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Effects of organisational communication on administrative performance of staff in a multi campus university

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Abstract

The study examined the effects of organizational communication on administrative performance of staff in a multi campus University in Ghana, guided with the application of the System theory and a developed conceptual framework. The mixed research design was used and a multistage sampling technique was applied with 428 staff selected. Questionnaires were administered to 400 staff out of which 309 (77.3%) questionnaires were returned. Descriptive and inferential statistics such as percentages, means, factor analysis, cluster analysis, chi-square, t-test, correlation and F-test were used to analyse the data with the help of SPSS software version 18.0 and Microsoft Excel. The results revealed that staff generally perceived the communication system in the University to be good with a grand mean value of 3.86 which is equivalent to "Agree" on the response scale. The two step cluster analysis revealed four groups of employee cohesion patterns, and the factor analysis also revealed four independent communication constructs vis a vis group cohesion. The rotated factors showed four major constraints: Human, Communication Systems, Administrative and Structural. The researcher concludes that significant differences do not exist in the patterns of communication among campuses of the University. This means that a congenial managerial communication system is likely to improve the organisational environment. It is recommended among others that standardisation and decentralisation in administration and management should be encouraged and various campuses given some independence to enhance performance. Feedback, acknowledging good performance, periodic progressive conversations to enhance policy direction in communication, there is the need to upgrade the knowledge and skills of staff through appropriate training.

Key words: Administrative performance, Information, Group cohesion, Multi Campus University, Organisational Communication, Staff

Introduction

In any work setting and indeed among humans, effective communication flow could enhance administrative performance between staff members and management of the organisation. Communication allows organisations to exploit the value that information has for their proper functioning, effective and efficient performance, competitiveness and continued success. Communication in every organisation is, therefore, a critical resource for performance. Effective communication takes place when there is a perfect convergence in meaning between the sender and the receiver. Wright (2005) stressed that communication in organisation is the development of a common understanding between the communicator and the manager or practitioner about both the existence and utility of an innovation, leaving the same encounter with different perceptions of that encounter. Morrison (2014) also indicated that of all the life skills available to us, communication is perhaps the most empowering in work settings. It is therefore imperative to view organisational communication as process with the embodiment of social units formed by individuals with different views and knowledge aimed at a common goal through establishing links with external world with the information they gained from the environment.

According to Adereti et al. (2006), it is when data have been put into a meaningful and useful context that one can say communication has taken place with another and a decision is made. Samuel (2001) indicated that information on the other hand is data for decision-making collected as a resource and passed on as acquired and used in order to make an informed decision. Consequently, accessing communication is implicit across organisations, while disseminating information is explicit to staff. This implies that communication could constitute a great asset to organizations if the appropriate quantity and quality of information obtained is seriously considered. Shoveller (1987) posited several reasons for distortion in organisational communication resulting in communication dissatisfaction which includes: individuals failing to accept the responsibility to communicate and the lack of interest on the part of the receiver as well as non-convergent in meaning of what are being communicated. Cramton (2001) indicated that management of knowledge resources for knowledge workers in different locations is often difficult than management of centralised knowledge workers. For instance, in some organisations with dispersed centers or branches, members often face difficulty or inability to create and maintain mutual knowledge and understanding about work-related issues. This may thus cause misunderstanding, distrust or even frustration among staff of the organisation.

The perception of organisational communication is also considered as the way people view and feel about communication. According to Akinsorotan (2001), perception is a psychological reasoning or conclusion drawn from observing a given phenomenon following experience or prevailing conditions. It is an active cognitive process, a mechanistic system fixed by inherent structure of the nervous system. Poon (2002) stated that several factors, including strength and quality of stimuli, attention, cognitive style, arrangement of subject matter, the experience of the child, physical and emotional health, mood of individual and other factors influence the perception of the individual at work. Furthermore, personal factors such as attitudinal needs, values, credit, situational factors (like work ambiguity, climate and financial factors) could also influence perception of the individual. Hinkson and Keith (2000) indicated that the individual's current appraisal of an object is his perception. It is therefore recognised with social psychologist around the world that perceptions towards work activities including organisational communication affect responses on how people speak, think and view situations in general. Hence, the perception of organisational communication could facilitate or slow the flow of information in a given environment. The flow of information in organisations depends on the necessary tools available to ensure that staff who communicate adhere to the standards and regulations that are embraced by members in the organisation. In the University set up, the effectiveness of organisational communication on administrative performance could be complex most especially in a multi-campus institution like the University of Education, Winneba (UEW).

Multi campus institutions

Holland and Sullivan (2005) indicated that a multi-campus institution most often has a complex and challenging administrative perspective. A typical multi campus institution with its mission drives the policies, practices, services, and organisational structure at each campus. Campuses that are part of a large University system generally have diverse student populations, including those from senior secondary schools, moving through a four-year program, or matured students who are much older and employed. In addition, individual campuses and their schools/faculties, typically develop business processes at different times using a variety of systems. For instance, different tuition and fee, academic year calendars, human resource policies and communication issues vary too. These differences could result in a large diverse constituency that takes into consideration uniformity in communication and general implementation of activities.

In a related study, Yingxian-Zou (2011) pointed out the disadvantages of multi-campus University in China to include: less exchange between teachers and students, the time wasted on the way for teachers, the additional traffic costs for the universities and the environmental pollution caused by additional traffic among campuses. In Xi'an Jiaotong University with four campuses at Xingqing, Qujiang, Yantaand Caotan, many lecturers move from one campus to another in long distances with traffic issues every day. Besides these distances, delays and time wasted are huge cost associated with claims from staff on fuel and hotel bills.

One of the few multi-campus universities in Ghana is the University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale in the Northern Region. UDS was established in 1992 as a multi-campus institution and as the fifth public University in Ghana. It was created within the four northern regions of the country in mind, which deviates from the usual practice of having universities with central campuses and administrations. The Brong Ahafo Region, Northern Region, Upper East Region and the Upper West Region were to accommodate UDS under decentralised administrative structures with the Deans forming constituent campuses. This novel experiment brought along with it certain challenges to educational administrators, teachers, learners and surrounding communities. Similarly, the NIIT in Ghana (now known as Blue Crest College) has also forged an alliance with other partner institutions like the UEW in Ghana for students to acquire degree in IT without leaving the country. With this, are large populations of students with Campuses spread throughout six regions of Ghana to train IT professionals.

University as a center of knowledge requires information generation and dissemination. It is a complex environment, yet academically structured system with strict regulations in communication. Some tertiary institutions in Ghana, whether public or private, run multi-campus satellite system. The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) in Ghana is one of such institutions with satellite campuses that maintain statutory functions of ensuring that information is well accessed and disseminated to both staff and students by instituting appropriate organisational communication system; notwithstanding the distance among campuses. At the UEW, communication involves the transfer of information and exchange of facts, ideas, opinions and emotions and obtaining feedback among and between staff and students. Hence, staff may transmit information and obtain feedback, indicating their understanding or lack of it and confirmation. Poor communication could result in interpersonal conflict and affect output. Staff within the University system usually spends time working and communicating by speaking, reading, writing and listening and through the hierarchy of structure as routine.

Other systems of communication in the University are the upwards, downwards and horizontal communication. In the University for instance, communication takes place between the Deputy Registrars, the Heads of Department and Management and among staff at all levels. Communication that flows 'downwards 'from superior to subordinates is referred to as downwards communication; and 'Upwards' communication is when communication is passed on to members of the management team, from staff of a lower level. Upwards communication gives employees the opportunity to express their concerns, problems and anxieties and find solutions that may enhance job effectiveness and efficiency. Other forms of communication in the University include: face-to-face, on telephone, at meetings, the use of fax, campus radio and more recently, the electronic mail, teleconferences and voice mail. Some other internal means of communication include: memoranda, notices, circulars, minutes of meetings and the University journals. Keeping in view the importance of organisational communication, this study was conducted to examine the effects of organisational communication on administrative performance at UEW, Ghana which runs multi-campus system in Winneba (main campus), Kumasi, Mampong-Ashanti and Ajumako.

Statement of problem

The multi- campus nature of UEW presupposes that regular, prompt and effective communication among staff of the University could be achieved to support the realisation of her *mission* (to train competent professional teachers for all levels of education as well as conduct research, disseminate knowledge and contribute to educational policy and development) and *vision* (to be an internationally reputable institution for teacher education and research). The result of this encourages standardisation and effective processes in delivery, resulting in cost reduction and quality promotion. Apart from this, a University could employ other alternative channels of information flow, allowing for more open communication between individuals and group members in the University (Argenti, 2003). Despite the important roles' communication play in the development of every institution, communication in a multi campus institution is perceived as being poor resulting in a gulf in information flow and delay or distortion (Holland and Sullivan, 2005). One potential setback of this is that the University could easily lose sight of its mandate (Adereti et al., 2006), and sometimes could create myriads of

communication arc, for instance between the management (the sender) and staff (the receiver) and the vice versa (Yingxian-Zou, 2011). These communication problems could have adverse effect on administrative performance in terms of causing frustration and erode good will (Holland and Sullivan, 2005). Since the establishment of the University, there has not been any known empirical study that been undertaken to ascertain the effect of organisational communication on administrative performance of staff in the University. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to find answers to the following research questions:

- What is the perception of staff on the nature of communication in the University?
- How does the present nature of communication in the University affect administrative performance?
- How does staff perception of organisational communication affect group cohesion of staff?
- What are the constraints militating against communication flow in this multi-campus University?
- How does the demographic characteristic of staff influence communication in the University?

Main objective

The main objective of the study was to assess the effects of organisational communication on administrative performance at the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. Effective communication forms an integral part of enhancing administrative performance in educational institution. Since the inception of UEW in 1993, the tripodal mandate of teaching, research and community services seems to be undertaken within the University catchment areas at Winneba, Kumasi, Mampong and Ajumako. However, there had neither been empirical study on the nature of communication within the University nor examination of the administrative performance of staff in the system. This is without prejudice to the fact that the campus-wide nature requires interplay of communication to enhance and maintain academic milieu on the campuses; and how it affects performance. To this end, it is imperative to document the effect of organisational communication on administrative performance the UEW in terms of perception of staff at this time, since it could have the potential to impact on staff pattern of behaviour. The outcome of the study could create an institutional framework for information flow and further engender a two-way communication between management and staff, staff and management, or even among staff in the University. Recommendations from the study could guide policy formulation in the University as it relates to communication. Furthermore, the study would contribute to knowledge in development communication.

Literature review

Literature was extensively reviewed on communication and information theories, barriers to communication, staff communication needs, bureaucracy, organisational structure and more importantly, adopted both the theoretical framework (systems theory) and the conceptual framework of communication. Some empirical literature on communication models were evidence of what existed and those parts the researcher believed were particularly relevant to this study. The literature provided a variety of contrasting models and perspectives on how the world of communication may be studied. It has demonstrated models of human communication to have followed similar patterns of development, from Semiotic models that represent classical analysis, to information theory and dialogical models that are part of a cybernetic view and to discourse analytical views, which form holistic approach to organizational communication. More importantly the study adopted both the theoretical framework (systems theory) and the conceptual framework of communication. Communication in every organisation involves the process of creating, exchanging, interpreting and storing messages within a system of human interrelationships. The researcher has pointed out in the literature some basic theoretical perspectives in organisational communication, and administrative performance and focuses on areas of the research in relation to effectiveness of organisational communication in a University environ; applying some theories and models' vis a vis the conceptual framework developed. Based on the literature reviewed, the researcher concludes that, there were still gaps in scholarly understanding of the role of organizational communication and administrative performance which will be considered in the objectives of the study to improve problems solving in the University.

Theoretical framework

Systems theory treated human communication in the same manner as all other communicative processes, be they engineering systems, physical communication phenomena such as light or energy transfer processes, living biological systems, or entire social systems Scott (2000). Open Systems applications were also made by Katz and Kahn, as self-renewing systems that ingest energy from the environment (input), transform that energy (throughput), and expend it back into the environment (output) for maintenance and production purposes in an organisation. Many other approaches to human communication have been developed after as systems theory which played a significant role in the development of communication theory (Cohen, 1996). Bertalanffy et al (1968) developed systems and cybernetics theories, and focused on human communication studies on language, linguistics and semiotics. Scott maintained that communication can be treated like any other system, containing features such as feedback processes and other aspects of control theory. Miller (2006) pointed out that the organisation itself is an 'open system', exposed to a wider environment in which it both experiences competitive threats and finds its collaborative partners. Cheney and Christensen (2001) and Zorn (2002), however, indicated that there have been efforts to reintegrate internal and external communication issues, an approach that points to the increasingly 'blurred' boundaries of today's organisations, and argue that there is an underlying continuity between what have previously been termed 'internal' and 'external' communication processes. Figure 2.1 is an illustration of the multiple dimensions of organizational communication as depicted by Blundel& Ippolito (2008).

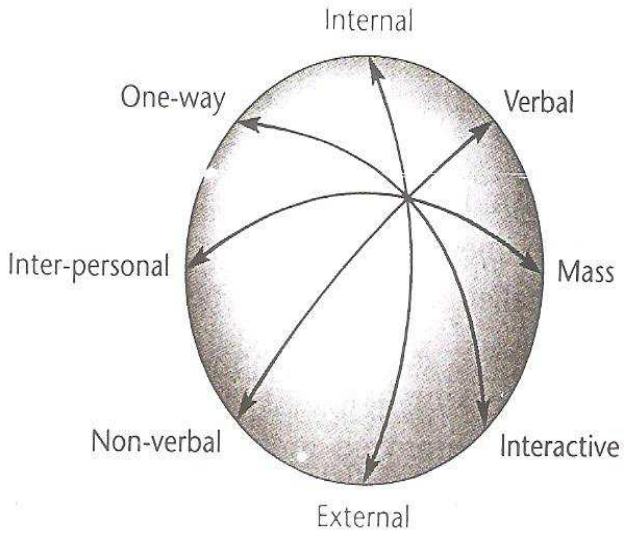


Figure 2.1: Multiple dimensions of Organizational Communication
Source: Blundel& Ippolito (2008)

The diagram (fig. 2.1) illustrates a "modern-system" approach of inter-related part of an entity, which no separated aspect of an organisation in the communication process exists but depends on one another, a whole entity and is interdependent too. Organisation from the system theory, therefore changes from time to time. Yates and Orlikowski (2002) reflecting on the finding of the concept of 'genre systems', also indicated that the patterns of communication and collaboration are shaped by established technologies. With this Cane (2007) predicts that by 2011, instant messaging will be the de facto tool for voice, video and text communications in businesses, replacing the relatively inaccessible e-mail (Cane 2007). Yates and Orlikowski's (ibid) research work pointed out how communication practices developed into established norms, structuring the way that we interact with one another. Their more recent work, on 'genre systems' (focused on the ways that technologically-mediated communication shapes the way that people collaborate at work). Clark (2000), Dannels and Gaffney (2009) supporting the above, have encountered a similar range of perspectives elsewhere in organisation theory, management studies and other areas of social science.

Conceptual framework

A theoretical framework outlines the assumption within which investigation is conducted. No particular framework has however been recommended. Ideally Effective organisational and communication should contribute to job performance. Some explanations have been made on organisational communication and job performance in the preceding pages. Longest et al., (2000) on the other hand provides us with several forms of intra organisational communication for public service organisations; some of which reflect the pages that follow. The Conceptual framework on the other hand indicates organisational communication and the perception of staff on staff performance at the Institution with interrelated variables: independent, dependent and intervening variables. The independent variables of this framework consist of the organisational communication with components: as the systems of communication, means of communication and the personal characteristics of staff. The intervening variables are group cohesion, Institution policy and macro and micro barriers; while the dependent variable is job performance (improved job behaviour). All these variables are interrelated and depend on each other. Staff within the organisation with their personal characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, rank, ethnic-linguistic (tribe) years of experience and educational qualification could have direct influence on organisational communication and the perception of staff on job performance in the Institution. Again, the perception of organisational communication could determine how satisfied staff of the Institution is at the work place.

The intervening variables made of group cohesion, Institution policy and macro and micro barriers of communication could equally influence job performance. For instance, when group cohesion is weak, the relationship between perception of staff communication and job performance will be weak. On the other hand, when group cohesion is strong, the relationship between organisational communication and job performance will equally be strong. This however further perceived could happen or achieved with proper organisational policies and ameliorated communication barriers positively or negatively which either could strongly impact on job performance.

Determinants of Job Performance

Johnson et al (2008) detailed a more complete model of performance determinants quoting Campbell et al. (2004) and Motowidlo et al. (1997) models as good general models of performance prediction. Deficiency in the process by whichspecific individual differences influence performance on specific dimensions were pointed out by Johnson (2004), whostressed that motivation was given inadequate attention by those models and proposed anexpanded model of how individual differences influence job performance.

Mitchell and Daniels (2003) also identified two components of motivation: proactive cognitive processes, and on-line cognitive processes. Control theory, action theory, and self-regulation were on-line theories of motivation (Mitchell and Daniels, 2003). Johnson (2003) added that psychological motives as a third component of motivation. A motive is a reason (value, interest, preference, and attitude) for choosing to exert effort in a particular direction. Brett, J.F., and VandeWalle, (1999) motive-based theories recognise that people may have very different purposes for exhibiting the same behavior. Job attitudes therefore tend to be more strongly related to citizenship performance than personality variables (Podsakoff et al., 2000); leading to Ryan and Deci, E. 2000) to conclude that the relationship between personality and citizenship performance is probably mediated by attitudes such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and fairness perceptions. Gade (2003) on the other hand opined that, organisational commitment is an important motive for the military context, its components have been shown to predict various types of job-related behaviors (Gade, Tiggle and Schumm, 2003; Karrasch, 2003).

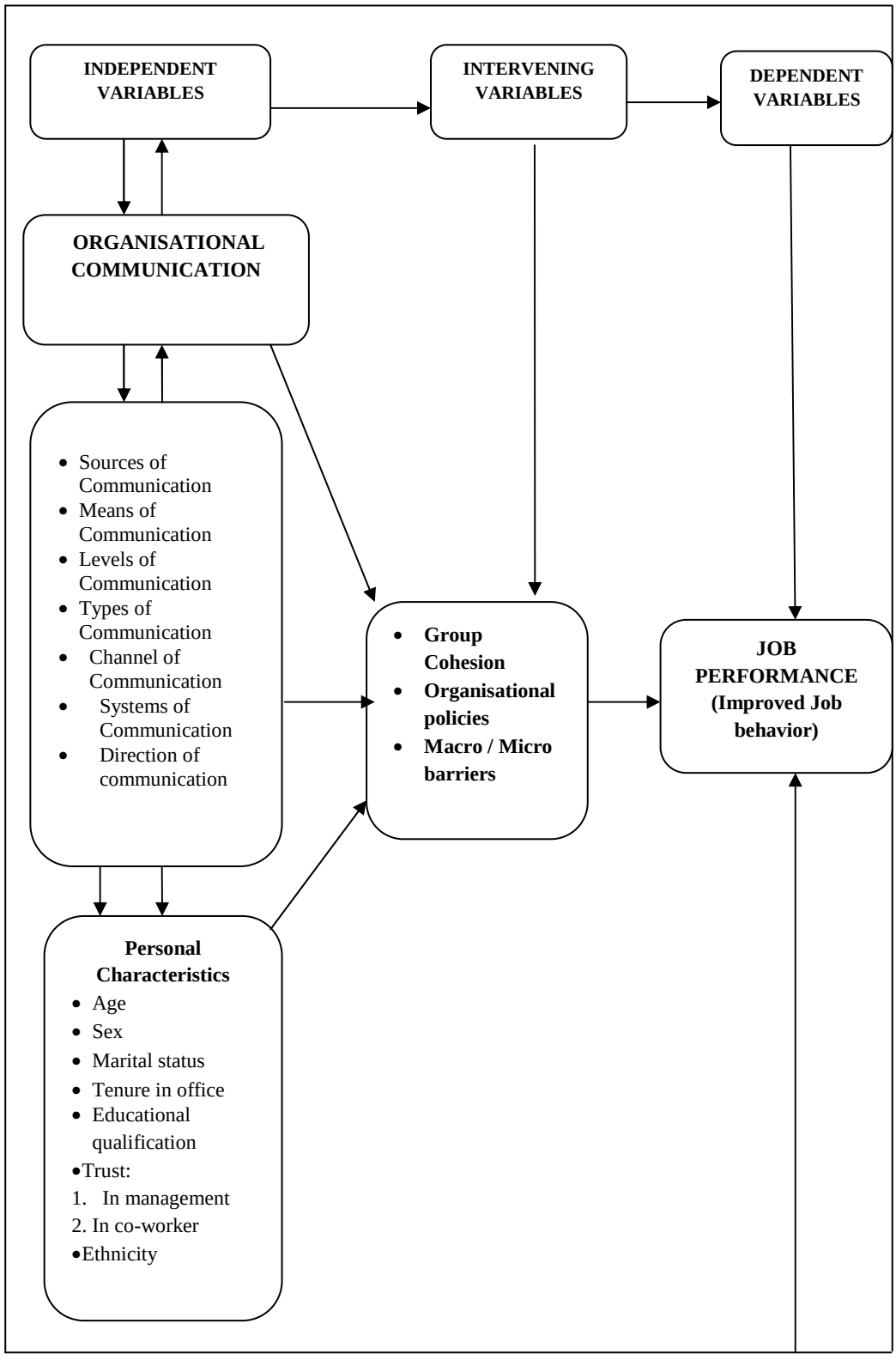
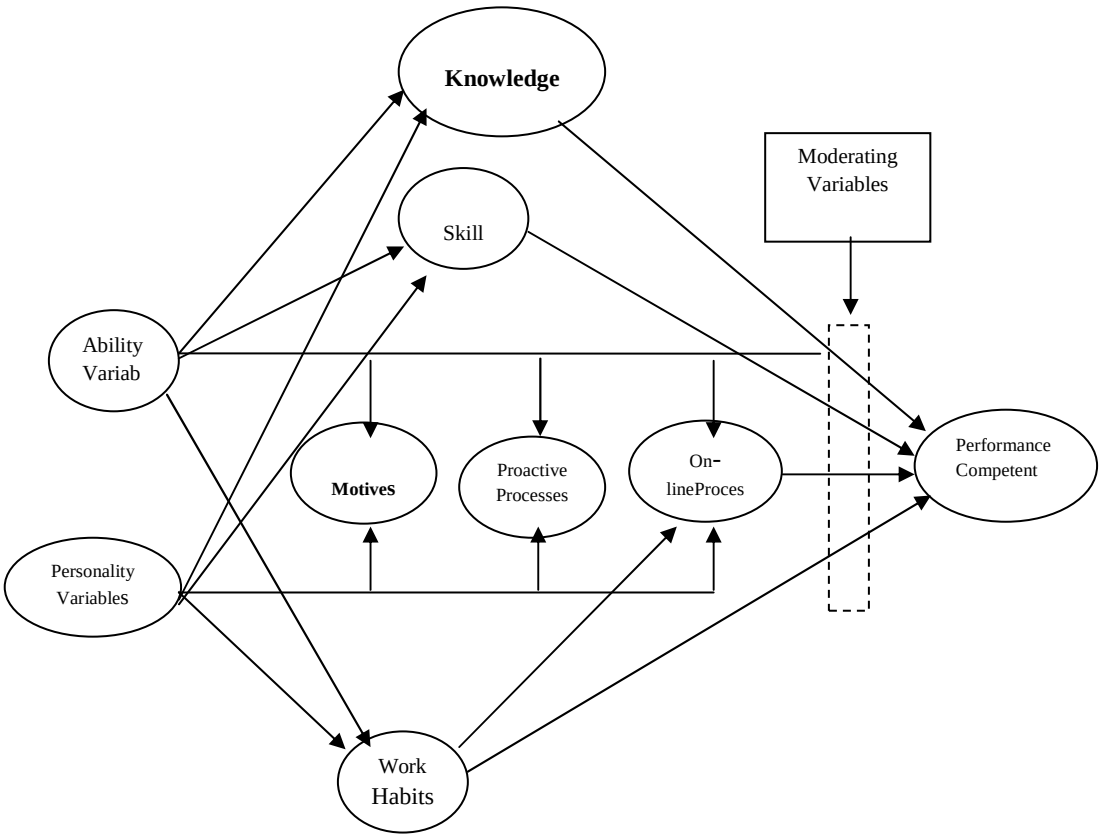


Figure : Author's field work on the conceptual framework on organisational communication and administrative performance of staff in a multi campus University

Johnson's (2003) general model of the pathways by which individual differences in predictor variables influence performance on a given dimension is presented in: Figure 2.12. Campbell (2004) also suggested that the determinants of performance components should be based on individual differences on function of three main areas: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and skill, and motivation. Consistent with Campbell et al. (1993), performance is a function of knowledge, skill, and motivation. The model could be expanded to include other classes of individual organisation, indirect performance determinants and also recognise the numerous potential moderators that can influence the extent to which individual differences predict performance.



Determinants of Job Performance
Source: Johnson (2003)

The model describes the potential paths through which different classes of variables may operate to influence different levels of performance. The relative strength of each path from one construct to another depends on the specific predictor variables included in the model and the specific performance dimension that is the criterion. For example, if achievement were used to predict the demonstrating effort dimension of citizenship performance, the strongest path would go through motivation (because motivation is highly relevant to demonstrating effort, and achievement is highly relevant to each component of motivation). If sociability were used to predict the maintenance of good working relationship dimension of citizenship performance, the stronger paths were likely go through knowledge and skill.

Model on Administrative Performance from Blumberg and Pringle (1982) model however, a typology of administrative performance as it relates to organisational communication is presented in Figure 2.13.

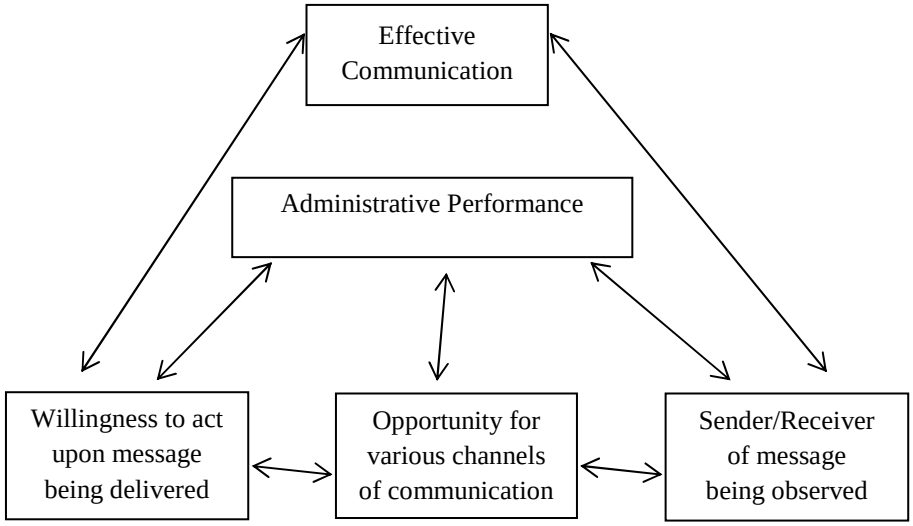


Figure 2.13: Administrative Performance Model
Source: Author's Typology Field Work (2012)

Administrative performance (jp), as in Figure 2.13, shows a function of effective communication (ec), opportunity on channels of communication available (occ), the sender/receivers of message observed (srm) and the willingness to act upon the message (wa). The concept above can be represented in a mathematical equation as: jp = f (ec, occ, srm, wa). The model concept means that the factors indicated above affect performance and that is determined by the degree at which each component is affected in the communication process. For instance, the more efforts people in the communication process put in, the likely better the performance. Similarly, if one of the components of the above concept is missing, the poor likely will be the performance.

Vigoda (2003) also indicated that the search for higher performance in public administrative systems draws on a continuous exploration of measurable output and outcome indicators. This doctrine as implemented in the public sector implies that if you can't measure a public output/outcome, it probably isn't worth considering. Many performance indicators (PIs) have been developed to evaluate administrative performance (Berman 2000; Nyhan 1995). Nonetheless, two of the most commonly used perceptual measures are (1) attitudes towards the general responsiveness of governments and public administration and, (2) detailed evaluations of citizens' satisfaction with governmental services. Responsiveness to citizens as clients may be regarded as the Holy Grail of modern public administration. A responsive bureaucracy delivers services and goods to its destinations with optimal speed and accuracy (Chi 1999; Vigoda 2000). Thomas and Palfrey (1996) argued that responsiveness attests to the speed and accuracy with which a service provider replies to a request for action or for information. Speed can refer to the waiting time between citizens' request for action and the reply of the public agency. Accuracy means the extent to which the provider's response is appropriate to the needs or wishes of the service user (Rourke 1992; Stewart and Ranson 1994).

Beyond the idea of measuring the general responsiveness of public agencies there is also a need to evaluate in greater detail the satisfaction from services received. Administrative performance means a comprehensive, distinctive, reliable and continuous. Managerial Quality, Administrative Performance and Trust in Governance assessment of citizens' satisfaction from governmental operation in various fields. In recent decades, satisfaction measures have become prevalent in state and federal agencies. They were largely prompted by the client canon and by the vision of 'putting citizens first' (Caiden and Caiden 2002). Hence, public administration encourages the use of satisfaction measures as part of performance evaluations both inside public agencies and around them (Poister and Henry 1994; Swindell and Kelly 2000). It should also be noted that this strategy has been adopted despite some limitations and criticism it needs to address (Stipak, 1979, 1980).

From the foregoing literature, many variables including trust, transparency and accountability, could result in performance. Similarly, effective communication could result in administrative performance. This follows a typology adopted by Citrin and Muste (1999) and Ruscio (1997), representing effective communication as a precondition for the emergence of better performance. From the above, effective communication could lead to performance if government and University administrators, for instance, mediates the relationship between a set of variables, representing quality of performance and stakeholder's satisfaction.

Methodology

The study examined the effects of organizational communication on administrative performance of staff in the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana under five main objectives. The mixed research design was adopted for the study. Using multistage sampling techniques, 428 staff were selected. Questionnaires were administered to 400 staff and the remaining 28 were interviewed. A total of 309 (77.3%) questionnaires were returned. The data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18.0 and Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, means, standard deviations, percentages, means, factor analysis, cluster analysis, chi-square, t-test, correlation and F-test were used to analyse objectives one to five of the study. Three hypotheses were tested in null forms at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and chi-square. These were presented in a quantitative summary to allow for simpler and quicker interpretation of the data by the researcher. It provided understanding of the data in detail and helped put the findings in proper perspective. Objectives 2 and3 involved inferential statistics in the form of one sample t-test was used to analyse them. This study employed the means to determine respondents' levels of agreement with the various perceptive statements and t-values and p-values to establish the levels of significance of the agreements with the statements. Two step cluster analysis was used to analyse group cohesion among respondents and to identify the natural group in objective 4. Though the variables were measured on a three point Likert scale (low, moderate, high), the two step cluster analysis was deemed appropriate to meet the four groups of employee cohesion patterns. A chi-square test of independence between the groups and employee ranks was also considered here, since employee rank could influence the interest group patterns. Again the chi-square test for employee membership of a cluster (group) was also used to check the influence level by campus of the employee. All these were carried out to check the consistency of communication practice in the University. In the last objective, five, the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance (W) was used to rank constraints to communication in the university. It is a tool that was used to assess agreement among raters.The researcher also used factor analysis with the Varimax rotation method to categorise the constraints.

Summary of results and discussion

The results showed that effective Organizational communication is widely believed to have the capacity to improve administrative performance in organisations. The study was premised on the perception that output will seriously be affected if communication in UEW is ineffective. The following were highlights of the main findings of the study based on the objectives. **S**elected socio-demographic characteristics of staff were: age, campuses, gender (sex), rank (title), status in the University, educational qualification, years at post (tenure) and marital status detailed outcome for objective one.

Objective two sought to measure the perceptions of staff on the nature of communication in the University using a five point Likert scale. Respondents generally agreed that the Likert items or perceptive statements reflected the nature of communication in the University. This is indicated by the overall mean value of 3.86 which is equivalent to 'Agree' on the response scale. This strong assersion agrees with that of Bozeman (2000) who opined that bureaucracies (red-tapes) like rules, regulations and procedures that remain in force and entail compliance tend to become a burden in large organisations. Scott and Pandey (2000) have also indicated that red-tape has been considered as a barrier to improved. This notion is in line with the findings of Ada (2007) in his contribution to organisational communication and eliminating barriers in organization that, unclear regulation and poor team work could affect communication flow in an organisation.

Campion

Again the objective three examined the organizational communication system and the perception of staff on performance. It was found that, communication systems available for use in the University are large and were perceived to influence administrative performance. When a person communicates, he establishes a common ground of understanding and in the organisational context; it brings about unity of purpose, interest and effort (Barth, 2003). The process by which information and feelings are shared by people through exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages, or the successful transmission of information through a common system by symbols, signs, behaviour, speech, or writing signals their understanding of the message received (Kalla, 2005). This finding is in line with Oetzel et al. (2001), whose research highlighted the link between interpersonal communication and staff cohesion too. Such response is in agreement with Longest et al., (2000) that, the least used channel of communication in a large organisation is the diagonal flow which links up many staff in the organisation to make information move faster to avoid bureaucracy. Again Kay (2000) noted that, the use of a well developed communication channel and skill was necessary for personal effectiveness.

With respect to objective four, organisational communication was found to have moderate influnce on staff cohesion with a grand mean of 1.90. The two step cluster analysis again revealed four groups of employee cohesion patterns. Clusters I and II showed high cohesion while clusters III and IV showed low cohesion. This shows that employee rank influences the grouping patterns and membership of a cluster (group) and was also influenced by the campus of the employee, as revealed from the chi-square analysis. Neorreklit and Schoenfeld (2000) however, opined that the problems of cooperation among staff arise from lack of understanding between work groups in merging organisations and that reduces effectiveness at work. Staff cooperation, according to Alagheband (2004), is rather a mutual communication between subordinates and superiors that makes them more acqainted with each other. An exploratory factor analysis with Varimax Rotation showed that four independent communication parameters explained 48% of variance in communication pattern in UEW vis-à-vis group cohesion. . Boree and Thill (2000) are of the view that exchanging knowledge and opinions in organisational communication promotes positive atmosphere in organisations. A Pearson correlation coefficient value of 0.026 showed organizational culture and corporate planning to be positively and significantly correlated at $p < 0.01$.The results of a one-way ANOVA conducted for the various clusters to determine if differences exist among the four groups identified in terms of group cohesion revealed that corporate planning ($F = 52.729$, $df = 308$; $P < 0.01$) accounted for the differences. The findings of this study confirm what was discovered by Grunig et al (2001) and Tindal (2009) that people coming from different backgrounds could promote racial, tribal insensitivity, tension and mistrust in the work place.

In objective five, respondents were made to identify 30 factors militating against organizational communication in the University. Factor analysiswas conducted to reduce the data for further analysis using the Alpha Factoring method for the extraction. The factors classified in Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W) was adopted to rank the classified variables to assess which ones highly militated against organisational communication in the University as appeared in Bird (2002). According to Luft (2000), research into the communication barriers experienced by deaf employees indicated that organisations need to address a much more complex set of social and cultural factors beyond those directly related to hearing loss is similar to the above outcome. Okiy (2005) points out poor and inadequate telecommunication facilities; poor level of computer literacy, even within the academic community; poor level of computer facilities; poor level of awareness of internet facilities among policy makers, government officials and the ruling class in general; and minimum involvement of academic institutions in network building as challenges militating against communication that is no different from the object.

The foregoing assertion is similar to McGinn and Keros (2002) who demonstrated that people have greater difficulty developing a shared logic of exchange and coordination when they communicate with channels with challenges. Similarly, negotiations, according to Moore et al., (1999) on communication issues to the individual on the job can result in improved performance if the channels are good.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher reached the following conclusions:

That, the nature of communication systerm in the University is influenced by the availability of numerous pathways, channels (oral, written, electronic), interpersonal communication,communication skills of staff, location of office and time of communication,teamwork,bureaucracy andred-tapism, feedback and the magnitude of grievance resolution mechanisms. The effectiveness of communication at UEW is influenced by the nature of the current communication system, staff communication with superiors, staff contributions to discussions, subordinate communication and information flow from colleagues, the varioussources of information and staff educational level. Others include the use of magazines/newslettersand sign language and demonstrations (characterised as non verbal communication). In all cases communication channel make an interplay in effective flow of information but that comes with challenges too. Official information that flow from colleagues to other staff include notices relating to promotions, transfers, pensions and other conditions of service. In some few instances the grapevine serves as the initial channel of communication of official information until it is formerly communicated to staff.

Again the effectiveness of communication is also positively influenced by organisational environment and managerial communication. The demographic characteristics that influence communication performance among staff are gender, rank, education and marital status. The factors affecting group cohesion are staff cooperation, expression of opinions relating to management issues, level of staff dissatisfaction, inadequacy of information communicated, availability of training (long and short term), orientations and attachments for staff in the University, Non uniformity in the single spine salary structure and the multi campus nature of the University. The most serious constraints militating against communication flow in the University are inexperience of staff, inadequate qualified human resource, distance to offices/ laboratories, unclear organisational structure leading to role conflict, lack of supervision and lack of communication skills.

Recommendations

- From the findings on the study, the following recommendations were made to improve the effectiveness of communication in a multi campus University.
- To ensure effective communication and administrative performance, there is the need for upgrading the knowledge and skills of staff. Again, majority of the respondents (73.9%) have degree qualifications. However out of this large population, only 2.7% are professors or hold analogous position. It is therefore recommended that management of the University to support the development of senior members to move towards attaining the statuses of senior lecturers, associate professors and professors; which could improve on communication in general.
- Considering the dispersed nature of the UEW (multi campus nature), campuses should be given the opportunity to act on routine issues at College level, making them semi-autonomous, before getting to central administration. This attempt in decentralizing information through the support of management could reduce the communication traffic among campuses or from the main campus Winneba, to satellite campuses to further appreciate the essence of time.
- To enhance administrative performance and effective communication, it is recommended that the University authority should promote the use of information flow, feedback, relationships between superiors and subordinates; and use of circulars, letters, notices, newsletters, should be greatly enhanced in the University.
- To enhance organisational communication, group cohesion and team work is important. The result revealed that staff were unhappy with the influence of ethno-linguistic use at work place, salary discrimination, lack of capacity and little cooperation of some staff. It is therefore recommended for management of the University could use the organissation of durbars and other social events periodically to bring staff together, create awareness and foster stronger cooperation to enhance the communication system.
- For a University to have good organisaional communication and effective administrative performance, the bottlenecks hindering communication performance must be done away with. This research revealed

a tall list of communication challenges in UEW. These challenges were classified into four main constraints (Human, systems, administrative and structural) and the support of management could reduce the bottlenecks.

a. **Human constraint**: With human constraint, individuals and groups were perceived to be the sole cause of such challenges at work. It is recommended that such staff are identified and given further training and education in communication, human relations, and appropriate ethical behaviour and with the needed motivation.
b. **Systems constraint**: This challenge has to do with the use of machines, equipment and other resources, e.g. unreliable power supply, poor telephone network and lack of computers. It is recommended that priority is given to the provision of appropriate and adequate innovative and durable machines and equipment to ensure effective communication.
c. **Administrative constraint**: Bureaucracy was identified as a major constraint to effective communication and information flow in the University. It is recommended that the administrative structure should be re-examined and the possible causes of delays in information flow removed to ensure effective and timely information dissemination within and without the University system. There is also the need to create awareness among staff through education and training on work ethics to make them more effective and efficient in their work.
d. **Structural constraint**: Some of the constraints identified in the study were poor transportation system, lack of suggestion boxes, long distances and lack of adequate space. It is recommended that management of the University should make provision for the procurement and supply of these items in future budgets.

- Managers need to communicate effectively to motivate staff put up their best. The following suggestions could improve communication skills in the work place in the University:
    a. Formal speeches, one-on-one and group discussions are popular forms of verbal communication. Verbal communication ensures speedy information flow and feedback. However, senior members in the University who have supervisory roles should be encouraged to constantly reinforce verbal communication when relating to other levels of staff at work place.
    b. Staff lamented that some superiors do not communicate clearly. It is recommended therefore that management should ensure that through the periodic in-service training, supervisors are reminded to present their information, whether verbal or written, in clear and unambiguous language to reduce the misinterpretation and misunderstanding among staff.
    c. The study further identified appropriate media and other effective forms of communication to include memoranda, SMS messages, notices, meetings and house journals. The researcher recommends that staff should apply more than one means of communication (using the principle of redundancy) for effective information flow among staff. This approach will ensure that at least one of the messages is received and feedback obtained.

Areas for Further Research

Though this study provided valuable insight in to the effect of communication of staff performance in the study area, it has equally led to some unanswered questions relative to its capacity to produce the desired outcomes in Ghana. The research therefore represents the beginning of an effort that is geared towards making Organisational Communication better. As a result, further studies are required to broaden this research so as to help improve the quality of Organisational Communication in Ghana and other jurisdictions. Again the study was limited to only UEW, and it is therefore recommended that future works should have a larger scope that would strengthen the findings of this study in order to ascertain whether generalising these findings is possible beyond where this research was undertaken. The researcher also recommends further research to investigate the influence of other factors such as cultural, job related factors of trainees, and other environmental issues that could affect the quality of Organisational Communication in institutions with the same governance architecture. Another acknowledged limitation of this study was its over reliance on data obtained within the period of study.

A repetition of this study in the future could add the benefit of a longitudinal scope and could allow researchers to understand how the effect of Organisational Communication can affect Staff Performance.

Limitations of the Study

The data for this study were only gathered from UEW. Thus, the study does not provide insight into the variables influencing other public universities or similar multi campus University Environments. Administrative performance, as a result of the influence per variables, could not be established. However, this was not the aim of the study, as the study focused on the respondent's perceptions of the variables and the relationship between the variables, which influenced practitioners view. Contributions made to organisational communication are limited. It should be noted that it is possible to keep in mind that there is possibility that the respondents' perceptions of the influence of variables and the actual influence of variables on staff in contributing to organisational performance, could differ. Further studies to investigate this difference are needed. Although it is suggested that staff may be performing more than one role at a time, this study could not accommodate that information in the statistical analysis. This is since the researcher limited himself to status only (junior staff, senior staff, senior member and management staff) as identified in the study. Furthermore, it was difficult to categorise areas of specialization and performance. It should also be noted that the researcher after applying the survey method and using the required statistical tools in analysing results from the data, was compelled to apply the mixed method of data collection approach by interviewing and making observations at his place of work to confirm the statistical data analysis, which also took time and other resources not budgeted for.

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