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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICE: A CASE STUDY OF THE WENCHI EDUCATIONAL DIRECTORATE

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICE: A CASE STUDY OF THE WENCHI EDUCATIONAL DIRECTORATE

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MARCH, 2023

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, ALICE LAARI, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature: ………………………………………

Date: ……………………………………………

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME: MR KWESI AGGREY

Signature: ………………………………………

Date: ……………………………………………

DEDICATION

I dedicate it to my two sons, Mr Solomon Kabore and Mr Manasseh Baah Sackey.

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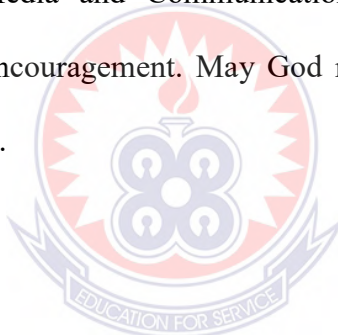
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ABSTRACT

This work explored effective communication and organizational practice at the Wenchi Educational Directorate. Using the qualitative research approach anchored on purposive sampling method, the study used data collection tools like focus group discussion, interviews, and document analysis to establish that when employees are empowered, motivated, respected and appreciated, it makes them own the organization and therefore put in much effort to increase productivity. Drawing concepts from the Barnlund's communication transactional model, the study concluded that the Wenchi Educational Directorate used different communication approaches to reach its publics. Feedback at the directorate is immediate because all the communication mediums and methods are employed. The study recommended that the image of teachers should be uplifted financially for them to feel valued and hence put in their best. Also, the current disciplinary measures put in place by the government in the various institutions should be revised to commit and make pupils/students responsible to avoid property destruction and future murder incidents.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Several publications have emphasized the strategic importance of communication in organizational practice and outlook (Myers & Myers, 1982). Both employees and management in any organization find that an important element of organizational practice is communication (Baker, 2002). Communication set rules and define the scope of organizational practices and procedures to avoid operational ambiguities and lapses (Uka, 2014). Within every organization, there could be different forms of communication interplay, however, the type of communication that takes place within the operational scope of an organization has been conceptualized as organizational communication (Goldhaber, 1986).

Organizational communication has become an academic discipline with different fields of study. According to (Myers & Myers, 1982), it is now the central binding force that allows a practice of coordination among people's behavior in an organization. In every institutional establishment such as public organizations where there are human interactions, there is an obvious need for communication to regulate conduct and enhance performance (Uka, 2014). The Rogers complemented this position when they averred that behavior of individuals in every setup can be understood from a communication point of view (Rogers & Rogers, 1976). In effect, communication becomes an important concept to control human interactions for achieving organizational goals.

Organizational communication has always played a significant role in how organizations interact with its internal and external publics. The concept clearly

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operationalized effective interpersonal and group communication practice as a form of human interaction in organization which is accompanied by a better collective action especially in terms of achieving organizational goals (Uka, 2014). This effective organizational communication practice, according to (Decenzo et al, 2016) elicits the best ideas, suggestions, creativity, or a subtler plan in an organization. They conclude that any form of innovations in an organization may not take shape without communication (Decenzo et al, 2016). Inherently, the basis of communication is thought to satisfy personal or social needs and in the case of organizational practice, to fulfil organizational goals (Steinberg, 2007). Furthermore, structures, systems and organizational operations are organized around communication in various public and private institutions.

Mescom et al (1981) have argued that for organizations to work effectively, there is the need to ensure that communication is timed and effective in the organization's operations. In sharp contrast, many organizations underestimate the role of communication in effective organizational delivery. Goldhaber (1986) posits that the need to properly evaluate the true essence of communication in organizations lies in effective organizational communication that allows for the creation and exchange of information within a specific network of interdependent relationships in the organization's setting to cope with environmental changes. Goldhaber's (1986) conception of organizational communication invokes our understanding of organizational practices in the framework of environmental constraints within which an organization operates. In the environmental context of organizations, the connection organizations develop with its publics is primarily hinged on communication and the aim is to transmit information to both internal and external publics. Again, organizations fall on communication to develop and maintain

relationships with employees, customers, investors, communities, government officials, donors, volunteers, the media, and the publics.

Furthermore, in an organizational environment, good level of communication gingers employees to work towards achieving the goals, thus increasing performance of their work (Uka, 2014). Based on Uka's (2014) assertion, positive change in workers which is achieved by communication leads to increase in performance of the organization. Moore (2013) simplified the correlation between the efficacy of communication on worker's output when he affirmed that how well you perform your task to meet your goal will depend upon how well you design your initial communication. Again, how rigorously you follow up and how successful you are at responding to the concerns of those who have reservations about adopting a new process are all defined by prudent use of organizational communication (Moore, 2013).
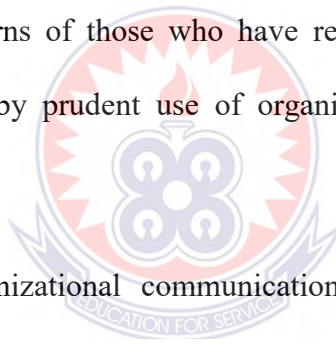
The discourses of organizational communication on organizational practice are largely context specific phenomenon (Baker, 2002). In Ghana, both private and public organizations operate within a certain degree of communication policy (Koah, 2021). However, the standards of communication practices in most of these organizations usually fall below the communication effective benchmark (Koah, 2021). Neher (1997), Rogers and Rogers (1976) have emphasized on this observation and have argued that social and organizational functions of organizational communication rather than focusing on the functions of specific communication exchanges is significant in every organization's setup. This research work is seeded on the common organizational practices in government institutions including the Wenchi educational office to analyze communication effectiveness and organizational practice. As argued

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by (Tomkins, 1993) communication must not just service the organization, it should be the organization itself because the practice of communication ensures continuity of an organization. In this regard, effective communication, therefore, unfolds the existence and success of any organization, hence, it is worth exploring in every institutional setup including the Wenchi Education Office which falls within the framework of the broad discussions on organizational communication practices.

1.1.1 Effective communication in organization

Effective communication in organizational practice describes the flow of quality information between management, subordinates, and publics of an organization to enhance performance (Eisenberger, et al, 1986). It is imperative that the transactional flow of information among stakeholders in an organization (Neves & Eisenberger, 2012). The organizational procedural practice, state of employees and the relationships with external publics are all defined by how communication is effectively practiced. Proctor (2014) has argued that different publications have discussed the various strategies of organizational effective communication to include high frequency, openness and accuracy, performance feedback and adequacy of information. These aspects of effective communication strategies according to (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) effective leadership is linked to employees' happiness and job satisfaction. Waggoner (2013) is of the view that effective leaders in an organization can relate to effective communication to bring about happy workers that lead to positive productivity in the organization. Moreover, in the context of effective organizational communication, dialoguing is imperative to understand the communication processes and implications within the scope of organizational practice (Eisenberger & Goodwill, 1997).

All human interactions are forms of communication and effective communication as a formal human interaction in an organization can enhance organizational outcomes (Garmelt, et al, 2008). Most organizations become successful when employees are valued through bidirectional communication because it provides avenue for both management and subordinates to own the organization through contribution and commitment. It is practical that an open two-way symmetrical communication model keeps employees happy during their work performance (Anchor, 2018). In this sense, (Reddy, 2005) has propounded five strategies for effective communication in an organization. He opined that an open communication environment can be an avenue created by managers for employees to share feedback, discuss ideas and critique pertinent issues that may cause retrogression in the organization. Some studies, however, suggest that employees weigh their value to the organization and its preparedness to motivate and reward increased work performance before they tie in their commitment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This observation is important to analyze how employees may pay attention to the effective practices in organizations.

Again, (Reddy, 2005) states that inclusive communication that involve employees in the organization should be allowed for decision making process in the day-to-day activities of the organization. Effective communication and a positive environment created by superiors keeps employees sincerely happy to deliver their best for positive job performances (Leonsis & Buckley, 2010; Miller, 2006). As part of excellent communication principle, (Grunig, 1992) argued for this position that for institution to be classified as effective organization, there should be a decentralized management structure where employees can be part of decision-making process. Reddy (2005) further argues that two-way communication that involves both management and employees must hold authority in sending information horizontally or vertically in the

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organization to their respective superior employees. Two-way communication as often argued facilitate employee happiness and generates positive feedback (Anchor, 2018) and it further promotes the feeling of being valued which inherently increases job satisfaction. It also creates a positive work atmosphere and breeds respect but does not address the responsibility of the employee to improve their personal attitude.

Results driven business communication that ensures a holistic reception of a message by all employees in the organization is the fourth strategy stated by (Reddy, 2005). Employers must adopt a language that can easily be understood by all and sundry for ease in comprehension in the organizational setup. Lastly, multi channeled communication approaches are important in the organization to ensure that every member of the organization receives an instruction, forwarding it through multiple channels. Some of which include emails, memos, letters, face to face conversation, telephone call, meetings etc. These strategies as suggested by (Reddy, 2005) are critical organizational communication practices that are crucial for effective communication. Furthermore, his observations are within the excellence organizational concept and very significant for understanding effective communication practices in the Wenchi Education Office which has long standing reputation as one of the first to be established educational office within the Bono region that has engaged in communication activities for the past six decades in the education enterprise.

1.1.2 The Wenchi Education Office

The Wenchi Education Office was established to superintendent the educational needs of Wenchi Municipality in the Bono region of Ghana. The office started as a unit under the Sunyani education directorate before later gaining full recognition in 1952

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as fully fledged unit under the ministry of education and the Ghana Education Service. The main function of the unit is to supervise all forms of educational activities at the pre-tertiary level of education within the municipality.

The directorate is a division in the Ghana Education Service, and it works to achieve goals and objectives of the service. The mission statement of the directorate reads; "to *provide quality formal education and training to pupils of school going age in the municipality to acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes that will prepare them for higher education and adult life to make them useful to themselves and society".* The office strives to achieve its mission through various organizational activities that are administratively coordinated.

Administratively, the Wenchi Education Office is headed by a Municipal Director of Education who is assisted by four other deputies. The director provides leadership and direction to all other operations in the office. The four deputy directors are the heads of Administration and Finance who oversee all the financial obligations in the office. The Human Resource Manager is in charge of human resource base and ensures that personnel are recruited for placement. He or she also handles transfers, postings, re-engagements, and others. The next on the tier is the deputy director in charge of information management (EMIS). He or she oversees managing data and coordinating ICT in the office and finally the deputy director in charge of supervision who ensures that monitoring and evaluation of teachers and other staff in the directorate are handled to the standards of the Ghana Education Service. The unit is also supported by several staff who provide general administrative services to assist the office, based on their training and qualification. Among the many staff is the office communication

officer who is directly in charge of communication. His job mainly is to liaise between the office and its external stakeholders.

1.2 Statement of Problem

There are various discussions about organizational practices and the role of communication in achieving organizational goals (Nobile, 2003). The relationship between communication and organizational success is evident in several studies (Proctor, 2014). However, many studies in this direction have concluded on the positive relationship between effective communication practices and organizational efficacy. For instance, Abugre (2011) delved into appraising the impact of organizational communication on worker satisfaction in organizational workplace and concluded that effective organizational communication ensures commitment of workers in organizations. Moreso, effective organizational communication can be achieved through management upgrading their communication strategies and making it accessible to all employees within the Ghana Education Service. Nielsen and Thomsen (2009) investigated CRS communication among Danish middle managers where they found that reputation of organization is proportionate to its communication framework. Uka (2014) in the same direction also studied the influences of effective communication in organizational practices focusing on interpersonal communication and its results on organizations. Kirti (2009) analyzed the efficacy of communication as a tool of motivation in organizational practices. Her study noticed that applying many effective communication practices enthused employees to increase productivity.

Effective communication, which is defined as the purposeful use of communication principles to achieve organizational goals (Hallahan et al, 2007) has been crucial to

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studying organizational environment and job satisfaction. Studies like (Meng & Berger, 2018) looked at the impact of communication and job satisfaction in some selected organizations in the United States of America and (Kwarteng et al, 2014) also studied organizational communication and job satisfaction in health institutions in Ghana. These studies and others were conducted to analyze how organizational communication can improve job satisfaction in different contexts. In different view of effective communication in organizational practice, (Abugre, 2012) investigated the link between the interactions that take place with management and employees and the communication outcomes. Sakyi (2010) also conducted research in the same area to understand the relationship between organizational communication effectiveness and its impact on an organization. He concluded that a drop-down approach practiced at the Ghana Health Service limited employer and employee engagement.

These reviewed studies discussed effective communication and the application of technology in organizational enhancements. For instance, studies like (Appiah et al, 2021) investigated Measuring efficiency and effectiveness of workers performance and information flow system in technical universities in Ghana and found that there is an overall high performance in technical efficiency and ranks of lecturers. Their study which centered on information systems for managing communication concluded that technology has improved human interaction at the technical university. Studies of this nature are focused on tools that enhance effective communication practice without analyzing the overall communication framework and the general practices of effectiveness.

Several studies conducted in Ghana such as the works of (Sakyi, 2010) who studied communication in the Ghana Health Service, (Kwarteng, et al 2014) who also studied

communication practices in health institutions in Ghana and Koah (2021) who investigated the communication practices in the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) exist in the literature. These studies discussed effective communication in different organizational settings. However, studies in the context of effective communication in the Ghana Education Service are scarce in the literature. At least none of such studies have been conducted in any of the district education offices. This study therefore seeks to investigate the effectiveness of communication at the Wenchi Education Office, a unit under the Ghana Education Service to understand how effective communication define operations in the unit. The study would adopt a qualitative research approach hinged on effective communication theories to draw conclusions.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This research work sought to investigate the communication practices at the Wenchi Education Office and how effective and applicable communication can be defined. For this purpose, the following research objectives undergird the study.

1. To analyze the communication structure at the Wenchi Education Office.
2. To explore the communication strategies used in the Wenchi Education Office and how effective they are.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions are as follows.

RQ 1. What communication structures exist at the Wenchi Education Office?

RQ 2. What are the communication strategies used to disseminate information at the Wenchi Education Office?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Communication is something we do every day in our organizational establishment. The study of organizational communication is not new but has recently achieved some level of recognition as a field of academic study. It has largely grown in response to the needs and concerns of businesses. In recent times, most employees acknowledge that communication plays a vital role in their job execution. This research therefore seeks to add knowledge that can be referenced in future on similar related topics in communication.

It will also serve as a guide to both management and employees to shape the communication strategies practiced in their organizational settings and improve job delivery and satisfaction. Communication is not only an essential aspect of recent organizations, but effective communication can be seen as the foundation of modern organization (Grenier & Metes, 1992). In this sense, this study is important for organizations and institutions to revise their understanding of communication to match with current trends in organization management with communication. Again, this research will further aid policy makers during policy formation in communication planning, it is sufficient to focus the situational analysis on internal and external factors that may influence the problem or challenge being addressed.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the Wenchi Education Office which is one of the units of Ghana Education Service with peculiar interest rate drawn on the communication practices in the establishment. It further looks at the office administrative setup and the functions of communication to address the research questions.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the topic being studied. This introduction involves background of the study, statement of the research problem, research objectives, research questions, significance, and scope of the study. Chapter two provides a detailed review of related literature to the study. It further discusses the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Chapter three brings into focus the methodology used for the research. It describes the research approach, research design, sampling strategy, data collection processes and data analysis methods. Chapter four consists of research findings and discussions. Chapter five presents a summary and conclusions of the study. It also proposes recommendations to Ghana Education Service and Ministry of Education. It presents limitations of the research and offers future studies in the field.
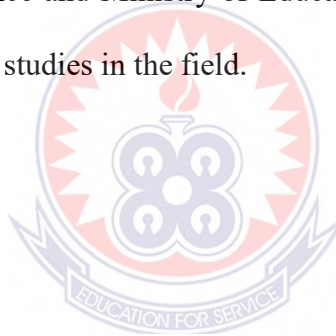
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews some empirical literature on previous studies and concepts relating to the study. The concepts and themes reviewed in this chapter include effective communication and organizational practice, communication and technology, communication for personal and organizational development, strategic communication and effective communication, internal and external communication in organization and communication and organizational culture. The chapter also discusses the theory and models that support the study and how relevant they relate to the work.

2.1 The Concept of Effective Communication and Organizational Practice

The origin of the word communication in Latin is "communicare" and connotes making known or sharing (Peters, 2008). This historical notion of communication has formed the basis of understanding and applying communication concepts across different spectrums. However, the concept of communication is often overlooked by communication scholars who normally presume that the world of communication only exists from the lenses of the west. For instance, (Anderson & Murdock, 1981) have bemoaned that communication concepts only sound international if it is on the other side of the ocean. Communication has always involved a sender and a receiver concept with many different levels involving persons or groups (Paavo, 2018). Its practicality, however, transcends the simplistic information sharing notion of communication but does include a whole business of culture as advanced by (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 2005) and (Manyozo, 2018).

The study of organizational communication has become significant in the books of communication in recent times (Drenth et al, 1998). It has taken a new and a more diverse form to include technological devices and capabilities to achieve effective communication in organization practices (Gerardine et al, 1999). According to (Baker, 2002) Organizational communication has a dual viewpoint in organizational practices. She viewed organizational communication as an aspect of an organization implying that it is one of the many agencies in an organization operating differently. Again, she also argues that organizational communication has an underlying basis of the organization itself. Baker's (2002) description of organizational communication gives the understanding that communication establishes the systems and structures of an organization which is also the driving wheel on which the organization thrives. Drenth et al, (1998) avow that if the effectiveness of communication in an organization is achieved, there is always a better collective mobilization of employees to achieve personal and organizational goals.

According to (Tomkins, 1993), communication is the force that keeps organization in existence. His understanding of communication is, perhaps, without recourse to the descriptive notion of communication as against effective communication practice in organizations. The latter is very sophisticated and well planned to achieve an outcome and it does not just happen without conscious planning. Baker (2002) adds that every organization is a small world with a distinct atmosphere, culture, and climate. This supposed cultural phenomenon has fraught discussions among scholars as to its significance in shaping organizations. Organizations operate in a system of communication mix underpinned by different principles. Organizational communication mix refers to a representation of all the voices of communication used by the organization to send notices to its internal and external publics (Ristino, 2008)

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has argued. However, depending on how any organization operates, the importance of communication defines how effective communication is conceptualized in the organization (Baker, 2002). When communication is effective, it makes all parties involved operate freely and satisfied. Organizational communication is therefore an element an organization cannot do without Drenth et al (1998) have concluded.

Effective communication is the transmission of messages accurately as intended to a receiver. Zulch (2014) defines effective communication as sending information between entities. Barbara (2018) sees effective communication as a concept which when transferred, the context is understood the way it was presumed. It aims to cause action or bring change, create perception, and increase knowledge. Uka (2014) explored communication and its influence on the effectiveness of the organization. He discovered that communication serves as a universal tool for managing any organization. He identified organizational culture as an effective collective agreement by employees to achieve a common goal. He analyzed the technologically driven communication practices that propel organizations' goals. He concluded with suggestions that trust and encouragement are key factors employees need to put up their best in the organization. He added that employees need to be involved actively in the decision-making process.

Organizational communication scholars have researched much into some areas of relevance in the field of organizational communication and the cutting relationship that exist between communication and technology. For instance, (Ellerup & Thomsen, 2009) investigated 'CSR communication in SMEs; a case study among Danish middle managers'. They found that Corporate Social Responsibility (CRS) communication in small and medium scale Enterprises (SMEs) is recently emerging and therefore,

scholars have more to understand. Their study probed and discovered that many of the key issues dominating the corporate communication adventure are seen to be relevant to managers in SMEs, as they are deeply involved in the functioning of the enterprise. These managers concentrated mainly on internal communication but tend not to make SMEs issues known to the external publics of the enterprise. They concluded that SME managers are willing to adopt CSR but need formalization of communication strategy without any compromise by the industry.

2.2 Internal and External Communication in Organization

Communication in an organization is a supportive approach where employees socialize, create, and comprehend feedback through uni-directional or dual directional process (Stohl, 1995). Depending on the type of communication model practiced in the organization and the kind of organizational culture that prevails in the working setting, communication can be very complex to manage working procedures and employee's delivery. Many studies relate organizational communication to internal communication. (Ritter, 2003) slated the vital roles of communication in the attainment of organizational goals and how that can regulate organizational job satisfaction. Other studies that have focused on communication in organizations. Smith and Mounter (2008) had studied internal communication for organizational success and profitability and concluded that effective organizational communication with employees' satisfaction is one of the surest ways for any organizational development. In line with that, Lewis (2007) also established that ambitious internal communication creates low output, turnover, absenteeism, lack of understanding of business strategy and lack of direction by employees. Such a miscommunicated approach thwarts achieving organizational goals because workers may not have clear direction instructed by communication. (Dawkins, 2005) noticed that exchanging

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messages with peers in organization is most at times disregarded as an important element of communication. However, for organizations to thrive and realize their targeted objectives, (Grunig, 1992) has suggested that employees should have the leverage to make decisions themselves since they are knowledgeable and knows organizational goals. Secondly, the staff in the organization can differentiate the goals, mission and processes of the organization which can effect change and hence increase output and efficiency. Again, he argued that equitable sharing of resources and information must be apt to avoid misappropriation and finally, reducing misunderstanding due to less ambiguous instructions on the merits of the organization. Grunig's (1992) concepts about organizations internal communication appear simplistic but in actual sense organizational factors may likely interrupt its swift application to the letter. Some studies including Ruch and Welch (2012) explicitly support the views on employee relations as an integral part of internal communication and the wellbeing of that organization. There are therefore numerous benefits that can be derived from strategizing internal communication for an organization.

Welch (2011) investigated employee's ideologies on internal communication using a qualitative method of inquiry and discovered that it would be risky for management of organization to disregard employees' ability to access operational information via the employees preferred internal communication media. Employees are skilled and can carry out different purposes as stakeholders. There is therefore the need for strategic communication in all organizations because employees are rational, adaptive, and divergent for different communication media.

Vercic, Vercic and Sriramesh (2011) postulated a vital perspective on the technical and managerial applications of internal communication. They found that internal communication can empower employees when resources are available for productivity. Also (Quirke and O'Riordan 2012) averred in similar direction that effective internal communication can aid turn strategy into action to enhance services and manage change more efficiently. Both studies compared effective communication in private and public managed organizations to come through with their conclusions. Other works like (Men, 2014) had also analyzed how leadership influences internal communication and employees. Men (2014) gave much attention to organizations that practiced external communication and how its effectiveness impacted organizations. In all, these studies did establish the correlation between realizing organizational goals through impactful use of communication.

External communication has been conceptualized by many organizational communication scholars over the past years. Publications on this subject posit that external communication is to coordinate with external publics like stakeholders, customers, and the public through several channels (Grunig & Grunig, 1992). External communication integrates the stakeholders of the organization to the activities of the organization from a distance. Many authors (Baker, 2002; Grunig, 1992) indicate that external communication is not rigid and should be innovated to suit organizational situations. Some reviews on external communication have also shown why some channels of communication are preferred and how ambiguity can mar the achievement of organizational goals. For instance, White et al, (2010) investigated project team preference for a particular type of information and choice of channel. Findings from that study found improved face-to-face communication to be the most effective approach as compared to electric communication which happen

through mail for external communication. Kelleher (2001) differentiated choices for communication is needed in different roles performance. He argues that superiors adopt electric and intrapersonal communication to belong to the organizational community. However, Woodwall (2006) avers that adapting to message depends on the choice of communication method used. Ahmad (2016) argues that external strategic communication management aimed at describing external communication channels is effective for sending administrative messages to other departments. The study compared the effectiveness of using various communication channels. His study concluded that at least 87% of his study participants preferred face-to-face as most effective for transmission outside organization to publics. The less preferred choices were newsletters and SMS which the study concluded.

Other researchers like (Ristino, 2008) viewed communication from the public relations perspective of managing organizations image and identity. He discussed external communication as Corporate Social Responsibility, perhaps, a concept quite alien to the discourses of organizational communication. Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al (2019) worked on CSR practices, organizational culture and firms' reputation and performance in hotels in Spain. The authors established that hotels employing CSR practices built good rapport with employees and customers and it automatically reinforced the reputation of the enterprise. Normally, studies of this nature are concentrated on public relations in private organizations and hence little research is done in non-profit organizations to analyze external communications (Liu & Horsley, 2007).

2.3 Organizational Communication in Government Organizations

This part conceptualizes organizational, internal and external communication as well as the upward, downward, horizontal and informal flow of information commonly practiced in most government organizations in Ghana. Many scholars have shared different opinions about organizational communication and its dynamics in organizational practices. For instance, Theaker (2004) argues that organizational communication is "an instrument of management through which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible to create a favorable basis for relationships with groups upon which the company is dependent." Also, Allen et al. (1996, p. 384) holds the view that organizational communication is the practice of "sending and receiving messages that create and maintain a system of consciously coordinated activities."

These observations and descriptions of organizational communication are imperative and suggest that communication is essential for the successful running of any organization or, as Rensburg (1996) puts it as a critical catalyst of an organization. According to Ritter (2003), communication is crucial for understanding the value of intangible organizational assets, and for Njomo (2013), organizational communication is a way through which individuals who are interested in an organization's happenings connect internally and externally. In other words, organizational communication provides an opportunity for affiliated individuals of an organization to be abreast with the communication activities and behaviors that take place in an organization. This definition shows that organizational communication is dynamic, complex, ongoing, functional, and purposeful (Steinberg, 2007).

There are four types of organizational communication. These are interpersonal, intergroup, intragroup, and public or mass communication (Dawkin, 2005; Hume, 2001). Interpersonal communication refers to communication between people, which usually occurs face-to-face. For example, communication between a teaching staff member of the educational directorate and community members during a PTA session is a typical interpersonal level of organizational communication. Intragroup communication is the type of communication that occurs within a small group, such as a department in an organization. The communication that would go on among members of an electoral committee that is tasked with overseeing the election of new prefects of a school is a good example of intragroup organizational communication.

All members of such a committee would need to both receive the opinions of other members of the committee and also effectively convey their own ideas and input to ensure the overall success of the group. Communication which occurs in the intergroup communication category, as opposed to the intragroup organizational communication, refers to sharing information between different groups of people. For instance, communication can take place between the human resource department and the information technology department of the directorate. Lastly, public or mass communication refers to communication created for public consumption. This type of communication is often used for public education exercises by organizations with an educative function like adolescent health challenges because public or mass communication relates to several people of varied backgrounds at once. Some examples of this communication are radio, television, or newspaper presentations.

Internal communication involves the communication activities and behaviors among members of an organization. Hume (2015) observes that internal communication

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encompasses all organizational communication. It includes communication channels within an organization, like newsletters, noticeboards, emails, memos, staff meetings, and all interactions within an organization that convey meaning. With the above assertion, it is undeniable that internal communication is required for the smooth running of an organization.

Manning (1992) observes that internal communication is vital for binding an organization, enhancing employee morale, promoting transparency, and reducing attrition. Also, Guffey et al. (2010) suggest that organizational communication is used to issue and clarify procedures and policies, make improvements and changes, coordinate activities, and evaluate and reward personnel. In simple terms, internal communication contributes to an overall harmonious ambiance in an organization. Lewis (2007) advances that well-informed employees are more satisfied, have an enriched connection with the organization, and therefore consciously work towards achieving the organization's goal.

The channels employed to transport information reflect an organization's internal communication structure (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). An observation suggests that an organization's internal communication structure stems from the structure of the organization's strategy and organizational culture (Chandler, 1962; van Riel, 1995). The structure must communicate in three directions: downward, upward, and horizontal (Lunenberg, 2010). These directions prescribe the outline within which communication is carried out in an organization. Channels of communication in organizations can either be formal or informal. Upward and downward communication flows are generally in line with the formal procedures within an organization. Formal communication channels, such as line communication, take the

form of a downward or upward flow (Greenbaum et al., 1988; van Riel, 1995), whereas informal communication channels include interpersonal management communication and grapevine (van Riel, 1995; van Riel & Fombrun, 2006).

Downward communication is the communication process where Information is transmitted from higher to lower levels of an organization. In most Ghanaian organizations, downward communication is used in transporting Information to employees. In most cases, the topic of such Information is messages on job instructions and job rationales, for example, describing the tasks and procedures connected to the rules and policies of the organization, providing feedback, or explaining the organization's ideology (Nazarova, 2015). Cheney (2010) identifies five general purposes of downward communication: Implementation of goals, strategies, and objectives, job instructions and rationale, procedures and practices, performance feedback, and socialization.

Downward communication is used for directives, instructions, and Information to organizational members; however, messages can be misconstrued (Tourish, 2010), making communication unsuccessful.

As connoted by its name, upward communication refers to the communication transferred from subordinate staff members to management staff. Lunenburg (2012 p.4) suggests that this type of communication is necessary to determine if staff members "have understood information sent downwards." Also, upward communication addresses grievances, disputes, performance reports, and financial and accounting information (Canary, 2011). More importantly, "with the practice of upward communication, the management of an organization knows the feelings of

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employees about organizational policies, feelings toward their job, and working procedures" (Nazarova, 2015, p. 23).

A divergence from the upward and downward communication is the horizontal communication. Horizontal communication is the transmission of Information by people on the same level within an organization (Nazarova, 2015), for example, interpersonal management interactions. Horizontal communication becomes instrumental with a more significant sized and more complex organization. The purpose of this communication flow is for coordination, enabling departments to work with other departments without following rigid up-and-down channels. (Lunenberg, 2010).

Cheney (2010) posits that horizontal communication falls within one of these categories: intrapersonal problem-solving, interdepartmental coordination, and staff advice to line departments. Organizational communication scholars acknowledge informal communication with a grapevine metaphor as having a significant role in performance at the workplace. Daniels and Spiker (1994. p, 102) describe the concept of grapevine communication "as the concept of spreading information within an organization when a person A gives a message to person B and C, and these two people send a message further to people D, E and F." Information spread through this means is usually information about other people in the organization or happening in the organization. Any organization member can initiate grapevine communication as research has discovered that the information passed is usually accurate (Daniel & Spiker, 1994). Nazarova (2015) suggests that formal and informal communication are not separate but should be viewed as an intertwined network because the combination of formal and informal communication is the reality within organizations.

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As mentioned earlier, organizational communication concerns communications with both internal and external audiences. External communication refers to the communication directed to the outside and involves an organization's communication with its environment (Juris, 2004). In other words, external communication involves creating alliances with stakeholders and an organization's public. In the case of the Wenchi Educational Directorate, whose primary function is assisting government to provide pre-tertiary education to children in Ghana, its external communication is assumed to be directed to parents as well as other stakeholders and collaborators, including government, the Ministry of Education, the west Africa examination Council, and many others. Stuart et al. (2007) observes that creating and sustaining productive relationships with the external public of an organization is of considerable importance because this initiative contributes to achieving mutually beneficial goals for both the organization and the public.

Communication is a practical tool that organizations use to achieve the desired organizational objectives. In line with this submission, Zink and Zink (2000) averred in an article titled; Organizational Communication that effective communication is an essential ingredient in every successful organization. They further stated that managers must notice how employees behave to provide the appropriate environment. Organizational behavior motivates employees to do their best for organizational success (Neher, 1997). In their study, Zink and Zink adopted scientific management, bureaucracy, and the emergence of modern organizations.

In his view, Taylor argues that scientific management is the management-oriented and production-centered view of organizational communication. He averred that organizations fail because they misapply systematic management. Taylor emphasized

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that the best management is scientific, with clearly defined laws, rules, and principles as a solid foundation. These observations are rightly situated in earlier organizational theorists' positions. For instance, in bureaucratic theory, Max Weber and Henry Fayol argued for classical perspectives on organizational communication. The duo emphasized the organization's structure and how that impacts productivity in any organizational setting. Weber noticed severe corrupt activities of some managers in the former management approach and now insisted on task proficiency and impersonal relationships with employees.

The modern organization, on the other hand, operates on an open social system where employees depend on each other for the organization's survival. Also, employees or subordinates look up to their superiors in their job delivery, improving upward communication. For instance, Tourish D (2023) submitted his work titled Critical upward communication 'Ten commandments for improving strategy and decision making.' The research work uncovered that critical upward communication promotes employee input in making decisions in the organization. Without upward communication, organizational activities become stand still as effective exchange of messages does not occur (Yin, 2012). Tourish, therefore, suggested the need to adopt and enhance two–way communication strategy between employees and their managers.

2.4 Strategic Communication in Government Organizations in Ghana

Extant literature supports the view that communicating strategically in a business entity plays a crucial role in the organization's overall success. Conrad and Poole (2015) observe that communication generally is a process through which people act together, create, sustain, and manage meanings within a particular context, all geared

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towards achieving organizational goals. Based on Conrad and Poole's observation, an organization can only be profitable with efficient communication. In support of this, scholars such as Manning (2010) and Theaker (2004) have discussed the usefulness of organizational communication as leading to high productivity, commitment to work, job satisfaction, and healthy relationships between the organization and its public. It is becoming increasingly important for organizations to be deliberate and intentional in their communication endeavors (Argenti et al., 2005; Hallahan et al., 2007). Because effective strategies respond better to demanding situations, organizations must be deliberate and strategic in communication.

In like manner, Argenti et al (2005) described strategic communications as communication aligned with a company's total strategy to spotlight and strengthen its strategic positioning. Likewise, Hallahan et al (2007) consider strategic communication to be "the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission (p. 3). To Hallahan et al (2007), strategic communication considers the organization a social actor since its existence in society contributes to creating public culture. Deducing from the above authors' arguments, the researcher observes that while Hallahan et al (2007) view strategic communication from a functionalist point of view, Argenti et al (2005) see the success of an organization to be dependent on merging strategic communication into the overall policy of the organization. On the other hand, Grunig (2006) avers that strategic communication is motivated by how an organization decides to relate with its stakeholders. This implies that an organization strategizes its communication based on organizational and situational factors toward its stakeholder relationship. Indeed, these varying understanding of strategic communication provides evidence that strategic communication concerns an organization having a clear direction for its communication activities. Because of this,

strategic communication is essential, especially for government organizations. This is because, unlike profit-oriented organizations perceived to be driven by image-building and profit, government organizations should be driven by their mandate and ethical responsibility to their society. Hence, government organizations require strategic communication in the pursuance of their mandate.

In brief, organizational communication entails internal and external aspects (Theaker, 2004). While internal communication involves generating and exchanging messages within the organization (Hume, 2015), external communication is directed at an organization's outside public, stakeholders, and collaborators (Juris, 2004). The subsequent discussion will focus on these two dimensions of organizational communication and their implications.

2.5 Organizational Communication at Government Institutions in Ghana

A literature search indicates a need for more studies on the communication patterns of government organizations in Ghana. Only a few studies are available on state institutions in Ghana. These are given a more extensive review in this section.

Kwateng, Osei, and Abban (2014) examined internal communication in public health institutions in Ghana and found a positive correlation between communication and employees' commitment to their jobs. The study also indicated that issues regarding monitoring and control mechanisms of organizational communication in public hospitals were deplorable as they were either absent or ineffective. Again, findings from the study showed a high preference by staff for the use of downward vertical communication as they felt it was effective as opposed to upward vertical communication. This finding appears to correspond with a study by Stohl (1995) about how hierarchical relationships influence organizational communication patterns.

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Conclusions from the study indicate that a highly bureaucratic organization is more inclined to employ a top-down chain of command, which involves written forms of communication with little or no forms of personal interaction. Their study concluded that communication in public hospitals was ineffective and inefficient, affecting the quality of services rendered by public hospitals.

In like manner, Ansong (2013) studied the communication (patterns/processes) of public institutions with the Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Ghana, as a case study. The study discovered that CHRAJ did not have a communication policy guiding its communication activities, which implied that the institution lacked clear-cut communication strategies to control activities toward achieving the CHRAJ's mandate. A communication policy was therefore recommended to facilitate and guide activities to attain the institution's goals. The study also found radio and television as the most used channels the institution employs in its haphazard communication with its public. Ansong (2013) thus recommended that CHRAJ should seriously consider running an up-to-date online presence since it provides features including instant feedback, face-to-face interactions, and voice recordings.

Similarly, Akomeah (2015) studied communication between utility companies and their public from the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) perspective. Using a qualitative method that collected data from interviews and focus group discussions, the author found that although GWCL claims to have regular interactions with its public through varied communication channels, the public and the Public Utility Regulatory Commission (PURC) do not trust that GWCL does that. The study found that GWCL's communication was either delayed or non-existent, suggesting poor communication behavior on the part of the Ghana Water Company in reaching its

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public and stakeholders. The study, therefore, recommended that the management of GWCL should consider organizing community/stakeholder forums where GWCL could engage in frequent face-to-face interactions with its stakeholders. Akomeah (2015), Ansong (2013), and Kwateng, Osei, and Abban's (2014) studies discussed above indicate that communication within government organizations in Ghana is generally poor. Considering the essential contributions government organizations render to society and humanity, this should be a source of worry to scholars. While such conclusions may apply to the named organizations above, this current research will also tell if the same trend of poor organizational communication applies to the Wenchi Educational Directorate.

The above review has revealed significant gaps in research on the Ghana education service, which is yet to have any known study on its communication activities. It is realized that while much research attention has focused on topics relating to citizens' awareness of their civic statuses and roles and their relation to political participation, not much has been done on the communication system or approaches of the Ghana education services and its implications on the service's stakeholders/publics. For example, through an extensive literature search in journals, books, and other published and credible works in various university libraries, such as those of the University of Education, Winneba, and the University of the Coast, in addition to searches on various internet sites such as Google, Google Scholar, Sage, Research Gate, and Emerald for published and credible academic works on the communication activities of the Ghana education service, there is no study on the internal communication of the service. Therefore, the current study is essential because it has a prime interest in discussing pertinent issues concerning the service's overall

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communications policy or strategy, the ideas behind the strategy, and the relevance and appropriateness of the strategy in today's world.

2.6 Communication and Information flow in Organizations

Effective communication is necessary for every successful organizational setup and the direction of communication is the flow of information from the sender to the receiver (Neher, 1997). It is therefore essential to research how information flows during communication to enable communicators to use the most appropriate and preferable alternative for improved interactivity and organizational success. There are various forms of communication which are commonly practiced by organizations. Among them are;

2.6.1 Two-way communication

The two-way communication concept describes a communication method where the sender and the receiver exchange roles during the information-sharing process. Both the management and subordinates make time to deliberate on issues concerning their job schedule in their designated organization. This method promotes attentive listening, productive feedback, and effective dialogue. The parties involved in this communication process take time to deliberate on issues for both parties to understand issues that seemed ambitious at the initial stage by each of the communicators. It is one of the most appropriate communication directions that managers and subordinates of many institutions prefer to adopt in their daily interactions. So, in reference, in the Wenchi Education Directorate when the need arises for the Director and her management team to meet subordinates. They deliberately make time after delivering the intended speech/ message for a questions and answers period so that whoever has an issue related to the speech delivered or any other issue related to the work jurisdiction can be addressed appropriately with optimum respect to the subordinate.

This communication process promotes job satisfaction, and therefore, all parties concerned put their best for improved production.

2.6.2 One-way communication

The direction of information transmission here is generally from the sender to the receiver. In some organizations, the management or top hierarchy typically sends information they wish to communicate to workers through only one route, transmitting what is needed to be communicated without soliciting feedback from the receivers. Means of communication generally adopted by the information senders are speeches, lectures, and broadcasts. The transmission of messages in this process is efficient, but adherence may need fixing. In relation, at the Wenchi Education Directorate, one-way communication only occurs on one side. For clarification purposes, management and the subordinates sometimes adopt the one-way communication procedure. When a subordinate wishes to undertake further studies such as sandwich, after applying and being successfully admitted, the personnel only write to make his intentions known to the management. On the other hand, when the management also uses the one-way communication approach, they use it to either convene meetings, send urgent messages, or request information/ data from the schools. The transmission modes are phone calls, WhatsApp messages, or printed media.

2.6.3 Downward communication

This type of communication also describes a single direction of communication flow. It is noticeable by the flowing messages from top to bottom. Hence, the superiors typically convey information and directives to subordinates in this communication direction. The general purpose of downward organizational communication practice is

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to implement the organization's goals and strategies or objectives. Its application is for instruction and rationale, procedures and practices, performance feedback, and socialization. They mostly use formats such as manuals, memos, emails, and management meetings. The sender typically delivers messages successfully, but knowing whether the information was well understood cannot be assessed in this option. This direction of communication lets subordinates feel they need to be respected and therefore, hesitate to do their best for improved productivity. The subordinates mostly feel they do not own the organization because their views are not sought during planning. Here, concerning the Wenchi Education Directorate, the management often adopts it to ensure success and quick delivery of the sent message. Instances where downward organizational communication is seen being practiced is during meeting invitation, reminders, or when information is required from the various schools. These messages are sent through phone calls, WhatsApp, or printed media. Although this approach could not be more appropriate, it is the best option for the Directorate to fall on in times of emergency.

2.6.4 Horizontal communication

This communication type occurs among peers or workers of the same rank or hierarchical level within an organization. This communication type encourages teamwork, collaboration, and coordination in achieving common goals. Sometimes, short meetings are conducted to seek in-depth knowledge concerning the work description among peers. Emails and collaborative tools can also be used to communicate with peers in an organization. Horizontal communication serves the purposes of intradepartmental problem-solving, interdepartmental coordination, and staff advice to the departments. In the Wenchi Education Directorate, horizontal communication is practically observed when an orientation workshop is organized for

newly recruited staff to train them on the job. Also, workshops are generally organized for some teachers of the same year group to update them on new adaptations in work and also equip them with the right work attitudes and skills for enhanced performance.

2.7 Communication and Organizational Culture

Culture is defined as the way of life of a given society, many scholars have argued. Every organization is a society and has a culture it practices internally and externally. Paavo (2018) contributed to the knowledge base of communication in his study; Interrogating Development organizational communication: Improving internal organizational communication. He aimed to gain insight into how organizations strategize internal communication and see to its improvement. Paavo's (2018) conclusions excluded the slippery area of culture and its relationship with organizational strategies and communication practices. He identified internal communication to be a key component for enterprises to be much more successful. Communication is said to be the key concept to achieve personal and organizational targets and these targets are the desiring force behind the employee output (Steinberg, 2007).

Deresky (2011) has discussed about the link between communication and organizational cultural context. He averred that the culture of a person has an impact on how the person perceives meaning and this can generally interfere with organizational cultural goals that define the successes of the organization. Culture is thought to have a multifaceted dimension in organizational practice. Organizational communication practice offers culture-free and culture-specific positions to explain the differences of views in organizational practice (Tayeb, 1988). The Culture-free

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positions are championed by scholars like (Hickson et al, 1994). They argue that organizational cultures are balanced across societies and therefore diversity is a redundancy. Authors like (Hofstede, 199; Pascal &Athos, 1981; Tayeb, 1988) dissent to such a simplistic view by advancing that culture is specific and unique to every establishment including societies and organizations. Deresky (2011) like other organizational cultural scholars usually limit their view on culture within the scope of organization without recourse to the societal cultural beliefs and concepts that sometimes impact organizations.

A clear understanding of the relationship between organizational and societal culture is needed to improve good organizational communication for effective communication practice. Communication models applied in the Ghanaian setting are often adopted from works published by Western scholars without the peculiarities of our cultural communication environment. However, the study of organizational communication is supposed to provide an understanding of every human behavior that occurs in an organizational setting (Daniels et al, 1997). These human behaviors are influenced by cultural communication orientations (Paavo, 2018.). He recommends that although much is already done to improve organizational functioning culture, there is still much to be done.

 Nazarova (2015) worked on "Integrated communication strategy and organizational management". Her work focused on assessing communication strategies for managers to improve internal and external communication in the organizational setting. She aligned historical functions of communication seeded in industrial agitations to critique primitive management theory that perceived an organization to be a "machine" and therefore did not pay attention to communication within an

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organization. Max Weber for instance described bureaucracy as a formal system of organization aimed to enhance productivity (Jones et al, 2000). Invariably, Weber's conception of bureaucracy has become key aspect of communication flow in originations which essentially define workers' abilities to be effective and efficient (Jones et al, 2000). According to (Redding, 1979), failure in communication causes organizational failure. The assumption of the importance of communication is tightly tied to communication due to the role communication performs in task implementation (Tomkins, 1993). Nazarova (2015) argues that managers must be excellent communicators to enable them to be able to make adequate use of communication functions to transform their organizations. Messages transmitted should be authentic and delivered at the needed time (Mescon et al, 1981). Information transmission can begin with any member of the organization. (Daniels et al, 1997) have argued. However, managers are empowered to lead in an organization's communication setup, but they must note that subordinates also have power and any attempt to curtail that power may create crises in the organizational set up (McClelland, 2000).

Managers communication and relationship building including appreciation and encouragement is important to create trust among subordinates (Miller 2012 p184). Leaders must however exhibit and reflect what they seek from their subordinates with optimum use of communication created from the accepted cultural context of the organization. Myatt (2012) suggests that some leaders are naturally good communicators, but others can also learn the best practices of communication to improve organizational success stories. The balance between these notions is important to be appreciated in organizational context to measure the communication potency of corporate managers. To improve output, communication must be opened,

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employees actively involved in policy formulation, enforcement, and flow of instructions (Daniels et al, 1997, p66). Managers should always offer support to employees (Nazarova, 2015) in the business of communication flow in every organization. Nazarova (2015) further analyzed a case study on Herzberg's theory to find out the behavior of managers and how they relate with employees' happiness in an organizational setting. She used qualitative research that aimed at exploring a deeper insight into the concept of organizational communication practices and employees' happiness. She found that a manager must know the needs of subordinates to aid in motivating them. Employees must be actively involved in decision making process but unfortunately, in application, managers do not search for unnoticed capabilities of subordinates or accept their input during decision making. The position and other inherent traits influence the pedagogy superiors adopt during communication in an organizational setting.

Christine (2014) adventured into 'Effective organizational communication and how it affects employee attitudes, happiness and job satisfaction'. He discovered that managers acknowledge that enthused workers put their best in organizations when communication is effectively done. He cited (Waggoner, 2013) who argued that bi-directional communication or two-way communication creates trust and satisfaction for employees to do their best. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) have all done substantial studies in this direction to show that workers are concerned about their value in their designated organization and the readiness of the employer to reward increased performance when they have stake in organizational communication (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Bi-directional communication creates belongingness and increased output in performance. There will be productiveness if we focus on the positives of employees (Anchor, 2018; Miller, 2006; Waggoner, 2013) and to build

organizational culture through communications (Neves & Eisenberger, 2012). This will result in massive success (Anchor, 2018) have clarified. Organizations can also create positive attitude by respecting subordinates and believing in them as persons who have something to offer when communication is used to improve and to stimulates employee commitment to arrive at success (Peters & Austin, 2010).

2.8 Communication for Personal and Organizational Development

Managers can make their goals known to internal and external publics through communication. They can also influence changes in the behaviors of co-workers using the same medium. Communication is one of the measures that can lead to success in an organization if applied very well (Marjana, 2011) have argued. Invariably, communication has come to be known by the three traditional factors namely the channel, decoder and encoder which explains the dynamics of every communication conception. A much-improved introspective considerations of a more enhanced study on these models is practical to understand organization communication frameworks.

2.9 Strategic Organizational Communication

Strategic communication thinking is the mindset enforced when decision making is rationalized in organizations, and it is a young field and quests for maturity (Kuhn, 1970). Kuhn (1970) further argues that a concept becomes matured when it has theories and conditions that satisfies standards. There is therefore the need for intensified scientific research to be carried out to redeem strategic communication in the context of organizational practice. Strategic communication was first conceptualized in organizations in the 1950s. Organizational competition in the market space to gain shares started the conversations on strategic communication (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Effective organizational communication impacts

positively on organizational performance (Grunig & Hunt, 1986) when the said communication is strategically planned to be implemented. Grunig and Hunt (1986) further stated that symmetric communication as a sender and receiver who are inseparable and equal in the communication process and seeks clarification and comprehension to react is the basis of strategic communication in organization. They suggested that employees must be managed well for productivity and effective communication is much needed in curing any menace.

Hallahan (2007) researched into 'Defining Strategic Communication' and defined strategic communication as using communication meaningfully to achieve organizational goals. Hallahan related the concept of communication to other fields to conceptualize how communication can strategically solve problems. Duncan et al (2001) added that internal communication should be organized strategically based on external publics' expectations. Strategic communication has been synonymously used as public relations (Kaplan et al, 1995) perhaps, because of what public relations can do to strategically position communication in any organization and to re-enforce the politics of doing business (Johnson-Carttee & Copeland, 2004). Strategic communication is argued by (Quest, 2005) to enhance and build brands. In recent times, communication researchers see that the process takes more than a single transmission to include an array of communication concepts application (Grunig, 1976). Cutlip et al (2009) and Grunig and Hunt (1984) avow that communication in Public Relations differed in one way and two-way communication where behavior of others can be altered and effected by organizations or individuals.

2.10 Communication and Technology

The evolvement of new technological tools and application changes noted by organizations and the quest for advancement in organizations has made the organizational communication concept very vital in the functioning of organizations (Baker, 2002). Communication is traditionally known to be the exchange of information by any possible means. It could be verbatim, letters, phone calls and so on. Technology on the other hand is a newly evolved strategy that is used to lessen the burden of doing things in our daily interactivity. With technology, humans can speak through and with machines. The new discoveries in technology are text messages, WhatsApp, Instagram, emails, twitter and many more. The upsurge of technology provides numerous choices for communicators to choose from (Daft et al, 1986). The continuous process of technological upgrade has impacted employees positively (Boulhna, 2020).

Some of the communication processes make it possible for cues gestures and facial expressions to be noticed by both communicating parties (McNally et al, 2016). Such methods are video calls, zoom meeting, skype meeting, google meeting and others. All the listed methods are digitalized communication methods and it's so far, the most effective but experience challenges when the area network is unstable (Legner et al, 2017). The introduction of technology in communication however has brought about some merits likes making it cheaper and less extraneous to send and receive messages from people. The introduction of a new technology into an organization and its effectiveness depends on the readiness and cognitive levels of employees to adapt (Beer & Mulder, 2020). To change from an old method of doing something is good but not easy. This change in technological terms is called creative destruction or discontinuities as advanced by (Rotherermel, 2000). The better the communication

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method, the less ambiguity and hence effective communication and increased productivity.

It serves as a catalyst for change (Beer & Mulder, 2020). In education for instance, the application of ICT tools helps the teacher to organize and present lessons attractively to learners at any stage of the educational ladder (Ratheeswari, 2018). A new item like zoom and google meet can aid a group of people at different places to learn or discuss issues at the same time in a virtual class.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

This research study sought to understand effective communication and organizational practice in the Wenchi Educational office. The media richness theory served the purpose of the study. Again, the Barnlund Communication Model was also used in the study to guide the analysis process.

2.11.1 Media richness theory

The need for information processing is a necessity in every organization and scholars have researched into how organizations can adapt to this phenomenon. One of such theories is the media richness theory propounded by (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Media Richness Theory plays much emphasis on how media types fit into different communication reasons (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Kahai & Cooper, 2003) explains media richness theory that quality comprehension of decision is dependent on receivers' expertise, the ability to scrutinize and the content rich media yields the needed positive effect in decision making when employee have high relevant related knowledge (Kakai & Cooper, 2003) has suggested that there exist some specialized unique structural qualities and actions that links information expectations and a

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standardized inquiry and theory that supports co-existence of co-workers which must be integrated in organizations.

Media Richness Theory, also known as information Richness Theory is a guideline made to test the ability of a medium to reproduce any information sent through. It was proposed by its proponents to add to the information processing theory which was practically common. The theory is purposely meant to test and check the effectiveness of the various communication mediums like phone calls, emails, and video conferencing. For instance, a phone call cannot reproduce cues and gestures therefore making it less effective compared to video conferencing which accommodates all transmissions the proponents of the theory have argued. Richer communication media are more effective for transmitting or communicating ambiguous issues than less rich mediums.

Daft and Lengel (1986) defines information Richness theory as the ability of information to change meaning over a period. The theory points out that communication mediums offer different opportunities to users who communicate and change meaning. The intensity of the mediums' ability to reproduce what is sent through it is termed media " Richness". The theory scales all the mediums based on their ability to correctly transmit complicated information. Media Richness is noted to influence based on word choices and usage during communication (Shepherd & Martz, 2006). Lee Cheng and Chen (2007) also posit that scholars and researchers prefer rich media to any other forms that will not yield the desired communication results. Robert and Dennis (2005) argued that enhanced motivation noticed by users of rich media has made it generally acceptable in the communication space. The

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theory therefore helps users in making right choices whenever they are communicating (Paavo, 2018).

2.11.1.1. Tenets of the media richness theory

The media richness theory comes with underpinning tenets that can help check for effectiveness of a communication medium. The tenets as argued are;

2.11.1.2 Immediacy of feedback

When feedback is immediate, authentic information is reproduced and both uncertainty and equivocality are reduced (Kahai & Cooper, 2003). A medium rich choice may enhance communication by making comprehension easy (Daft et al, 1986). Digital communication is noted to be more effective with reference to information transmission (Kreps & Neuhauser, 2013).

2.11.1.3 Cues

Cues are observable traits that are easily noticed in the communication and comprehension process (Candolin, 2002). When measured during dialogue and when used interchangeably helps to reduce misinterpretations but aids in promoting peace in every communication process in an organization. Cues that are transformed intentionally or naturally are called specialized signals. Signals can consist of one or multiple cues (Johnson, 1997). Cues are grouped into informative and non-informative. Informative cues offer additional insights during every communication to reduce errors whiles non-informative cues are normal gestures (Olson & Oswen, 1998).

2.11.1.4 Language variety

Language is a communication system or method generally accepted and practiced by a community or country (Dwivedi, 2019). It can be spoken or documented and used by members of a social group to express themselves. Fishman (1972) states that every language variety is noticed through sound differences, vocabularies, grammatical features and meaning.

In linguistics, language variety is called lectures and used to refer to overlapping subcategories of a language, dialect, register, etc (Nordquist, 2020). It is Important to use numerous words, body languages, signs, and symbols if applicable during communication to make the choice of media rich. Some of the media like phone calls cannot accommodate some of the tenets.

2.11.1.5 Personal focus

This refers to what a person prioritizes and works hard to attain, it therefore becomes a desire or driving force for every action of the person who is focused. Focus serves as guides and brings clarity to our situation and is built through socialization. Personalization is vital for the receiver of the information to comprehend easily and hence a rich media is helpful.

The communication process that utilizes the media Richness theory do not need any specialized equipment or gadget to make it more effective and hence less expensive . It has however been criticized that it focuses on the medium only without considering content, context and differences in the individuals engaged in the message transmission process (Kock, 2005; Kahai & Cooper, 2003). To attend to some or all of those identified differences, (Carlson & Zmud, 1999) proposed Channel Expansion

theory which also states that the perception of a person on a rich media depends largely on the frequency of usage and knowledge base of the user on the media.

2.11.1.6 Relevance of the theory

Braun and Clarke (2013) have argued that there is the need to use theoretical concepts to move research from mere descriptive analysis to deep analysis. The literature reviewed on organizational practices reveal how context communication practices is important to organizational effectiveness. For this reason, the media richness theory was adopted to help answer the research questions in the study. The theory is very apt in providing an insight into the effectiveness of the various communication mediums used by the Wenchi Education Directorate. The theory will help the researcher to analyze the medium that addresses a specific communication challenge.

2.11.2 Barnlund's Transactional Communication Model

Models of communication are ideologies used to bring clarity to comprehension of every communication process (Kapur, 2020). The transactional communication model also called the circular communication process is the exchange of messages between an encoder and a decoder, they exchange roles by sending and receiving messages at the same time (Businesstopia, 2018; Mitzen, 2006). There is some negotiation in the communication process that calls for all communicating parties to be satisfied with the process (Grimes & Rock, 2018). The transactional communication model is also known as the feedback model because it caters for both the sender and the receiver to swap roles and are therefore referred to as independent communicators (Bragg et al, 2021). They both exist in isolation and hence every source of information has a receiver, and every message has a source.

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The responses of each person/communicator depend largely on factors such as past experiences, self-esteem, attitudes, backgrounds, and beliefs. These factors have massive influence on the choice of words a communicator chooses in the communication process. Barnlund, a communication scholar who postulated the Barnlund's Model sees communication as creating meaning from within. He was however wary of limitation of theories that says messages move like an arrow from a sender to a receiver, hence, his conceptualization of the transactional model. The Barnlund's Transactional Model postulated in 1970 sees communication among humans as a simultaneous, interdependent and a continuous procedure where the speaker is a listener and the listener a speaker interchangeably in every communication process. The participants hold equal authority in the process and therefore no one has control, both are important and independent.

Barnlund (1970) discovered that the transactional model has several characteristics and one of them is cues. Cues are signals of some happenings and they are grouped into public, private and behavioral cues. Qughtibridge (2018) relates public cues as environmental. Private cues are from persons and hence verbal and non-verbal. The behavioral cues are non-verbal, people therefore can initiate an act and later control themselves to suppress it. The Barnlund's Transactional model is generally known to be the most appropriate model of communication. This theory has a merit of being quick in responses, it allows noise to be laid off completely, but on the contrary, it is complicated and demands both communicating parties understand all messages in the dialogue. Kastberg (2020) argued that the Barnlund's transactional model sees communicators as co-constructors of messages but do not consider the rational aspect of communication. There is the need for both Communicators to share experiences before mutual understanding can take place.

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2.11.2.1 Relevance of the model to the study

This study looked at effective communication and organizational practice; a case study of the Wenchi Educational directorate. The transactional communication model is the ideal in the context of effective communication because it caters for both participants by making all of them responsible or authoritative for the purpose of the communication to be achieved (Garmelt et al, 2008). It gives equal opportunities to all participants in the communication process for deeper understanding and hence efficacy. The transactional model therefore would help me analyze how effective communication is practiced in the Wenchi Educational Office. The model would provide the basis for measuring the place of both management and subordinates in the communication transactional process at the directorate.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research approach and the research design selected for the study. It also discusses sampling strategy, the sample size, the data collection methods, and data collection processes. The chapter concludes on ethical considerations and trustworthiness of the study.

3.1 Research Approach

This study adopted the qualitative research approach to understand the phenomenon under study. Creswell (2013) explained that qualitative research as an approach for investigating and interpreting the subjective meanings individuals or groups attribute to a human or social phenomenon. Creswell (2014) further notes that qualitative research primarily involves emerging questions and procedures. According to (Tracy, 2019), data for qualitative research are typically collected from participants in their natural setting. In addition, the qualitative research approach also enables the researcher to analyze data inductively from particular to general themes and help researchers to make the interpretation of the data collected (Creswell, 2014). Kvale (1996) argues that qualitative research in its original form does not produce "objective" data to be quantified since it does not aim to make generalization, but meaningful relationship to be interpreted. This study was conducted in a natural setting that explored personal experiences and reflections; a qualitative research approach was adopted to investigate the effective communication practices of the Wenchi Education Directorate from the views of the participants who oversee the management of communication at the Directorate.

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Furthermore, the research approach was adopted because of its exploratory characteristics and its ability to produce in-depth data to make inferences about the directorate's communication practices (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Qualitative approach fits into this context because the study aims at interpreting and making meaning of the participants' perspectives and experiences expressed in the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2013)

3.2 Research Design

Yin (2009) establishes that research design is the rationale that links the data to be collected and the conclusion to be drawn to the research questions of the study. Thus, the research design is therefore significant as it serves as a guide to the researcher. Creswell (2014) adds that the researcher's selection of a research design is mostly dependent on the nature of the phenomenon under study. The research design available to qualitative researchers are case study, grounded theory, ethnography, and phenomenology (Creswell & Crewell, 2018). Studying the communication practices of an institutional setting in Ghana is a natural phenomenon that can be researched using case study, hence, the researcher adopted the case study design for this study.

Again, (Yin, 2009) defines a case study as an accurate research investigative tool that probes an ongoing phenomenon with a real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear (Yin 2009; Creswell, 2013). In this regard, the case study design was adopted for this study because the research questions in this study are formulated to answer questions of how the Wenchi Education Directorate conceptualize effective communication and why the directorate adopt and implement communication strategies. Yin (2018) asserts that case studies are adopted when the researcher is keen to answer the questions of "

how" and "when" the researcher wants to probe into related cases because of the relevance of the cases to the study. On this basis, the case study approach is justified as one of the appropriate research designs that can be used to understand the phenomenon.

3.2.1 The single case study

Creswell (2013) argues that choosing a particular type of case study depends on the size of the bounded case and the aims behind the case analysis understudy. When performing case study research, the researcher can deploy a single case study approach or a multiple case analysis depending on the nature of the case understudy (Yin, 2018). The context of the study therefore becomes imperative in deciding which type of case study may fit for a purpose (Yin, 2018). According to Stake (1995), the researcher in a single case study pays an attention to an issue and select one bounded case to expand the issue in depth, rich and thick description. Single case study when used can offer an extra and better understanding of a phenomenon in context and according to (Dyer & Wilkins, 1991), it can also question existing theory and improve a concept. A phenomenon can be described in detail and thick using a single case study (Siggelkow, 2007). Yin (2014) adds that one case is enough to generate valid data in a single case study.

I adopted the single case study approach for this study because I sought to understand the communication framework of the Wenchi Educational Office in details, rich and in-depth. Again, I consider the single case approach appropriate because it can generate enough data for this kind of study. This position is favored by (Yin, 2014) who notes that one case is enough to generate a valid data for a study.

3.3 Sampling

The sampling technique adopted for this study is the purposive sampling technique. The researcher settled on purposive sampling because, as the name suggests it involves intentionally or deliberately choosing participants based on a variety of criteria that may include participant's knowledge of the research issue or capacity and willingness to participate in the research (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Purposeful sampling is also based on the notion that the researcher wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which most can be learned (Merriam & Tisdell 2015). In line with this, (Patton, 2002) argues that "the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting "information rich" cases to be studied in-depth. Information rich cases are those who have detailed information on the purpose of the enquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling" (Tracy, 2019; Lindolf & Taylor, 2017) assert further that the right selection of a sampling strategy helps the researcher in determining what to look for in the study and provides justification for what to study. This aids the researcher to strategically contact informants with information on the phenomena with a minimum of wasted effort (Lindolf & Taylor, 2017). For this study, participants, and documents with detailed information on effective communication practices of the Wenchi education directorate were purposefully chosen because they had the necessary responses and information on the directorate's communications. Again, the use of purposive sampling is also in tandem with (Merriam & Tisdell 2015) and (Patton, 2002) assertion that purposive sampling enables the researcher to identify participants who can be most learned from in the study. The chosen participants and documents helped the researcher to gather rich and detailed information on effective communication practices of the Wenchi ducational Directorate.

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3.4 Sample Size

(Creswell, 2013) averred that usually a qualitative sampling is made of small sampling units studied in-depth. Daymon and Halloway (2011) opined that the appropriate number of participants chosen for qualitative research depends mainly on the type of research question, the type of approach used in the study, material, and time resources available to the researcher as well as the number of research questions involved in the study. According to (Berg, 2004) it is better to select participants who have experienced the phenomenon being studied. Per (Berg, 2004) assertion, participants for this study were chosen based on their experiences and knowledge of the issue under investigation. For convenience and easy data analysis purposes, (Creswell, 2013) has advised that the sample size for qualitative research should be manageable since qualitative data take time to code. Because of this, I purposively selected four persons working at different levels at the Wenchi Education Directorate for interviews. Subsequently, I selected four other personnel within the structures of the education unit for a focus group discussion. The decision to select four persons for the focus group discussion is in line with (Braun & Clarke, 2013) assertion that focus group discussion participant can range from three to eight. In fact, the authors cited works they have settled on four participants which worked better for them. On this basis, four people who have experienced communication within the Wenchi Education Directorate were selected for the focus group discussions. This was followed by six sampled documents out of a list of documents made available to me for analysis. The documents purposively sampled contained information delivery content about the Education Directorate.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods look at the various approaches adopted to collect data for the study. The study employed three data collection approaches which are discussed in details.

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviews are professional conversation with the objective of engaging a participant to talk about their experiences, personal information, and perspectives and to capture their language and concepts in relation to a topic or subject that you have determined to understudy (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell, 2015; Robin & Robin, 2012). Interviews are usually a face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the respondent that can be useful for exploring understanding and perceptions (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Lewis & Nicholls, 2013; Sreejesh, 2014). According to Braun and Clarke (2013), interviews have different methods that can be adopted. They argue that interviews can be standardized or structured which refers to the interview type where questions and their response categories are arranged in advance by the researcher. The second type is the unstructured or flexible interview where the researcher has a list of topics or subjects to discuss with participants, but the interview is primarily led by participants. The last of the three types is the semi- structured interview which has a list of questions but there is a possibility for participants to raise issues that the researcher has not predicted and may be important to the study (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989). Semi structured interview, primarily, aims to gain deeper understanding about the feelings and beliefs of participants or informants. It provides the chance for shared discovery, understanding reflections and explanations through an organic path, adoptive and mostly very engaging (Gill et al, 2008: Tracy, 2019).

For this study I adopted the interview as one of my data collection methods because I wanted to have a face-to-face conversation with the participants. According to (Braun & Clarke, 2013), this is the ideal way of soliciting informants' perspectives on the subject underway. Again, the semi-structured or qualitative interview was used in this study for two reasons because participant's perspectives on the topic were solicited in a guided way within the study context. Secondly, qualitative interview was adopted so I can bring my personal skills, research judgement and flexibility to source participant's feelings, beliefs, and perspectives for the study, (Braun & Clarke, 2013) have argued about qualitative research. In line with the above reasons and for convenient and data management purposes, I selected four participants from the Wenchi Education Directorate who are well versed in issues of organizational communication for the interview.

I wrote to notify the Wenchi Education Office of my intentions to conduct an interview with the deputy director in charge of human resource, the auditor, a head teacher, and a teacher within the directorate. In a week's time, I received a phone call from the registrar acknowledging receipt of my letter. He further demanded that I personally contact the selected participants and schedule a time that will be convenient to their work schedules to have the interviews. I then met each participant separately to discuss the time, date, and venue convenient with their schedules. Eventually, a day, time and venue were reached with each of the interview respondents. On the scheduled day of each of the interviews, the participants were briefed about the general idea behind the interview. The motive was clearly spelt out for them and each of the participant's consent were sought to have the interview conversation recorded electronically. As part of the requirement for ethical consideration, their consents were sought to conceal their identity in the data reporting

and analysis. All the four interviews were conducted in the English language and in a friendly conducive venue. Before the questioning started, I had prepared questions prior to the interview which guided me in my line of questioning in order not to lose focus. However, based on the responses that the participant gave, some probing questions were asked to enhance the kind of responses being sought. Occasionally, I jotted some key information that popped up in the interview and later referred to them and sought more clarity from the participants. On the average, each interview lasted for about 20 minutes and each of the participants thanked for the cooperation.

3.5.2 Focus group discussion

Lindolf & Taylor (2017) state that even though focus group discussion is a form of an interview, it has evolved over a time to be a standalone data collection method. Creswell (2014) avows that "focus group discussion is a process of collecting data through interview with a group of people" (p.218). The group of people in focus group discussion usually consist of people generally brought together by the researcher to explore their ideas, attitudes, and feelings about a topic under study (Desombe, 2017). Creswell (2012) states further that focus groups are advantageous when the interaction among interviewees will most likely yield the best information and when interviewees are similar and cooperative with each other. Krueger and Casey (2000) explain that within a group setting, participants are influenced by the other participants just as they are in real life, thereby, stimulating the ideas and experiences of participants. Considering the context of this study that involves various publics connected to the operations of the Wenchi education directorate, the focus group discussion was adopted for this study due to its qualities as expressed above of soliciting different opinions of an issue spontaneously from participants in well organized and coordinated form. Referring to Braun and Clarke's, (2013) assertion

that four participants in a focus group discussion works better, I selected four participants for the study.

The focus group discussion began with a formal written indication to the office indicating my intention to conduct a focus group discussion at the directorate. After getting a positive response from the registry of the directorate, the researcher was assisted by the office to identify persons who worth the knowledge of the research objectives to be recruited for the focus group discussions. A meeting was scheduled two weeks after the letter was delivered. On the said day, the researcher travelled from Sunyani to Wenchi to meet the participants at the Wenchi Education Directorate. On my arrival, I was met by the registrar who organized for me a convenient place within the office to have the focus group discussions. In line with (Braun & Clarke's, 2013) assertion that four members of focus group discussion works better, I recruited four discussions began, I explained the rules and the parameters of the discussions to all the members and encouraged them to be forthcoming with the most important views needed for the study. After exchanging pleasantries with the members, I introduced myself to the participants and gave them a brief narrative about what the whole study was about. I also made it known to participants that they have the right to decline questions they are not comfortable with or stop the discussion. I appealed to them to feel free to share their views. Again, I asked for their permission to record the discussion with my mobile phone. Once the interview started, I used my semi structured interview guide as a moderation instrument for the discussion, to prevent participants from straying away from the boundaries of the discussion. The discussion was one session and lasted for fifty-six minutes. I also wrote notes in my jotter as the discussion and interview were ongoing. Overall, the focus group discussion was conducted in a cordial and relaxing setting.

All the four participants had the opportunity to express themselves fully. The focus group discussion allowed me to collect rich and detailed data from participants on their experience on effective communication practices of the Wenchi Education Directorate within a short period of time (Daymon & Halloway, 2011). It also gave the researcher the opportunity to have an in-depth knowledge and insight into the experiences and ideas of the participants on effective communication practices of the Wenchi Education Directorate.

3.5.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis is one of the data collection approaches used to gather data from reliable documents which the researcher considered. Daymon and Halloway (2011) state that document analysis is particularly applicable to qualitative case studies which specifically aims at producing a detailed description of a case based on critical inspection of documents that can provide a rich data for analysis. After the focus group discussion, the records department of the office gave the researcher documents that contained correspondence giving directives and passing information to and from the office for the researcher's review as a source of qualitative data. These documents were unclassified documents that have been recorded over a period of five years. In all, six documents were used in this study because they contained significant communication content that reflects the research objectives. Precisely, the researcher was interested in finding documents that proved effective communication delivery by paying attention to feedback.

After the focus group discussion, the researcher requested and received six documents that contained various modes of communication exchanges available for public consumption. The documents were used in this study because they were current and

contained comprehensive effective communication records of the Directorate which was necessary for the data. The documents contained texts, visuals of effective communication products originated or received by the office from the periods from January 2018 to March 2021. These documents brought together in various ways information which may not have been provided during the discussion session or may contain information that placed more emphasis on the information collected during the interview session. Thus, (Daymon & Halloway, 2011) assert that documents can be rich based on comprehensive primary or supplementary data than interviews conducted over a short time. The documents received were well inspected for the most significant ways that provided the needed information for interpretation.

3.6 Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis was used to analyze the information gathered from the interview sessions and the focus group discussion. However, content analysis was adopted for the documents. Braun and Clarke (2013) explained that thematic analysis is one of the several methods of analyzing data which involves the identification, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) across a data set. Creswell (2013) argues that another part of the thematic analysis process involves the researcher interpreting and commenting on the assembled data. Based on these reviewed assertions. This study also employed the thematic analysis approach to interpret the findings using concepts and theories to draw meanings from responses from participants. Direct quotations were also used to support the interpretations and discussions.

The first step of the analysis involved the data transcription of the recorded data. I did this by continuously playing the tape back and forth to get the exact responses given by the participants during the focus group discussion and the interview session. I

thoroughly read through the interview transcript looking out for trends and patterns that run through the data collected and to ensure that in-depth and direct quotations were given to support the detailed descriptions when it came to discussion on specific research questions. Afterward, all responses and sessions of the documents which were considered relevant were either merged with others or discarded. This enabled me to clean the data and make it wholesome for further analysis.

The second stage involved the coding of all relevant materials. Codes were also assigned to participants to ensure confidentiality and privacy. According to (Boeije, 2010), coding involves two steps: segmenting and reassembling the data. Boeije (2010) also notes that both activities of segmenting and reassembling the data are done from the angle of the research questions and research purpose. Data coding creates categories which allow for further interpretations and generates a theoretical understanding of the subject under study. After transcription, an analysis was performed by identifying emerging themes relevant to the research. These themes were interpreted, explained, and consequently related to the theories reviewed in the literature regarding effective communication.

In bracketing my biases, I would like to state emphatically that I have never worked in the directorate. Therefore, I do not have any preconceptions about effective communication in the Wenchi Education Directorate or any other related Directorate which could have affected the way I analyzed and interpreted the data. I am just a student researcher whose desire is to investigate effective communication and organizational practice in the education sector and how effective communication can help sustain the education sector.

3.7 Ethical Issues

Halai (2006) notes that sound research is one which is morally and ethically focused on ensuring that participants of the study are not harmed because of the study. In terms of seeking consent and giving information, I informed the informants about the purpose of the research and what will be expected of them. The participants were then given the opportunity to either accept to be interviewed or decline. All participants agreed to take part in the focus group discussion. Participant's permission was sought before I used my phone to record whatever transpired verbally during the discussion. In terms of authenticity, (MacDonald, 2008) as cited in (Daymon & Halloway, 2011) avers that "if a document is genuine, complete, reliable and of unquestioned authorship, then it can be said to be authentic" (p.281). Daymon and Halloway (2011) posit this when a document is free from error or distortion. The authors suggest that to be assured of the credibility of a document, the researcher needs to ask questions such as who produced the document, why, when, for whom and in what context.

The documents used for this study were given to the researcher by management of the Directorate and contained communication contents of the office hence, the researcher believes the data from the documents are complete, genuine, and reliable.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the procedures and processes that were employed to collect data for the research. The research adopted qualitative approach anchored on a case study design to collate detailed information on effective communication practices at the Wenchi Education Directorate. Multiple data collection methods including focus group discussion and document analysis were used to collect data. Also, rationalization was given for each choice of method adopted.

Additionally, the chapter discusses the research approach, research design, sampling technique and size, data collection processes, the method of data analysis and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings on the study on effective communication and organizational practice in the Wenchi Educational Directorate with a comprehensive analysis and discussions. To aid in the knowing of how communication flows in the Wenchi Educational Directorate, a contextual description is presented for easy conceptualization of the communication framework at the office. The details of findings from the data collated through interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis in the Wenchi Education Directorate are also discussed thoroughly. For easy analysis and interpretation purposes, the data collected from the field were grouped into emerging codes (Creswell, 2013). The codes were later suppressed into some inductively generated themes that provided the basis for the unit of analysis in the study. The themes identified were thoroughly described and analyzed critically using the media richness theory and the Barnlund's transactional communication model and effective communication concepts as discussed in the literature review session in chapter two. The following research questions guided the study.

RQ1 What communication structure exist at the Wenchi Education Directorate?

This research question addresses the various structures put in place at the Directorate to regulate communication engagement. The following themes discuss the research questions, Formalized communication structure, Leeway communication and Controlled Communication.

4.1 Formalized Communication Structure

For the purposes of this study, the theme formalized communication structure will be understood to mean any form of communication that involves the flow of official notices through properly structured channels and routes which is controlled and needs deliberate effort to be properly operationalized. The indicators of this theme are diagonal communication, downward communication, upward communication, communication channels, notices, information, messages, informal, grapevine communication etcetera.

The study uncovered that; the Municipal Director of Education at the Wenchi Education Directorate is the highest officer at the directorate. She is being assisted by four deputy directors who are also called front liners and together, they work towards the organizational success and the well-being of employees. One other important setup that was uncovered in the office during the study is the formal and structural procedures that prepares the employees to work towards the goals and vison of the unit. For instance, the office is run in various units and departments to ensure that tasks are well coordinated and delivered to the very best that meet the directorates goals. This observation is in line with (Grunig, 2002) position on organizational practice where he argued that staff in an organization can collectively work towards achieving a common organizational goals and objectives if there are systems and structures developed to ensure communication is timely and effective. Again, the office places importance to employee and employer relations to ensure good productivity that feeds into the overall goal of the unit. (Ruch and Welch, 2012) have argued for this position when they found employee relations as an integral part of internal communication for the prospect of the organization.

Additionally, it was found that the organogram of the directorate is formalized to ensure swift and procedural communication delivery. For instance, aside the four deputy directors who are; the head of supervision and inspectorate, the head of administration and finance, the head of Education Management Information System (EMIS) and the human resource manager, there are other departments that are empowered to perform specific functions. All the deputies have specific functions they play to assist the director, especially when it comes to handling organizational correspondences. The researcher noticed during the data collection that, the deputy director in charge of administration and finance alongside his or her unit handles correspondences that involves issues of employee finances, salary administration and other related administrative issues. The deputy director in charge of inspectorate is mostly the one who coordinates the actual job delivery of the employees (teachers), he exchanges correspondence of teachers through the School Improvement Support Officers (Sisos) and head of schools. The deputy director in charge of human resource also receives and forward same correspondence that involve employee's promotions, recruitments, transfers etcetera. The EMIS head manages database of the directorate. These arrangements in terms of productivity outcome also promotes effective communication where communication delivery is segmented to ensure quick response and maximum attention. This arrangement dovetails into Coopers' (2003) observation that when there exist some specialized structural qualities and actions that links information expectations and a standardized inquiry and theory that supports co-existence of co-workers which is integrated in organizations, it becomes an organization of effective communication with a possible high productivity outcome.

Furthermore, the formal communication observed at the unit is purposive to ensure that authority is exhibited, and it also ensures a better information flow between

superiors and their corresponding subordinates. For instance, a participant in an interview, interview participant 3 revealed that "*any action a teacher takes in school must be in consultation with this head teacher*" and to add to this, from some official correspondence both letters and digital communication that was given out to be reviewed and analyzed for the purposes of this study also revealed a periodic management meeting with employees to afford the latter, an opportunity to discuss with management some information gaps that are likely to hinder the productivity in the office. Excerpts of the correspondence reads**;**

> "*ATTENTION PLEASE I have been mandated by the Municipal Director of Education to invite all Basic school heads and teachers in the Municipality to an important meeting. Date Wed March 2nd ,2019 Time 9:00am Venue: The Church of Pentecost English Assembly opposite Bethel Methodist Church (Magazine). Municipal Education PRO, Wenchi"*.

Such meetings are platforms offered to all employees at different levels to meet with the highest officials at the unit to deliberate and send their communication directly to management without any barrier or bureaucratic process. These usually are discursive platforms and such meetings rekindle the goals of the unit and reorient both management and other employees to the unit's organizational culture designed to suit its operations. Perhaps, such an organizational environment is what Baker (2002) described as the need for organizations to have their own small world with distinct atmosphere, culture, and climate to be focus driven organization.

A focus group participant designated as FDG participant 1 who also doubled as a teacher expressed that, "*well sometimes the office people come to meet us, and we talk about issues that concern us as teachers for them to address them for us*". Another participant designated FDG participant 3 also explained that "sometimes *when they come, they reintroduce us to new ways the office wants stakeholders to operate*".

These observations from these participants are rightly in pair with the assertion of (Lavinthal, 2018) who argues that communication serves as a catalyst for change in every organization. Again, it also ties in with (Stihl, 1995) who asserted that communication in organization is a supportive approach where employees socialize, create, and comprehend feedback through unidirectional or dual directional channels for attaining the desired goals. The formal procedural structure at the Wenchi office has contributed to communication delivery at the unit by streamlining how communication ought to be carried out.

4.2 Leeway Communication

For an in-depth comprehension of this study, the theme leeway communication is used to describe a kind of communication structure which is integrated into the directorate's communication framework that allows for free flow of communication to bypass the formalized communication structures when there is the need for that to happen. Categories of codes that expressed this theme includes organogram, communication channel, unidirectional, bi-directional, horizontal communication, vertical communication, cover letter, invitation, communication mix and many others.

The study revealed that, the transmission of notices and information to and fro from stakeholders at the Wenchi Educational Directorate could have a leeway and somewhat enjoys free flow of communication from different directions. Usually, communication flows from a multiple direction following a certain design path to ensure authenticity. However, aside the official process of communication, stakeholders could be allowed to sidestep the normal laid down processes that communication in the office must travel. For instance, the data revealed that ordinarily, any letter meant to be delivered to the office by any teacher must first be

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routed through the head teacher who must attach a cover letter to it before it gets to the office.

The office has a window that allowed for procedure skipping, thus, giving way to leeway communication when communication is deemed personal and needed a certain level of privacy or confidentiality. In such a situation, any person is allowed to reach any person directly without having to route his or her communication through any intermediate superior. The office accepts such communication as intended for a specific need which must be accorded such a leeway status.

An Interviewer explained that.

> *"Personal issues such as complains of mistreatment, harassment and danger can be written to the director if the persons in the chain of communication are not trusted or are personally involved."*

Another participant, designated as interview participant 4 also argued that *"the only time we get to complain to the boss (director) directly is when the concerns are too personal"* from these two perspectives of the participants, it is obvious that the directorate accept diagonal communication approach which recognizes a bypass of communication structures to reach any level in the directorate's organogram. This practice at the Wenchi Education Directorate ties in with (Kelleher, 2001) who posited that choices for a particular communication is needed in different role performance, especially when communication has become timely during the time of crisis. Aside these, it was again noted that there exists another form of communication used at the directorate that comes into the fold of leeway communication.

In adding to this, Participant 3 said that there are a few recorded instances where some of the employees failed to follow due course for presenting communication at the

office, however, their communication was acknowledged. An explanation was given to these cases that in a desperate instance where the office finds it appropriate to exchange communication with stakeholders at all levels, they often allow that per the office's own discretion of the need for such communication. FGD Participant 3 averred,

> "*in times of emergencies, sometimes a teacher may be permitted to communicate with the director directly but the office may have to determine if there is the need for such communication"*.

These observations sink with (Ritter, 2003) argument on vital roles of communication in the attainment of organizational goals when the duty of communication must be flexible to allow for free flow of communication. It is further supported by (Ristino, 2008) assertion that communication mix is essentially a representation of all the voices of communication an organization adopts to send and receive notices to and from its internal and external publics for a swift organizational operation.

Additionally, for effective communication, every organization must have an organized communication structure that has a documented communication policy which stipulates all instructions concerning every form of communication that should prevail in the organization. The Ghana education service, however, does not have any communication providing clear communication direction at their various offices. The Wenchi Education Office, however, takes a structural communication implementation from its office organogram, thus, communication flow is typically based on the directorate's organogram.

The lack of communication policy crafted by the Wenchi Education Office is a contributing factor that causes the acceptance of leeway communication at the office. FGD Participant 3 averred that,

> *we don't have a laid down communication way that parents and other stakeholders are supposed to deal with the directorate. They often come around and make a request as to whom they want to see which in my view is not right.*

Again, another participant in the focus group discussion lamented that, sometimes you would be in the classroom and a parent will just walk into the class to engage the ward. These expressions are traces of leeway communication that is somehow practiced in the office even though it not regulated by any office communication policy but has generally become a conventional way of communication the directorate recognizes. Deresky (2011) was critical about this communication approach when he averred that the culture of a person has an impact on how that person perceives meaning and this can generally interfere with organizational communication goal and successes. Ghana is a high communication context society and a low uncertainty avoidance society and that by nature means there are lax characteristics of application in the Ghanaian society (Hall, 1978; Hofstede, 1984). These cultural characteristics explains why leeway communication is permitted at the Wenchi Education unit. For instance, the FG participant 3 bemoaned that;

> *"We are limited as to how we control some these ways people communicate to the office. if you want to be strict with the rules sometimes people see you being inhumane because the culture of Ghana feels like rules must always be bent".*

This expression is also in line with the Barnlund's Transactional communication model which sees responses of each person /communicator to depend largely on factors such as past experiences, self-esteem, attitudes, backgrounds, and beliefs.

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4.3 Controlled Communication

Controlled communication in the study is operationalized to describe a communication network where there is a personality in charge of managing all information in an organizational setup. This person is responsible for receiving all incoming notices and sends all outgoing information. All employees must therefore consult the PRO if the need be whether to reach internal or external publics of the organization. The PRO is, therefore, the pivot through which communication revolves around in the organization. In the data coding, the indicating codes that defined this theme are Public Relations Officer (PRO), communication officer, public affairs, etcetera.

The study showed that in the Wenchi Educational Directorate, there is an employee in charge of managing all information is known as the Public Relations Officer (PRO) who connects with many different levels involving persons or groups. The PRO is directly in charge of communication in the unit and works under the Administration and Finance Director. Among his communication roles are that; the PRO acts as the communication liaison officer for the unit and is expected to build a strong relationship between the publics and the organization. The PRO is among other things a facilitator of communication and removes barriers of communication as (Kelleher, 2018) argues of the communication facilitator. The PRO is supposed to coordinate all kinds of communication that goes out of the unit and build relationships with other stakeholders. The position of the Public Relations Officer in the office is in perfect match of the description given by (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 2005) and (Paavo, 2018) who reinforce the simplistic information sharing notion of communication but does include a whole business of culture. Interview participant 1 added that,

> *"We have... and I will say somebody who is in charge of managing information so far as the directorate is concerned and he is the mouthpiece of the organization, so any information that needs to reach employees and stakeholders must first of all be channeled through him".*

Even though the public relations officer is originally in charge of communication, he is not the only person who can begin communication in the directorate. From the study, every member working in the directorate can initiate a communication process that is meant for internal operations except that such communication needs to go through the procedure established in the office. The data further reported that, this process adopted in the office practice encourages information exchange is supported by (Daniels et al, 1997) position that information transmission can begin with any member of the organization. In congruent with the assertion above, FGD participant 1 averred that,

> *"the director's doors are always open to any person who has any concern about the work to discuss or share. We are also allowed to engage in any form of communication that bothers on our interest or wellbeing in the office".*

The most important thing here is that due course must be followed, or the communication must be treated as some of the conventional means of sending information or communicating to the office. Thus, a teacher can initiate any form of communication except that it must not bypass his/ her head teacher through the school Improvement Support Officer (Siso). This can only be possible if the head authorizes that teacher to contact the Siso directly. In line with this notion, the Barnlund's Transactional Communication Model provides the basis for measuring the place of both management and subordinates in the communication transactional process in every organizational setup.

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The study also revealed that there exist some WhatsApp and other social media platforms for some sections of employees of the directorate where the PRO is a participant, and mostly, communicates notices from the director through these mediums. Three of such platforms are the Wenchi Municipal Gnat WhatsApp Platform, Wenchi Municipal COHBS Telegraph and Wenchi Municipal Basic Heads. The researcher noticed that the first group consists of only GNAT members and the PRO is a member, the second is made of head teachers in the directorate whilst the third is made of Head teachers and other officers in the directorate including the director and other unnamed platforms that are used to discuss issues and send notices across to both management and subordinates. Although the director is a member, the PRO take charge of the group and answers all questions that needs better or further clarification as far as the directorate is concerned. However, he must do this in consultation with the Director who is the highest authority in the Directorate and therefore normally he notifies the director accordingly as the sender of the information. Apart from being the mouthpiece of the Directorate, the PRO also serves on the board of advisers to the director and moves with the director to provide communication services.

Again, the directorate engages in some mini communication campaigns that are aimed at building relationship between the directorate and their stakeholders. Some of these communication campaigns are often carried out by some units in the office to change behaviors. The prime essence is to use communication to control behaviors. Some of these campaigns target the students. A focus group participant in the study designated as FDG participant 4 explained that *"the office uses communication to control behaviors, in fact communication through campaigns have been the most effective ways to educate students on issues like early marriages, drugs, etcetera"*. Another

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participant in the interview sessions averred that, *"we need to control attitudes in the various operational environments of the directorates, and I must say that everything is coordinated from the office from any kind of campaign we embark on. Th*ese propositions by these study participants dovetails into old principles of communication that advocates for using communication as a tool to change human behaviors. It was also observed that the office did not record issues that could be classified as crisis, however, serious matters that deemed close to crisis are handled from a central communication network.

RQ2 What are the communication strategies used at the Wenchi Education Directorate and how effective are they?

On this research question, I adopted Kibe's (2014) definition of communication strategy which she gave as a part of business plan detailing how to communicate with various people. The following themes were generated for this research question for discussion, Digital Communication Strategy, Publication Strategy and Contact Communication.

4.4 Digital Communication Strategy

For the purposes of this study, the theme digital communication strategy is used to refer to any communication that involves the use of gadgets like mobile phone, computer, fax machine and others to fast truck communication. Such medium of communication sometimes requires data and network to be successfully functional to its users. The indicating codes that defined the theme during the study were text messages, WhatsApp messages, phone calls, emails, telegram, Twitter, Instagram, snap chat, zoom, google meet, video conferencing, conference calls etcetera.

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During the data collection process at the Wenchi Education office, it was realized that the office has recently adopted many forms of electronic communication methods to reach its employees, stakeholders, and other partners. It was observed that the office finds it convenient to use these electronic means of communication to reach its receivers in a timely and more affordable way. Digital communication was a tool for mobilization of employees for meetings and other gatherings. The use of digital communication for effective mobilization is supported by Drenth et al (1998) assertion that communication effectiveness in organization is more practical when there are responsive and timely means of mobilizing employees for organizational goals. Again, the use of digital communication for mobilizing employees for job outcomes also dovetails into what Tomkins (1993) argues that effective means of communicating is the key force that keeps organization functional and in existence.

During the data gathering process, it was discovered that hitherto the use of digital communication approaches, the office used to communicate with teachers or facilitators and other stakeholders through other conventional means which could sometimes take up to weeks before it gets to the intended person. In practical terms, by the time the receiver receives the communication the date requiring an action or response to the letter may have elapsed. Communicating to the many members through these conventional means were noted to be expensive because of cost of transporting from one party to the other. The inception of digital communication arguably provided solutions to the problems of delays that often provided a means of prompt feedback. This observation is rightly in line with authors like Grunig (1992) and Baker (2002) who indicate that external communication is not rigid and should be innovated to suit organizational situation and the context the communication is taking place.

During the interview session, participants indicated that digital communication has transformed communication at the directorate, and it is more efficient when compared to other conventional communication.

An interview participant designated as interview participant 2 said, "*before digital communication was adopted by the office, most letters sent had dates that had passed before the teacher gets the notice but now some communications are done electronically which make things better*". This comments by the interview participant dovetails into (Gerardine et al, 1999) assertion that communication has now taken a new and a more diverse form to include technological devices and capabilities to achieve effective communication in organizational practices. The improved communication gadgets have made communication much swifter and easier at the directorate in terms of communicating with their stakeholders and partners.

Furthermore, FGD participant 4 also averred that, "*in this office we have every digital communication form in practice because together, they aid in achieving the objectives of the organization*". This assertion ties in with the Media Richness theory where (Kreps & Neuhauser, 2013) argue that digital communication is noted to be more effective with reference to information transmission. Again, this argument is in line with (Uka, 2014) who investigated communication and its influence on the effectiveness of the organization and indicated that communication serves as a basic ingredient without which an organization can hardly survive.

Uka (2014) position is again supported by interview participant 1 who explained that "*all what l am saying is that with the introduction of these technology, now communication is somehow easy as compared to the olden days*". Furthermore, FGD participant 2 also explained how digital communication has improved when she said,

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"Methods of communication currently in use in the directorate have been tried and tested over a time period and it has proven to be the best and less expensive, however, when a more advanced new medium of communication is discovered and is more effective, it will equally be adopted without hesitation."

The use of digital communication has been proven by these discourses to be the most effective strategy to organizational communication success. This position is in tandem with the Media Richness theory where (Daft et al, 1986) argue that a rich medium choice may enhance communication by making comprehension easy for communicators.

4.5 Publication Strategy

The theme publication strategy is operationalized to mean any means of communication that is disseminated through printed materials. Examples of codes that formed the conceptualization of this theme included letters, notices, flyers, etc. At the Wenchi Educational Directorate, it was discovered during the data gathering process that the office uses different forms of publication as a means of communication to engage its stakeholders and publics. The office largely relied on letters and circulars to inform teachers and other key stakeholders like parents on issues of importance to the directorate. The chain of communication at the office is well structured to ensure that any form of publication meant for dissemination is sanctioned by the right authorities who must check for its appropriateness before it is cleared. The study further uncovered that the Municipal Director of Education at the Wenchi Education Directorate is the highest officer at the directorate who must sanction all types of communication in the office which thus include all publications before they are distributed to the intended recipients. This arrangement is a formal strategic plan in the office communication framework that ensures that the head of the directorate is answerable for any communication issue and to also ensure that any content sent out

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meet the communication goal of the directorate. Also, such an arrangement sinks with observation that when there exist some specialized structural qualities in an organization, communication delivery is always effective and functional.

A study participant at the directorate explained as to how publication form an integral part of the directorates communication strategy for achieving an organizational goal when he said,

> *"The main form communication in this unit is normally done through formal letters and sometimes statements that are issued to communicate something important to our teachers and other stakeholders."*
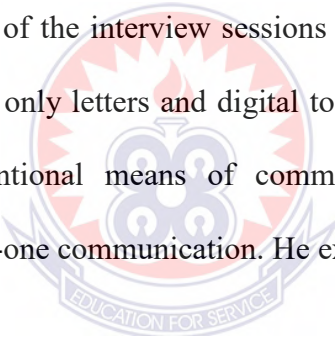
This extract from an interview participant in the study designated as participant 3 established the point of relevance of publications in the Directorate's Communication Strategy. Again, it dovetails into the Media rich Richness theory by (Daft & Lengel, 1986) which argues that a sender of communication is more likely to consider the most effective and familiar means of communication to a recipient. A review of some of the directorate's publications sent as means of communication to different stakeholders had reference numbers and clearly communicated the intent of the message.

For instance, portions of a reviewed letter read *".... this letter is to inform you about the directorate's decision to visit the various circuits and interact with employees"*. Another circular that was given for review also read *"the municipal director would be vising all the schools in the Buoku community"*. These expressions in the above excerpts in the *directorate's* publication is rightly in pair with (Ruch & Welch, 2012) assertion (that employees are fulfilled if they are informed by various means of communication including written communication). Again, it dovetails into (Dwivedi, 2019) submission that notices can be spoken or documented and generally accepted

by a community or a country. Also, Robert and Dennis (2005) agree that employees are happy when rich media is employed and used in the organizational set-up.

4.6 Contact Communication

This theme is operationalized to represent any communication strategy deployed by the directorate that involves a formal one-on-one engagement between the directorate and its stakeholders. For this study, the directorate communication framework represents all levels of its operations including classroom communication. Categories of themes that expressed this code included face-to-face communication, one-on-one, communication and many others. The office relied on different types of contact communication to engage or communicate with all levels of its stakeholders, and this was disclosed during one of the interview sessions with participant 3 who explained that the office cannot use only letters and digital tools for communication but has to also rely on the conventional means of communication which is the contact communication or one-on-one communication. He explained,

> *"it is the chunk of our communication in this office, we sometimes invite teachers and talk to them directly or indirectly through their head teachers instead of writing to them"*

Again, I realized that contact communication was commonly practiced getting task through in the office. It did not take any formalized form, but it was highly accepted as a means of daily communication in the office that was recognized in the directorate's communication framework.

One focus group discussion participant mentioned to me how contact communication plays a very significant part in the directorate's communication when she opined that, *"ordinarily, our communication in this space is more effective when it is verbally used to carry out a lot of tasks".*

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Another focus group discussion participant designated as participant 1 stated that, *"we communicate verbally to achieve our working goals in this office space, and it is an accepted communication approach we all recognize"*. These expressions by these study participant's rightly sinks with (Barnlund, 1970) argument that the communication environment in terms of the composure and mannerisms of sender and the receiver play very important role in the meaning of the communication process. Barnlund (1970) argues that there are factors such as facial expression, gestures and other movements that influence communication, yet only noticeable in contact communication.

In the data gathering process at the directorate's communication applications, it was uncovered that the management of the unit sometimes deliberately use contact communication to measure the motions and other expressions of people they engage at the unit. For instance, a participant in an interview expressed that, "if teachers are aggrieved, that is not the time to sit in your office and issue out letters or communique, you need to call and engage them face-to-face so you can feel for their concerns" these observations if analyzed critically is rightly in pair with (Lowesberg, 2006) argument that communication is more impactful if the means of communication is direct and exchanges are the same medium of communication. It also fits into aspects of the Media Richness theory that advance that people would always choose the most convenient and effective way of carrying out message dissemination. Again, the office informed me that even though face-to-face teaching at the various schools under the supervision of the directorate is often overlooked. However, it is one of the strategic means of communicating knowledge to the pupils.

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A participant designated as participant 2 expressed that, *"we could have used an online or virtual space to communicate teaching to our pupils, but we have it in our strategic plan to do that through face to face"*. from this excerpt, it is conceived that despite the resource limitation of carrying out virtual learning at the basic level, it is a way by policy to use contact communication for effective teaching and learning at the various pre-tertiary schools within the Wenchi Education Directorate.

4.7 Summary

The chapter presented findings and in-depth analysis of the research questions for the study. The data gathered on all two research questions were described and analyzed critically using effective communication concepts, the theory of Media Richness and Barnlund's Transactional Communication Model. The first research question sought the types of communication strategies practiced in the Wenchi Education Directorate and three themes emerged from that research question, thus, digital communication, publication communication and contact communication. Research question two looked at the structure of communication strategies used at the Wenchi education directorate. The first theme that emerged from the question is formalized communication structure, the second is leeway communication structure and the third is controlled communication structure. All these themes had emerging codes that were rightly defined to enrich the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research work, it declares conclusions and also makes recommendations on effective communication and organizational practice that were explored at the Wenchi Educational unit. The chapter further captures the limitations of the study and recommends other scope that could be explored for future studies.

5.1 Summary

This research sought to identify the communication strategies practiced in the organizational setting. It further looked at communication structures that exist at the Wenchi education office Finally, it analyzed how the communication strategies relates to the Barnlund's transactional communication model and the media richness theory.

In chapter one, the backgrounds of the study were set out which grounded the study in the concept of effective communication in an organizational practice. References were made from key literature on organizational Communication to support the discourse. Again, the significance of the study, statement of problem, study objectives and research questions were stated in the first chapter. Finally, chapter one was concluded with delimitation and organization of the study.

Literature was reviewed in chapter two to investigate the following concepts: strategic communication and effective communication, communication for personal and organizational development, communication and technology, effective communication and organizational practice, internal and external communication in organization and communication and organizational culture. The theory of media

richness and the Barnlund's transactional communication model were adopted and reviewed for the study. Personal reflection and research judgement were the basis to critique the literature to discuss the gabs and the relationship with this study.

Chapter three dealt with the research methodology which discussed the research approach and design used for the study. Qualitative research approach and qualitative case study design were respectively used for the study (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell, 2013). The single case study was adopted to further understand the case understudy critically. Yin (2014) has argued that the single case study is appropriate for investigating a phenomenon, especially when a deep insight of the phenomenon is to be investigated. For that matter it was chosen for the study to understand the concept of effective communication in detail and to describe the concept well. Again, justification was given for selecting the Wenchi Educational Directorate because it is among the first to be established in the bono region of Ghana and it was the biggest directorate in terms employees until the Tain district education unit was carved out from the Directorate.

The data collection approaches used for the study were interviews, focus group discussion and document review. Generally, purposive sampling was used to select participants for the interviews and the focus group discussion. Again, the office provided documents that were relevant to the study were accessible for research purposes. In all four participants each were selected for both the interview and the focus group discussion. Three documents were made available by the office for review together with other electronic messages for circulation. The interview and the focus group discussion were conducted in English and a semi- structured questionnaire were used to guide both the interview and the focus group discussion.

Four participants were selected for the four different interview sessions. The focus group discussion also had four participants purposively sampled for their insight in effective organizational communication.

The data sets sourced through the three data collection methods were eventually coded, cleaned, and merged to make them wholesome for the analysis. Themes were generated from the codes which formed the basis for the analysis in chapter four. In all, three themes each were developed for each of the two research questions.

5.2 Main Findings

The fourth chapter of the research sought to answer the two research questions that underpinned the study. The data collected were thoroughly described and analyzed using effective communication concepts and the theory of media richness and the Barnlund's transactional communication model as noted in the literature review session in chapter two.

Two of the interview participants in the study were informants who provided an expert point of view to the subject under study due to their unique participatory roles they play at the Wenchi Educational directorate. Responses from the participants in the focus groups discussion and interpretations I made from the samples of audio recording as well as documents analyzed reiterated a better understanding of effective organizational communication in the directorate.

Research question two identified the communication strategies practiced in the Wenchi education directorate and the themes that emerged were digital communication strategy, publication communication strategy and contact communication. The data established that the three themes identified as effective

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communication strategies were inherently practiced in the Wenchi Education Directorate.

Research question one looked at the communication structures at the Wenchi Education Directorate and the analysis revealed that the office has adopted digital communication which has resulted in communicating parties getting prompt feedback. In addition, there are person in charge of managing the flow of information to and fro the directorate and that person is called the PRO. Also known as the mouthpiece of the office, he plays the function of working hard to enhance the reputation of the organization. The study again showed that the effectiveness of communication management at the Wenchi Education Directorate is leeway because there are instances where stakeholders do not follow laid down procedures in their dealings during communication. The office has also adopted multiple communication approaches in their strategies to enable every communicator to express themselves to the fullest.
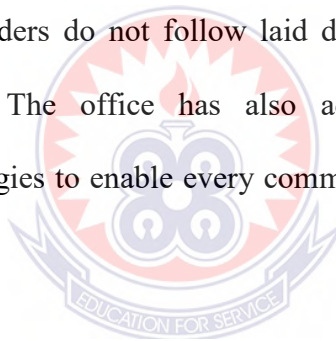
In relating to how the media richness theory fits into the effective communication practices of the directorate, the analysis in chapter four revealed that the office has recently adopted digital communication in their daily operations because it is quick and reproduces exactly what is sent. The Barnlund's Transactional Communication Model also fits in by offering equal authority to both subordinates and superiors during the communication process. Finally, the directorate is ready to work with every employee / stakeholder for a better delivery of educational needs of pupils and parents in the municipality.

5.3 Limitations

This study looked at effective communication practices in the Wenchi Education Directorate. It also sought to find out the communication structures in place at the Directorate. It further analyzed how these practices fits into the Media Richness theory and the Barnlund's Transactional Communication Model. Some challenges were encountered during the research, some of which include the following.

Having access to the directorate to gather the necessary data was not easy. I had to travel from Sunyani to Wenchi to submit the authorization letter and wait for a period and do some follow up calls and visits. Finally, after being granted permission, it became another hurdle to identify the right participants for both interview and the focus group discussion. I had to consult the Registrar at the Wenchi Education Directorate to educate me on the various personnel portfolios and what their work schedules are so that I could make the right decision during selection. I also agreed with the participants on the timelines of the research and how I wanted their responses organized.

Also, getting data on the topic under study was a bit cumbersome because the concept of effective communication is young and therefore very little previous research have been carried on it, especially on the African continent. This challenge made the literature reviewing very difficult.

Lastly, getting in touch with my supervisor was also uneasy due to his busy schedules but all these notwithstanding, the challenges could not affect the research negatively. There was a possible remedy to each of the challenges and they have all been overcome and the project has been successful with the required outcome and standards.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Study

For further studies, research can be done on the need for anonymous communication to be encouraged in every organizational setup.

Future research can also be focused on the essence of empowering the subordinate through communication and motivation for communication effectiveness and improvement in productivity.

Another area worth working out is on multiple approach communication using the excellence theory and mixed method approach.

Finally, research can be made on the cause of the increase in exam malpractices in the Ghana Educational system.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the key findings and discussions of this studies, the following recommendations are made;
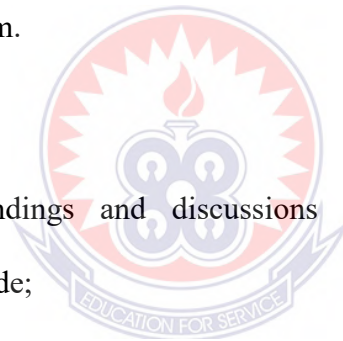
The Wenchi Education Directorate together with other education directorates should adopt and maintain a communication policy that can bind and guide all their stakeholders after they are fully educated about the policy. This can assist in achieving the purpose of following properly in the organizational setting they look up to.

The government of Ghana should uplift the image of teachers and also empower them financially to make the teaching profession enviable to enable teachers willingly put up their best as happy and appreciated workers.

The Ghana government should review the disciplinary recommendations to suit the African continent to reduce the mass property destruction and its related manslaughter cases happening in some pre-tertiary schools.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questions for teacher

1. How do parents/guardians receive and reply notices from the school?

2. How is information from higher authority/ office communicated to facilitators?

3. Do you think the approaches of communication adopted and practiced currently are the most appropriate?

4. Would you quickly comply is a more advanced communication strategy is introduced for usage?

Questions for head teacher

1. How do you disseminate information to parents/ guardians.

2. How do you communicate internally to your facilitators?

3. Briefly explain the means through which the various stakeholders are called for meetings?

4 Do you think the communication approaches in use currently are the best?

Questions for deputy director

1. How do notices move into and out of the directorate?

2. Is there a personnel in charge of managing information in this directorate?

3. How are heads/ facilitators reached with regards to communication mediums?

4. Will a more advanced method of communication be adopted if discovered and introduced to the directorate?

5. Any final submission to end the interview season?

Questions for Auditor

1. What communication strategies are in practice in this directorate currently?

2. Can those strategies be accepted as the best so far?

3. Would a more advanced communication method be adopted if introduced in the office in future?

4. Please your final submissions to end the interview.