

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KETA  
MUNICIPALITY

BY

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Thesis submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Educational Administration

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## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

*I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.*

Candidate's Signature:..... Date:.....

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### Supervisors' Declaration

*We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to assess the communication practices in the administration of senior high schools (SHSs) in the Keta Municipality. A descriptive survey involving the use of questionnaires was employed to solicit information from students, staff and headmasters of the schools.

A questionnaire was designed to find out the communication tools used mostly in the administration of SHSs in the Keta Municipality. It sought to find out how subordinates (staff and students) communicate with the head; the perceptions of staff and students about the communication practices of the head; challenges faced in communication (among the students, staff and head) and finally the effectiveness of communication tools used.

In all, 248 respondents took part in the study which was made up of 80 student representative council (SRC) members, 160 staff and 8 heads. The data collected were analyzed using frequency distributions and percentage counts. The study revealed four media of communication mostly used namely: staff meetings, SRC meetings, school assembly and notice board. Again, the study showed that both students and staff communicated with the head mostly through SRC and staff meetings respectively. It is also revealed that staff and students generally had good perceptions about the communication practices of the head.

The study however, indicated a few challenges. Measures to be taken to improve communication in the administration of the schools for example heads being specific in giving out instructions; and avoidance of the use of too many middle men in giving out instructions had been recommended.

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## **DEDICATION**

To my mother, Mrs, A.K. Dali, my lovely wife Gertrude L.A. Dali and my son

Etonam J.K. Dali.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background to the Study**

Effective communication is the cornerstone of strong, healthy relationships. Relationships begin and develop through communication. It is indeed one of the major elements of success in any human relationship. What then is communication? According to Mankoe (2007), “It is the process in human relations of passing information and understanding from one person to another” (p.117). The word ‘communication’ is derived from a Latin word ‘communis’ which means to make common, to share, to impact or to transmit. The origin of communication dates back to the Greek era of civilization. History has it that, the ancient Greeks were the first to study the communication process systematically. Their concept of logic persuasion, dictation and speaking are not out of date today, twenty five centuries later (Mortensen, 1972).

As do modern methods, communication theory by Aristotle focused on the fundamental elements of the communication process: the speaker, the message and the audience. His model of communication depicts communication as a simple structured process in which the communicator (sender) transmits a thought, idea or feeling to another person (receiver). In recent times, the model has been modified to include other terms like encoding, message, medium,

decoding, reaction, feedback and noise. Peretemode (1992) believes that communication is the transfer of information, feelings or messages from a source to a receiver. Communication pervades organizational activities and it is the process by which things are done in organizations (Gibson, Ivanceviah & Donnelly, 2000). If management and administration really want to make an impact in their organization, then they must communicate.

According to Afful-Broni (2006), it has been reliably discovered that one of the most potent means of psychologically and socially killing a person and cutting him off any community or organization is through negative communication. In this context, we are referring to the deliberate refusal to communicate valuable information to a person or a group of persons for their survival. Negative communication is also understood to mean the situation where information flow is so poorly done, so deliberately twisted through improper transmission or where the information is intentionally or incompetently made to arrive so late that it is of no use to the recipient.

It is for the above reason that proper communication is important. The headmaster of a senior high school needs to effectively communicate information to teachers, other administrative staff, kitchen staff, students and the community. An essential leadership task is to discern which data to share, how to share and when to share it and which to withhold (Agyenim-Boateng, Atta & Baafi-Frimpong, 2009). Leaders must create the atmosphere within which communication can flow not only from the top to down, but also from the bottom up. Without communication, we would not be able to function. We interact with

others, share information, beliefs, exchange ideas and stimulate plans and solve daily problems by use of communication. According to Hanson (1991), communication is not merely a matter of action and reaction; it is a transactional exchange between two or more individuals. Within this context, communication can be defined as the exchange in meaning. We all depend on communication to help meet our needs, find happiness and attain personal fulfillment. Possessing the ability to communicate effectively with others is essential for one's own success and the success of the organization that one works for or any group that one belongs to.

Communication is the transfer of information, feelings or messages from a source to a receiver, using verbal and non-verbal symbols. The verbal communication involves the use of spoken words, either in face-to-face setting or through telephone. The non-verbal communication includes facial expressions, gestures, eye-movement, posture and other body movements (Hellriegel, Slocum, & Woodman, 1992).

Written communication may take the form of letters, memoranda, telegrams, annual reports and others. Visual communication is where a pictorial appeal is made to the receiver in the form of materials such as posters, diagrams and cartoons. The audiovisual one appeals to the eye and is heard at the same time, using both sound and pictures through televisions, videos, and others (Becker & Ekdom, 1980).

Communication could either be formal or non-formal. The formal communication is the officially recognized means of sending messages, which is

transmitted along the official laid down lines of authority, while in-formal communication is the transmission of information through officially unrecognized channels and means, which do not follow any laid down procedures (Comrad, 1985).

Communication is integral for any relationship, be it a familial relationship, a friendship, a business association, a working relationship, or a romantic partnership. Not only is communication important for the success of any relationship, but the lack of it can absolutely ruin a relationship. The repercussions of poor communication include feelings of betrayal, fast propagating of distrust, misinterpretation of signals and events, accumulation of problems, willing self-isolation, and the deterioration of relationships. Communication is an excellent means by which all involved parties can work on ailing relationships (Bethel, 2000).

The quality of communication has a direct impact on the quality of the relationship especially at the workplace. This is why effective communication is crucial, as we all yearn for close healthy relationships throughout our lives. Effective communication can therefore be the tool for fostering trust and cooperation among workers, and also increase their commitment to the goals of any organization (Hellriegel, Slocum & Woodman, 2001).

Every time we speak, we choose and use one of four basic communication styles: assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive. Assertive communication is the ability to speak and interact in a manner that considers and respects the rights and opinions of others while at the same time standing up for

your own rights, needs and personal boundaries. It is the most effective and healthiest form of communication style and creates opportunities for open discussion with a variety of opinions, needs and choices to be respectfully heard and considered in order to achieve mutually satisfying solutions.

Aggressive communication always involves manipulation, where one may attempt to make people do what he/she wants by inducing guilt (hurt) or by using intimidation and control tactics (anger). Passive communication is based on compliance and hopes to avoid confrontation at all costs. In this mode, the speaker does not talk much, question even less, and actually does very little. Finally, passive-aggressive communication is the term used to describe communication and behaviour that is a) indirect and b) contains messages that are driven by negative emotions, maliciousness or are otherwise intended to attack someone (Ishii, 1981).

Within every organization, information is transmitted through the following channels: vertical (downward or upward), horizontal, diagonal and outward. Downward communication occurs when information is carried from a superior to the subordinates, while the upward one is the flow of opinions, ideas, complaints, and others from subordinates to superiors. The horizontal communication is the flow of information among employees of the same level in an organization. The diagonal one is the transmission of information between a superior in one unit and a subordinate in another. That is, it is the interaction among units at different levels. The outward communication is the flow of

information between an organization and the outside world or the general public (Philips & Brown, 1993).

Every organization is directed and managed by leaders and the school as an organization has the headmaster as its leader and communication, thus, exists across all relationships in the institution. A leader is defined as a person who is appointed, elected or informally chosen to direct and co-ordinate the work of others in a group (Yukl, 2002).

Leadership can be considered to be the personal qualities, behaviours, styles and decisions adopted by the leader. Gardner (1990) describes leadership as a process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the whole group. This strong statement suggests that the leader cannot only rely on the policies, statutes, laws and protocol of the organization to rule effectively but also needs to consider the system of communication to be adopted.

Leadership is an important concept in the study of groups since it has to occur usually in order for groups to become more effective. The leader plays an active part in development and maintenance of role structure and goal direction and influences the existence and efficiency of the group (Cheng, 2002).

According to Amuzu-Kpeglo (2005), communication helps management to engage in managerial functions such as planning, organizing, co-ordinating, directing and decision making. The head alone cannot perform all these managerial functions, therefore there is the need for him to organize regular staff meetings and also issue notices from time to time so that through delegation of



responsibility, he will be able to attain the targets set for the school. Communication therefore becomes an outlet through which these managerial functions could be performed.

An organization has been described as "...a system having an established structure and conscious planning, in which people work and deal with one another in a coordinated and co-operative manner for the accomplishment of recognized goals" (Beach, 1985, p.64). As a system, it consists of many interdependent parts and there are subsystems within the whole system. Structurally, there is a degree of formality involved and that the members have designated roles to play. This description of organization has wide application to all fields of human endeavour including business enterprises, the military, government, schools and colleges, churches and other non-governmental establishments (Beach, 1985).

According to Martens (1997), communication, motivation and performance are indicators that reflect in the student attitude about how much they can trust what the teacher says. Students will give teachers credibility, simply because they occupy the prestigious role of the teacher. Berger (1990), stated:

communication scholars tend to feel that communication is central to understanding everything else and have generated innumerable theories of communication models of the communication process. There seems to be a split in communication study between people with a social science background versus people with different ideas about communication. Schools of communication are recent arrivals in academia and many of the most influential thinkers in these

schools are people who have trained in sociology, political science, history, literature, journalism, economics, psychology and anthropology (p. 137).

According to Froyen (1998), in addition to possessing communication skills that draw students into a relationship, the teacher must be skillful in encouraging the student to use the relationship for growth. The skill is grounded in a basic belief in the goodness of the students and their ability to separate their work from their worth.

Communication is the lifeblood of any organization. The need for effective internal communication systems is particularly crucial when organizations, such as schools, are operating in a turbulent environment of rapid and sustained change. Schools must be innovative to be able to respond and adapt to the challenges presented by such changes. It is now increasingly evident that those organizations which promote good internal communication reap positive dividends in meeting these challenges.

However, there is a need for hard data on the nature, structure, flow and practice of communication to ensure that the most effective systems are put in place and are working to the optimal level. To achieve this, a method of assessing the communication practices need to be employed which allows for a thorough analysis of internal organizational communication, and also to explore the principal tools utilize in the implementation of a communication.

From the discussion so far, it is evident that no human institution or society can make their feelings, knowledge and aspirations known without

communication. Again, how can the organizational goals be achieved without communication? The absence of communication could be a serious challenge to the development of society.

This is why the headmaster as a manager of an educational institution needs to communicate and communicate well. The headmaster again as a manager has some management functions to perform – he needs to plan, organize, co-ordinate, control and supervise (Amuzu-Kpeglo, 2005). All these functions need to be performed through people as the head alone cannot perform all these functions. There is the need therefore for the head to use the tools and media at his disposal to effectively perform these functions. Effective use of staff meetings, the use of Student Representative Council (SRC), effective use of the notice board and through effective co-ordination and delegation of power, the headmaster would be able to take the school to greater heights. One of the major means available for the head to achieve these is through effective communication.

For the staff and students to enjoy their stay in the school largely depends on the communication skills of the headmaster. Parents and other stakeholders take interest in the schools' activities if they realize that the headmaster is able to effectively co-ordinate the activities of staff, students and other stakeholders. Again, absenteeism, especially on the side of the staff is also curbed and academic performance on the part of students enhanced (Bryk & Driscoll 1988; Smith & Scott, 1990).

Again, communication can be used as means of conflict resolution. It must be noted here that, however hard, the headmaster tries to effectively manage the

school, conflicts are bound to happen. For instance, conflict can arise on the allocation of staff bungalows, allocation of classes can also bring about conflict among the staff. Misunderstanding over meals served in the dining hall can be resolved by the use of communication.

Communication is one of the effective tools used by most leaders to achieve organizational goals. Effective flow of information is one of the crucial functions of management in an organization. This is because when management communicates with employees ideas are shared and concerns expressed from both ends (Levy, Wubbels, Brekelmans, & Morganfield, 1997).

The flow of information in any organization therefore is important in that it creates a tunnel through which the players of an organization can channel their view and grievances to promote understanding, effective co-ordination and team-spirit. It is in this vein that Lesikar (1974) maintained that communication is an ingredient which makes organization possible.

To this end, it is expected of school heads to establish effective channels of communication verbally or written with students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders of education so that they will be able to communicate with the head to ensure effective school administration. There is the assumption that before somebody is appointed a head, he might have attended a workshop and in-service training on school administration and learn about the important role of communication in administration.

Also, it is assumed that the heads have attended training colleges and learnt about the effective communication practices. There is therefore the need for

a focused communication strategy for the realization of the objectives of the school.

A focused communication strategy makes a significant contribution to achieving managerial effectiveness and must become an integral part of the strategic planning process for all organizations (Irving & Tourish, 1994). As part of this, effective communication systems and practices need to be developed and implemented. This starts with ascertaining the existing level of communication effectiveness (or breakdown) within the organization concerned. Much management activity consists of “fire fighting” rather than the exercise of strategic leadership, while the problems that prove so distracting on a day-to-day basis are often the consequence of bad communication systems. These produce poor staff commitment, and lead to staff who are less effective in their jobs (Larson & Fukami, 1984), with more absenteeism (Steers, 1977) and higher staff turnover (Angle & Perry, 1981) than their more informed counterparts. As a result when there is a change in the organization, little misunderstandings can grow into dissatisfaction.

By contrast, the communication process should be designed as part of the development of a positive social system (Reilly & DiAngelo, 1990), so as to be able to address any barriers to the promotion of effective communication within the organization. Indeed, the importance of communication cannot be over emphasized, surely, there cannot be any meaningful organizational life without effective communication among members and between the organization and its public.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The responsibility for the development of effective communications strategies and systems is essentially that of management. Managers need to organize ways of integrating a communications programme with existing general managerial functions. They should therefore think about how to develop a comprehensive communications strategy as an integral part of their overall strategic planning programme. For this reason, it has been argued that communication is the critical success ingredient in a school's strategic planning (Negben, 1991).

Hence, headmasters must be able to assess the effectiveness of their school's communication practices. To do so, they need to know what these are and how well they are currently functioning. It is important that there should be some review of and accountability for the flow of organizational communication. At the practical level, this means that if vital information is not reaching its target audiences, then the blockages in the communication channels can be identified and dealt with (Tourish & Hargie, 1996).

Here in Ghana, it is assumed that there is a communication gap among headmasters, staff and students of SHSs. This has led to numerous agitations of both staff and students against their heads. In the Ghanaian Times of March 27, 2005, p.7, an article by Hope, Kinsley E. captioned "Teachers cross sword with headteachers" purported that, the headmaster of Asoughaman Secondary-Technical at Akrofrom-Techiman, misappropriated funds and refused to release

money for science practicals. This led to agitations and unrest among both staff and students calling for the head's removal from the school.

Again, a report by David Yarboi Tetteh in the Ghanaian Times of March 18 2008, p.1, reported that Adisadel College in Cape Coast was closed down when students refused to take breakfast after the death of their colleague and went on rampage destroying school property. According to the report, a final year student of the school died after jumping from the third floor of a classroom block to avoid a punishment. Many of these reports are all over the dailies.

These incidents should not be regarded as isolated issues, for they signify what students can do when there is a break in communication. The question is how are the school heads in Ghana prepared for headship? Afful-Broni (2006) answers this question as he says: "the first observation to be made in terms of preparation of school heads in Ghana is that a very large percentage of these school heads have not had any formal training in the field of Educational Administration and Management"(p.4). This formal training would have helped these heads in the acquisition of effective communication skills.

Afful-Broni (2006) believes that despite this lack of formal training, a good number of these school heads have been able to perform rather effectively. He argues further that even though some have attained successes, these successful school heads would admit they initially had to experiment with many ideas, policies, or leadership principles, some of which might have negatively affected the future placement of a good number of students in society.

There is therefore, the need to accurately assess the school's present communication performance so as to be able to devise and implement worthwhile improvements. Such a strategy begins with gathering accurate information about current communication systems and practices within the school. Relevant questions that may be posed are which media do heads use to communicate? Do staff and students have good perceptions about the communication practices of the head? What are some of the challenges faced in communication? These questions constitute the core of the problem of investigation in the study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study sought to assess the communication practices in the administration of senior high schools (SHSs) in Keta Municipality. In doing this the following will be considered:

1. the type of communication system most often used in the administration of SHSs by heads in the Keta Municipality.
2. how students and teachers communicate with school heads.
3. the perception of students and teachers about the communication practices of the head.
4. the challenges students and teachers faced in their attempt to communicate with the heads.
5. the effectiveness of communication tools used by the heads.



## **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What type of communication tools are most often used in the administration of SHSs in the Keta Municipality by the heads of the institutions?
2. How do the staff and students in the SHSs in the Keta Municipality communicate with their school administrations?
3. What are the perceptions of staff and students about the communication practices of the heads of their institutions?
4. What major challenges do students and staff face in their attempt to communicate with the heads of their institutions?
5. How effective are the communication tools used by the heads?

## **Significance of the Study**

A healthy organization is one in which an obvious effort is made to get people with different backgrounds, skills, and abilities to work together towards the goal or purpose of the organization. In mobilizing people in order to realize the set goals of the organization, communication tools must be effectively used by both administration and subordinates (Negben, 1991). There is therefore the need to study how headmasters of senior high schools in the Keta Municipality use these communication tools effectively in the running of the schools in order to achieve results.

According to Hackman and Johnson (1996), effective communication occurs when the intended message of the sender and the interpretation of the receiver are one and the same. Again he believes that appropriate use of information technology such as e-mail can made communication effective in organizations.

It is in the light of this that the study becomes very important. The findings of this research will help school administrators in the Keta Municipality to see the need to keep the channels of communication open for free flow of information. By so doing, they will be making their staff and students active participators of school level decision-making process in order to ensure effective management of the schools.

The study is especially important because it would help headmasters of the SHSs in the Municipality to also see their weaknesses in the use of information technology and for that matter communication tools in their administrative practices and work on the weaknesses in order to realize the goals of the schools of which they are made heads. The assessment of communication practices in the administration of SHS would also foster the sensitivity of headmasters to matters which are crucial to the management of teachers but could be very difficult to detect from their personal and subjective perspectives.

Practicing teachers would also be made aware of certain communication variables that affect them adversely either individually or collectively for which they need not blame the headmaster. Finally, it will help policymakers to know

how to package information to those at the grass root so that they can get their support in the realization of educational goals.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The study is limited to SHSs in the Keta Municipality. The eight public SHSs in the Municipality were used. This had been done purposely to include all the eight headmasters in the study since they are in the centre of communication in the schools.

The study is limited in scope to the use of effective communicative practices in the administration of SHSs. However, the study unearthed solutions that can be found to challenges faced by heads and other stakeholders in the use of effective communication to help improve education in the country.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There were few problems that hindered the smooth collection of data. This included the following: a) I found it very hectic and difficult to get the busy heads to respond to the questions. b) Again, majority of the heads were less than two years in their schools which made it difficult to assess their communication practices. c) Also, in as much as the study is limited to the Keta Municipality in the Volta Region, and more especially limited to some SHSs in the country, the findings may not be generalized to the whole country. The results can only be reflection of those schools found in the Keta Municipality.

## **Definition of Terms**

1. **Encoding:** The sender transforms an idea, a thought or an impulse into a meaningful form (a set of symbols or gestures). The major form of encoding is language, which may be written, spoken or expressed through gestures. The result of the encoding process is a message.
2. **Message:** This is whatever the sender communicates to the receiver. It also refers to the transmitted data and the coded symbols that are intended to give particular meaning to data. Data includes the words spoken face-to-face, telephone calls, letters and memos and computer print out.
3. **Meanings:** These represent the receiver's ideas, facts, values, attitudes and feelings. It means evolving a mental picture of the message, giving it a name, and developing a feeling about it (Hanson, 1991).
4. **Medium:** This is the channel through which the message is carried; examples, telephone, e-mail, fax or text message.
5. **Decoding:** A technical term used for the receiver's thought processes which involve interpretation of the message.
6. **Feedback:** It is the response the sender gets from the receiver.
7. **Context:** It is the time or place where communication occurs.

These terms help us understand (and talk about) any communication act.

## **Organisation of the Study**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one presents the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, definition of terms, delimitation and limitations of the study. Chapter two contains the review of related literature.

The methodology and procedures that were used to gather data for the study are presented in chapter three. It covers the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection procedures, and the mode of data analysis. The results of analyses and findings that emerged from the study have been presented in chapter four. Chapter five contains a summary of the study and findings, conclusions drawn from the findings and recommendations for further study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The chapter reviews related literature to guide the study. The literature review begins to look at communication followed by the models on the concept of communication. The first model on organizational communication was propounded by Aristotle (as cited by Roberts 1924), followed by Laswell's model on communication. The third model by Shannon and Weaver, (1964) pays attention to the process of communication in organization. The importance of communication in organizations is discussed.

The chapter also deals with leadership and communication. The channels of communication in educational institutions and effective communication tools have also been dealt with. Also discussed in the chapter are the barriers of communication in educational institutions and finally how to improve upon communication in educational institutions.

#### **Theoretical Background**

##### **Communication in organizations**

Communication in organizations is very important because it performs the essential functions of enabling two or more individuals to maintain simultaneous orientations towards each other. The importance of communication in

organizations is further validated by Rogers and Rogers (1976), who gave four main reasons for its existence:

1. Communication is the lifeblood of every organization;
2. It pervades all activities in the organization;
3. It presents tools through which individuals understand their organizational roles and integrate into organizational sub-units
4. And finally, it provides means of making and executing decisions, obtaining feedback, and correcting organizational objectives as well as producers as the situation demand.

Management must therefore have a clear understanding of the functions of communication as well as the role it plays in decision making in the organization or institution. The external and internal environment must also be well understood before communication can be effective in organization.

According to Gardner (1990), communication is the ingredient, which makes organization possible. It is the vehicle through which basic management or administrative functions are carried out. Poor communication sometimes can be dangerous and even lead to tragic and unnecessary loss of human life. Managers and administrators direct the activities of the members of the organization through communication; they coordinate through communication. Staff also plan and control through the same means.

According to Kinard (1988), communication is one of the administrator's most important tools which when used correctly embody the speaker's objectives and helps accomplish tasks that require co-ordination. Besides, it disseminates

information motivates and understanding and aids in decision-making. Management needs to understand the values of its members before it can communicate to them because, for an institution to be successful, it must have an open communication that values diversity.

### **The communication process**

To communicate effectively, we need to be familiar with the factors involved in the communication process. If we are aware of them, these factors will help us plan, analyze situations, solve problems, and in general do better in our work no matter what our job might be.

This leads to a discussion of the communication process. There is the need to look at it part by part as viewed by several communication theorists. Communication is a concern to many people. So a lot of thought, work and discussion have gone into different communication situations. Today, such people as psychologists, educators, medical doctors, sociologists, engineers and journalists represent only a few of the professional groups whose members have developed ways of looking at and talking about the communication process in their specialized fields.

Several theorists have discussed the communication process in ways that have important implications for those involved in formal education programmes. Each of the "models" that is reviewed has a point of vital interest.



## **Communication Models**

Communication models come in a variety of forms, ranging from catchy summations to diagrams to mathematical formulas. One model of the communication process reviewed is also one of the oldest.

### **Aristotle's model**

Aristotle, writing 300 years before the birth of Christ, provided an explanation of oral communication that is still worthy of attention. He called the study of communication "rhetoric" and spoke of three elements within the process. He provided us with this insight: Rhetoric falls into three divisions, determined by the three classes of listeners to speeches. For, of the three elements in speech-making that is, speaker, subject, and person addressed, it is the last one, the hearer that determines the speech's end and object (Roberts, 1924).

Here, Aristotle speaks of a communication process composed of a speaker, a message and a listener. He points out that the person at the end of the communication process holds the key to whether or not communication takes place.

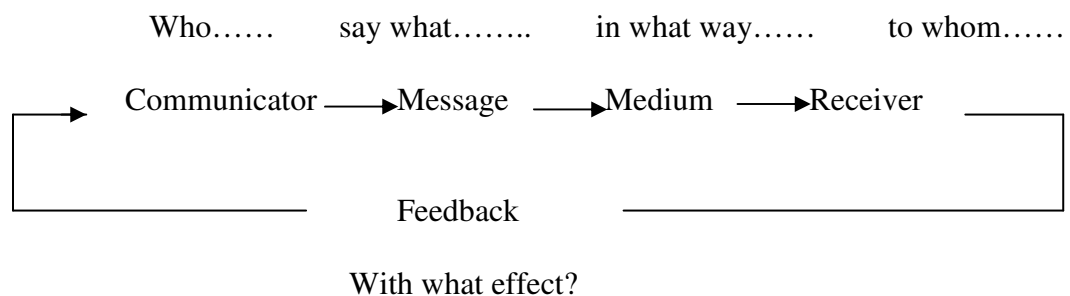
Our failure to recognize what Aristotle grasped thousands of years ago is a primary cause, if not the primary one, for communication failure. We fail to recognize the importance of the audience at the end of the communication chain. We tend to be more concerned about ourselves as the communications source, about our message, and even the channel we are going to use. Too often, the listener, viewer, reader fails to get any consideration at all.

Aristotle's words underscore the long interest in communication. They also indicate that man has had a good grasp of what is involved in communication for a long while. So we might even wonder: if we know so much about the communication process, and if we have known it for so long, why do we still have communications problems?

It is unlikely we will ever achieve perfect communication. The best we can hope for is to provide improved communication. Hopefully, we will be more aware of the process and work harder to minimize problems with communications.

### **Lasswell's model**

Harold Lasswell, a political scientist, developed a much quoted formulation of the main elements of communication: "Who says what, in which channel to whom with what effect" (Lasswell, 1948, p.37). This summation of the communications process has been widely quoted since the 1940s.



**Figure 1: Lasswell's communication model.**

Source: (Lasswell, 1948)

The point in Lasswell's comment is that there must be an "effect" if communication takes place. If we have communicated, we have "motivated" or produced an effect. We shall give a detailed meaning to the various components of the model:

### **Communicator (who...)**

Any form of human communication has a communicator or sender who may be the source of communication. This source could be an individual person or group of persons who have an idea, intentions, desires, information or a purpose to transmit to another individual or group.

### **Encoding**

Given the communicator, an encoding process must take place that translates the communicator's ideas into a systematic set of symbols – into a language expressing the communicator's purpose. The major form of encoding is language.

### **Message (Say what...)**

The result of the encoding process is the message. The purpose of the communicator is expressed in the form of the message - either verbal or nonverbal. Administrators have numerous purpose for communicating, such as to have others understanding their ideas, to understand the ideas of others, to gain acceptance of themselves or their ideas, or to produce action.

The message, according to Mankoe (2007) refers to the transmitted data and the coded symbols that are intended to give particular meaning to the data. Data include the words spoken face-to-face, telephone calls, letters and memos and computer print out. The sender expects that the receiver will interpret the data as meant. The greater the difference between the interpreted meaning and the original message, the poorer will be the interpersonal communication.

### **Medium (In what way...)**

The medium is the carrier of the message – the means by which the message is sent. Organizations provide information to members in a variety of ways, including face – to – face communication, telephone conversations, group meeting, fax message, memos, policy statements, reward systems, production schedules, and video teleconferences. The medium is sometimes a neglected element of the communication process. Often administrators don't adequately consider the impact of the choice of medium on a communication's effectiveness and even managerial performance.

### **Decoding/Receiver (To whom...)**

For the process of communication to be completed, the message must be decoded so it is relevant to the receiver. Decoding, a technical term for the receiver's thought processes, involves interpretation. Receivers interpret the decoded message in the light of their own previous experiences and frame of reference. The closer the decoded message comes to the intent desired by the

communicator, the more effective is the communication. This underscores the importance of the communicator being 'receiver-oriented'.

### **Feedback (With what effect...?)**

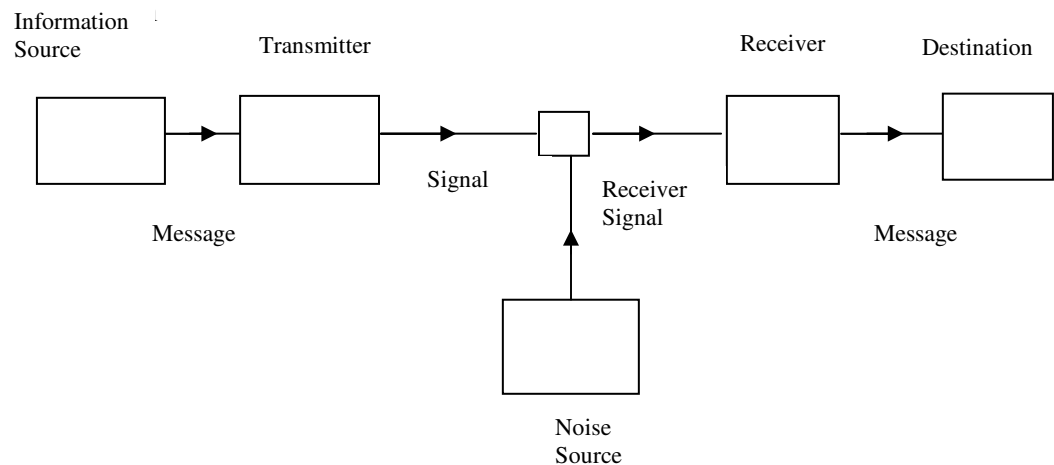
One-way communication processes do not allow receiver-to-communicator feedback. It rather increases the potential for distortion between the intended message and the received message. Provision for feedback in the communication process is desirable. A feedback loop provides a channel for receiver response that enables the communicator to determine whether the message has been received and has produced the intended response. Two-way communication process provides for this important receiver – to –communicator feedback.

For the manager, communication feedback may come in many ways. In face to face situations, direct feedback through verbal exchanges is possible, as are such subtle means of communication as facial expression of discontent or misunderstanding. In addition, indirect means of feedback (such as declines in productivity, poor production quality, increased absenteeism or turnover, and coordination and/or conflict between units) may indicate communication breakdowns (Afful-Broni, 2006).

In the senior high schools (SHSs) for instance, the heads must try to effectively use feedback since it enhances communication. Staff meetings and SRC meetings can be organized to receive feedback on important issues from

other students and the head. At other times, effective use of the suggestion box equally enhances feedback in the schools.

It is also interesting to note that Lasswell's version of the communication process mentions four parts: who, what, channel, whom. Three of the four parallel parts mentioned by Aristotle: speaker (who), subject (what), person addressed (whom). Only channel has been added. Most modern-day theorists discuss the four parts of the communication process, but use different terms to designate



**Figure 2: Shannon and Weaver's model of communication**

Source: (Shannon & Weaver, 1964).

Back in 1949 Claude Shannon, an electrical engineer with Bell Telephone, and Warren Weaver, of the Rockefeller Foundation, (Figure 2) published their book, *The Mathematical Theory of Communication* (Shannon & Weaver, 1964).

Shannon and Weaver attempted to do two things:

1. Reduce the communication process to a set of mathematical formulas
2. Discuss problems that could be handled with the model.

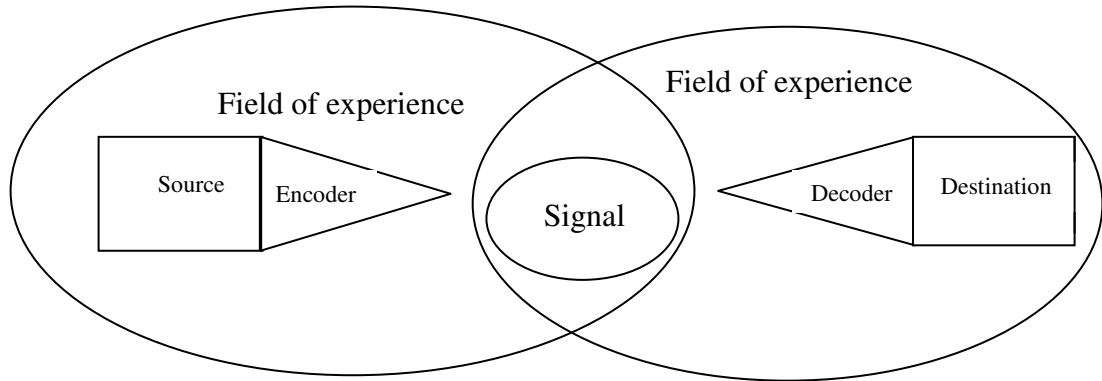
Shannon and Weaver were not particularly interested in the sociological or psychological aspects of communication. Instead, they wanted to devise a communications system with as close to 100 percent efficiency as possible. The Shannon and Weaver diagram has essentially the same parts as the one formulated by Aristotle. It is true the parts have different names, and a fourth component that is in this case the transmitter — is included.

However, this model has an interesting additional element. Shannon and Weaver were concerned with noise in the communications process. Noise, Weaver said, " there may be distortions of sound (in telephony, for example) or static (in radio), or distortions in shape or shading of picture (television), or errors in transmission (telegraph)" (Shannon & Weaver, 1964, p.7).

The "noise" concept introduced by Shannon and Weaver can be used to illustrate "semantic noise" that interferes with communication. Semantic noise is the problem connected with differences in meaning that people assign to words, to voice inflections in speech, to gestures and expressions and to other similar "noise" in writing.

Semantic noise is a more serious problem or barrier to developing effective communications than most realize. It is hard to detect that semantic noise has interfered with communication. Too often the person sending a message chooses to use words and phrases that have a certain meaning to him or her. However, they may have an altogether different meaning to individuals receiving the message. In the interest of good communication, we need to work to hold semantic noise to the lowest possible level.

There is a semantic noise in face-to-face verbal communication just as there is static noise, for example, in radio communication. There are other kinds of noises involved in communication as well.



**Figure 3: Schramm's model of communication**

Source: Schramm, 1961.

Wilbur Schramm, a well-known communications theorist, developed a straight forward communications model (Figure 3) in his book *The Process and Effects of Mass Communications* (Schramm, 1961).

In Schramm's model he notes, as did Aristotle, that communication always requires three elements: the source, the message and the destination. Ideally, the source encodes a message and transmits it to its destination via some channel, where the message is received and decoded.

However, taking the sociological aspects involved in communication into consideration, Schramm points out that for understanding to take place between the source and the destination, they must have something in common. If the source's and destination's fields of experience overlap, communication can take



place. If there is no overlap or only a small area is common, communication is difficult if not impossible.

### **Berlo's model**

The final communications model that I will consider is the SMCR model, developed by David K. Berlo, a communication theorist and consultant. In his book *The Process of Communication*, (Berlo, 1960), he points out the importance of the psychological view in his communications model. The four parts of Berlo's SMCR model are: source, message, channel, and receiver.

The first part of this communication model is the source. All communication must come from some source. The source might be one person, a group of people, or a company, organization, or institution. Several things determine how a source will operate in the communication process. They include the source's communication skills: abilities to think, write, draw, and speak. They also include attitudes toward audience, the subject matter, or toward any other factor pertinent to the situation. Knowledge of the subject, the audience, the situation and other background also influences the way the source operates. So will social background, education, friends, salary, culture — all sometimes called the socio-cultural context in which the source lives (Berlo, 1960).

Message has to do with the package to be sent by the source. The code or language must be chosen. In general, we think of code in terms of the natural languages: English, Spanish, German, Chinese and others. Sometimes we use other languages like music, art and gestures. In all cases, the code chosen should

be easy for the audience to understand. Within the message, the content must be selected and organized to meet acceptable treatment for the given audience or specific channel. If the source makes a poor choice, the message will likely fail.

Channel can be thought of as a sense: smelling, tasting, feeling, hearing and seeing. Sometimes it is preferable to think of the channel as the method over which the message will be transmitted: telegraph, newspaper, radio, letter, poster or other media. The kind and number of channels to use may depend largely on purpose. In general, the more a message is tailored to the people "receiving" each channel, the more effective the message.

Receiver becomes the final link in the communication process. The receiver is the person or persons who make up the audience of the message. All of the factors that determine how a source will operate apply to the receiver. Think of communication skills in terms of how well a receiver can hear, read, or use his or her other senses. Attitudes relate to how a receiver thinks of the source, of himself or herself, of the message, and so on. The receiver may have more or less knowledge than the source. Socio-cultural context could be different in many ways from that of the source, but social background, education, friends, salary, culture would still be involved. Each will affect the receiver's understanding of the message.

Messages sometimes fail to accomplish their purpose for many reasons. Frequently the source is unaware of receivers and how they view things. Certain channels may not be as effective under certain circumstances. Treatment of a

message may not fit a certain channel. Or some receivers simply may not be aware of, interested in, or capable of using certain available messages.

These are just a few of the many views of the communication process that have been developed. There are many other communication theorists — McLuhan, MacLean, Westley, Stephenson, Gerbner, Rothstein, Osgood, Johnson, Cherry and others. Those briefly described here are pertinent to many everyday communication situations.

For an ending thought, let us return again to the idea that successful communication depends upon the receiver. As a communications source, we can spend a lot of time preparing messages and in selecting channels, but if the receiver does not get the message, we have not communicated. Heads must try to know the receivers of their message so as to choose the right channel and source for the message. It is, as Aristotle said 300 years before the birth of Christ; for of the three elements in speech-making: speaker (communicator), subject (message), and person addressed (receiver), it is the last one, the hearer that determines the speech's end and object.

### **Summary of the models**

Here is a summary of the important thoughts illustrated by each model:

Aristotle: The receiver holds the key to success.

Lasswell: An effect must be achieved if communication takes place.

Shannon and Weaver: Semantic noise can be a major communication barrier.

Schramm: Overlapping experiences make it easier to communicate successfully.

Berlo: Several important factors must be considered relating to source, message,

channel and receiver.

After discussing the models, one may ask, so what is the importance of communication that it is given attention by all these theorists?

### **Importance of communication**

Communication is seen as an essential element in the functioning of any organized group, including business organizations. It is used to disseminate the goal of the organization, develop plans for their achievement, and organized people, money and materials in the most effective and efficient way. Communication is used to resolve organizational conflicts and to create an environment in which people are willing to contribute towards the welfare of the organization. The efficiency of information exchange, therefore, becomes a prerequisite for the achievement of organizational goals (Thompson, 2007).

The organization exists in a dynamic environment in which efficient exchange of information is essential for its survival. The internal environment is also dynamic, requiring efficient information exchange to keep the individual units of the organization functioning as an integrated whole. It is expected of heads of SHSs in the Keta Municipality therefore to know the environment in which they operate and relate with all the people they work with in order to achieve results.

The basic objective of any business organization is survival. The organization seeks to achieve this by pursuing survival functions such as profits, markets standing, productivity of resources, innovativeness through research and

development, improvement of management – worker performance, development of the firm's physical resources, and the pursuit of social responsibility between the organization and the external environment on which it depends, as well as on the efficiency of the firm's total resources conversion process (Drucker, 1954).

Katz and Kahn (1978) have proposed a theoretical model for understanding organizations. This is based on the energetic input –output system in which energy return from the output reactivates the system. They posit that all social systems including organizations consist of patterned activities of a number of individuals. These patterned activities are complementary or independent with respect to some common output or outcome. They are repeated, relatively enduring and bounded in space and time.

The stability or recurrence of activities, they claim, can be examined in relation to the energetic input into the system; the transformation of energies within the system and the resulting product or energetic output. In a factory, for example, the raw materials and the human labour are the energetic input; the patterned activities of production are the transformation of energy in the finished product. To ensure growth, and to preserve its character, a system turns to import more energy than is required for its output.

In other words, systems ensure their survival by operating to acquire some margin of safety beyond the immediate level of existence. The human body, for example, stores fat, the social organization builds reserves, and the society increases its technological and cultural base. Miller (1973) found that the rate of

growth of system, within certain ranges, is exponential if it exists in a medium that makes available unrestricted amounts of energy for output.

Human organizations, according to Koontz and Weihrich (1988), are not only energetic systems but they are also informational. Every organization takes in and utilizes information. Within the organization itself, information is also exchanged. Thus, Communication which is the organization of information and transmission of meaning becomes the very essence of organizations since it is the means by which people are linked together to achieve a common purpose (Koontz & Weihrich, 1988).

According to Musaazi (1985), a number of practices create good behaviour patterns in schools. Some of these are described below: First there must be recognition by both staff and students of the purposes and values of the rules in force. It is only when the teachers and students fully understand the importance of the rules that they will uphold and defend them. It is therefore advisable for the school rules and regulations to be clearly explained and made known to each member of the school community. The rules and an implication for the smooth running of the school should be written down and if possible, circulated to all the students and staff.

Internal relations in a corporation are like the framework of a building. If the termites of mistrust creep into the framework, the whole edifice is threatened and eventually it would collapse. This is why there should exist good relationship among all the players who form the school community. Again, effective communication can help bring about that trust (Hamilton & Parker, 1997).

The same is true of external relation. Today, the company has become dependant on all those upon whom social change, among other factors, has conferred a fragment on economic, political or administrative power. Depending on the confidence, which the company and its activities may or may not inspire in those myriad individuals or groups, they may exercise that power to stimulate, slow down, or even halt all together this development of trust for them (Leavitt & Mueller, 1951). There is therefore the need to establish trust between an organization and its publics.

In an effort to build understanding and trust between a firm and its publics, the firm may utilize one-way or two-way communication in transmitting information. In their experiment on the effects and effectiveness of one – way and two – way communications, Leavitt and Mueller (1951) came up with findings which they believe could provide guidelines for communications in organizations in situations where communications have to be fast. They found one-way communication to be more economical and efficient, where orderliness is considered more vital – as in a large, public meeting – one – way communication might be more appropriate.

In situations where accuracy of communication is considered important (as in instructions for carrying out complex task) the two-way communication was found essential. Without feedback from the receiver, the sender has little bases for judging the accuracy of the communication or the degree of understanding and comprehension experienced by the receiver. They

recommended to managers to create the most efficient mix of one-way and two-way communication to achieve the best results (Leavitt & Mueller, 1951).

They however, noted that some categories of managerial communications, such as straight forward statement of company rules and policies, require little or no feedback to ensure clarity. In many other cases such as the formulation of organizational objectives or the implementation of a new strategy, two – way communication is usually essential.

The effectiveness of organizational communication, which ever method is used, has been found to be influenced by the company's formal channels of communication and authority structure, by job specialization, and by information ownership. Glauzer and Glaser (1961) found that, even in a group as small as five, an “all channel structure where anyone can talk to any is less effective for a number of purposes than a structure where only some channel may be used. For this reason formal channels of communication are created in organizations to specify who communicates to whom. The leaders in organizations must make sure subordinates under their care use the channels effectively in order to realize the organizational goals.

### **Leadership and Communication**

Leadership has been defined by various and many authorities. The importance of leadership in any kind of institution cannot be overemphasized. Starratt (1996), (as cited by Afful-Broni, 2006) stated, “...the paths of communities and entire nations have been paved very much by their leaders”



(p.1). Gardner (1990) also describes leadership as a process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the whole group.

Even though there is abundance of literature today on leadership as service (Drucker, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1996; Bush, 2004), leadership is also a status. This truth can cause leadership to ruin the very organization it was set out to guide.

Leadership is very crucial in any setting, be it religious, corporate or educational. In one sense, then, educational leadership is like any type of leadership.

According to Mankoe (2007), "... probably the most critical managerial task is to be both effective and efficient in the use of resources for the attainment of an organization's goals and objectives" (p.9). It is in this light that Richman and Farmer (1975), declared, growing inter-dependence, complexity, rapid change, uncertainty, limited resources, and inter related human needs, goals, expectations and aspirations are among the underlying reasons for the importance of good management. Richman and Farmer (1975) observe:

Management involves decision making about what goals to pursue and how to attain them. The decisions and operations of a manager may differ from one organization to another; however, the functions of a manager, which are central to the overall management process, are common to all. These basic and interrelated managerial functions include planning and control, organization staffing, direction, leadership, motivation and communication (p.4).

This implies a leader, for that matter a leader of a Senior High School cannot do without communication. Hamilton and Parker (1997) under theories of management in their book “Communication for Results” associated all the management theories with a type of communication that goes on in the organization. For instance, the traditional and bureaucratic models talk about the chain of command which is the communication structure of an organization.

Hamilton and Parker (1997) discussed the role of communication as it flowed up and down the chain of command and noted the restriction placed on communication by the organization structure where every information must be channeled through the appropriate quarters. In fact, “the bureaucratic organization, with its tight hierarchy, controlled and formal communication and legal, written rules of action, still is the dominant model for governmental agencies, educational institutions and private firms” (Hamilton & Parker,1997, p.48).

Again, under the human relations model, Hamilton and Parker (1997) reported that “although managers in human relations organizations provide a friendly, relaxed work environment, they still view communication as a command tool for use by management. Therefore, communication in the human relations organization is basically downward, although it is also supportive” (p.53). Managers show love and care to employees because they believe that employees, when treated with care are more productive.

However, in Ghana today, selection of school heads is based on long service or seniority. This has been confirmed by Afful-Broni (2006) when he stated:

a study among school heads across the nation will reveal that their selection as leaders was generally based on long service or seniority. If the headteacher of a school goes on transfer or retirement and another headteacher is not immediately available to be transferred to that post one common criterion for replacement is the teacher on staff with the longest time served at the school (p.5).

Belief in the necessity of formal training in Educational Administration is only now catching on with us. It must be stated here clearly that leadership in educational institutions requires a unique skill that requires special training to ensure competent performance.

In addition, having a degree in educational administration is not enough. One must have understanding of what goes on in schools, and this understanding must come from one's own experience with, and work within the school environment. There is the need to let our schools flourish and this can be done effectively by empowering our headmasters and building them up to serve their true purpose; the major medium that the head can use therefore to achieve the aims of the school is communication. Once again communication cannot and can never be separated from leadership tasks since it is the vehicle by which leaders drive their institutions to greater heights. There are forms and channels of communication available for the heads of SHSs to choose from and the form or

channel to use depends on appropriateness; timeliness and relevance of the form or channel.

### **Methods of Communication**

Communication comes in forms (formal and informal) and channels (vertical, horizontal and diagonal). However, under all these forms and channels there are methods used to communicate and they are explained below:

1. Verbal Communication: This involves the use of the spoken word either in a face-to-face setting or through telephone call
2. Written Communication: This may also take the form of letters, memorandum, telegrams and annual reports, text message e-mail
3. Non-Verbal Communication (Kinetics): These include facial expressions, gestures, eye-movement, posture and other body movements (Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2009).
4. Visual Methods of Communication: In this, pictorial message is made to the receiver and takes the form of posters, diagrams, flow charts, cartoons.
5. Audio-Visual Methods of Communication: They include films, filmstrips, video and audiocassettes. They, however, require careful preparation and planning to make them useful (Mankoe, 2007).
6. Art-Communication: Here, the receiver interprets columns, images, sculptors and cultural designs for example Adinkra signs among Ghanaians.

**Forms of Communication:** Communication within an organization can take two main forms, namely formal and informal communication.

### **Formal Communication**

This is the officially recognized means of sending a message and it is transmitted along the officially laid down lines of authority. It conforms to lay down patterns and procedures in the organization (Weiss, 1998). This form of communication comes with some advantages: It is highly reliable, since every member of the organization needs to know who to report to and at what time to report. For instance students in the boarding house know exactly who to report to if they want to leave the school premises. It also gives clear direction in terms of communication (vertical, horizontal or diagonal) there by making coordination effective in an organization such as the school. Another advantage that comes with formal communication is that, it aids in decision making in organizations. For instance, at staff meeting, which is one of the official channels used in the school to communicate, a lot of decisions can be taken either on the date to start examinations, on discipline, or any other matter relevant to the school.

However, the hierarchy is unduly long, due to that, the social needs of the individual may be ignored. For instance, where a student is ill and has to report to the Dispensary Prefect who in turn reports to the health tutor to obtain official permission from the Senior Housemaster before he can go to hospital. This can result into serious consequences due to the delay. The headmaster, however should learn to make an effective use of the formal communication system despite

the shortcomings since without the formal channels in the organization, the focus of the organization can be misplaced.

### **Informal Communication**

This is transmission of information and ideas through officially unrecognized channels and means within the organization (Weiss, 1998). It comes with some advantages some of which are discussed below: it can bring strength and vitality to an organization; it provides an additional channel of communication, which can usefully complement official lines, it also encourages better management and administration since managers always listen to what is being said among their subordinates, for example for the fear of criticism management will want to do the right thing, again, it provides identification and emotional support, for example, it gives some people significant recognition and influences which the formal channel might deny. Informal communication also helps to satisfy the social needs of the people hence motivate them to work.

Finally, it saves time, since it does not need to follow any laid down procedures and may take several forms, for example a teacher may walk straight to the District Director's office to lodge a complaint of indiscipline acts or behaviour to the District Director without reporting the issue to the Assistant Headmaster, Headmaster or any of the four front liners. As the example portrays, this form of communication is often faster in transmitting message than the formal channels and may be beneficial in problem – solving.

However, on the other hand, it may seem to show disregard for rank and authority and does not promote orderliness in the organization. Again it can easily spread false information among workers in the organization. It is believed that if management is properly trained to understand and work with the informal channels, the benefits will far exceed the fears. Therefore, the heads of the SHSs in the Keta Municipality need to control and manage it for its effective use, since it cannot be stopped.

### **Channels of communication in organizations**

According to Bennett and Hess (2001), information flow is essential to an organization's effectiveness. Several studies have shown that many work – related problems are caused by poor attitudes rather than inadequate skills and knowledge. Open communication molds positive attitudes and improves the likelihood of job satisfaction and better job performance. In all organizations, formal and informal information is transmitted through different channels

The formal channels may be rigid and highly centralized, with individuals able to communicate with only a few persons; or they may be loose and decentralized, with individuals able to communicate with each other at any level. Experiments by James, Stoner and Wankel (1986) revealed that centralized networks are faster and more accurate than decentralized network for simple tasks while for complex tasks, decentralized channels are quicker and more accurate. They also found that the most central person is most satisfied in centralized networks, while group members' satisfaction is higher in decentralized networks.

Within these formal channels, communication may be vertical, consisting of communication up and down the organization's chain of command. It could also be crosswise consisting of horizontal flow of information with people on the same or similar levels and diagonal flow with persons at different levels who have no direct reporting relationships. Here, the channels are categorized as downward, upward, and horizontal.

### **Downward Communication**

Downward communication occurs when information is transmitted from higher to lower levels in an organization. Directives, policy statements, and memoranda fall into this category. In the school for example, as soon as the headmaster/mistress orders the school bell to be rung for an emergency meeting, both teachers and students respond to it. Katz and Kahn (1978) identify five major types of downward-flowing information:

1. Job instruction, which explains how a task is to be performed. They come from written specifications, training manuals, training sessions, or on-the-job training.
2. Jobs rational statements, which explain to workers how their tasks relate to other jobs in the company. Specialization in many organizations has made it difficult for workers to see how their particular tasks fit into the overall operations of the firm. Job rationale communications answer this problem.
3. Policy and procedure statements, which explain the employer's regulation and personal benefit provided.



4. Feedback, which includes message that tell employees whether their work is satisfactory. Feedback should be provided daily, as well as in the form of periodic performance appraisal.
5. Indoctrination communications, which try to highlight employees' support for a particular organizational goal, such as an area fund – raising drive.

Although downward communication is necessary, it is frequently overemphasized and overused. This creates an authoritative atmosphere that may hurt employee motivation and morale. Downward – flowing information also has a tendency to become lost and distorted.

Problems in downward communication exist when managers take the information needs of subordinates for granted. They often do not provide subordinates with information they need to carry out their task effectively, assuming the accuracy and completeness of their downward communication. In some organizations managers frequently fail to pass on information (such as high-level change of policy) or to instruct subordinates adequately on how to perform their duties. This lack of communication is sometimes deliberate, as when managers withhold information to keep subordinates dependent on them. The result of incomplete downward communication is that subordinates may feel confused or powerless and may be unable to carry out their tasks properly (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

According to Clappitt and Downs (1993), in the past, managers placed too much faith in the downward channel, ignoring the benefits that arise when employees fully discuss the company policies. Managers often fail to provide

clear channels for funneling information, opinions, and attitudes up through the organization. Managers who assume that the company's supervisory hierarchy provides a sufficient channel for sending message to subordinates may be in for a big surprise. Too much faith in downward communication may blind the manager to company rumours and only create problems instead of solving them.

This must be a warning to the heads of SHSs who always give out information without expecting any reaction from either the staff or the students. Most of the times, staff meetings cannot be described as meetings, since in some of the schools, it is only heads who give out information from the beginning of the meeting to the end while the staff only listens to the head. This could lead to a lot of ill feeling among the staff.

### **Upward communication**

Upward communication is also vital to successful communication in an organization. More and more executives are discovering the benefits of keeping in touch with their employees (Clampitt & Downs 1993). It is the flow of opinions, ideas, complaints, and other kinds of information from subordinate up to managers. It is generated by suggestion systems, grievance producers, informal and formal meetings, attitude surveys, and exit interviews (Glauser, 1984; Griffin, 2000).

Upward communication is important for several reasons. First, managers need to know how their subordinates feel about their jobs, their working conditions, and the company's policies and procedures. Second, upward

communication encourages workers to discuss particular job-related problems that may be hindering productivity and efficiency. Third, it provides managers with feedback on the workers' reactions to policy changes, developments in their departments, and other matters that affect their attitudes and performance (Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2009).

In other words, upward communication supplies management with the information that it needs to make intelligent decisions. In the school for instance, students may send their grievances through the school prefects, house masters/mistress or senior house master/mistresses. There is another spin-off benefit of upward communication as well. Whenever workers are encouraged to communicate with upper-level managers, downward communication, such as policy changes, meets with less resistance.

Managers who isolate themselves from what is happening below them are asking for trouble. Besides losing touch with reality, they fail to maintain close rapport with their subordinates. In many instances, isolation results when a manager refuses to listen to his or her subordinates or has inadequate personal interaction with them. Workers feel isolated when they think that their boss does not want to be bothered with their problems.

Again, Kinicki and Brian (1999), (as cited by Baah 2006), stated that organizations that are really opened to upward communication can profit from the opinions of employees. They again pointed out that upward communication can convey four messages and these include:

1. "what subordinates are doing,

2. unresolved work problems,
3. suggestions for improvement, and
4. how subordinates feel about each other and the job.” (p.24).

According to Afful-Broni (2006):

in the school situation, and in most organizations, information flow is therefore usually from the top to the bottom. However, it is suggested that as much as possible, the top administration personnel would do well to stay in touch with the lower level of staff so that there would be elements of information flow from bottom up as well. For example, it should not be considered a sign of weakness for the headmaster or principal to elicit the opinion of other staff and student leaders, or even allow members to debate major issues, even if in the end he would be the final decider in consultation with the board of governors. Sometimes these can offer good opportunity for leaders to know what is needed, what is not liked and what needs to be changed or addressed (p.67).

He went ahead and said that, generally the amount and quality of information that reaches leaders are determinable by the type of leadership that is in place. There is the likelihood that more data and information would reach a head who is conceived of as being open and welcoming. What can rather be frustrating for school administration is when the information they receive cannot

be traced to its origins. He put it thus “if the administrator does not know who is complaining or providing information, it would be difficult for him to follow up if there needs to be clarification and verification” (p.68).

For the dispensation of his daily duties therefore, the headmaster should run an open door policy where he can take information from all stakeholders. The caution here though is that it must be done with tact.

### **Horizontal Communication**

Horizontal, or lateral, communication refers to the flow of information among workers on the same organizational level (Bennett & Hess 2001). Horizontal or lateral communication usually follows the pattern of work in an organization. It occurs between members of work groups, between members of different departments, and between line and staff. The main purpose of horizontal communication is to provide a direct channel for organizational coordination and problem sorting. In this way it avoids the much slower procedure of directing communication through a common superior. For example, all teachers of the school or heads of department meet to discuss issues that concern their work as well as the welfare of students. Goldhaber (1993) said that horizontal channels can be used for:

- (1) Coordinating tasks.
- (2) Solving problems
- (3) Sharing information
- (4) Resolving conflict and

(5) Developing rapport among workers.

Horizontal communication is essential for managers and workers alike. Without it, business functions could not be co-coordinated. Sound decision making also relies on information – sharing among functional units. Several studies have shown that most poor management decisions result from poor communication (Munter, 1993).

People who work closely together and communicate regularly rarely have difficulty understanding one another. Their interaction also provides emotional support and helps satisfy their social needs. It must also be noted that this channel of communication facilitates organizational coordination between departments.

### **Diagonal Communication**

Diagonal Communication identified by Gibson (1980), describes the flow of information within persons at different levels who have no direct reporting relationship. To him, it is the least used channel of communication in organizations.

Diagonal channels become effective when managers cannot communicate through other channels. A significant amount of diagonal communication occurs outside the chain of command. Such communications often occur with the knowledge, approval, and encouragement of supervisors who understand that diagonal communication often relieves their communication burden and also reduces inaccuracy by putting relevant people in direct contact with each other. In the SHSs for instance, the communication between the school driver and

teaching staff where the staff may need the services of the school driver to transport some items to his bungalow is termed diagonal. Again, a teacher may decide to employ the services of some of the kitchen staff without informing the matron. This is equally termed the diagonal channel.

It is worth noting here that, the diagonal channel of communication saves time and it is more economical. In the school situation for instance, the teacher who wishes to employ the services of the school driver should seek permission from the person responsible for transport. Also a teacher who wishes to engage the services of the kitchen staff should obtain permission from the matron. This would have wasted time and energy.

Goulet (1971) believed that the four channels of communication which are downward, upward, horizontal and diagonal are not mutually exclusive. What this means is that there is the need for a shared use of the four channels in the administration of SHSs. Even so, formal communication channel often do not give employees all the information they want. As a result, informal channels – commonly called the grapevine develop.

### **The Grapevine**

According to Keller (1999), the rumour mill known as the grapevine is the informal communication network that is responsible for transmitting an astonishing five out of every six messages in organizations. This network is the informal communication system for the organization and also supplements the formal communication network.

The grapevine is a natural phenomenon that can provide social satisfaction, power, and prestige to workers. Messages may be factual or inaccurate. Rumours often start with people who are in a spot for seeing and hearing things but are not necessarily in high organizational positions. For instance, a headmaster's secretary may overhear a conversation from the head and he/she may inform other members of staff, and the grapevine grows.

One of the first studies to assess the workings of a grapevine was conducted by Davis (1998), who analyzed the informal communication patterns within a medium – sized manufacturing plant. Based on his interviews with factory workers, Davis (1998) concluded that the grapevine:

1. spread information rapidly
2. was selective in terms of what was transmitted
3. filled voids left by the formal communication channels, and
4. was confined to the workplace.

In the single strand, with one person communicating with only one other, information is often distorted in the gossip chain, every member talks with everyone else, usually about personal matters. Communication is random in the probability chain, which might carry a rumour about a promotion. Messages are transmitted selectively in the cluster chain. The study also revealed that some grapevine members were much more active than others in transmitting information (Davis, 1998).



## **Desirable and Undesirable Characteristics**

According to Bennett and Hess (2001), the grapevine is both good and bad. It is desirable because it gives managers insight into employee attitudes, serves as a safety valve for employee emotions, and helps spread useful information. But the grapevine also can spread incorrect information, and it is uncontrollable (Bennett & Hess, 2001).

Most studies have shown that the information transmitted by the grapevine is reasonably accurate, although sometimes distorted (Griffin, 2000). Information passing from person to person tends to be modified in three ways. The first change is leveling; in which details are dropped or the information is simplified. The second change takes the form of sharpening, in which people dramatize selected parts of the data. The last change is assimilation, in which information is shaped to serve the needs of the grapevine member.

According to Tourish and Hargie (1998), if there is an information shortfall, the staff will devote more time to the rumour. The grapevine flourishes in organizations where staff are selectively informed on a “need to know” basis. Where information is not forthcoming from management, staff will invent it.

All organizations have “creative” individuals who, building on basic information, construct plausible scenarios of impending gloom and doom. To circumvent such doomsday stories contaminating the organization, credible and speedy communication channels are essential. The timeliness of information delivery is more difficult in organizations spanning several different sites, and here mechanisms must be established to ensure a swift flow of information.

Organizations should develop free-flowing communication highways along which messages can be delivered both speedily and accurately, and to which all staff should have ready access. One way of achieving this is to appoint communication “champions” - enthusiastic individuals who will be trusted and respected by their peers - to deliver information within their own location (Tourish & Hargie, 1998).

Keller (1999) also cautions: “Never lose sight of the power of the grapevine. If you fail to keep your word with an employee, other employees are likely to find out about it quickly, resulting in a severe blow to your credibility” (p. 73). Managers and supervisors must realize that even if they wanted to stop the grapevine, they could not. In fact, directing people not to talk about an issue often ensures that the word will spread more quickly. Thus, it is very important for managers to make the grapevine work for them rather than against them.

The volume of information transmitted via the grapevine is large, managers therefore need to learn to adapt to, manage and use it easily. It doesn't mean that something is wrong in the organization; it is a normal response to work activity. Since most of the grapevine's information is accurate, managers must learn to listen to it, and use it accurately (Bennett & Hess, 2001). For instance, heads should not let staff and students form their own perceptions about issues before the head comes out, since perception plays a major role in communication. Information delivery should be done early enough before staff and students create their own information.

## **Role of perception in communication**

Perception plays a central point in communication and is defined as the process through which people receive and digest information. According to Pearson and Nelson (1994), “perception is the mental process through which we interpret that which we sense” (p.24). Perception can be passive where we tend to receive what we sensed in the same way. Reception is objective; receivers do not add to or change what they sensed. The things they sense have inherent meaning: a chair is a chair, and that is all there is to it. There is also active perception where we see things differently in this sense perception becomes subjective and creative: we interpret what we sense; we make it our own; and we add to and subtract from what we see, hear, smell, and touch. Differences occur in perception because of physiological factors, different past experiences, and differences in present feelings and circumstances (Pearson & Nelson, 1994).

Communication becomes complicated when you know that everyone has his or her own view, uniquely developed and varying both by what is happening outside and inside his or her own head. Perception is just one of the many reasons communication gets complicated, differences invite conflict and commonality of view is hard to achieve (Pearson & Nelson, 1994).

The choice of medium, of encoding or decoding a message depends on the perception of the individual. Wrong perception can cause biases, which may in turn lead to ineffective communication. When student’s perception of punishment is wrong, they may brand the teacher who metes out punishment as wicked (Arnott, 1987). This is why every headmaster of a SHS should try and

make information available before the subordinates start to form their opinions and perceptions. This can be done through effectively communicating to all stake holders.

### **Effective communication**

Effective communication is very important for all people in all walks of life. In the works of Bampoh-Addo (2006), he cited Stoner and Freeman (1994), indicating the importance of effective communication to managers (administrators). To them, effective communication is important to managers for two reasons. First, communication is the process by which managers accomplish the functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Second communication is an activity to which managers (administrators) devote an overwhelming proportion of their time. He stresses that managerial time is spent largely in face to face, electronic or telephone communication with subordinates, peers and supervisors.

Everyday, we communicate in many different ways. As much as there are different ways of communicating, there are also different kinds of communication tools. While at work, it is important that we are able to make use of at least one effective communication tool. In this way, we would be able to go through our daily tasks and responsibilities more smoothly.

It must be noted that there is no single effective way of communicating, nor is there a single effective communication tool. Any medium or tool for communicating has the potential to be effective, and communication can be

affected by a lot of different factors (Bove & Thill, 1992).

Again, as technology advances, communication also advances. And as different advances in technology are being introduced, so are newer tools for communicating emerging. With these we are able to discover new ways of communicating effectively; allowing us, to better put our messages across (Andrews & Herschel, 1998).

There are certain factors that help define effective tools for communicating. These different factors not only include technology, but also convenience and the environment. Without the right mix of different factors, almost automatically any communication tool can fail. It must be noted that it is not just about the kind of communication tool being used that make communication effective, but it is also about all the other factors that can influence communication.

It is not just about a certain communication tool, it is all about the right mix of factors that makes communication effective. These different factors include the person sending and receiving pieces of information (Dutton, 2010).

According to Nayyar (2003), in effective communication, the first thing is to be able to express one's viewpoints in very clear and precise way. The second part is that the receiver of this message, written or verbal must understand it in the same way as it was intended to be. According to him, communication is considered effective if it induces reaction or some sort of feedback. In oral communication it is very easy to know the reaction or the feedback since mutual communication is possible. But in this form it is important that the communicator

is precise and clear in his thoughts and expressions and the listener is responding to the required level of responsiveness. He said further:

this form of communication is not easy, it requires special skills besides the natural ability for carrying the conversation purposefully, objectively and inquisitively with friendly postures, tone and considerate nature. Whether the mode of communication is face to face or by means of electronics media as long as the conversation is direct, all these qualities are imperative for a successful communication. In this form of communication, the communicator is directly exposed to the target or the listener and it will be difficult to roll back a statement or comment. This is in contrast to the written communication. Our assumptions and perceptions play a vital role for effective communication (p.483).

According to Griffin (2000), for communication to be effective, the individuals need some important skills. To him, the individual must be a good listener. Being a good listener requires that the individual be prepared to listen, not interrupt the speaker, concentrate on both the words and the meaning being conveyed, be patient, and ask questions as appropriate.

According to Griffin (2000), in addition to being a good listener, several other individual skills can promote effective communication. "Feedback, one of the most important, is facilitated by two-way communication. Two-way communication allows the receiver to ask questions, request clarification, and

express opinions that let the sender know whether he or she has been understood” (p.328).

### **Effective Communication Tools**

In an attempt to seek success in one’s personal life, professional career, or business the single most important skill to master is that of communicating effectively. There is the need to be competent at speaking, writing, listening, persuading, caring, inspiring, and managing conflict. Success does not occur in a vacuum; it is created in the context of relationships. Powerful communication and relating skills are essential - and learnable.

It is not enough to simply hear what others are saying. There is the need to "get" what they really mean. It is not enough just to say what one wants. There is the need to make sure that people really hear what is being said, "get" what is being said, and are inspired to act. It is not enough to superficially interact with people. There is the need to be able to create collaborative and empowering relationships and environments that bring out the greatness in everyone, motivate inspired action, and minimize blocks and personal friction.

The resources below can help:

1. Know what to say and how to say it to get what you want.
2. Feel confident in your personal and public communications.
3. Speak so that others do not get defensive and tune you out.
4. Know specifically what to listen for and how to listen so that you hear and understand all that is coming across.

5. Distinguish the source of a problem from its symptoms.
6. Recognize how your non-verbal communication "gives you away" and how to use non-verbal cues to enhance your effectiveness.
7. Understand your own personal communication style, where it will work well and where it will not.
8. Learn how to use communications to create collaborative environments, motivate teams and individuals, and create problem-free zones.
9. Keep people from violating your personal boundaries (Herman, 2003).

Bittel (1985) also suggests the following measures to enhance communication:

1. make it your responsibility as a leader to keep informed on organizational matters of importance. Take interest in matters that concern your employees, for example, social security, incentives and pension plans.
2. use different forms of communication with all the personnel to obtain their ideas. Know the best method or combination of methods to use by assessing each situation.
3. talk as straight as you can in all your conversations with employees. Be frank about your purpose in all cases.
4. do not over communicate with employees. Speak only about what you are certain about.
5. stay clear of issues that deal with religion and politics. In such issues allow employees to form their own judgments and express their own opinions.



6. make sure people understand what you mean. Do not be afraid to repeat what you mean but do not over do it. Always seek feedback from employees as a basic part of your communication routine.
7. do not be impersonal or cold-blooded in your approach to people. Think of communication as a process of developing the organization. Check your biases and prejudices about sex, religion, handicaps, age or national origin from creeping into your communication.
8. encourage employees to communicate with you by building a good faith, mutual confidence, a friendly attitude and welcoming their ideas. Develop a fine art of listening.
9. use face-to-face communication as the best way to communicate with employees. Be mindful of timing, tone and choice of words.
10. build an upward communication system. Develop an open formal system making sure it is not misused.
11. maintain an open door policy. In many cases an open door policy means that the door is open for managers to walk out to see others.

In as much as headmasters may try to communicate effectively with their subordinates, there may also be some obstacles that need to be dealt with.

### **Obstacles to Effective Communication**

The overriding objective of communication is to make the message understood. Secondary objectives include securing a response (feedback) that is positive, negative, or noncommittal and maintaining favourable relationships with

people with whom we communicate. But we often fail to communicate effectively, our efforts because of obstacles and barriers inhibiting the communication process.

### **Semantic Problems**

When we want to communicate with another person, we must symbolize our thoughts or ideas. The most commonly used symbols are words. Hearing or reading the symbols, the receiver translates them into an idea or image. Usually, the message received is very similar to that sent. If the symbols used have no meaning to the receiver, however – such as when an illiterate person is handed a memo, the communication process breaks down. When this happens, understanding cannot take place. Problems caused when the intended audience does not understand the use of words and phrases are called semantic problems. Managers must be very careful to gear their communication to the audience they wish to reach (Hirsch, Anderson & Gabriel, 1999).

Gibson and Hodgetts (1990) indicated that the most important lesson to be learned in semantic is that meaning is not in words; meaning is in people since communication is the transfer of meaning not words. This implies the problems in semantic stem from oddities in our communication system (language) not from the listeners' lack of effort.

## **Varying Perception**

Rarely do two people observe, analyze and react to an event in the same way. Ten people who witness an automobile accident will give ten different versions of what happened. Likewise, the same information given to ten people at a meeting will result in ten different interpretations.

These differences in interpretation are caused by selective perception, in which each person's brain selects the stimuli that seem most important. When listening to a message, people choose the bits of information that they believe are most interesting or relevant. The message can be distorted as a result, just as our perceptions sometimes distort our visual impressions. People of different age's cultural backgrounds and national origins do not perceive stimuli the same way. Administrators should remember that they all rely on the past experiences to interpret what they see (Stoner & Freeman, 1994; Mankoe, 2007; Nayyar, 2003).

## **Filtering**

None of us wished to look foolish in the eyes of our boss. This is why we all tend to filter or screen out upward – flowing information that will discredit us. Because we all want to look good in our boss's eyes, we overemphasize our own contributions and pinpoint the inadequacy of other's contribution; in either case, we discolour our message. Information is like a weapon or a defense. It can be shaped, molded, and used in a number of ways to achieve our ends, maximize our gain, and weaken our competitors (Kinard, 1988; Agyenim-Boateng, Attah & Baafi, 2009; Nayyar, 2003).

Several factors contribute to the filtering of upward communication. Many employees felt that being candid is dangerous to their long-range welfare. Fearing that disagreements with their boss will jeopardize their chances of promotion, they stifle criticism and honest expression. Employee's value systems, personal anxieties, and aspirations also discolour the information they transmit. Administrators should therefore be aware of circumstances that lead to filtering information;

1. The authority structure of the organization. Arbitrary and inflexible authority tends to increase upward distortion. Vague, conflicting rules, excessive secrecy, and close supervision are conditions that create feelings of anxiety and insecurity among workers.
2. Sever competitive conditions or intense rivalry among subordinates' anxiety and insecurity and, therefore, the likelihood they will distort information.
3. A climate of cynicism and mistrust in the company. Such an environment tends to accentuate subordinates' feelings of insecurity. This also leads to further distortion (Kinard, 1988).

### **Poor Listening Habits**

Studies show that most managers spend between 45 and 63 percent of their time listening. According to Keller (1999) as cited by Bennett & Hess (2001), "listening is a fundamental aspect of effective communication....When 282 members of the Academy of Certified Administrative Managers were asked

to list the skills most crucial for managerial ability, 'active listening' was rated number one" (p.85). Yet tests of listening comprehension have shown that, without proper training, they listen at only 25 percent efficiency. As important as listening is, many people lack good listening skills. Jenkins (1999, p.59) reports that "75 percent of what we hear is heard incorrectly; and of the remaining 25 percent, we forget 75 percent within weeks." Why are most people poor listeners? How can we improve our listening ability? By recognizing the traits associated with poor listening and focusing on good listening habits. Here are some keys to effective listening.

1. Learn to tolerate silence.
2. Concentrate on the speaker. Maintain eye contact with the speaker and observe body movements and facial expressions.
3. Use your power as a listener. Don't intimidate or disrupt speakers.
4. Ask questions for clarification.
5. Reflect feelings. Show you are sympathetic with, or at least understand, a speaker's point of view. Restate the speaker's message.
6. Use an attentive posture to reinforce listening.
7. Keep emotional biases under control.
8. Avoid judging the speaker. Keep an open mind.

### **Too many organizational levels**

The more levels a message must travel through, the greater the possibility it will be lost or distorted. Also in the classical hierarchical organization messages

are filtered through the different levels of the organization following the military chain model. The more levels a message has to get through, the poorer the information content of the final message.

### **Lack of credibility/ distrust**

Communication is greatly affected by its believability. Messages are more credible when the speaker or writer is considered trustworthy or expert, and less believable when the person is perceived as unreliable or lacking in experience. For example, a manager who must inform employees about new company policy might ensure effective communication of the message by delivering it personally rather than delegating to a less-trusted subordinate (Mankoe, 2007; Parson, 1959; Wright & Noe, 1996).

### **Kinetics**

Body movements, especially facial expressions, convey meaning as forcefully as the spoken word does. Americans love “people watching” and decoding body language. A wrinkled forehead, a raised eyebrow, a tug on one ear, the tapping of fingers on a desk, or the crossing of arms over the chest all conveys messages. When we are uneasy, we perspire or loosen our collar, when we are nervous, we shift our weight or clear our throat repeatedly. Happiness and contentment elicit humming. Nonverbal communication often reveals the emotional side of our communications (Krishna & Meera, 2001).

According to Pearson and Nelson (1994), researchers can relate human body language and other nonverbal behaviour to the message being transmitted. The result is a dictionary of body language, with nonverbal messages reveals sincerity, conviction, ability and qualifications. The body language of the person receiving the message is also revealing. It often can tell the sender whether the receiver accepts or rejects the message.

### **Improving communication in organizations**

Managers striving to become better communicators must accomplish two separate tasks. First they must improve their message or the information they wish to transmit. Second, they must see to improve their own understanding of what other people try to communicate to them. In other words, they must become better encoders and decoders. They must strive not only to be understood but also to understand. The following techniques can help accomplish these two important tasks (McShane & VonGlinow, 2000).

#### **Following up**

This technique involves assuming that you are misunderstood and, whenever possible, attempting to determine whether your intended meaning was actually received. As we have seen meaning is often in the mind of the receiver. For example, an accounting unit leader in a government office passes on to accounting staff members motives of openings in other agencies. While long – time employees may understand this as a friendly gesture, a new employee might

interpret it as an evaluation of poor performance and a suggestion to leave (McShane & VonGlinow 2000).

### **Regulating information flow**

Regulating communication can ensure an optimum flow of information to managers, thereby eliminating the barrier of communication overload. Communication can be regulated in both quality and quantity. The idea is based on the exception principle of management, which states that only significant deviations from policies and procedures should be brought to the attention of superiors. In formal communication then, superiors should be communicated with only on matters of importance and not for the sake of communication. In other words, executive should be supplied with diagnostic rather than superfluous information (Griffin, 2000).

### **Utilizing feedback**

Earlier, we identified feedback as an important element in effective two-way communication. It provides a channel for receiver response that enables the communicator to determine whether the message has been received and has produced the intended response. In face-to-face communication, direct feedback is possible. In downward communication, however, inaccuracies often occur because of insufficient opportunity for feedback from receivers. Distributing a memorandum about an important policy to all employees doesn't guarantee that communication has occurred.



We might expect that feedback in the form of upward communication would be encouraged more in organic organizations, but mechanisms that encourage upward communication are found in many different organizational designs. A healthy organization needs effective upward communication if its downward communication is to have any chance of being effective. The point is that developing and supporting mechanisms for feedback involve far more than following up on communications. Rather, to be effective, feedback needs to be engaging, responsive, and directed towards a desired outcome (McShane & VonGlinow 2000).

### **Empathy**

Buchholz and Roth (1987), state that empathy is the ability to put oneself in the other person's role and to assume individual's viewpoints and emotions. This involves being receiver – oriented rather than communicator – oriented. The form of the communication should depend largely on what is known about the receiver. Empathy requires communicators to place themselves in the shoes of the receiver to anticipate how the message is likely to be decoded.

Too often, managers perceive themselves to be much better communicators than their subordinates perceive them. Managers must understand and appreciate the process of decoding. In decoding, the message is filtered through the receiver's perceptions. For vice president to communicate effectively with supervisors, for faculty to communicate effectively with students, and for government administrators to communicate effectively with minority groups,

empathy is often an important ingredient. Empathy can reduce many barriers to effective communication. Remember that the greater the gap between the experiences and background of the communicator and the receiver, the greater the effort needed to find a common ground to understand where fields of experience overlap (Kenneth, 1980).

### **Repetition**

Repetition is an accepted principle of learning. Introducing repetition or redundancy into communication (especially that of a technical nature) ensures that if one part of the message is not understood other parts carry the same message. New employees are often provided with the same basic information in several forms. Likewise, students receive much redundant information when first entering a school. This ensures that registration procedures, course requirements, and new terms such as 'freshers' and head of department (H.O.D.) are communicated.

### **Encouraging mutual trust**

According to Hamilton and Parker (1997), time pressures often mean that managers cannot follow up communication and encourage feedback or upward communication every time they communicate. Under such circumstances, an atmosphere of mutual confidence and trust between managers and their subordinates can facilitate communication. Subordinates judge for themselves the quality of their perceived relationship with their superiors (Hamilton & Parker, 1997). Managers who can develop a climate of trust, find that following up on

each communication, is less critical. Because they've fostered high source credibility among subordinates, no loss in understanding results from a failure to follow up on each communication. Some organizations initiate formal programmes designed to encourage mutual trust (Hamilton & Parker, 1997).

### **Effecting timing**

Individuals are exposed to thousands of messages daily. Because of the impossibility of taking in all the messages, many are never decoded and received. Managers must realize that while they are attempting to communicate with a receiver, other messages would be received simultaneously. Thus, the message that the manager sends may not be heard. Messages that do not compete with other messages are more likely to be understood.

Because of this problem, many organizations use "retreats" when important policies or changes are being made. A group of executives may be sent to a resort to resolve an important corporate policy issue, or a college department's faculty may retreat to an off campus site to design a new curriculum.

On an everyday basis, effective communication can be facilitated by properly timing major announcements. The barriers discussed earlier often arise from poor timing that results in distortions and value judgments.

### **Simplifying language**

Complex language has been identified as a major barrier to effective communication. Students often suffer when their teachers use technical jargon

that transforms simple concepts into complex puzzles. Government agencies are also known for their often incomprehensible communications. Administrators must remember that effective communication involves transmitting understanding as well information. If the receiver does not understand, then there has been no communication. In fact, many techniques discussed in this section have as their sole purpose the promotion of understand. Administrators must encode messages in words, appeals and symbols that are meaningful to the receiver.

Another observation I made on my visit to the schools was the use of simple language in communicating notices. This is in support of what Bennett and Hess (2001) say in the KISS principle which means “Keep It Short and Simple”. To them, communication must be kept simple and short for the recipient(s) of the message to easily decode the message.

### **Effective listening**

Bennett and Hess (2001) maintain, each of us has a deep and innate desire to be listened to. It is a need so fundamental that when it is consistently denied in either adults or children, it can lead to mental illness. Conversely, when our desire to be heard and understood is fulfilled, we are energized, uplifted, more creative and significantly more productive.

As important as listening is, many people lack good listening skills. Davis (1998) said: “Hearing is done with the ears, but listening requires use of the mind” (p. 86). Jenkins (1999, p.59) reports that “75 percent of what we hear is heard incorrectly; and of the remaining 25 percent, we forget 75 percent within

weeks.” The weakest link in the communication process is listening. Again, a study of perceived listening needs of training managers in 500 industrial organizations revealed that poor listening, which leads to ineffective performance and low productivity (Hunt & Cusella, 1983), was one of the most important problems faced.

To improve communication, managers must seek not only to be understood but also to understand. This involves listening. One method of encouraging someone to express true feelings, desires, and emotions is to listen. Just listening is not enough; one must listen with understanding. Can managers develop listening skills? Numerous pointers have been given for effective listening in organizational settings. For example, Costley and Todd (1987) stated the “Ten Commandments for Good Listening”: 1) stop talking and listen, 2) empathize with the speaker, 3) ask questions, 4) concentrate on what the speaker is saying; 5) show the speaker you want to listen; 6) control your emotions and your temper; 7) remove distractions; 8) look for areas of disagreement, 9) avoid jumping to conclusions and making evaluations, 10) listen for the main points, note that both the first and the last commandment stress on the need to listen. Such guidelines can be useful to managers.

More important, however, is the decision to listen. Guidelines are useless unless the manager makes the conscious decision to listen. Only after the realization that effective communication involves understanding as well as being understood can guidelines for effective listening become useful.

In conclusion, it can be said that finding any aspect of a manager's job that does not involve communication would be hard. If everyone in the organization had common points of view, communicating would be easy. Unfortunately, such is not the case; each member comes to the organization with a distinct personality, background, experience, and frame of reference. The structure of the organization itself influences status relationships and the distance (level) individuals, which in turn influence the ability of individuals to communicate.

Headmasters, therefore, must make every effort to listen to both staff and students however hard it may be. The benefits are more than can be imagined.

### **Empirical Studies**

There have been a number of related studies in communication in which findings revealed the importance of communication as a factor which is very important to consider for the survival of an organization. These few ones are reviewed from University of Ghana, Legon and University of Cape Coast.

Hammond (1986) conducted a study to find out the organizational communication in the Social Security Bank at the University of Ghana. The study showed that management of the Bank recognized that workers participation in the running of the institution was so crucial. The policies of the Bank were therefore communicated to the workers as well as volunteering information. Employees got a lot of satisfaction out of their work and had a sense of belongingness to contribute to management decision making through this open door administration.

Again, the study revealed that suggestion box became one of the outlets for communication for efficiency in administration and to promote participation in decision making as well as make communication effective. Apart from creating a two way communication, it also provided the needed feedback for a successful institution. It also encouraged self expression which helped to tap the creative talents of the employees as well as exposing disgruntled groups in the institution.

From the study, it could be deduced that administration is a shared responsibility; in the schools therefore, the school administrators and their members of staff should come together to share policies and problems of the school. Resources will be pulled together for the schools to achieve enviable results in all fields if heads of senior high schools see their staff, students and other stakeholders as partners in the school administration and communicate with them.

Another study conducted by Daaku (2000) at the University of Ghana to find out the role that communication plays in GNTC, it was revealed that communication keeps people working together towards achievement of organizational goals. This is because the survival of any organization hinges on the way the people working together in the organization communicate.

The study again showed that management used combination of communication channels appropriately in every given situation to ensure that messages are understood. Face-to-face communication was used to reinforce the message in all situations.

Also, Daaku revealed that in order to ensure effective communication, there is the need for the organization to provide an environment of trust, recognition and security in which people will be willing to work together to achieve set objectives. The ability to create such an environment will depend on communication- upward, downward and sideways throughout the organization. In the words of the author, “through effective communication, management was able to put GNTC on a sound footing” (p.67).

The study pointed out that school administrators must bear in mind that in their attempt to communicate with the players of our educational institutions, they must select the right channel in order for their intended messages to be understood by those that they communicate with.

There are challenges in school administration. Managers need to appreciate the role of communication; they may not have any cause to complain in their administration in that there is nothing that communication cannot do in organizations. It promotes unity, togetherness, understanding and also checks abuse of power as well as distortion of facts.

Another study conducted by Baah (2006) to find out about communication practices in senior secondary schools in the New Juaben Municipality, came out clear in the findings that the notice board, school assembly, staff meetings and SRC meetings were frequently used. The rest of the media were not used frequently.

Again about the effectiveness of the media mentioned earlier, the four, that is, notice board, staff meetings, school assembly and SRC meetings were



identified by the respondents as the most effective. Circular letters were also considered quite effective.

The study also revealed that, of the six feedback techniques mentioned in the study, only three of them namely, “members submission of written and verbal reports to the head after attending seminars, in-service training and symposia”, members submission of written and verbal reports on issues raised at meetings” and “members give their views on issues raised at staff meetings” were mostly used. The least was said about the rest of the techniques.

In the study again, students’ lack of proficiency in the use of the English Language, the use of big words which most students do not understand, were found to be the most formidable barriers to communication in the schools. This reminds us about Hirsch et al (1999) who talked about problems caused when the intended audience does not understand the use of words and phrases. Here again, the study pointed out the need to avoid the barriers in communication if we want to be understood.

It was found that school durbars are not periodically organized in the senior secondary schools in the New Juaben Municipality. This medium of communication would achieve the desired results if members of the school community are made aware of its value.

Another study by Bampoh-Addo (2006) on the perception of teachers and administrators on communication in the administration of senior secondary schools in the Ewutu-Efutu Senya District came out with some interesting findings. The teachers had a strong desire to be part of school based

communication process to ensure effective communication; however, administrators feel reluctant to fully involve teachers as they distrust them for the fear of information leakage (e.g. information concerning discipline). Teachers' involvement in school communication process makes them more committed and responsible in the school

Most pertinent issues were not discussed during staff meetings. Administrators often had the final word. Teachers' views were not respected neither were they welcomed. Teachers were not included in institutional policies. Teachers were not timely informed about changes in decisions.

Also administrators admitted that teachers were not always aware of who and where to go for information at a given time for particular information. Again, teachers have also reached a stage where they mistrust their administrators such that they do not take what they say seriously. Administrators sometimes used wrong channels to disseminate information. Suggestion boxes are not used in the schools and finally teachers did not want to maintain their place of work because of the absence of job satisfaction.

It could be deduced from the study that teachers and administrators perceived communication in the administration in the senior secondary schools in the Ewutu-Efutu-Senya District not to be very effective. Things were not running well for the administration, staff and students of the senior secondary schools in the Ewutu-Efutu Senya District.

Another study conducted by Agyeman-Duah (2007) on the senior staff perceptions of communication practices of University of Cape Coast

administration, came out with the following: that there are some positive effects of the communication practices of University of Cape Coast administrators. These include the frequent use of verbal communication, which enables senior staff to have the opportunity to ask their heads of department for clarification of job instructions. It is also evident that senior staff are allowed to take initiatives in responding to routine letters.

There is evidence from the study that the grapevine is active and sometimes useful in the University because both administrators and staff use it. Evident from the study indicates that senior staff are encouraged to contribute to the growth of their department. It is therefore, concluded that senior staff enjoy good working relations with administrators.

However, the communication practices of University of Cape Coast administrators have some negative effects, as evidence from the study. Some senior staff are over worked due to their being overloaded with too much job instructions from senior personnel in their departments. It can also be concluded that the size of the University affects the dissemination of information to its entire staff.

### **Summary of the Chapter**

The chapter looked at communication in organizations. Communication models; leadership and communication in educational institutions had also been looked at. The chapter looked at the importance of communication. Here, communication is seen as an essential element in the functioning of any organized group, including business organizations. It is used to disseminate information,

resolve conflict and create an environment in which people are willing to contribute towards the welfare of the organization.

As can be seen from the literature, communication in organizations takes into account all the forms, that is, both formal and informal. Channels of communication had also been dealt with in the chapter where upward, downward, diagonal and horizontal channels had been thoroughly discussed. These channels of communication may be used to disseminate official information between employees and management. From the literature, it has been noted that formal communication must be backed by informal communication. Management should encourage employees to contribute to the success of the organization through suggestions, opinion sharing and others.

The chapter went further and looked at the effectiveness of communication tools. The chapter has also considered tools for effective communication as well as the barriers of communication. It had been demonstrated that some of the barriers of communication include: semantic problems, varying perceptions, filtering, poor listening habits, too many organizational levels, lack of credibility and kinesics.

Another topic the chapter discussed was “improving communication in organizations”. Under this heading, various things that can help to improve communication in institutions were discussed some of which are: following up on communication, regulating the flow of information in the organization, utilizing feedback, empathizing, repeating what you said for the sake of emphasis, encouraging mutual trust, effecting timing, simplifying language and finally

effective listening as a tool of improving communication was thoroughly dealt with. The chapter also did some empirical review of earlier works on communication.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter deals with the techniques and procedures that were used in the process of data gathering. The chapter discusses the research design adopted for the study, the population, the sample and sampling procedure as well as the instrument that was used for data collection. It also looks at the procedure for the data analysis as well as a pilot testing.

#### **Research Design**

According to Jankowicz (2005), research design is a systematic and orderly approach taken towards the collection and analysis of data so that information can be obtained from those data. Gay (1992), rules that the research design indicates the basic structure of the study, the nature of the hypothesis and the variables involved in the study. The design thus indicates whether there is an intervention and what the intervention is the nature of any comparisons to be made, the method to be used to control extraneous variables and enhance the interpretability, the timing and frequency of data collection, the setting in which is to take place and the nature of communications with the subjects.

The study is a descriptive survey and its primary aim is to assess communication practices in the administration of Senior High Schools (SHSs) in

Keta Municipality. The reason for choosing the survey for the research is that, it is a research which specifies the nature of a given phenomenon. It determines and reports the way things are. Descriptive survey thus involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning current status of the subject of the study. It is a relatively inexpensive way to get information about people's attitudes, beliefs and behaviours (Gay, 1992; Mitchell & Jolley, 2004).

Again, it affords the researcher the opportunity to select a sample from the population being studied and then make generalization from the study of the sample (Gay, 1992; Best & Kahn, 2003). It also employs the method of randomization so that errors may be estimated when population characteristics are inferred from observations of samples.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) also, descriptive surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determine the relationship that exists between specific events. The descriptive survey is considered the best design for this particular study since the aim is to find out communication practices in the administration of senior high schools. The advantages that the survey method had was that it enabled the researcher to select a careful probability sample which provided a group of respondents whose characteristics were taken to reflect those of the larger population.

Another advantage was that it helped in constructing standardized questionnaires which provided data in the same form from all respondents.

Further, the use of descriptive survey design enabled me to observe, describe and document aspects of the situation as they naturally occurred rather than explaining them (Frankel & Wallen, 2000). It was appropriate since I described some aspects of a population by selecting unbiased samples of individuals who were asked to complete the questionnaire.

The difficulties involved in survey research according to Frankel and Wallen (2000) include: 1). Ensuring that the questions to be answered are clear and not misleading. 2). Getting respondents to answer questions thoughtfully and honestly and 3). Getting sufficient number of copies of questionnaire completed and returned so that meaningful analysis could be made. Also the descriptive survey is susceptible or easily influenced by distortions through the introduction of biases in the measuring of the instruments. For example, errors due to the use of questionnaire or interviews might distort research findings. However, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages hence its usage for this study.

To overcome the weaknesses associated with the research design for the study, the purpose of the study was thoroughly explained to the respondents and their confidentiality and safety were also assured. A pilot test was done in order to correct all ambiguities and questions which otherwise could have posed problems to the respondents. To ensure a high percentage return rate, I administered the questionnaires personally and where respondents were not ready to respond to the items so as to return them on the same day, an arrangement was made for another time.



## Population

The study covered all the eight SHSs in the Keta Municipality. The population included the headmasters of the SHSs, teachers and bursars/accountants and also members of the Students' Representative Council (SRC) of the SHSs in the Municipality. Eight headmasters, eight bursars/accountants, 380 teachers and 308 SRC members formed the target population. In all, 704 people were the targeted population for the study.

Table 1

### Population of schools

Name of school	SRC Members	Teachers	Bursars	Heads
1. Keta SHS	58	72	1	1
2. Keta Busco SHS	50	60	1	1
3. Anlo SHS	48	56	1	1
4. Zion College SHS	42	60	1	1
5. Abor SHS	38	38	1	1
6. Anyako SHS	22	28	1	1
7. Afiadenyigba	26	30	1	1
8. Atiavi SHS	24	26	1	1
Total	308	380	8	8

**Source:** Field survey Data, 2010

## **Sample**

According to Sarantakos (2005, p.171), “there is an easier way of estimating the ‘right’ sample size, without needing to use formulae and computations. The researcher who wishes to know how large the sample should be, needs only to look at the table and considering the necessary factors... computes the figure that corresponds to the required sample size”. According to the table, a population of around 700 should have a sample size of 248. Therefore the sample size for this study was 248 respondents.

The study comprised eight headmasters which constituted the administrative group. The second group of respondents was 152 teachers and eight accountants from the eight schools. The last group of respondents was made up of 80 members of the SRCs. In all, 248 respondents from the eight SHSs in the Keta Municipality responded to the questionnaires.

## **Sampling Procedure**

All the eight headmasters and the eight accountants were used in the study. This was done purposely to include all the headmasters in the eight senior high schools and their accountants in the research since they were in the centre of communication in the various schools in the Keta Municipality. The simple random sampling was used, using the lottery method for the teachers and students. In order to have a fair representation of all the schools, the quota system was used, where 26% and 40% were used to select SRC students and teachers respectively from each school randomly for the study.

In each of the schools visited, “yes” and “no” were written on pieces of papers. The papers were then put into a box and vigorously shaken to mix the papers up. Each of the respondents was asked to pick a slip of paper without replacement until all the papers were finished. Those who picked “yes” were given the questionnaire to answer. Table 2 shows the quota sampling technique used in selecting respondents from the various schools. It should be noted that all the eight headmasters and eight accountants of the various schools have all responded to the questionnaire.

Table 2

**Quota sampling technique for the schools**

Schools	SRC Members	% Used	Quota	Trs.	% Used	Quota
KETASCO	58	26	15	72	40	29
KETABUSCO	50	26	13	60	40	24
ANSECO	48	26	12	56	40	23
ZICO	42	26	11	60	40	24
ABORSCO	38	26	10	48	40	19
ANYASCO	22	26	06	28	40	11
AFIASCO	26	26	07	30	40	12
ATIASEC	24	26	06	26	40	10
Total	308		80	380		152

Source: Field survey data, 2010

## **Instrument**

For the purpose of this study, questionnaires were the main instrument for the study (Appendix A, B and C). Oppenheim (2000) describes a questionnaire as a device consisting of a series of questions dealing with some demographical, psychological, social, educational and other related issues which are sent to or given out to an individual or a group of individuals, with the object of obtaining data with regards to some problems under investigation. Questionnaires however have some strengths and weaknesses.

According to Sarantakos (2005), questionnaires have the following strengths: they are less expensive than other methods and can be sent through the mail; they produce quick results; they can be completed at the respondent's convenience; they offer greater assurance of anonymity; they offer less opportunity for bias or errors caused by the presence or attitudes of the interviewer; they are a stable, consistent and uniform measure, free of variations; they offer a considered and objective view of the issue, since respondents can consult their files and since many subjects prefer to write rather than talk about certain issues; and, their use allows a wider coverage, since researchers can approach respondents more easily than other methods. Thus, the questionnaire may yield superficial information than an in-depth interview.

Weaknesses of questionnaire include the following: it is expensive both financially and in time, especially if the respondents are scattered over a large area; they do not allow for probing, prompting and clarification of questions; they do not provide opportunities for motivating the respondents to participate in the

survey or to answer the questions; and finally, respondents may also not provide appropriate answers to questions since the method normally uses structured questions (Sarantakos, 2005).

To overcome the weaknesses associated with the questionnaire, the instrument for this study was structured in such a way that respondents easily responded to the questions. The questionnaire employed Likert scales to measure the responses given by the respondents. The questionnaires for the students consisted of two main parts. Part (A) which had five items, dealt with the background of the respondents. It focused on the type of respondents, gender, age, academic qualification, work experience and present rank in Ghana Education Service (GES). Others included the respondent's class form and office held. The reason for asking for this information was to ensure that the respondents were the right caliber of people whose responses would be of great help for the study. Part (B) was made up of 25 items for both the staff and the students and 26 items for heads consisted of close ended questions. The 25/26 items were grouped under 5 main sections in respect to the research questions.

The reason for grouping the items under the research questions was to help analyze the data very easily. Staff and students answered questions based on: the communication system in the SHSs, students' perception about communication tools used in the administration of SHSs, effectiveness of communication and finally the challenges faced in communication. The heads also answered the questionnaires based on the same areas of communication.

## **Pilot Test**

Validity and Reliability are very important in every research. Validity is the consistency of a measure with a criterion while reliability is determined by looking at the internal consistency of a measure (Gambel & Gambel, 1999). Again according to Gay (1992), a pilot test could be used to revise questions in the guide that are unclear or produce negative reactions in subjects. Also, Borg and Gall (1983), strongly recommend preliminary trial of the research for the less experienced research student. Therefore in an attempt to verify the validity and the reliability of the study, a pilot test was conducted in three schools that share similar characteristics as the sample schools for the study but were not part of the sample.

Content validity of the instrument was established by submitting the instrument to the supervisors and a lecturer of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, who have expert knowledge in research. They helped shaped the instrument by rephrasing some of the items which were ambiguous and introduced more appropriate ones. The questions were vetted finally and approved by the supervisors for content validity.

In Ghana, all the public Senior High Schools (SHSs) are put in categories. The instrument was tested in three schools in the Central Region namely Edinaman SHS for category A schools, Efutu SHS for category C schools and Jukwa SHS for category D schools. This was done because all the eight SHSs in the Keta Municipality fell within the above categories as published by Ministry of Education (MOE), Ghana 2009 in the Daily Graphic of April 4 (pp. 4,6, and 12).

The Cronbach's alpha co-efficient measure of internal consistency was used in determining the reliability of the questionnaire used for the study. Since the majority of the items were multiple-scored, especially on the Likert scale, the Cronbach's co-efficient was deemed most appropriate. The co-efficient obtained was .87 at 0.05 level of significance which was considered as high (Ary, Jacobs & Razzahvieh, 1990).

The questionnaires were administered to headmasters, teachers, accountants and students. After the Cronbach's co-efficient was deemed as high, the questionnaires were administered to the respondents of the main study, comprising Keta SHS (category A), Keta Business SHS (category C), Anlo SHS (category C), Anlo Zion College (category C). The rest were Abor SHS (category D), Atiavi Senior High Technical (category D), Anlo Afiadenyigba SHS (category D) and Anlo Awomefia SHS (category D).

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data was collected within a period of three weeks. An introductory letter (Appendix D) was obtained from the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA), UCC, after preparing the research instruments. The letter was given to all the Heads of the schools visited. Each respondent was given the appropriate questionnaire to fill after I had taken permission from the head to do so. All the students selected for the study were gathered in a classroom. The purpose of the study was explained to them after which the research instruments were distributed to them. Each of the items was explained to the respondents and

they were asked to respond to the items independently. I moved round to explain any misunderstanding to them. In each of the schools, the questionnaires were collected back on the same day after the exercise. This was to ensure all the questionnaires were collected on the same day.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

The data collected were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Products and Services Solutions (SPSS). The variables were coded and with the aid of the SPSS, frequency counts were observed and percentages calculated and closer views of the responses that were made by respondents were obtained. These approaches were used to analyze the biographic data and all the research questions. Tables were used to support the analysis to make it clearer.

In scoring the data, each of the questionnaires was given a code number to facilitate identification. Responses to the various items were coded and tabulated. The categories for the 4 point Likert scale items were “strongly disagree” (1), “disagree” (2), “agree” (3), and “strongly agree” (4).

The 4 point scale was collapsed for the analysis of the responses as follows:

- i. Scale 1 and 2 were put together as “disagree”
- ii. Scale 3 and 4 were put together as “agree”.

This was done to make the analysis easy and more convenient.



**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Introduction**

The study sought to assess the communication practices in the administration of senior high schools in the Keta Municipality. In all, eight senior high schools were used. The analysis and the interpretation of the data are presented in the chapter. The analysis is done alongside the research questions, wherever applicable, frequency and percentage distribution tables are used.

The sample size for the study was 248 respondents which were made up of students, teaching and non-teaching staff and headmasters. Table 3 indicates the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents by type.

**Demographic Data of Respondents**

Table 3

**Distribution of Respondents by Type**

Type	Frequency	(%)
Students	80	32.3
Staff (teachers & accountants)	160	64.5
Heads	8	3.2
Total	248	100

Source: Field survey data, 2010

It can be observed from Table 3 that the staff constituted the majority of the respondents (64.5%) while the headmasters (3.2%) were in the minority. The staff constituted the largest number because the quota given to the staff was more than any other group. This was done to give the staff the chance to share their opinions on the communication practices of their schools, since the staff worked closely with the heads than did the students. The heads formed the minority because there were only eight public senior high schools in the municipality and each school was led by only one head.

Table 4

**Distribution of Respondents by Sex**

Gender	Frequency	(%)
Male	190	76.6
Female	58	23.4
Total	248	100

Source: Field survey data, 2010

From Table 4, it can be observed that the majority of the respondents were males (76.6%) while the female (23.4%) constituted the minority. The possible explanation to the larger number of men is that the male teachers in all the schools were more than their female counterparts. Also, all the eight headmasters were males.

Table 5

**The Highest Academic Qualification Distribution of Staff and Heads**

Qualification	Frequency	(%)
High National Diploma	22	13.1
First degree	143	85.1
Masters degree	3	1.8
Total	168	100

Table 5 indicates that 22 of the staff representing 13.1% were High National Diploma holders. Majority of the teachers (143) representing 85.1% were first degree holders. Out of the 168 respondents only 3 are second degree holders constituting 1.8% of the total academic qualification of the respondents.

Table 6

**Number of Years Served by Staff in their Schools**

Number of years served	Frequency	(%)
Less than 1 Year	27	16.8
1-5	95	59.4
6-10	20	12.5
11-15	6	3.8
16-20	5	3.1
21-25	3	1.9
26-30	2	1.3
31 and above	2	1.3
Total	160	100

In Table 6 it can be seen that majority of the staff, that is 95 staff representing 59.4% of the staff had served within the periods between 1 and 5 years, followed by those who had taught or served for less than a year; that is 27 staff representing 16.8% of the staff. In all the eight schools visited only 2 staff had been teaching for more than 30 years.

The above figures show that majority of the teachers do not stay in the schools for longer years. This may be attributed to either the teachers leaving for further studies or the schools are not conducive to the teachers so when they are posted to the schools they do not stay for longer years. There is the need therefore to find out why the staff attrition rate is high.

Table 7

**Years of Experience of Headmasters**

Years	Frequency	(%)
1-5	6	75
6-10	2	25
Total	8	100

Source: Field survey data, 2010

Table 7 presents the number of years that the heads served. Out of the 8 headmasters, 6 of them had served as headmasters within 1-5 years while 2 headmasters representing 25% had served as headmasters within 6-10 years. It can be seen that not only the staff but the headmasters' attrition rate also needs to be investigated.

## **Type of Communication Tools often Used**

Research Question 1: What type of communication tools are most often used in the administration of SHSs in the Keta Municipality?

In any human institution or organization, it is expected that information is given downward, upward, horizontally and diagonally so that ideas and views could be sought and exchanged and grievances addressed. As cited in Baah (2006), Kinard (1988) pointed out that it is communication which makes organization possible.

The study observed that there were so many tools of communication in use in the administration of SHSs and these included: notice boards, staff meetings, SRC meetings, school assemblies, circular letters, posters and banners and suggestion boxes. It was observed that information was sent and received by the stakeholders through these media. According to Amuzu-Kpeglo (2005), communication helps management to engage in managerial functions such as planning, organizing, co-ordinating, directing and decision making.

The head alone cannot perform all these managerial functions, therefore there is the need for him to organize regular staff meetings and also issue notices from time to time so that through delegation of responsibility, he will be able to attain the targets set for the school. Communication therefore becomes an outlet through which these managerial functions could be performed. In view of this, the respondents (staff and students) were asked to give the media which were mostly used in their respective schools by the heads in giving out information.

Table 8 shows responses of the respondents in frequencies and percentages

Table 8

**Media of Communication**

Medium of Communication	Students		Staff	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Notice board	22	(27.5)	54	(33.8)
School assembly	44	(55.0)	-	-
Staff meeting	-	-	98	(61.2)
SRC meeting	10	(12.5)	-	-
Circular letters	1	(1.2)	3	(1.9)
Individually	3	(3.8)	-	-
Colleagues	-	-	3	(1.9)
Others	-	-	2	(1.2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey data, 2010

From Table 8, it can be seen that some of the media like staff meeting (61.2%), school assembly (55.0%), notice board (27.5%) and (33.8%) respectively for students and staff and SRC meetings (12.5%) are highly used; while the rest like circular letters (1.2%) and (1.9%) for students and staff respectively, individuals (3.8%), colleagues (1.9%) and others (1.2%) are the least used in the schools.

From Tables 8, it is observed that staff meeting, notice board, general assembly and SRC meetings were mostly used in the schools in giving out information. Out of the 160 staff respondents, 98 of the staff representing 61.2% of the staff respondents were of the view that most of the information they got from the headmaster were taken at staff meetings.

Out of the 80 students it was only 10 representing 12.5% who indicated that SRC meetings gave them information most. This suggests that, the SRCs were not effectively used as it was in the case of staff meetings, since majority of the students (55.0%) believed most of the information they needed were given at the general assemblies. The rest of the media – letters, colleagues and individuals picking information from the head are not being effectively used in most of the SHSs in the Keta Municipality.

Table 9 also presents the responses by heads on the media mostly used in communication.

Table 9

**Media mostly used in Communication by the Heads of SHSs**

Media of communication	Frequency	(%)
Staff meeting	8	(100)
Notice board	7	(87.5)
General assembly	4	(50.0)
Circular letters	2	(25.0)

Source: Field survey data, 2010

From the responses given by the heads, all the 8 (100%) heads mostly give information through staff meetings, while 7 (87.5%) through the notice board. Again, 4 (50.0%) of the heads give information mostly through the general assembly and 2 (25.0%) through circular letters.

From Table 9, it is observed that staff meeting (100%), notice board (87.5%), general assembly (50.0%) were mostly used in the schools in giving out information. From Table 9, all the headmasters representing 100% of the headmasters confirmed that most of the information was given at staff meetings.

Among the student respondents, 44 representing 55.0% pointed out that they got most of the information from the headmasters at the general assembly of the schools. Here again, from Table 9, 4 of the headmasters representing 50.0% of the headmasters agreed with the students that they gave information most at the schools' assemblies.

According to Bennett and Hess (2001), information flow is essential to an organization's effectiveness. Also the means or the tools used in communication or giving out information is very important that is why it is very important for heads of SHSs to know which of the means or media to use to give out information. Information for the teaching staff should be delivered at staff meetings rather than at any other place. Also notice boards must be effectively used since it inculcates into both staff and students the habit of finding out what is happening around them by taking interest in reading notices.

According to Kinard (1988), communication is one of the administrator's most important tools which when used correctly embody the speaker's objectives



and helps accomplish tasks that require co-ordination. Afful-Broni (2006) supports Kinard by putting it in a different language that every leader must put in place a system through which the relevant messages and data of the organization are disseminated effectively and efficiently.

This in no way means to indicate that all data must be disseminated to the public. An essential leadership task is to discern in as professional a manner as possible which data to share, by which media to share and which to withhold (Afful-Broni, 2006).

In the school situation, therefore, important issues are discussed; messages are usually carried down from the head to the rest of the staff at staff meetings. Sometimes feedback is received, or views discussed and consensus arrived at. It must be understood that there are various classification of information that is why no single medium or tool of communication should be the only means to disseminate information but rather a combination of them; just as can be seen from the research conducted that even though staff meetings seemed to be the major means by which information was given to the staff, school assembly and the use of the notice boards were also held in high esteem. This is evident in the responses given.

During the data collection period, it was observed that, notice boards were placed at vantage points that were accessible to almost every member of the school community in all the SHSs. Stakeholders could also access information for themselves whenever they visited the schools. Another observation made was the use of simple language in communicating notices. This is in support of what

Bennett and Hess (2001) say in the KISS principle which means “Keep It Short and Simple”. To them communication must be kept simple and short for the recipient(s) of the message to easily decode the message. It was also observed that, in a few schools the notices on the notice boards were not pasted in any order. Both old and new messages were mixed up on the notice boards. This can be corrected by removing old and outdated notices from the notice boards giving way to new notices.

In conclusion, therefore it is clear that the mostly used media in giving out information in the SHSs in the Keta Municipality were: staff meetings, notice board and general assembly. This implies the heads of SHSs in the Keta Municipality are making effective use of these tools. However, there is the need to encourage the use of the other media like the circular letters and consultations.

### **How Students and Teachers Communicate with the Head**

Research Question 2: How do students and teachers communicate with the school administration?

Table 10

#### **How Students’ Suggestions, Grievances and Ideas get to the Head**

Media of communication	Frequency	(%)
SRC meetings	66	(82.5)
Letters	11	(13.9)
Delegation	1	(1.2)
Individually	2	(2.4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(100)</b>

From Table 10, it is obvious that majority of the student respondents (66) representing 82.5 % gave their suggestions, grievances and ideas through SRC meetings. Eleven of them representing 13.9 % wrote letters to the headmasters in sharing their ideas. Two of the students representing 2.4 % gave out their suggestions and grievances through personal contacts with their heads while one person representing 1.2 % did that through delegation.

Table 11

**How Staff's Suggestions, Grievances and Ideas get to the Head**

Media of communication	Frequency	(%)
Staff meetings	154	(96.2)
Letters	3	(1.9)
Delegation	3	(1.9)
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey data, 2010

The information in Table 11 shows that 154 staff representing 96.2 % of the staff gave their suggestions at meetings while 3 of them representing 1.9 % did that through writing of letters. Again, other 3 staff, through delegation got their suggestions and ideas across to the head. Responses presented in Tables 10 and 11 indicate that both students and staff put across their suggestions and grievances to the head through SRC meetings and staff meetings respectively.

It must be noted here that, in the administration of SHSs, upward communication refers to information communicated from members of staff and student leadership to the head. It could be from students to the head about the

attitudes of some of the staff and it could also be from the staff to the head about the students. At times too, it could be feedback that both staff and student want to communicate to the head. This is in line with what Rogers and Rogers (1976) argued that subordinates can report to their bosses about what they have done or what they think needs to be done, and they also talk about their problems in the organization. Kinichi and Brian (1999), (as cited in Baah, 2006), pointed out that “upward communication can convey four messages and these include:

1. what subordinates are doing,
2. unresolved work problems,
3. suggestions for improvement, and
4. how subordinates feel about each other and the job” (p.24).

The above authorities emphasized the importance of upward communication. Headmasters who therefore want to realize their goals should create avenues for both staff and students to be able to share their problems and give their suggestions and complaints. Staff and students who share their ideas with the head expect some kind of response (feedback) from the head. If the head treats upward communication with care, it will let the school have a good climate. It behoves on the heads therefore to strengthen and encourage the staff to use the other means available like, suggestion boxes, group meetings and appeals and grievances procedures for the goals of the school to be realized.

In the literature, the importance of upward communication is obvious, where the flow of opinions, ideas, complaints and other kinds of information from subordinates up to managers help the managers to know how their subordinates

feel about their jobs, their working conditions and their living conditions in general (Agyenim-Boateng et al. 2009; Griffin, 2000). According to Bennett and Hess (2001, p.87), subordinates must be “in the know” for if employees do not know what administration expects from them, they cannot support organizational goals and objectives. In the schools, the staff and students must also have a platform to interact if the need be.

Again, we should not lose sight of what Mankoe (2007), advised that: “it should not be considered a sign of weakness for the headmaster or principal to elicit the opinion of other staff and student leaders, or even allow members to debate major issues, even if in the end he would be the final decider in consultation with the board of governors. Sometimes these can offer good opportunity for leaders to know what is needed, what is not liked and what needs to be changed or addressed” (p.67).

In conclusion, therefore, it has been found out that, in finding answers to research question two, there is a room for upward communication, while students mostly carried their ideas and suggestion across to the heads through discussions at SRC meetings; the staff mostly did that through staff meetings. This is not good enough; other informal means of communication can equally help in aiding administration, staff and students to coexist towards the attainment of the school’s objectives.

### **Respondents' Perceptions about Communication Practices of Head**

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions of teachers and students about the communication practices of their heads?

Research question 3 sought to find out the perceptions of both staff and students on the communication practices of the heads. Table 12 shows the responses from students.

Table 12

#### **Students' Perception about the Communication Practices of the Head**

Students' perceptions	Agree	Disagree	Total
	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)
The head shows bias in communicating with students	13(16.3)	67(83.8)	80(100)
The head sometimes work with rumour	59(73.7)	21(26.2)	80(100)
The head encourages upward communication	74(92.5)	6(7.5)	80(100)
Students often express their opinions verbally to the head	26(32.5)	54(67.4)	80(100)
The head uses gestures to encourage Students to make suggestions	38(47.6)	42(52.6)	80(100)
The head responds promptly to students' needs	49(61.3)	31(38.8)	80(100)
The head discusses the policies of the school with students	45(56.2)	35(43.8)	80(100)

From Table 12, it can be concluded that students had positive perceptions about the communication practices of the heads. Sixty seven students representing 83.8% disagreed with the statement that the head showed bias in communication while only 13 students representing 16.3% agreed with the statement.

Also from the Table 12, 59 students representing 73.7% of the student respondents agreed with the statement that the heads worked with rumour while only 21 students representing 26.2% of the student respondents disagreed with the statement. Seventy four students representing 92.5% agreed that the heads encouraged upward communication while 6 students representing 7.5% disagreed with the statement.

Also, 38 students representing 47.6% of the student respondents agreed to the statement that the heads used gestures to encourage students to make suggestions while 42 students representing 52.6% disagreed with the statement. The statement that the heads responded promptly to students needs had 49 students representing 61.3% of the students agreeing to it while 31 students representing 38.8% disagreed with the statement. Again, 45 students representing 56.2% of the student respondents agreed to the statement that the heads discussed the policies of the schools with the students while 35 students representing 43.8% disagreed with the statement.

Judging from the responses given by the students in Table 12, it is clear that students had positive perceptions about the communication practices of the heads of the SHSs in the Keta Municipality. Majority of the students disagreed with the statement that “the head shows bias in communicating with students”

majority of the students disagreed with the statement which implies student did not see the heads as being bias in communication.

Table 13

**Perceptions of Staff about the Communication Practices of the Head**

Staff' perceptions	Agree	Disagree	Total
	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)
The head shows bias in communicating with the staff	40(25)	120(75.0)	160(100)
The head sometimes work with rumour	104(65)	56(35.0)	160(100)
The head encourages upward communication	128(80)	32(20.0)	160(100)
Staff often express their opinions verbally to the head	154(96.2)	6(3.8)	160(100)
The head uses gestures to encourage staff to make suggestions	86(53.8)	74(46.2)	160(100)
The head responds promptly to staffs' needs	114(71.2)	46(28.8)	160(100)
The head discusses the policies of the school with staff	143(89.4)	17(10.6)	160(100)

Source: Field survey data, 2010

From the responses in Table 13, given by the staff, we can observe that majority of the staff (120) representing 75.0% of the staff respondents disagreed with the statement that ‘the head shows bias in communicating with staff’. Again



in response to the statement 'the head sometimes work with rumour' only 56 of the staff representing 35.0% of the staff respondents disagreed with the statement while a majority of the staff (120) representing 75.0% agreed with the statement.

Also, 128 staff representing 80% of the staff respondents were in agreement with the statement that 'the head encourages upward communication' while 32 of the staff, (20.0%) disagreed with the statement. Again, in response to the statement that 'staff often communicate with head by expressing their opinions verbally', 154 staff (96.2%) agreed with the statement.

Again, 86 staff (53.8%) agreed to the statement that the heads used gestures to encourage staff to make suggestions; while 74 staff (46.2%) disagreed with the statement. In response to the statement 'the head responds promptly to staff needs', 114 staff (71.2%) agreed to it.

The last statement in Table 13 which aimed at soliciting views from the staff about their perceptions on the communication practices of the heads had 143 of the staff respondents (89.4%) agreeing with the statement that 'the head discusses the policies of the school with the staff' and only 17 of the staff respondents (10.6%) disagreed with the statement.

Judging from the responses given by the staff, it is clear that the staff also have good perceptions about the communication practices of their heads just as had been purported by the student respondents. For example, apart from majority saying the head used rumour sometimes as a means of gathering information, the rest of the statements showed signs that the perceptions of the staff on the communication practices of the head were good. Comparing the responses from

Table 12 (students' responses) to those in Table 13 (staff responses), there is a substantial evidence that both staff and students had good perceptions about the communication practices of their heads.

Table 14

**Perceptions about the Communication Practices of the Head**

Heads' perceptions	Agree No.(%)	Disagree No.(%)	Total No.(%)
The head shows bias in with staff and students	2(25.0)	6(75.0)	8(100)
The head sometimes work with rumour	7(87.5)	1(12.5)	8(100)
The head encourages upward communication	7(87.5)	1(12.5)	8(100)
Staff and students often express their opinions verbally to the head	7(87.5)	1(12.5)	8(100)
The head uses gestures to encourage staff and students to make suggestions	7(87.5)	1(12.5)	8(100)
The head responds promptly to staff and students' needs	7(87.5)	1(12.5)	8(100)
The head discusses the policies of the school with staff and students	7(87.5)	1(12.5)	8(100)

Table 14 presents the headmasters' responses to questions on their perceptions about their own communication practices. The responses of the headmasters are in agreement with those of both staff and students.

On whether or not the heads showed bias in communicating with staff and students, 6 of the headmaster respondents (75.0%) disagreed with the statement. Again 7 of the heads (87.5%) agreed on the use of rumour sometimes in their communication practices. This goes to confirm what Keller (1999, p.73) also said: “Never lose sight of the power of the grapevine. If you fail to keep your word with an employee, other employees are likely to find out about it quickly, resulting in a severe blow to your credibility.” Keller further argued that managers and supervisors must realize that even if they wanted to stop the grapevine, they cannot. Thus, it is very important for managers to make the grapevine work for them rather than against them. All the other questions in the Table 14 under perceptions had been agreed to by 7 of the heads representing 87.5%.

According to Pearson and Nelson (1994), “perception is the mental process through which we interpret that which we sense” (p.24). In every organization or institution, it is very important for heads to create good rapport between them and their subordinates and also other stakeholders. The perceptions of staff and students about the communication practices of heads in the SHSs go a long way to affect the whole school set up; be it academic performance, relationship between staff and students and others.

Before the study, it was not clear whether or not the staff and students had good perceptions about the communication practices of their heads. The study has however, revealed that majority of the staff and students, by the responses given had good perceptions about the communication practices of their heads. However,

majority of the three sets of respondents agreed that the heads sometimes relied on the grapevine in dealing with information.

### **Challenges Faced in Communicating with Head**

Research Question 4: What are some of the challenges faced by students in trying to communicate with the headmaster?

Students were asked to give their opinions on some of these challenges as they perceived them in their various schools. The responses are in Table 15.

Table 15

#### **Challenges in Communication as Perceived by Students**

Students' responses	Agree		Disagree	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Students sometimes do not understand instructions from the head	44	(55.0)	36	(45.0)
The head sometimes frowns his face when communicating with students	11	(13.8)	69	(86.2)
Students cannot approach the head because of his position	41	(51.3)	39	(48.7)
Head at times is busy and therefore does not listen to student complaints	35	(43.7)	45	(56.3)
Complains from students to the head are distorted before they get to the head	45	(56.3)	35	(43.7)
The head does not provide the students with adequate information they need to carry out their task effectively	24	(30.0)	56	(70.0)

From Table 15, it is obvious that students faced some challenges in communicating with the heads. Forty four (44) students representing 55.0% out of the total number of student respondents admitted that they sometimes did not understand instructions from the heads while 36 of them (45.0%) disagreed with the statement.

Again from the Table 15, the statement that ‘the head sometimes frowns his face when communicating with students’, 69 (86.2%) students, disagreed with the statement and only 11 (13.8%) agreed with the statement indicating that most of the heads did not frown their faces when talking to the students. Forty one (41) (51.3%) agreed with the statement that ‘students cannot approach the head because of his position’ while 39 (48.7%) of them disagreed with the statement. Also in response to the statement that ‘the head at times is busy and therefore does not listen to student complaints’, 45 (56.3%) students, disagreed while 35 (43.7%) students, agreed with the statement.

Again, 56.3% of the students agreed with the statement that complaints got distorted before getting to the head while 43.8% disagreed with the statement. Fifty six (70.0%) of the students on the other hand, disagreed with the statement that ‘the head does not provide the students with information they need to carry out their task effectively’, while 24 (30.0%) agreed with the statement.

From the Table 15, it is obvious that the major challenges facing the students were: 1.) students did not sometimes understand instructions from the head. 2.) students could not approach the head because of his position. 3.) complaints from students to the head were distorted before they got to the head.

All the above challenges go to confirm what Wright & Noe (1996) and Mankoe (2007) said that the characteristics of the sender, such as lack of necessary communication skills, emotional state, use of conflicting signals, lack of credibility and reluctant to communicate can impede the effectiveness of communication.

Table 16

**Challenges in Communication as Perceived by the Staff**

Staff responses	Agree		Disagree	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Staff sometimes do not understand instructions from the head	49	(30.7)	111	(69.4)
The head sometimes frowns his face when communicating with staff	43	(26.9)	17	(73.1)
Staff cannot approach the head because of his position	31	(19.4)	129	(80.6)
Head at times is busy and therefore does not listen to staff complaints	46	(28.8)	114	(71.2)
Complains from staff to the head are distorted before they get to the head	50	(31.3)	110	(68.8)
The head does not provide the staff with adequate information they need to carry out their task effectively	35	(21.9)	125	(78.1)

Source: Field survey data, 2010

Interestingly, the staff did not seem to have any problems with the communication practices of the heads. Majority of the staff disagreed with all the statements trying to solicit their views on some of the bad communication practices of their heads.

In another direction, the student respondents have identified some challenges. This goes to suggest that the heads were closer to their staff than their students. Since most of the times in the SHSs the heads did not frequently give information to students directly but rather through the use of the principles of delegation give information to the students through other staff. This might have brought about a gap between the head and the students.

Table 17

**Challenges in Communication as Perceived by Heads**

Heads responses	Agree		Disagree	
	Numbers	(%)	Numbers	(%)
Staff and students sometimes do not understand instructions from the head	3	(37.5)	5	(62.5)
The head sometimes frowns his face when communicating with staff and students	-	-	8	(100)
Staff and students cannot approach the head because of his position	-	-	8	(100)
Head at times is busy and therefore does not listen to staff and students complaints	-	-	8	(100)

Table 17 *continued*

Complains from staff and students are distorted before they get to the head	5	(62.5)	3	(37.5)
The head does not provide the staff and students with adequate information they need to carry out their task effectively	-	-	8	(100)

From Table 17 again, apart from the statement that ‘complaints from staff and students to the head are distorted before they get to the head’ where 5 (62.5%) of the heads agreed with, majority of the heads disagreed with all the other statements. It appears that the heads and the staff were having similar opinions on the challenges in communication.

From Tables 15, 16 and 17, challenges faced by students, staff and headmasters had been presented respectively. From Table 15 (challenges faced by students in communicating with the head), students’ responses showed that there are some challenges in the communication practices of their heads.

On the other hand, the staff (Tables 16) and heads (Table 17) did not agree with the students. The two sets of respondents (staff and heads), did not agree with the statements posed as challenges. Majority of the staff and heads disagreed with all the statements posed under challenges as can be seen in Tables 16 and 17.

Therefore in an attempt to answer the Research question 4, student respondents had identified the following as challenges:

- 1.) Students did not sometimes understand instructions from the head.
- 2.) Students could not approach the head because of his position.
- 3.) Complaints from



students to the head were distorted before they got to the head. Interestingly, majority of the staff and the head did not agree with the students.

One of the possible reasons for this may be that, the heads in the SHSs in the Keta Municipality work closely with their staff than the students. In other words, the heads use delegation as a way of communicating with the students This is evident in the fact that students agreed with the statement that ‘students cannot approach the head because of his position’ while a majority of the staff and the heads disagreed with the statement.

There is therefore the need for heads to get closer to the students through the SRCs to be able to know some of the challenges faced by students. Also by working directly with the students will drastically reduce the problem of information getting distorted before getting to the head.

In our everyday life and most especially in organizations, barriers to communication are common. Even when a receiver receives a message and makes a genuine effort to decode it, there are a number of interferences that may limit the receiver’s understanding. These obstacles act as barriers to communication, and they may entirely prevent a communication, filter part of it out, or give it incorrect meaning.

In the schools, these challenges come in the form of misunderstanding instructions from the head; the head frowning before communicating; staff and students inability to approach the head because of his position.

## Effectiveness of Communication Tools

Research Question 5: How effective are the communication tools used?

Research question 5 sought from respondents whether or not the communication tools were effectively used by the heads.

The responses were re-coded in the same way as the previous ones were done. The responses from students are presented in Table 18.

Table 18

### Effectiveness of Communication Tools as Perceived by Students

Students responses	Agree		Disagree	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
There is an optimal flow of information between students and the head	36	(45.0)	44	(55.0)
Information from the head gets to students on time	39	(48.8)	41	(51.2)
It is always easy sending information to the head	18	(22.6)	62	(77.5)
We often secure positive responses from the head	43	(53.8)	37	(46.2)
The head is always specific in giving out instructions	4	(5.0)	76	(95.0)
The head uses non-verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication	33	(41.3)	47	(58.7)
The head sometimes delivers messages through other staff	77	(96.2)	3	(3.8)

Table 18 *continued*

The information from these staff are always factual and accurate	67	(83.8)	13	(16.2)
The head uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals	72	(90.0)	8	(10.0)

Source: Field survey data, 2010

From Table 18, it can be observed that 44 (55.0%) students disagreed with the statement that ‘there is an optimal flow of information between administration and students’, while 36 (45.0%) agreed with the statement. Again, majority of the students (41) disagreed with the statement that “information from the head gets to the students on time”, while 39 (48.8%) agreed with the statement. Sixty-two (77.5%) students disagreed with the statement that “it is always easy to sending information to the head” while 18 students agreed with the statement. Also, 76 (95.0%) disagreed with the statement that “the head is always specific in giving out instructions”. Answers provided to the statement “the head uses non-verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication” saw 47 (58.7%) students disagreeing with the statement while 33 (41.3%) students agreed with the statement.

Conversely, apart from the above statements that majority of the students disagreed with, the rest of the statements saw majority of the students agreeing to them. For instance, 72 (90.0%) students agreed with the statement that “the head

uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals”.

Table 19

**Effectiveness of Communication Tools as Perceived by the Staff**

Staff responses	Agree		Disagree	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
There is an optimal flow of information between staff and the head	104	(65.0)	56	(35.0)
Information from head gets to staff on time	116	(72.5)	44	(27.5)
It is easy sending information to head	123	(76.9)	37	(23.1)
We often get positive responses from head	117	(73.1)	43	(26.9)
The head is always specific in giving out instructions	146	(91.2)	14	(8.8)
The head uses non-verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication	107	(66.9)	53	(33.1)
The head sometimes delivers messages through other staff	145	(90.6)	15	(9.4)
The information from these staff are always factual and accurate	109	(68.1)	51	(31.9)
The head uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals	135	84.4%	25	(15.6)

Source: Field survey data, 2010

From Table 19, it is obvious that majority of the staff agreed to all the statements raised. For instance, 104 (65.0%) staff agreed with the statement that “there is an optimal flow of information between the head and the staff”. Again, 116 (72.5%) staff also agreed with the statement that “information from the head gets to the staff on time”. One hundred and twenty three (123) staff representing 76.9% also agreed with the statement that “it is always easy sending information to the head”, while 37 (23.1%) staff disagreed with the statement.

In Table 19 again, 135 (84.4%) staff agreed with the statement that “the head uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals”.

Table 20

**Effectiveness of Communication Tools as Perceived by Heads**

Responses from heads	Agree		Disagree	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
There is an optimal flow of information between staff and the head	6	(75.0)	2	(25.0)
Information from the head gets to students and staff on time	8	(100)	-	-
It is always easy sending information to the staff and students	5	(62.5)	3	(37.5)
the staff and students often secure positive responses from the head	6	(75.0)	2	(25.0)

Table 20 *continued*

The head is always specific in giving out instructions	8	(100)	-	-
The head uses non-verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication	8	(100)	-	-
The head sometimes delivers messages through other staff	8	(100)	-	-
The head uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals	8	(100)	-	-

Source: Field survey data, 2010

From Table 20, responses from headmasters indicate that there are very effective communication practices in the eight SHSs in the Keta Municipality. Majority of the heads agreed with the responses given by their staff in Table 19, where majority of the staff saw most of the practices of the heads as effective in terms of communicating with staff and students in the schools.

Comparing the responses from the three sets of the respondents that is, students, staff and heads in Tables 18, 19 and 20 respectively, there is no doubt that heads were seen to be doing well in terms of communicating with the stakeholders of the schools internal environments. However, responses from the students were suggestive that there was no optimal flow of information between the heads and the students. For example, majority of the students (51.2%) disagreed with the statement that ‘information from the head gets to the students

on time'. Again, 76 (95.0%) students disagreed with the statement that "the head is always specific in giving out instructions". This again is suggestive that the heads got closer to their staff than their students

In the day to day running of the school, there are different issues and different problems. There is therefore the need for administrators, for that matter, the headmasters to adopt and use the most appropriate channels or media of communication for different scenarios in order to effectively communicate their views to their subordinates.

A medium of communication is said to be effective if it communicates what it is supposed to communicate. According to Herman (2003), "if you are seeking success in your personal life, professional career, or business, the single most important skill you can master is that of communicating effectively. You need to be competent at speaking, writing, listening, persuading, caring, inspiring and managing conflict" (p.6).

According to Drucker (1999) (as cited in Baah, 2006), effective communication has four well known parts which no one wishing to communicate effectively can ignore; one has to know what to say; one has to know when to say it; one has to know to whom to say it and one has to know how to say it. If one of these four elements is missing there cannot be effective communication.

In the school situation, the headmaster as the manager of the school has the power to adopt some means of letting information flow between him and others working under him. Again, it must be noted here that, the use of correct and effective communication, facilitates co-ordination of units and departments

within an organization toward the realization of organizational goals and objectives. For instance, if information from the head to the students does not get to the students on time, the expected action cannot be taken by the students. The headmasters must therefore find a better means of disseminating information to the students on time if the organizational goals are to be realized.

Stoner and Freeman (1994), (cited in Bampoh-Addo, 2006) indicate that “effective communication is important to managers and heads (administrators) for two reasons. First, communication is the process by which managers accomplish the functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Second communication is an activity to which managers (administrators) devote an overwhelming proportion of their time”. He stresses that managerial time is spent largely in face to face, electronic or telephone communication with subordinates, peers and supervisors.

According to Kinard (1988), communication is one of the administrator’s most important tools which when used correctly embody the speaker’s objectives and helps accomplish tasks that require co-ordination. Besides, disseminating information, communication motivates, ensures understanding and aids in decision-making. In providing an answer to research question five therefore, majority of the staff, students and heads respondents are of the opinion that most of the tools used by the heads are effective.

In the chapter, attempt was made to look at the responses given by students, staff and heads in the SHSs in the Keta Municipality about the communication practices of the heads. The chapter concluded that the media used



mostly by the heads in the Municipality in giving out information are notice boards, school assemblies, SRC meetings and staff meetings.

Again, about the perceptions of staff and students on the communication practices of the Heads majority of the staff and students perceived the practices to be good. Also, about the challenges faced in communication, majority of the students indicated that they did not always understand instructions from the head; they could not approach the head because of his position and complaints from students to the head are distorted before they get to the heads. Majority of the staff however did not seem to have challenges with the heads communication practices. Also, the chapter looked at the responses given on the effectiveness of communication tools used by the heads, where majority of staff and students purported that the tools used are effective.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Overview of the Study**

This chapter concludes the work by looking at the summary, conclusion and recommendations. The rate of agitations of students and teachers in the SHSs in the Keta Municipality is on the ascendency and has become a nagging and worrying issue among many stakeholders in the Keta Municipality. The study was therefore conducted to find out the communication practices in the administration of the SHSs in the municipality since it was assumed the communication practices of the administration for that matter heads in the schools were not good therefore creating a communication gap among the staff, students and the heads.

The population from which the sample was taken was made up of eight public schools in the Keta Municipality. The study involved 248 respondents from the eight schools including, SRC members, teachers, bursars and headmasters from the eight schools. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The respondents were selected from simple random techniques while all the eight heads and eight accountants were all used. A questionnaire made up of 30 items for students was used to collect relevant information from students and a 31 item questionnaire was used for staff and heads.

The questions were based on the research questions. The four point Likert scale was mainly used and later broken down to two - “agree” and “disagree” for the sake of easy analysis. Respondents showed their approval or disapproval on statements ranging from the communication media used mostly in the schools, how staff and students communicated with the heads, the perceptions of staff and students on the communication practices of the heads, challenges faced in attempt to communicate with the heads and the effectiveness of the communication tools used.

### **Summary of the Main Findings**

In this section, the answers yielded for the five research questions are summarized below as the main findings

1. It was found out that there were a lot of media of communication in the administration of SHSs in the Keta Municipality. However, it came to light that only four of those media were mostly used by the heads in giving out information. These were: staff and Students Representative Council (SRC) Meetings, notice boards and school assembly. The rest of the media like circular letters, posters and banners were not effectively used.
2. In respect to how the staff and students grievances, ideas and suggestions got to the heads, it had been found out that mostly the students channeled their grievances through SRC meetings while the staff shared their ideas with the heads mostly at staff meetings. Again it came out that, few of the staff and students wrote letters to the heads to report some concerns.

3. In respect of the perception that staff and students had about the communication practices of the heads, the study revealed that both staff and students had good perceptions about the communication practices of their heads. This was evident in the responses provided by both staff and students, where majority were of the view that their heads were doing well in terms of communication, despite some few concerns raised by students like the heads sometimes working with rumour.
4. The study also revealed that there were some challenges faced by the students. These include: Students not understanding instructions from their headmasters, students not being able to approach their headmasters because of the position of the heads and also complains from students got distorted before they got to the headmasters.
5. On the effectiveness of communication in the SHSs in the municipality, the respondents (students, staff and heads), have shown that generally communication practices were effective in the schools. However, in responding to the statement “there is an optimum (the best) flow of information between administration and students”, majority of the students disagreed with the statement. Again, majority of the students did not agree with the statement that “it is always easy sending information to the head”
6. It also came to light that the heads were not specific in giving out instructions to the students. This is evident in the responses of the students, where many of the students disagreed with the statement that “the head is specific in giving out instructions”. In another direction,

majority of the students agreed with the statement that “the head uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals.

7. However, the staff and majority of the heads held different opinions. Here, majority of the staff and heads agreed that: there was an optimum flow of information between the heads and the staff; information from heads got to the staff on time; it was always easy sending information to the heads; they always secured positive responses from the heads; the heads were always specific in giving out instructions; the heads used non verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication and the heads used communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals.

### **Conclusions**

On the basis of the findings, a number of conclusions could be drawn:

Various means were used by the heads in giving out information to staff and students. The heads were making effective use of staff meetings, SRC meetings, notice boards and school assemblies. The rest of the media like circular letters and posters/banners were not effectively utilized by the heads in an attempt to communicate with staff and students.

Staff and students in the public SHSs in the Keta Municipality mostly put their suggestions, opinions and grievances across to the heads through staff meetings and SRC meetings respectively. Others too did that through writing letters to the heads.

Both staff and students had good perceptions about the communication practices of the heads. However, students had a few challenges in their attempt to communicate with the heads.

On the side of the staff and the head, communication was effective. There was an optimum flow of information between staff and the heads. It was always easy sending information to the heads and the heads were specific in giving out instructions. Finally, the heads used communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals.

### **Recommendations**

The following are the recommendations of the study:

1. The study shows that some media of communication like, circular letters, siren and school magazines were not effectively used in the schools. It has been observed that most of the schools did not have school magazines and the siren. It is therefore recommended that the school authorities should find means of introducing school magazines to the schools so that students will be challenged to write interesting articles in the magazines there by helping them to become more proficient in the use of the English language. The introduction of the school magazine will also encourage both students and staff to be creative in writing simple stories to be published.
2. The use of the circular letters also helps to reduce the workload of the headmasters and also to avoid frequent meetings which interrupt classes.

Again, the use of the siren system also helps both staff and students to be time conscious. It is therefore recommended that heads in the Keta Municipality introduce the use of these media of communication in their schools to supplement those already in use for an effective communication system to be built in the schools.

3. Also, it has come to light that, the only means that staff and students used in sending their suggestions and grievances to the heads were through staff meetings and SRC meetings respectively. This is not good enough; it is recommended that the heads should make time with both students and staff beyond the official lines of communication. The head can organize open forum and interact with the students at school assemblies and many more. The human face of the organization should not be downplayed, since it helps create a healthy environment for the realization of the organizational goals.
4. The study again indicates that, both staff and students generally had good perceptions about the communication practices of their heads. It is recommended therefore to the heads to let this continue until they leave office since it helps in achieving results.
5. It is recommended that the heads should be specific in giving out instructions to the students for the expected feedback to be achieved. Also the heads should try and run an open door system, where students can see the heads as their fathers and run to them in times of problem. Again, it is recommended that the heads should avoid the use of too many middle men

in giving out information to the students since this may contribute to lose of vital information.

6. Finally, the study revealed that, there was no optimal flow of information between the head and students. Information from the heads to the students through other staff did not get to the students on time. Also, students found it difficult sending information to the heads. The heads again were not specific in giving out information. It is therefore recommended that the information flow between students and the head should be free flowing so that heads can win the trust of their students.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

1. The study was limited to the public SHSs in the Keta Municipality hence the findings cannot be generalized to cover all public SHSs in the country. Therefore, in order for the findings to be generalized, there is the need to expand the study to cover at least three districts so that the findings can be generalized.
2. The study focused on the heads' communication practices. Communication in the whole school could be looked at and also to be included is how the school communicates with its publics.
3. Another area of interest that could be looked at is feedback techniques used in SHS to solicit responses from students.



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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ON:  
ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KETA  
MUNICIPALITY**

This questionnaire is being used to gather data on the communication practices in the administration of SHSs in the Keta Municipality. Please feel free to answer the questions as objectively and truthfully as you can. Your response will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and it is for academic purposes only. Thank you.

**SECTION A**

**PERSONAL DATA OF STUDENTS**

*Please indicate your answers to the following questions by ticking [] the appropriate answer or completing the space provided with the needed information*

1. What is the name of your school? .....
2. Gender:                      Male [  ]      Female [  ]
3. Age:                              a. 14 – 16 years              [  ]  
    b. 17 – 19 years              [  ]  
    c. 20 – 22 years              [  ]  
    d. 23 – 25 years              [  ]

4. Your present class.....
5. Office held.....

**SECTION B**

**I. Communication tools used in administration of your school.**

*Please tick [√] the response you consider most appropriate to the questions.*

6. Through which communication means do you get information most from the school head?
- a. SRC meeting [ ]                      b. Letters [ ]
- c. Notice boards [ ]                      d. Delegation [ ]
- e. Individually [ ]
- f. Other(s) (specify).....

**II. Communication between students and administration**

7. How do students' suggestions, grievances and ideas get to the school administration?
- a. Through SRC meeting [ ]    b. Through letters [ ]
- c. Through delegation [ ]    d. Individually [ ]
- e. Other(s) (specify).....
8. By which means do you (as a student) communicate with your head most of the time?
- a. SRC meeting [ ]                      b. Letters [ ]
- c. Delegation [ ]                      d. Individually [ ]
- e. Other(s) specify.....

### Students' perceptions about the head's communication practices

Students' perception about the head's communication practices	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
9. The head sometimes shows bias in communicating with students				
10. The head sometimes works with grapevine information (rumour)				
11. The head encourages upward communication				
12. Students often communicate with the head by expressing their opinions verbally				
13. The head uses gestures to encourage students to make suggestions				
14. The head responds promptly to students' needs				
15. The head discusses the policies of the school with the students.				

### IV. Challenges faced in communication

Challenges faced in communication	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
16. Students sometimes do not understand instructions from the head				
17. The head sometimes frowns his/her face when communicating with students				
18. Students cannot approach the head because of his/her position				
19. Heads at times are busy therefore do not listen to their students' complaints.				
20. Complaints from students to the head are distorted before they get to the head				
21. The head does not provide the students with information they need to carry out their task effectively.				

## V. Effectiveness of Communication

Please tick [√] the response that is most appropriate to you.

<b>Effectiveness of communication</b>	<b>Strongly Agree 4</b>	<b>Agree 3</b>	<b>Disagree 2</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree 1</b>
22. There is an optimum flow of information between administration and students				
23. Information from the head gets to the students on time				
24. It is always easy sending information to the head				
25. We often secure(get) positive responses (feedbacks) from the head				
26. The head is always specific in giving out instructions				
27. The head uses non-verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication				
28. The head sometimes delivers messages through other staff members				
29. The information through these staff members are always factual and accurate				
30. The head uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals				

**APPENDIX B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF ON: ASSESSMENT OF  
COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF  
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KETA MUNICIPALITY**

This questionnaire is being used to gather data on the communication practices in the administration of SHSs in the Keta Municipality. Please feel free to answer the questions as objectively and truthfully as you can. Your response will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and it is for academic purposes only. Thank you.

**SECTION A**

**PERSONAL DATA**

*Please indicate your answers to the following questions by ticking [] the appropriate answer or completing the spaces provided with needed information.*

1. Name of your school .....
2. Gender:                      Male [  ]                      Female [  ]
3. What is your position in the school?  
.....
4. Please kindly indicate your highest professional qualification (eg. Cert 'A', First Degree etc)  
.....
5. Please kindly indicate your present rank in Ghana Education Service (eg. Assist. Superintendent, Principal Superintendent etc)

.....  
..... 6. How long have you been teaching/working in this school?

- |                     |     |                  |     |
|---------------------|-----|------------------|-----|
| a. Less than a year | [ ] | b. 1 – 5 years   | [ ] |
| c. 6 – 10 years     | [ ] | d. 11 – 15 years | [ ] |
| e. 16 – 20 years    | [ ] | f. 20 – 25 years | [ ] |
| f. 26 – 30 years    | [ ] | h. 31 and above  | [ ] |

## SECTION B

### I. Communication tools used in administration

*Please tick [✓] the responses you consider appropriate to the questions.*

7. Through which of the following means of communication do you receive information most from the head?

- |                            |     |                     |     |
|----------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| a. Notice boards           | [ ] | b. Staff meeting    | [ ] |
| c. Colleagues              | [ ] | d. Circular letters | [ ] |
| e. General assembly        | [ ] |                     |     |
| f. Other(s) (specify)..... |     |                     |     |

### II. Communication between staff and the head

8. How do staff's suggestions, grievances and ideas get to the head?

- |                            |     |                     |     |
|----------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| a. Notice boards           | [ ] | b. Staff meeting    | [ ] |
| c. Colleagues              | [ ] | d. Circular letters | [ ] |
| e. General assembly        | [ ] |                     |     |
| f. Other(s) (specify)..... |     |                     |     |

9. By which means do you (as an individual) communicate with the head most of the time.

- a. Staff meeting      [   ]                      b. Letters                      [   ]
- c. Delegation              [   ]                      d. Individually              [   ]
- e. Other (specify).....

**III. Staff’s perceptions about the head’s communication practices**

*Please tick [√] the response that is most appropriate to you.*

<b>Staff’s perceptions about the head’s communication practices</b>	<b>Strongly Agree 4</b>	<b>Agree 3</b>	<b>Disagree 2</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree 1</b>
10. The head sometimes shows bias in communicating to staff				
11. The head sometimes works with grapevine information (rumour)				
12. The head encourages upward communication				
13. Staff often communicate with heads by expressing their opinions verbally				
14. The head uses gestures to encourage staff to make suggestions				
15. The head responds promptly to staff’s needs				
16. The head discusses the policies of the school with the staff				



#### IV. Challenges faced in communicating with head

Please tick [√] the response that is most appropriate to you.

Challenges faced in communicating with head	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
17. Staff sometimes do not understand instruction from the head				
18. The head sometimes frowns his/her face when communicating with staff				
19. Staff cannot approach the head because of his/her position				
20. Heads at times are busy and therefore do not listen to their staff complaints.				
21. Complains from staff to the head are distorted before they get to the head				
22. The head does not provide the staff with adequate information they need to carry out their task effectively.				

#### V. Effectiveness of communication

Please tick [√] the response that is most appropriate to you.

Effectiveness of communication	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
23. There is an optimum flow of information between administration and staff				
24. Information from the head gets to the staff on time				
25. It is always easy sending information to the head				
26. We often secure positive responses (feedbacks) from the head				
27. The head is always specific in giving out instructions				
28. The head uses non-verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication				

29. The head sometimes delivers messages through other staff				
30. The information from these staff are always factual and accurate				
31. The head uses communication to create collaborative environment and motivates teams and individuals				

**APPENDIX C**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE HEADMASTERS/HEADMISTRESSES ON:  
ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KETA  
MUNICIPALITY.**

This questionnaire is being used to gather data on the communication practices in the administration of SHSs in the Keta Municipality. Please feel free to answer the questions as objectively and truthfully as you can. Your response will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and it is for academic purposes only. Thank you.

**SECTION A**

**PERSONAL DATA**

*Please indicate your answers to the following questions by ticking [√] the appropriate answer or completing the spaces provided with needed information.*

1. Gender:                      Male [    ]                      Female [    ]
  
2. Please kindly indicate your highest professional qualification (eg. First Degree, Masters Degree, etc)  
.....
  
3. Please kindly indicate your present rank in Ghana Education Service (eg. Principal Superintendent, Assistant Director II etc.)  
.....
  
4. How long have you been serving as the head of this school?

- |                     |     |                  |     |
|---------------------|-----|------------------|-----|
| a. Less than a year | [ ] | b. 1 – 5 years   | [ ] |
| c. 6 – 10 years     | [ ] | d. 11 – 15 years | [ ] |
| e. 16 – 20 years    | [ ] | f. 20 – 25 years | [ ] |
| g. 26 – 30 years    | [ ] | h. 31 and above  | [ ] |

## SECTION B

### I. Communication tools used in administration

*Please tick [√] the response you consider appropriate to the questions.*

5. Which of the following means of communication do you often use in giving out information most of the time? (Please tick as many as appropriate)

- |                         |     |                     |     |
|-------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| a. Notice boards        | [ ] | b. Staff meeting    | [ ] |
| c. Colleagues           | [ ] | d. Circular letters | [ ] |
| e. General assembly     | [ ] |                     |     |
| f. Other (specify)..... |     |                     |     |

### II. Communication between the head and subordinates

6. How do staff's suggestions, grievances and ideas get to you? (Tick as many as appropriate)

- |                         |     |                        |     |
|-------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| a. Staff meeting        | [ ] | b. Through other staff | [ ] |
| c. Circular letters     | [ ] | d. Telephone calls     | [ ] |
| e. Other (specify)..... |     |                        |     |

7. How do students' suggestions, grievances and ideas get to you? (Tick as many as appropriate)

- a. SRC meeting [ ]                      b. Through staff [ ]  
 c. Circular letters [ ]                      d. Telephone calls [ ]  
 e. Other (specify).....

8. Which of the following means do you normally use in communicating with the staff? (Please tick as many as appropriate).

- a. Staff meeting [ ]                      b. Letters [ ]  
 c. Delegation [ ]                      d. Individually [ ]  
 e. Other (specify).....

**II. Perceptions about the head's communication practices**

*Please tick [√] the response that is most appropriate to you.*

<b>Perceptions about the head's communication practices</b>	<b>Strongly Agree 4</b>	<b>Agree 3</b>	<b>Disagree 2</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree 1</b>
9. The head sometimes shows bias in communicating with staff and students				
10. The head sometimes works with grapevine information (rumour)				
11. The head encourages upward communication				
12. Staff and students often express their opinions verbally to the head				
13. The head uses gestures to encourage staff and students to make suggestions				
14. The head responds promptly to staff and students' needs				
15. The head discusses the policies of the school with the staff and students				

## V. Challenges faced in communicating with head

Please tick [√] the response that is most appropriate to you.

<b>Challenges faced in communicating with head</b>	<b>Strongly Agree 4</b>	<b>Agree 3</b>	<b>Disagree 2</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree 1</b>
16. Staff and students sometimes do not understand instruction from the head				
17. The head sometimes frowns his/her face when communicating with staff and students				
18. Staff and students cannot approach the head because of his/her position				
19. Heads at times do not listen to their students' complaints about the difficulties they face in their studies because they are busy				
20. The Head at times is busy therefore does not sometimes listen to staff and students complaints				
21. Complaints from staff and students to the head are distorted before they get to the head				
22. The head does not provide the staff and students with adequate information they need to carry out their task effectively.				

## V. Effectiveness of communication

Please tick [√] the response that is most appropriate to you.

<b>Effectiveness of communication</b>	<b>Strongly agree 4</b>	<b>Agree 3</b>	<b>Disagree 2</b>	<b>Strongly disagree 1</b>
23. There is an optimum flow of information between administration and staff				
24. Information from the head gets to the staff and students on time				
25. It is always easy sending information to the staff				
26. The head often secure positive responses (feedbacks) from the staff and students				
27. The staff and students often secure positive responses (feedbacks) from the head				
28. The head discusses the policies of the school with the staff and students				
29. The head is always specific in giving out instructions				
30. The head uses non-verbal cues to enhance the effectiveness of communication				
31. The head sometimes delivers messages through messengers				

## APPENDIX D