

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ISSUES IN COMMUNICATION FLOW IN THE UNIVERSITY OF
CAPE COAST

BY
SAMUEL YAW AMPOFO

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

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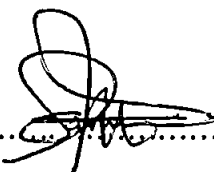
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DECLARATION

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

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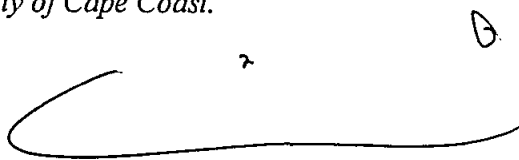
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Supervisors' Declaration

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

Principal Supervisor's Signature:



Date:

29/05/08

Name: Prof. A. A. Kpeglo

Co-Supervisor's Signature:



Date:

30/05/08

Name: Mrs. Janet Alberta Koomson

ABSTRACT

The study considered discovering issues in communication flow in higher educational institutions with particular reference to the University of Cape Coast. The purpose of the research was to bring to light the general perception of the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast on communication in the institution. It also sought to identify the kinds of formal and informal channels of communication, the medium of communication used and its effectiveness, as well as impediments to information flow.

The descriptive survey method was adopted with a sample size of 378, comprising 20 senior members (non-teaching), 107 senior members (teaching), 65 senior staff, 151 junior staff, and 35 student leaders. The questionnaire and interviews were the main instruments employed to collect data from the respondents. A return rate of 95.8% was achieved for the questionnaires administered. The main methods used in analyzing the data were frequency and simple percentage distributions.

The major findings were that information is communicated amongst the internal publics mostly through notice boards, bulletins and memoranda, and semantic problems, poor listening habits, mistrust, poor human relations, faulty communication equipments, serve as major barriers to information flow. Some recommendations made were that the office of the Dean of student affairs must occasionally organize planned fora for students to give updates on pertinent issues in the university, noise in the communication process must be reduced to the barest minimum, beauraucracy and red-tapism should be minimized as much as possible and communication equipments should be regularly maintained to reduce breakdown in information flow.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the Almighty God as the author of my thesis for His guidance and inspiration which have sustained me throughout my academic pursuits. If I have come this far then it is the unmerited favour of God who has blessed me with life, strength and wisdom, and I believe this same God has a purpose for the successful completion of this thesis.

Profound gratitude also goes to my supervisors Prof. A. Amuzu Kpeglo and Mrs Janet Koomson for their readiness and profound interest in the subject matter, their effective supervision, constructive criticisms and contributions which enabled the achievement of the objectives of the study. I am also grateful to all other lecturers and non-teaching staff of IEPA for their support throughout the years I spent with them as a student.

An appreciable co-operation from the lecturers, administrators, senior and junior staff, and student leaders of the University of Cape Coast who were used in the study contributed immensely to its successful conduct. Specific mention is made of Mr. Jeff Onyame (Senior Assistant Registrar -P.R.O) and Mr. Daniel Turkson (Assistant Registrar- Publications). Above all, special thanks go to all those known and unknown who through diverse means supported me in life and more importantly in the development of this thesis especially my mother, Mrs. Cecilia Ampofo.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my wife, Mrs. Ekua Otua Ampofo for the support, advice, encouragement, and love exhibited throughout this period of study. It is also dedicated to my sons Kofi Oheneba Ampofo and Fiifi Nyameyie Ampofo.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Communication plays a major role in nearly every aspect of life. Effective communication does not only help us solve problems but can also improve our lives. Communication experts believe that poor communication is at the root of many problems. Understanding the theory and principles of good communication and putting them to practice, can solve disputes between friends, countries, management and labour, teachers and students, and husbands and wives, to name only a few. Effective communication cannot solve all the world's problems, but it can solve or help avoid a lot of them.

Communication also plays a role in improving lives. Think about all the situations in which you use verbal and nonverbal communication in your life – for instance, going to school, meeting friends, and courting someone you love. And how would we celebrate major occasions and milestones such as graduations, birthdays, weddings and anniversaries without communication? Huss (2002)

Clearly, communication plays a pivotal role in our lives. Thus, regardless of one's interests and goals, the ability to communicate effectively will enhance and enrich one's life. In fact all facets of society these days need results-oriented, seasoned professionals who are good communicators and innovative in nature.

It is therefore not surprising at all that most employers these days seek for applicants who have excellent presentation, verbal and written communication skills to employ in various organizations. For an organization to achieve its basic goals successfully therefore, an effective communication system must be developed and implemented.

Communication is a word and a concept that comes up in all kinds of fora and circumstances. It is generally agreed that "good communication" is essential to any well-run organization. Thus, communication is one of the core management processes at any level of an organization in general and the university in particular, as staff in particular need to receive information that is meaningful to their work and their commitments to the organization.

Claude (1985) defines communication as the transfer of information and understanding from one person to another. It is successful only when a mutual understanding takes place - when both the sender and the receiver of the communication understand it. It is not necessary that they agree with an idea in order for them to have a successful communication. The understanding of an idea however, is very vital for a successful communication.

Communication can take place in many ways. You can communicate directly by talking or tapping, or indirectly by gestures (thumbs down, meaning "on good"), by actions (a pat on the back, drumming your fingers or tapping your foot), by facial expressions, by tone of voice and so on. (Claude 1985 p.64). Thus, communication may take the form of oral communication, written communication, visual communication, audio-visual communication or non -

verbal communication.

Peretomode (1992) also defines communication as the transfer of information or messages from a source that becomes the property of both the sender and receiver. Cole (1986) suggests that communication is a mutual interchange of ideas, feelings and opinions. Thus, communication is any means by which a thought is transferred from one person to another. Communication in another dimension is seen as sharing messages, ideas or attitudes that produce a degree of understanding between a sender and a receiver (Hoy and Miskel, 1982).

The importance of communication to every organization, including the teaching - learning enterprise cannot be over emphasized. In fact, the purpose of communication may be summarized as decision-making, organizing, influencing and activating or initiating action. According to a classic work-sampling study of 136 managers, 81 percent of the typical manager's workday was devoted to communication (Donnelly et al, 1987). Various forms of communication with peers, subordinates, suppliers and customers take place in any organization. It is an undeniable fact that an organization cannot function unless individuals within it can communicate with one another and are willing to contribute freely, their actions towards achieving shared goals and objectives.

Communication influences decision making which is very essential to organizational survival and achievement of organizational goals. The quality of any decision-making is largely dependent on the quality of information communicated.

Communication among the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast flows along the organizational structure as depicted in the organizational chart of the institution. Information such as job descriptions, instructions, procedures and policy statements is transmitted from people in the position of higher authority to people in positions of lower authority. Thus, the central administration passes on information to the faculties, schools, and departments, units, halls of residence and other sections of the university. On the other hand, messages such as grievances, appeals and feedback are transmitted from the people in the position of lower authority to those in the position of higher authority.

According to Donnelly, Gibson & Ivancevich (1987) whether it be on a person-to-person basis, nation to nation, in large organizations or in small groups, breakdowns in communication is seen to be pervasive. Problems may arise in organizations where directives are misinterpreted or distorted or when casually joking in a work group leads to anger.

Kreitner, (1983), emphasizes that because communication is a complex, give and take process, numerous problems occur and these are barriers to communication. The barriers may be within the individual or within the organization. He emphasizes these barriers to include process barriers, physical barriers, semantic barriers, and psychological barriers.

The issue of effective communication has been and continues to be a topical one and of major concern to various facets of society. Research according to Mitzberg [1975] indicates that managers often spend between 50 and 90

percent of their time talking to people. A similar view is shared by Claude [1985], who asserts that most first-line supervisors spend between 50 and 60 % of their time communicating with their employees.

Statement of the Problem

An administrator communicates with a variety of people in a number of different ways about specific situations, problems or issues. As a communicator, an administrator needs to be aware of some basic aspects of communication. However, this does not seem to be the norm in most institutions, including the University of Cape Coast. For instance at the beginning of the 2002/2003 academic year, the Students Representative Council of the University of Cape Coast held a press conference to reject the new accommodation policy of the university (ie. the In-Out-Out-In). Their main reason was that the university authorities did not inform them before this decision which concerns them, was taken. This suggests that there was a communication gap.

In another development, members of the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) embarked on a sit down strike at the beginning of the 2003/2004 academic year to press home their demand for better conditions of service. In the September 05, 2003 edition of the Ghanaian Times, No.14160 ISSN 0855-1503 the Minister of Education in reacting to the issue, said the lecturers would not have gone on strike if the information of an on-going discussion on the matter had been effectively communicated to the members of the association by their leadership. These instances clearly show that barriers to communication flow can result in unpleasant situations.

This study therefore seeks to find out the impediments to communication flow among the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast.

Purpose of the Study

The main focus of this study was to assess the situation of communication and information flow in the University of Cape Coast. It also sought to identify the formal and informal channels of communication, which aid the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the university.

Additionally, the study sought to identify the media of communication used to disseminate information among the internal publics of the university as well as determine how effective they have been. Finally, this study tried to find out impediments that disrupt the process of communication and make suggestions that would help to improve the communication process in the University of Cape Coast.

Research Questions

The researcher hopes to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the general perception of the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast on communication in the institution?
2. What kinds of formal and informal channels of communication exist within the University of Cape Coast and to what extent have they been successful in the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the institution?
3. In the view of lecturers, administrators, senior and junior staff, as well as students, what medium of communication is used in the dissemination of

information within the University of Cape Coast and to what extent are they effective?

4. In the perception of the internal publics of the university of Cape Coast, what impediments hinder the smooth flow of information within the institution?
5. In the perception of the internal publics of the university of Cape Coast what strategies can be employed to minimize the impediments?

Significance of the Study

The eventual importance of this study is varied and enormous. Firstly, the results of the study would benefit the institution in which it is conducted – the University of Cape Coast. This is because the real state of communication and information flow in the university would come to light so as to inform management's decisions in shaping the institution's communication policy to enhance efficient dissemination of information within the university community.

Secondly, it would identify some of the routes/channels of communication in the university system which would help improve the administrators' way of communicating with his subordinates and hence ensure effective and efficient running of the institution.

Again, the study is expected to unearth some of the problems associated with information flow among the internal publics of the university and measures that can be implemented by the authorities to reduce these barriers in order to enhance good interpersonal relationship among the university community.

Findings of the research are also expected to be applicable to the other

universities in the country in helping to improve communication among its internal public such as lecturers, support staff and students. It would also serve as the basis for further research in the near future on the area of communication flow in higher educational institutions.

Finally, the findings of the study would help to promote peace, understanding and tranquility among the internal publics of the university, especially between the administrators and the students in order to enhance smooth academic work on the university campus.

Delimitations

There are five public universities as well as a number of private universities scattered all over Ghana. However, this study will concentrate on the University of Cape Coast (UCC) in the Central Region of Ghana. The region is endowed with another university (University of Education, Winneba) but the researcher would delimit the study to U.C.C. Thus the target population and sample for the study will all be obtained within the confines of the university campus. The study was limited to UCC because the categories of respondents were enough to provide useful information for a study of this nature.

Limitations

The researcher had difficulty with the collection and return of some of the questionnaires. As indicated, not all the distributed copies of the questionnaire were received as envisaged. In all, 362 out of the total of 378 were retrieved. The researcher believed that this formed a significant representation of the

respondents' views which were not recorded but could have enriched the outcome of the study.

Again, the study focused on only the internal publics of the university who were mostly involved in the communication process. The rest of the internal publics of the institution were not sampled for the study. Therefore their views were not captured. These views however could also have enhanced the outcome of the study.

Operational Definition of Terms

Media	-	The channel through which information is spread from the source to the receiver
Management	-	The policy-making body of an organization. It is also the top most personnel in an organization
Publics	-	Any identifiable group that an organization relates to
Feedback	-	The reaction of people to a message
Channel	-	The pattern of flow of information

Organization of the Study

The study has been put into five main chapters as indicated below:

Chapter one looked at introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, purpose of the study and significance of the study. It also included delimitations, limitations, definition of terms and organization of the study.

Chapter two mainly looked at the literature review on the meaning of communication, importance of communication, media of communication and

principles of effective communication. It also considered the communication process, channels of communication, barriers to effective communication, improving communication in the administration of tertiary institutions and the history of the public relations department of the University of Cape Coast.

Chapter three gave a detailed overview of the research methodology. This covered areas of the study such as the characteristics of respondents, research design, population sampling, and data collection procedure as well as data analysis.

Chapter four concentrated on the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. Chapter five consisted of summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Over the years, a lot of studies have been conducted on communication in general and the channels of communication flow in particular. This section of the research seeks to review some of the studies conducted on this subject. The review of the literature was to aid the researcher to get a clearer mental picture of the problem and also help him to obtain the needed information and methods to carry out the research successfully. The review is broken down into:

- i. Meaning of Communication
- ii. Importance of Communication
- iii. Media of Communication
- iv. Principles of Effective Communication
- v. The Communication Process
- vi. Channels of Communication
- vii. Barriers to Effective Communication
- viii. Improving Communication in Administration of Tertiary Institutions
- ix. A Short History of the Public Relations Department of the University of Cape Coast

Meaning of Communication

Communication is a concept, which is difficult to define. Indeed the concept is said to be one of the hackneyed terms in the lexicon of social sciences. However, communication is the essence of all relationships. It is central to control, vital for survival, and is essential for all, both employers and employees in any working environment.

Bouachie Mensah (2000) defines communication as the process by which people exchange information by means of the transmission of symbolic messages. For communication to be effective, the message received must be essentially the same as the message that was sent. According to Cherry as cited in Mc Clure & Samuels (1982), communication may not be defined in terms of the response itself but the relationship set up by the transmission of stimuli and the evocation of response.

Claude (1985) defines communication as the transfer of information and understanding from one person to another. It is successful only when a mutual understanding takes place - when both the sender and the receiver of the communication understand it. It is not necessary that they agree with an idea in order for them to have a successful communication. It is however, necessary that they understand an idea in order to have a successful communication.

In the view of Thaye (1968), communication as a process can occur at four different levels;

- i) intrapersonal,
- ii) interpersonal,
- iii) organizational,
- iv) technological.

The Intrapersonal communication is the first level of communication. It focuses on internal behavior, such as observing, listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The second level of communication is the Interpersonal level. At this level, two or more people exchange thoughts. They may be sharing information, providing feedback or simply maintaining a social relationship. The organizational level of communication occurs on the networks that link organizational members together.

The technological level of communication concerns more than such hardware as telephone, intercoms, copying machines, computers, and two-way radios. Lee Thayer broadly describes the technological level as the focus upon the technology of communication including equipment, apparatus, and /or the formalised programmes for generating, storing, processing, translating, distributing, or displaying data – either for consumption by other pieces of equipment or for the ultimate translation into information and consumption by human beings.

Durbin (1975) sees communication as a two-way process and warns organizations not to see it as a means of telling their side of the story. They should rather ensure a two-way flow of information whereby the views, grievances and criticisms of others are seen as half of a total communication

process. Since the objective is to establish mutual understanding, a two-way communication process will ensure that the parties involved satisfy their desire to hear and be heard. In his opinion, they need to know their interests are well catered for. This is because ignoring the views of any of an organization's publics is detrimental to the well being of the organization itself.

Other scholars have also observed that good communication patterns between an organization's staff can affect higher productivity. They are of the opinion that effective channels of communication between employees and management for example can remove many impediments such as personal grievances and other problems all of which have the effect of lowering morale and productivity.

Supporting this view, Roethlisberger (1943) writing on what in his view constitutes adequate personnel management, identifies as the first human problem in any organization, the problem of securing the cooperation of people in attaining its collective purpose. He observes that people can work together effectively when there are effective communication channels through which employees can learn about their duties and obligations in relation to the economic purpose.

He also identifies as more important, the existence of communication channels between the junior and senior staff for the purpose of opening up avenues through which management can inform and also educate workers about their decisions, plans and intentions and also learn about the reactions of the workers to such decisions and plans.

Besides, communication, being informative and educative tool in

administration, it can be used to mould attitudes, persuade, convince and influence behavior. Prior (1973) opines that effective communication is a prerequisite to good consumer relations, which in turn will put the organization on a sound footing. He stresses that "One key to improved consumer relations is more and better communications, free of jargon and ambiguity". He, however, observes, "sound communication must be based on positive and innovative action to improve consumer services". In order for communication to achieve its complete effectiveness, it must not end with words but these words must be backed by very concrete and tangible deeds being performed and seen to be performed by the organization. Promises, in his view, are not enough. They achieve significance when they have been honoured.

Writing on the effectiveness of communication, Pinsdorf (1975) quotes Peter Druker as saying in his "Practice of Management" that information is the manager's main vehicle for operating. He was of the view that a leader can motivate, guide and organize people to perform their own work most effectively through the spoken or written word. It is an undeniable fact that communication is an integral part of many problems of productivity, turnover, morale and absenteeism. Unfortunately, Pinsdorf observes that the concern of communications specialists has often tended to focus on the way to get their messages across while virtually neglecting the message itself. She consequently calls for greater attention to the quality of the message as well as that of the people involved rather than the over-reliance on machines and technology. "Wordiness, executive isolation, following fads and the failure to even be aware

of another's point of view are prime enemies of communication". According to her, "The quality of the people involved, the messages they send each other, the quality of what is said, all are vitally important, much more so than the media which we have over-concentrated in years past".

Communication can take place in many ways. You can communicate directly by talking or tapping, or indirectly by gestures (thumbs down, meaning "on good"), by actions (a pat on the back, drumming your fingers or tapping your foot), by facial expressions, by tone of voice and so on. (Claude , 1985 p.64). Thus, communication may take the form of oral communication, written communication, visual communication, audio- visual communication or non - verbal communication

Importance of Communication

The importance of communication as a tool for organizational success development cannot be over emphasized. Various individuals, families, organizations and countries would have been in severe crisis if not for the existence of communication as a means of interaction among these groups. Studying communication comprehensively offers a number of advantages.

Communication can improve the way you see yourself. Self-confidence is greatly improved if one knows how to communicate effectively in a variety of situations from interpersonal relationship to public speeches. It can also improve how others see you since most people like communicating with others who can communicate well. In another sense, one can increase what he knows about human relationship since you have the opportunity of knowing how people relate

to each other and about what type of communication is appropriate for a given situation.

Communication is the core of almost every profession. Transmitting information from one person to another, from one organization to another or a combination of both, and to the shareholders and other stakeholders of the organization is mostly dependent on communication.

Media of Communication

Much has been written on the various forms of communication. Bouachie Mensah (2000), asserts that communication can be put into five main categories. These are oral communication, written communication, visual communication and non-verbal communication. According to him all these five activities operate in both business and non-business settings.

Oral Communication

This involves the spoken word. It is the dissemination of information either verbally through a medium or in a face – to – face contact between the sender and the receiver. Oral communication takes the form of telephone calls, interviews, speeches, staff meetings, messenger, public address system and inter-con.

A research by Mitzberg (1975) indicates that managers often spend between 50 and 90% of their time talking to people. In the view of Evans (1994), oral communication also includes oral briefing, seminars, presentations, tele and audio conferencing and training sessions.

Oral communication has the advantages of physical proximity and usually both sight and sound of sender and receiver, allow for instant interchange of opinions, views, and attitudes. Lengel and Draft (1988) observe that oral communication ensures instantaneous feed back, easier to convince or persuade and above all, allows for contribution and participation from all present.

On the other hand, this medium of communication has the disadvantage of becoming difficult to control when a number of people take part. In times like that, there is less time to think things out – hence quality of decision-making may be inferior. There are often no written records of what has been said; sometimes disputes result over what was agreed.

Written Communication

This is the process of transferring information from one place to another in a written or documented form. Written communication according to Gibson and Hodgetts (1986) is word-processed. This includes letters, memoranda, reports, minutes, mail-merged circulars, email messages, faxed and telex documents, queries, bulletins, house journals and notices. In the view of Bouchie Mensah (2000), added to all the above are statements of procedures, policies and methods designed to regulate business activities communicated often in written forms. (pp. 205).

In assessing the importance of the various media of communication, Haney (1992) contends that written communication provides written record and evidence of dispatch and receipt; is capable of relaying complex ideas, provides analysis, evaluation and summary; disseminates information to dispersed

receivers, can confirm, interpret and clarify oral communications; and forms basis of contract or agreement.

On the contrary, Haney (1992) asserts that written communication has the limitation of taking time to produce and can be very expensive. Also communication tends to be more formal and distinct and can cause problems of interpretation; instant feedback is not possible; it is difficult to modify message once dispatched; does not allow for the exchange of views/ options except over a period of time.

Visual Communication

This is the method of communication in which pictorial appeal is made to the receiver. It makes it possible for the receiver to see the information being transmitted. Visual communication takes the form of posters, diagrams, flow charts, and cartoons. They make an impression by appealing to the eye.

It has the merit of a large audience being reached at the same time. Also, it can be used for future reference and creates a long lasting impression as the receiver can picture the message in his mind. The main delimitation however, is the fact that it is time consuming to put information into a pictorial form, and is very expensive. Also, different meanings may be assigned to the same presentation.

Non-verbal Communication

According to Wright & Noe (1995), nonverbal communication is communicating through a channel that does not use words. It may include body language as well as other signals such as what people wear and what objects they

surround themselves with.. In the view of Fiske (1994), non-verbal communication is carried on through presentational codes such as gestures, eye movements, or qualities of voice. These codes can give messages only about the here and now. (pp.67)

Evans (1994) observes that non-verbal communication may also take the form of posture of expressions. This medium of communication reinforces oral communication; provides additional visual stimulus, simplifies written or spoken word. Research finding indicate that 55% of a message is transmitted through facial expression and body movement and that another 38% is conveyed in reflection. This goes to confirm the observation made by Fiske (1994) that non-verbal communication is to convey indexial information.

Principles of Effective Communication

The communication system used by an organization must be able to convey large amounts of information quickly to and from the data sources and the decision-makers. At the same time the system must transmit accurate and timely information to the places that need it.

The American Management Association has suggested the following criteria for good communication as sited in Bouachie Mensah (2000).

1. The communicator must clarify his or her ideas before communicating
2. The true purpose of each message or communication must be examined.
3. There needs to be consultation with others in planning communications, so conflicting or unintelligible messages are not sent.

4. The communicator needs to be mindful of the overtones of the message, which he or she is communicating, as well as its basic content.
5. Opportunities should be taken to convey something of help or value to the receiver.
6. Communications should be followed up to check that the intended meaning has been understood.
7. Communications should not be determined solely by the needs of present, but the communicator should also have tomorrow in mind.
8. Actions need to support communications, or else conflicting and contradictory messages will be transmitted to the receiver.
9. Good communication depends on a willingness to listen and understand.

In addition to what has been said, Bush and Frohman (1991) are of the view that the following principles could also be identified for effective communication:

1. Clarity

The sender of a message should use clear and concise language and should bear in mind the objectives of the communication. This should help overcome potential barriers to communication such as faulty translations and transmissions.

2. Attention

There is the need for due attention to be paid by the one at the receiving end of information.

3. Integrity

The integrity of an organization rests partly on supporting the position of subordinate managers. It is therefore important that senior management should

whenever possible, use the existing net work of communications according to the accepted line of authority.

4. Trust

Trust is vital to effective interpersonal communication. Subordinates would only send accurate and open messages to their superiors if only they could trust them.

5. Choice of Media

It is important for the most appropriate media to be used. Face-to-face must be used for interview, meeting and conference, oral communication must make use of telephones, radio, etc and memos, letters, circulars, manuals and newspapers for the written communication. (pp. 204).

The Communication Process / Theory

To make the most resources available, managers have to carefully develop and maintain an effective communication system. One of the communication theories that has gained currency as the main seed out of which communication studies has grown is that of Shannon and Weaver (1949). It is a clear example of process school, which sees communication as the transmission of messages.

Their basic model of communication presents it as a simple linear process, as

depicted in figure 1.

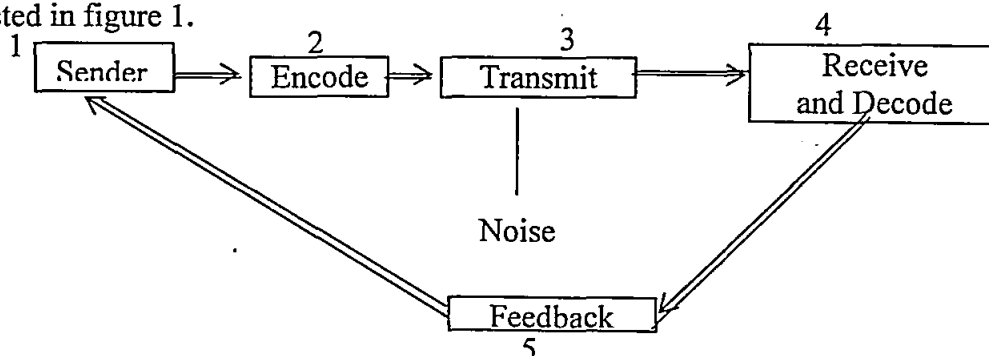


Figure 1: Shannon and Weaver's Model of Communication.

(Source: Fiske J. (1994 pp.7).

From Figure 1, it is clear that there are five main stages in the communication process. The very first stage is the sender. The whole communication is based on perception. The sender initiates a message received from certain stimuli from the environment that are perceived as requiring attention. The purpose of initiating the communication is to transmit information about what is perceived to be a second person.

The second stage is encoding. This refers to the transmission of information into a message in the form of symbols with a shared meaning. The symbols may take forms such as spoken or written words, and commonly understood gestures, colours and pictographs. According to Bouachie Mensah (2000), the major form of encoding is language.

The third step in the process of communication is to transmit the information. It involves the conveyance of communication symbols from the sender of the message to the receiver, either verbally or non-verbally.

The fourth stage of the communication process is to receive and decode the message. This involves two-step process. First, the receiving means one or more of the receiver's senses register the message and second the decoding which refers to interpreting what the message means.

Finally, there is a response in the form of a feedback. An immediate response is expected from the receiver of the message. This provides a channel

for receiver response, which enables the communicator to ascertain whether the message has been received and yielded the expected response. (Evans 1994)

It is important to stress that noise may occur in the communication process. According to McQuail (1972), noise is anything that is added to the signal between its transmission and reception that is not intended by the source. This can be distortion of sound or crackling in a telephone wire, static in radio signal or 'snow' on a television screen. In the view of Wright and Noe (1995), noise is "anything that distorts a message by interfering with the communication process" (pp.486). It may take the form of ambiguous wording of a message, a worn printer ribbon that makes a document hard to read or distractions that prevents the receiver from paying attention.

Channels of Communication

The term "Channels of Communication" according to Wood (1999) refers to the formal or informal processes by which the message gets from the sender to the receiver. Thus, he asserts that staff of an organization must understand the reasons for change and the process adopted to make decisions and implement those changes. For this to happen, it is important that there be clearly defined channels of communication and that the staff receive information that is meaningful to their work and their commitment to the organization.

Hampton (1981) is of the view that managers are the architects of organizational communication structures. They design and redesign those so that people in the organization can interact and communicate when necessary to

accomplish their work. The more the structures facilitate needed information processing, the more it contributes to effectiveness.

Evans (1994) sees the channels of communication as the routes of communication. In the view of Daft and Steers (1992) as cited in Wright and Noe (1995), channels of communication may also be referred to as directions of communication. The channels of communication may be put into two broad categories. These are Formal Channels of Communication and Informal Communication Channels

The Formal Communication Channels

This description is applied to those communications, which are routed through what is called 'official channels'. They are the officially designated and recognized channels by the organization for the conveyance of official messages inside and outside the organization. (Bouachie Mensah 2000, pp.206). The organization structure and organization chart determines these channels. In the University of Cape Coast for instance, the direction of flow of information is determined officially by the laid down organization chart and structure.

Formal communication in the view of Daft and Steers (1992) is the communication that flows along the organization's lines of authority or task responsibility. They further contend that, there are logically three directions in which a message can travel. These are the vertical, lateral and diagonal communication.

Vertical Communication Channel

This term is used to describe the principal channel for routing directives, instructions and policies from top decision makers down through the organization to the people who, at various levels will implement them. Thus, the vertical channel of communication consists of communication up and down the organization's chain of command and lines of authority. It takes place between superiors and subordinates. It is the official channel used to communicate:

- (i) policies
- (ii) plans
- (iii) instructions
- (iv) suggestions
- (v) reports
- (vi) complaints

The vertical channel can flow downward from a superior or higher level to a subordinate. It may also be upwards from a lower level to a higher one. In other words, supervisors use downward channels to send messages to employees while employees use upward channels to send messages to the supervisors.

Downward Channel of Communication

This route of communication carries information from people in the position of higher authority to people in positions of lower authority or subordinates. Job descriptions, instructions, procedures, policy statements and official memos have been identified to be among the most common forms of downward communication (Jablin, 1979). Means of downward communications

include the use of loudspeakers periodicals, telephones, messengers, committees, staff meetings, handbook, company bulletins or house journals, bells, circulars, queries, job instructions, organizational policy, procedures and practices, employee performance feedback and indoctrination of company goals.

According to Evans (1994), the downward flow of communication is most frequently channeled through an organization's 'line of authority' from manager to subordinate in a 'report to' relationship.

Upward Channel of Communication

In upward communication, the message is directed toward a higher level in the organizational hierarchy. It involves the flow of opinions, ideas, complaints, suggestions and other information from someone of lower level or subordinate in the organization to the superior. Another school of thought such as Wright and Noe (1995) see it as taking the form of progress reports or information about successes and failures of individuals or work groups reporting to the receiver of the message. Sometimes, employees also send suggestions or complaints upward through the organization's hierarchy. Some of the most commonly used tools for upward communication are group meetings, suggestion boxes and reports to superiors. It may also involve collective bargaining, appeals, open door policy and expression of grievances.

According to Gibson & Hodgetts (1986), less is known about upward communication in most organizations. They stressed that one consistent finding is that employee satisfaction with upward communication tends to be lower than their satisfaction with downward communication. Also, Larkin & Larkin (1994)

found low levels of satisfaction with all the strategies commonly used to enhance upward communication, including employee surveys, suggestion programs, employee grievance programs and employee participation programs such as quality circles and team meetings. In the view of Donnelly et al (1987) however, effective upward communication is important because they provide employees with opportunities to have a say. Also top management depends on subordinates for vital information.

According to Gibson & Hodgetts (1986) several management – based reasons can be given for this lack of satisfaction. These include the fact that most of these strategies do not involve two-way communication, are not packaged well, are poorly timed, and are apt to trigger defensiveness on the part of managers.

In addition, McClelland (1988) found a number of employee-based reasons why upward communication tends to be poor. Notable among them are fear of reprisals, filters and the fact that managers give the impression that they do not have time to listen to employees.

Lateral Communications Channel

This channel of communication is also referred to as horizontal communication. Lateral communication occurs at all levels of an organization and is generally marked by the increased frankness and ease with which groups at similar levels communicate. (Evans 1994,pp 28).

Lateral communication may be described as the communication between departments of an organization that generally follows the work flow, thus

providing a direct channel for co-ordination and problem solving (Stonner & Freeman, 1992)

This channel of communication is often overlooked in the design of most organizations. Effective organizations also need horizontal communication. It is necessary for the co-ordination of diverse organizational function. (Donnelly et al, 1987). In the view of Frank (1984) while recent trends to flatten organizations have enhanced the importance of lateral communication, studies on lateral communications still lag behind those on vertical communication.

Diagonal Communication

Diagonal Communication refers to communication between managers and workers located in different functional divisions (Wilson 1992). Although both vertical and horizontal communication continues to be important, these terms no longer adequately capture communication needs and flows in most modern organizations. The concept of diagonal communication was introduced to capture the new communication challenges associated with new organizational forms, such as matrix and project – based organizations. Also, with the rise of network organizations, communication flows can no longer be restricted to vertical and horizontal.

In the view of Donnelly et al (1987), although diagonal communication probably is the least used channel of communication in organizations, it is important in situation in which members cannot communicate effectively through other channels. Thus in such situations, the use of a diagonal channel would

minimize the time and effort expended by the organization. Every effort must be made by the university authorities to encourage the use of diagonal communication to solve diverse organizational problems such as conflicts and inter-departmental friction in the university at relatively lower cost.

Informal Communication Channel

Informal communication channel is any means through which information flows outside the formal channels and is used by people to transmit casual, personal and social interchanges at work. This is also referred to popularly as the grapevine. According to Lesikar, Petit, Flatley (1999) such communication follows no set pattern. They form an ever-changing and infinitely complex structure linking all the members of the organization.

The Grapevine

Grapevine refers to the informal transmission of information, gossip or rumor from person to person” The grapevine is the informal and unsanctioned information network within every organization. “The network helps employees make sense of the world around them and consequently provides a release from emotional stress and all informal information is undocumented”.(Simmons, 1985). Keith Davis (1969) discovered in his study that organizational Grapevine is an expression of healthy human motivation to communicate: “In fact, if employees are so uninterested in their work that they do not engage in shoptalk about it, they are probably maladjusted. Of all the things that the grapevine has been called, it is foremost—a communications network”.(Rosnow & Fine, 1976)

Since it is unstructured and not under complete control of management, it moves through the organization in every direction. "It moves upwards, downward, and diagonally, within and without chains of command, between workers and managers, and even with and without a company."(Davis,1969)

The term grapevine can be traced to Civil War days when vinelike telegraph wires were strung from tree across battlefields and used by Army Intelligence (Kreitner, 1983).The messages that came over these lines were often so confusing or inaccurate that as soon any rumor was said to come from the grapevine people get together in groups (Hicks & Gullet, 1975).The lines of communication seem to be haphazard and easily disrupted as the telegraph wires were, however, they transmit information rapidly and in many cases faster and with a stronger impact than the formal system allows.

Location of the Grapevine

Since the grapevine arises from social interactions, it is as fickle, dynamic, and varied as people are. It is the expression of their natural motivation to communicate. It is the exercise of their freedom of speech and is a natural, normal activity. The grapevine starts early in the morning in the car pools, once everyone has arrived at work, grapevine activity takes place nearly all day long down hallways, around corners, in meetings, and especially by the coffee machine. The peak time of the days are breaks and lunch hour during which management has little or no control over the topics of time intervals, some employees meet again. They are on company softball teams, golf leagues, and bowling teams. The grapevine at that time goes into full swing again and remains active with one final

activity peak at a local bar. The following day, the cycle is repeated. It is the wide range of locations where the grapevine takes place in combination with points out its difference from formal management communication. Structured management uses verbal messages to communicate through the chain of command, while grapevine communication jumps from one department to another and all within a short span of time. The grapevine, as communication, can be compared to the organizations formal information network.

Formal vs. Informal Channels of Communication

Every organization has a formal communication system. This formal system provides information regarding the organization to the employees through different media. The formal network, made up of memos, reports, staff-meeting, department meetings, conferences, company newsletters, official notices, is highly documented and as such has very little chance for change. However, nearly all of the information with the grapevine is undocumented and is thereby open the change and interpretation as it moves through the network. "The informal organization is less permanent and less stable (than the formal organization) because its leaders and patterns of action change readily". This occurs because of the dependency of the network on personalities, whereas the formal network is set up through structured policies nondependent on individuals.

Keith Davis did a classic study of the grapevine in 1953. This was followed by an extension of research by numerous renowned scholars. Keith Davis stated "the grapevine is a natural and unique part of a company's total

communication system...it is a significant force within the work group, helping to build teamwork motivate people, and create corporate identity". He emphasized that "the grapevine is the informal passing of information through the organization". It does not necessarily follow the formal structure of the organization and can bypass individuals without restraint. It can be more direct and faster than the formal channels of information since the information is not being screened or controlled. It often travels faster than formal channels. Interestingly, it has been found that the grapevine is equally active both in management and among the workers. The grapevine exists in organization with amazing speed. The grapevine is very useful in supplementing formal channels. It provides people with an outlet for their imaginations and apprehensions as well. It also helps satisfy a natural desire to know what is really going on and gives employees a sense of belonging. As an early warning system, gossip allows people to think through in advance what they will do if the rumors become the awful truth. Subordinates may get an idea of what the boss is wrestling with and may have some suggestions which may help the situation.

The grapevine is flexible and personal and can spread information faster than the formal communication channels. The grapevine is also capable of penetrating even the tightest security because it cuts across organizational lines and deals directly with people in the know. Bosses who choose not to pay attention to the grapevine have 50% less credible information than those who do. Khandwalla (1977) states that it exists because of excessive structuring of formal work flows and the excessive channeling of information flows. It is fed by

personal apprehension, wish fulfillment, retaliation, and gossip. (Koenig, 1985). Surprisingly, most researchers have found that most grapevine information is either true or has within it a kernel of truth.

Reasons for Grapevine Communications

Grapevine exists in all organizations in varying degrees. Allport & Postman (1947) describe two conditions as controlling activeness of the grapevine, importance of the subject to the speaker and listener, and the ambiguousness of the facts. He relates the two with the following formula:

$$R = IA$$

Where:

R is the intensity of the rumor

I is the importance of the rumor to the persons communicating, and

A is the ambiguity of the facts associated with the rumor.

This formula, according to them, means that the amount of rumor in circulation will vary with the importance of the subject to the individuals concerned times the ambiguity of the evidence pertaining to the topic at issue. The relation between importance and ambiguity is not additive but multiplicative, for if either importance or ambiguity is zero, there is no rumor. This formula is supported by Simmons (1985) who stated it slightly differently. He states "rumors originate, grow, and spread along the grapevine in direct proportion to their importance to workers and the lack of news on a subject from official channels.

How Accurate is the Grapevine?

Allport and Postman's research indicated that "most rumors start as a report of an actual episode – that is to say, with someone's perceptual experience of an event which he deems of sufficient interest and importance to communicate to others. Once this central theme, the actual episode has been accepted there is a tendency to distort subsequent news or events in order to make them consistent with the central theme. However, Davis (1969) reports from his research "that in normal business situations between 75 percent and 95 percent of grapevine information is correct. In general people tend to think the grapevine is less accurate than it is because its errors tend to be more dramatic and consequently are more impressed on one's memory than its day-to-day routine accuracy.

In a normal work situation, upwards of 80% of the information that comes over the grapevine is accurate (Arnold, 1983). While the day-to-day accuracy may be good, people believe the grapevine is less accurate because the times it is wrong are more dramatic. A communication may be 90% correct in details but that last 10% is often the most important part of the message. Messages from the grapevine are often lacking in all the details so that the message is subject to misinterpretation; while the grapevine generally carries the truth it seldom carries the whole truth. An interesting note about the informal communications network is that an estimated 80% of grapevine information is oriented toward the individual while 20% concerns the company. (Nofel, 1985).

Allport and Postman discuss in their book, the changes that occur as a rumor passes along the grapevine. The central theme may be resistant to change,

however crucial details necessary for understanding the true situation keep being deleted. (They call the process "leveling") At the same time the most dramatic details keep being exaggerated each time the rumor is repeated. (This they refer to as "sharpening.") So as the rumor moves along it begins to appear as some sort of shrinking missile as it keeps getting shorter and more pointed in flight. This may sound very simple, however we should remember that "the grapevine is fast-paced and generally moves, free of organizational restraints, by word of mouth."

Barriers to Effective Communication

The communication process as identified by Belch and Belch (1998) is often very complex. Success depends on such factors as the nature of the message, the audience's interpretation of it and the environment in which it is received. Various characteristics of the sender, receiver and communication situation can create barriers to effective communication. By being aware of potential barriers, the manager can avoid them or recognize situations in which one of the parties may understand a message. (Wright and Noe, 1995 p.500)

Barriers to effective communication and for that matter information flow include lack of communication skills, selective perceptions, poor listening habits, emotional state of both the sender and receiver, differing frames of reference, semantic barriers, source credibility, faulty communication equipments and many others.

Lack of Communication Skills

According to Wright and Noe (1995), the effectiveness of an effort to communicate is limited first by the sender's communicative skills. The sender needs to understand the message clearly and adequately. Like the sender, the receiver of the message needs certain abilities to communicate properly. The receiver must have adequate skills in reading, listening or whatever activity is necessary to receive the message. The lack of such abilities will be a barrier to communication. (pp.501-502)

Selective Perceptions

This occurs when people block out new information, especially when it conflicts with what they believe. Consequently, when people receive information, they are likely to hear only those parts that are in accordance with their beliefs. According to Donnelly et al (1987), any information that is incompatible with preconceived ideas may either not be processed or would be distorted to give credence to their preconceptions. For example, a notice may be sent to all operating departments that cost must be reduced if the organization is to earn profit. Such a communication may not achieve its desired effect, because it conflicts with the reality of the receivers. Operating employees may ignore or be amused by the notice in light of the large salaries, travel allowances, and expense accounts of some superiors. Whether these expenditures are justified is irrelevant;

what is important is that such preconceptions result in breakdowns in communication.

Also, as indicated by Donnelly et al (1987), selective perception results in Stereotyping. When an individual has preconceived ideas about other people, and refuses to discriminate between individual behaviors, that person is applying selective perception to his relationships with other people. Stereotyping is barrier to communication because those who stereotype others use selective perception in their communication and tend to hear only those things that confirm their stereotyped images. For instance, some men stereotype successful females, some women stereotype aggressive men and some superiors stereotype union stewards

Filtering

Filtering is a common occurrence in upward communication in organizations. It amounts to "manipulating" information so that the information is perceived as positive by the receiver. Subordinates "cover up" unfavorable information in messages to their superiors. The reason for such filtering should be clear. Upward communication carries control information to management. Management makes merit evaluations, grants salary increases and promotes individuals based on what it receives by way of the upward channel. The temptation to filter is therefore likely to be strong at every level in the organization. The shape of the organization determines the extent to which information can be filtered. An organizational design with many levels of management (a "tall" organization) will experience more information filtration than will one with fewer levels (a "flat" organization). One reason that can be

given to this is the more levels through which upward communication must flow; the greater is the opportunity for each successive layer of management to take out what it does not want the next level to know. Thus an advantage of the flat organizational design is that they minimize the problem of filtration (Donnelly et al, 1987).

Poor Listening

Listening is supposed to make up of about fifty percent of the time spent together by a superior and a subordinate. Unfortunately, it does not happen that way, since one or both persons are unable to listen (Hatfield and Huseman, 1982). Bouachie Mensah (2000) gives a very vivid example of this situation where an employee goes to tell the manager a problem, he or she may be facing. And before the person even starts his or her story, the manger begins to give a citation of his or her own current problem. Failing to listen may result from a host of personal habits. Donnelly et all (1987) opines that "we speak at rates of 100 to 200 words a minute, read at two or three times our speaking rate, and think several times faster than we read. As a result, a listener can move through a discussion much faster than a speaker can.

Because of the speed involved, we typically develop poor listening habits. Bad listening habits are of particular interest in work settings. For instance, if either a manager or a subordinate fails to listen to the other, the objectives of the discussion, feedback session, or job instruction will not be accomplished.

Semantic Barriers

A major difficulty with communication is the form of words. The same words may mean different things to different people. The selection and use of wrong or strange words or technical jargons and terms often impede effective communication.

According to Cullum (1994), the term 'jargon' refers to terms that have a precise meaning among specialists but are unfamiliar to non-specialists. Such barriers are increasingly likely, as specialized workers become a greater part of the work force in an information economy. There is therefore the possibility for a communicator to speak the same language as the receiver but still not transmit understanding. Because different groups use words differently, communication often can be impeded. This is especially true with abstract or technical terms and phrases. For instance a "cost-benefit study" would have meaning to persons involved in the administration of the organizations accounts but probably would mean very little to the other staff; in fact it might even carry a negative meaning to them. Such concepts as trusts, profits and treasury bills may have concrete meaning to bank executives but little or no meaning to bank tellers. Because words mean different things to different people, it is possible for a communicator to speak the same language but still not transmit understanding. (Donnelly et al, 1987, p.431).

Occupational, professional, and social groups often develop words and phrases that have meaning only to group members. Such special language can serve many useful purposes. It can provide group members with feelings of

belonging, cohesiveness, and self-esteem. It can also facilitate effective communication within the group. The use of in-group language can, however, result in severe semantic problems and communication breakdowns when outsiders or other groups are involved. Technical and staff groups often use such language in an organization, not for the purpose of transmitting information and understanding but rather in order to communicate a "mystique" about the group or its function.

Emotional State

A person's ability to encode a message can become impaired when the person is feeling strong emotions. For instance, when you are angry, it is harder to consider the other person's viewpoint and to choose words carefully. In the same vein, the receiver will have difficulty decoding a message when his or her emotions are strong. For instance a receiver who is angry might pay attention but misinterpret a message in light of his or her anger.

Communication Overload

One of the vital tasks performed by the manager is decision making. One of the necessary ingredients for decision is information. The last decade has been described as the information era, or the age of information. Because of the advances in communication technology, difficulties may arise, not from excessive information. Managers often are deluged by information and data. As a result, they cannot absorb or adequately respond to all of the messages directed to them. According to O' Reilly (1980), "they screen out the majority of messages, which

in effect means that these messages are never decided, thus the area of organizational communication is one which is not always better”.

Differing Frames of Reference

Different interpretations can be given to the same communication by individuals, depending on their previous experience. Wright and Noe (1995) see it as combination of experiences and expectations giving rise to a particular mind-set. This results in variations between the communication process, which effectively lead to communication breakdown. For instance, information overload can interfere with attention. As a result, the person to whom a message is directed might never receive it. (pp. 502-503). The result is variations between the encoding and decoding processes. When the processes are alike, communication is most effective. When they are different, communication tends to break down. To the extent that individuals have distinctly different forms of reference, effective communication among those individuals will be difficult to achieve (Huseman & Hatfield, 1982 p. 349-3.58)

One result of different frames of reference is that communications become distorted. In an organization, the jobs that people perform will create barriers and distortions in communication. Different levels in the organization also will have different frames of reference. First line managers have frames of reference that differ in many respects from those of middle level managers because they are in different positions in the organizations structure. As a result, the need, values, attitudes, and expectations of these two groups will differ and this often will produce unintentional distortions of the communication between them. Neither

group is wrong or right. In any situation, individual will choose that part of their own past experiences that relates to their current experiences and is helpful in forming conclusions and judgments. Unfortunately, such incongruities in encoding and decoding result in barriers to effective communication.

Source Credibility

This concerns trust, confidence and faith that the receiver attributes to the words and actions of the sender. The degree of credibility that the receiver attaches to the communicator directly influences how the receiver considers and reacts to the words, ideas and actions of the communicator. Thus sending conflicting signals erodes the sender's credibility.

Mc. Quail (1972) believes that the sender is seen to lack credibility when the receiver doubts that person has enough knowledge about the subject matter to discuss it accurately. Thus, how subordinates view a communication from their manager is affected by their evaluations of the manager. The degree of credibility they attach to the communication is heavily influenced by their previous experiences with the manager. A group of organizational staff who view their administrator as less than honest, manipulative, and not to be trusted are apt to assign non-existent motives to any communication from the administrator. In the same vein, union leaders who view managers (superiors) as exploiters, and superiors who view union leaders as inherent enemies are likely to engage in little real communication..

The barriers to communication discussed here, though common, are by no means the only ones that exist. Examining these barriers indicates that they are

either within individuals or within organizations. As indicated by Muchinsky (1977) this point is important because "attempts to improve communications must focus on changing people and/or changing the organization structure".

Improving Communication In Administration of Tertiary Institutions

Managers can and should improve communication in organizations, including universities and other tertiary institutions. This can be achieved by fostering a climate that encourages communication. Various strategies may be adopted in doing this. Some of the techniques include regulating information flow, utilizing feedback, clarity of expressions, encouraging active listening, managing emotions [supportive communication] and many others.

Regulating Information Flow

There is the need to regulate the flow of communications, which would ensure an optimum flow of information to administrators, there by eliminating the barrier of communication overload. This could be achieved by implementing the principle of "Management by Exception" [MBE] whereby only significant deviations from policies and procedure should be brought to the attention of Managers.

Utilizing Feedback

The manager [administrators] should utilize the element of feedback in the communication process. Feedback provides a channel for receiver response, which enables the communicator to ascertain whether the message has been received and has yielded the expected response. The manager should interpret his

feedback with care, confirming that the receivers understood the message and the manager understood the feedback.

Clarity of Expressions

To ensure effective communication, Bouachie Mensah [2000] contends that manager would need to simplify the language used by focusing on transmitting understanding as well as information. Instances in which people, particularly professionals try to use their in-group language in communicating with individuals outside their group should be avoided.

Encouraging Active Listening

Active listening according to Fiske [1994] means accepting responsibility for the accurate understanding of a message by helping the sender clarify its meaning. To do this deliberate effort should be made to listen carefully: make eye contact and do not let your mind wander. Whenever a message seems ambiguous, ask for clarification. Finally, test the perceived meaning by 'reflecting' it back, which is, paraphrasing what you think the sender said. If done sparingly, reflection is an effective tool.

Managing Emotions

One of the most important tools used in improving communication is to manage emotions. The sender should avoid encoding and transmitting messages when he or she is angry and upset. The sender can also manage emotions by using supportive communication. According to Whetted and Cameron [1984], supportive communication is a style of communication that delivers a message

accurately while supporting and enhancing the relationship between the parties to the communication.

The Internet

The Internet's appearance in higher education was used as a tool for researchers to communicate and share project data. Today the education domain is still one of the largest contributors to the Internet. However, the Internet is unorganized and Web sites appear, disappear, move or mutate on daily basis. While the Internet is difficult to search, it is even more difficult to search it well. Moreover, the information found on the Internet has both the useful and the useless co-existing (New Mexico State University Library, 2002).

Despite these drawbacks, the Internet has a few advantages: it is relatively fast, it is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week and you can use it from your own computer. More and more students as well as lecturers are doing their research exclusively on the Internet. While this phenomenon is a sign of the times, it is important for researchers to recognize that not everything is available on the Internet.

Importance of the Internet

The Internet can be conceived as a rich, multi-layered, complex, ever-changing textual environment. The Internet provides several opportunities for the academia. It is a mechanism for information dissemination and a medium for collaborative interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic limitation of space (Leiner et al., 2000; Singh, 2002). Content created on the Internet ranges from simple e-mail messages to sophisticated

'documents' (sites) incorporating sounds, images and words.(Evans, 1996) The Internet is a 'live', constantly 'moving', theoretically borderless, potentially infinite space for the production and circulation of information. The Internet is arguably one of the most significant technological developments of the late 20th century. While printed materials have a certain fixity and finitude, texts published via the Internet have a much more fluid character. With texts no longer housed between library or bookshop walls, it becomes impossible to 'pin down' all or even most of the available materials in given subject areas for archival and classification purposes. The Internet might thus be described as a 'sea of information', subject to the ebb and flow of various forces (political, corporate, institutional, etc.), creating an ever-shifting shoreline.

Services on the Internet

First, and perhaps of greatest importance for many subscribers to online services, is e-mail. Computer connectivity between nations has allowed a new form of correspondence to evolve and this, though seldom noticed, has changed people's daily lives the world over. Academics now send more words to others, more often, than ever before. While the bureaucratization of the university has contributed to an increase in 'busy work' of all kinds (including memoranda and correspondence), e-mail seems to have exacerbated the effects of this trend. E-mail has conferred some wonderful advantages. It is now possible to communicate easily and rapidly with people thousands of miles away. E-mail has become a seemingly indispensable part of people's lives, and correspondence by post seems tedious and slow by comparison. Yet, perhaps because e-mail, in

removing previous barriers of geography and distance, reduces some of the perceived burdens of the old paper and post systems, it is used almost incessantly! The flood of words generated by e-mail is matched by a similar drowning in discourse through the myriad discussion groups and 'chat rooms' of all kinds now available on the Internet. Some of these are outgrowths from, or affiliated with, formal publications or professional societies. In such cases participants usually take considerable care in their submissions to discussions. As with e-mail, however, the ease with which contributions to a discussion group can be made sometimes encourages those who might otherwise not be bothered to get involved — even if this is in a less than productive manner. Finally, the Internet is fast becoming a major site for commercial activity, and many corporate organizations now advertise their goods and services — and sometimes sell them, either as one wing of a larger operation or as their sole form of business activity — in cyberspace.

Meaning of Public Relations

It is an undeniable fact that no organisation can insulate itself from its publics. Every organisation is dependent on the people outside it as well as its own employees. There is indeed a need for an enormous flow of information from one part of the organisation to another as well as the development of a good external communication system.

Hargreaves (1977), is of the opinion that there is a direct relationship between the effectiveness of communication and efficiency of any organization. To him, any appreciable misunderstanding about what someone is required to

know or do will produce an appreciable degree of inefficiency in and organization. He is also of the opinion that good communication links with the publics of any organization can be said to have attained its objectives only when it has also satisfied the needs of all those who have a stake in the organization (i.e. its publics). In a typical tertiary educational institution such as the university, one major section, which facilitates or plays a key role in the dissemination of information through effective communication channels especially among the internal publics of the institutions, is the Public Relations Unit. The term "Public Relations" as a form of communication has been difficult to trace though public relations practitioners and educators have managed to locate where the modern form of the organized persuasive communication fits in history.

In spite of the difficulty, many authors have defined the concept of public relations in many ways.

Modoux (1989) sees public relations as representing a management function that has a three-fold task;

1. evaluating and interpreting the opinions, attitudes and aspirations of the various publics - internal and external - affected directly or indirectly by the activities of the organization.
2. presenting proposals to the governing bodies of the organization on policy and a line of conduct that make it possible to reconcile the particular interests of the organization with those of the publics concerned.

3. planning and carrying out short, medium and long term plans to create better knowledge and understanding, especially through dialogue, of the organization as well as its problems.

The British Institute of Public Relations (IPR) sees it as the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics. On its part, the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) sees public relations practice as a:

Management function of a continuing and planned character through which public and private organizations and institutions seek to win and retain the understanding, sympathy and support of those with whom they are or may be concerned.

Importance of Public Relations

The importance of public relations is derived from its omni-presence in every sphere of an organization's life. It is present in government be it on the international, national, regional or local/district level in small, medium-sized, large and trans-national business and industries social welfare, educational institutions, hospitals, charitable organisations and international concerns. It is the area in the organisation, which gives a human face and thought to its otherwise inhuman existence, and seeks to harmonize the different interests of the different publics to whom the organisation relates.

A Short History of the Public Relations Department of the University of Cape Coast

Basically, the objectives of an educational public relations programme, particularly in the university, is highly identical with the general purpose of any public relations company; to keep the public constantly informed, to build a solid foundation for the formulation of a favourable public opinion and to create active consent. Obviously the difference in public relations practice here is not one of kind but of degree. Thus educational public relations seek to influence mostly publics who are relevant to its particular field. Here the public relation officer is concerned with creating a favourable climate of opinion among all its publics including the alumni - the students' body, the local community and the world community.

In fact, the public relations outfit has evidently become invaluable in all tertiary institutions with the passing of each day because public goodwill and funds are at stake. This is especially so with the nation's universities which have been caught in recurring crises of student confrontation with both government and the university administration and protests against image distortion by the media for the past decade. This underscores the need for the public relations outfit in the university, and hence makes it indispensable as an administrative tool.

The Public Relations Section forms an integral part of the central administration of University of Cape Coast, which was established as far back as 1965. (Gazette Extraordinary, 1978). It was originally designated as an information section. However in 1969, the name was changed to the public

relations section to conform to the designation being used by most universities.

In 1970, the focus was changed to the promotion of community relations, that is to say, the office, is to promote and foster good community relations within the university and with the public outside the institution - usually in the town in which the institution is, the immediate environment, the country as a whole and on the international scene.

It is also the duty of the office to create a wholesome atmosphere by the efficient use of organizational communication techniques in which both academic and non-academic functions of the university could be fruitfully carried out.

In carrying out this function, an efficient administrative communication has been developed, hence the office provides information in the broadest sense of the word, about the university, its publics and programmes to all its constituents within the university and its community. The office has direct responsibility to the Vice – Chancellor, particularly for all “professional” matters and at the same time directly responsible to and close liaison with the registrar in respect of administrative matters and functions which affect the organization’s governance and administration of the university. It is very expedient to stress also, that the unit acts as a source of information and contact between sections of the university and between the university and its community.

Personnel

The Public Relations Section is presently headed by a Senior Assistant Registrar (PRO). He is supported by the following staff members:

2 Assistant Registrars (Publications & Protocol)

- 1 Senior Administrative Assistant
- 1 Administrative Assistant
- 2 Typists
- 1 Messenger
- 1 Receptionist

A significant aspect of the university administrative system which determines to a considerable extent, the mode of the public relations section is the committee system. Thus, personnel of the public relations section serve on most of the statutory boards and committees of the university as secretaries.

The dissemination of information to both internal and external publics of the university by the public relation unit is also evidenced in the various publications of the publication unit since they feed the publication unit with most if not all of the information published in the major official publications such as the university Bulletin, Gazette, Calendar, Annual Reports, Annual Statistics, Congregation Brochures / Speeches and many more.

It is important to state that the Public Relations Section communicates with the university publics by letters, hand-out, bills, circulars, notices and also through the mass media. Memoranda, reports, and minutes are also used.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted in carrying out the data collection. It describes the target population and the selected sample. The areas covered in this section of the study includes the research design, population, the sample and sampling techniques, the research instrument, pilot testing, data collection procedure and data organization and analysis procedure.

Research Design

The descriptive survey design was adopted and used. The descriptive sample survey involves the collection of data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject. The design mainly deals with assessing the communication system as it is in the University of Cape Coast. The assessment of the situation was made through the administering of questionnaires to the senior members (both lecturers and administrators), administrative staff, and students and the holding of interview with the Assistant Registrars for public relations and publications. The descriptive sample survey helped the researcher to obtain as much information as possible from a large sample of individuals, the result of which could be used to generalize for the entire population. It is usually recommended for the purposes of generalizing from a sample to a population so as to make inference about some characteristics, or behaviour of the population. According to Creswell (2003), a survey research involves researchers asking usually a large group of people questions about a particular topic or issue. Information is collected from a group of people in order

to describe some aspects of the population of which that group is a part. The main way in which the information is collected is through asking questions; the answers to these questions by the members of the group constitute the data of the study.

Population

The population for the study included all Senior Members (non-teaching), Senior Members (teaching), Administrative Staff and Student Leaders. The Administrative staff was further broken down into senior staff and junior staff. In all, a total of 2,352 respondents were included in the population for this study. This consists of the following:

Category of Respondents	Number of Respondents
Student leaders	35
Junior Staff	1,510
Senior Staff	470
Senior Members (teaching)	294
Senior Members (non teaching)	43
Total	2,352

Source: University of Cape Coast Basic Statistics (2003)

The student leaders included the executive members of the Students Representative Council (SRC), Graduate Students Association of Ghana (GRASAG), and National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), in the University of Cape Coast. Staff with position such as typists, clerks and cashiers made up the category of junior staff for the study.

Respondents included in the senior staff category were those with positions such as Administrative Assistants (A.A), Senior Administrative Assistants (S.A.A), Principal Administrative Assistants (P.A.A) and Chief

Administrative Assistants (C.A.A) from all the faculties, departments, units and other sections of the University. The main composition of the senior members (teaching) includes all lecturers with the rank of Assistant Lecturer upwards. Thus, this group of respondents was made up Assistant lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors and Professors.

The last group of respondents was the Senior Members (non-teaching). These included the senior administrative personnel of the status of Assistant Registrar, Senior Assistant Registrar, Deputy Registrar and the registrar at the central administration. Librarians and Medical Doctors of the University of Cape Coast.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for the study included Student Leaders, Administrative Staff, and Senior Members (teaching) and Senior Members (non-teaching) of the University of Cape Coast. A total sample of 378 was used for the study. The breakdown of the respondents included in the study was as follows:

Category of Respondents	Number of Respondents
Student Leaders	35
Junior Staff	151
Senior Staff	65
Senior Members (Teaching)	107
Senior Members (Non-Teaching)	20
Total	378

The entire 35 student leaders mentioned in the population was used to elicit information for the study. The purposive sampling method was used to select this group of respondents. The purposive sample is a non-random sample and it is used because those selected would have the necessary information. According to Koul(1997),purposive sampling is usually adopted because there is good evidence that it is a representative of the total population. Since the student leaders represent the interest of the entire student body, and serve as the link between the central administration and the students, the researcher believes that they would be representative enough for the students.

In selecting the junior staff, the researcher was guided by the suggestion made by Nwana (1992) which mentioned that if the population is a few hundreds, a 40% or more sample size will do; if several hundreds a 20% sample size will do; if a few thousands a 10% sample size will do; and if several thousands 5% or less sample size will do.

Out of a total of 1,510 junior staff, 151 from all the faculties, departments, schools and units was used to gather information for the study. This represents 10% of the junior staff included in the population. The simple random sampling technique was adopted and used to select the junior staff. The simple random sample is one in which each and every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. The lottery technique was applied here. Thus, the names of the junior staff were written on pieces of paper, put in a bowl, thoroughly mixed and one picked at a time. The rest of the pieces of papers in the bowl were then mixed again before the next one was picked. This process was repeated until

the 151 junior staff was obtained.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the senior administrative staff in the various faculties, departments, and units and other sections of the university. All the 65 senior administrative staff as stated in the Basic Statistics (2003) of the University of Cape Coast were included in the study.

In addition, lecturers with the rank of Senior Lecturer or above were purposively selected and included in the study. In all, 107 respondents on the named rank were used for the study. Those who fell into this category of respondents usually occupy positions such as deans of faculties, heads of departments and heads of various academic units. Thus, the researcher believes that since they occupy leadership positions in the university, they would have a lot of information, which would help the researcher to achieve his objectives in this study.

Also, the purposive sampling technique was used to select all the Senior Members (Non – teaching). Those included in this category were the senior administrative officers in the university who are directly involved in communication among the institution's internal publics. These include the faculty officers, unit co-ordinators and unit heads. A total of 20 of such respondents were involved in this study.

The researcher believes that the sample size of 378 was large enough to serve as an adequate representation about which he wishes to generalize. Also, it must be small enough to be selected economically in terms of sample accessibility and expense in time and money as well as complexity of data.

Instruments for Data Collection

Two main instruments were prepared and used to gather data and information for the study. These were structured questionnaire and interview. The respondents had to choose from answers which had been provided and which were applicable to them. The questionnaire method was adopted since the study was carried in an educational institution where all the respondents are literate. One type of questionnaire was prepared and administered to the respondents. Each set of the questionnaire had six main sections, treating the background of the respondents, views on communication, views on formal and informal channels of communication, views on the media of communication, impediments to information flow and the strategies to help minimize the impediments.

Each set of questionnaire had 45 items for all the respondents. The questionnaire involved open-ended and close-ended questions. These offered the respondents the opportunity to express their opinions on the communication flow in the university. A five (5) point Likert Scale was used to structure the questionnaire. A continuous scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' was used. The responses were valued as follows: 5='strongly agree', 4='agree', 3='uncertain', 2='disagree' and 1='strongly disagree'. Also, other sections of the questionnaire had a four (4) point scale ranging from 4='very often', 3='often', 2='seldom', 1='never'. The open-ended questions had space(s) for the respondents to provide their own answers.

Some senior members, such as the assistant registrars in charge of public relations and publication, were interviewed using an interview guide, to find out about the impediments to information flow among the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast.

Pre -testing of Instruments

In order to check for the inconsistency of responses given in the items in the questionnaire it became imperative to pilot test them. In view of this, a pre – test of the research instrument was carried out at the University of Education – Winneba which has similar characteristics as the University of Cape Coast. Forty (40) Copies of the questionnaire were given to junior staff, senior staff, senior members (both teaching and non-teaching) and student leaders for completion and return. An alpha coefficient of 0.76 was obtained. This indicated that the questionnaire was internally consistent and could thus be used for the study. The researcher interacted with the staff, to ascertain their views on and reactions to the questionnaire with regard to any incomprehension, incoherence or ambiguity with the drafting of the questionnaire. The researcher also believed that this would help him to ensure that the sample, data collection procedure among others were appropriate and would also be able to derive the best results when the actual study was considered.

Data Collection Procedure

After the research instruments were prepared, an introductory letter was obtained from the researcher's department. The requisite number of copies of both

the questionnaire and introductory letters were made. In all, 378 copies of the questionnaire were issued to respondents.

The researcher then went to the various faculties, schools, departments, halls, and the registry one after the other to present the introductory letter to them. For the faculties, the faculty officer devoted one of his subordinates to conduct the researcher round the various departments; units and offices to enable him administer the questionnaire. The hall administrators also devoted one of their staff to conduct the researcher round for the same purpose. The researcher established good working relationship with the respondents and this made them feel at home in responding to the questions. In most cases the researcher left the questionnaires with the respondents and went for them the next day. A total of 362 questionnaires were returned, indicating a return rate of 95.8%.

Data Organization and Analysis Procedure

To arrive at an effective statistical presentation and for effective computer analysis, the raw data gathered was organized bearing in mind the research questions for which the instruments were designed. The questionnaire was serially numbered to facilitate easy identification. This precaution was taken to ensure quick detection of any source of error when they occurred in the tabulation of the data. The responses to the various items in the questionnaire were then coded, tabulated and statistically analysed. Since the study adopts mainly a descriptive survey approach, the statistical analysis used consisted mainly of the determination of frequencies and percentages.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The main purpose for conducting this research was to identify the barriers to communication flow in higher educational institutions, specifically, the University of Cape Coast. Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS) was used to analyze data in order to find answers to the research questions. The views of the five categories of respondents were also analyzed in particular cases to compare their responses.

Tables were drawn for quick reference. The responses were ranked with the highest marks being 5 and 4. Implications of the findings were then discussed. More attention was paid to certain implications of the findings in the discussions and the ideas behind certain responses were also highlighted.

This chapter comprises two main parts. The first part deals with the demographic characteristics of the respondents while the second part deals with the analysis of the main results of the study using the computed frequencies and percentages. In all, five main categories of respondents were involved in the study, all of which form part of the university's internal publics. These are Senior Members, Administrative Staff, and Student Leaders. The senior members were further divided into teaching and non-teaching members and the administrative staff put into two categories- senior staff and junior staff.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are depicted in Tables 1-3. They show the demographic distribution in relation to sex, highest educational qualification and status of the respondents in the university.

Gender of the Respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate their gender. This was to enable the researcher to know the distribution pattern of the respondents in relation to their sexes. Their response is as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	263	72.7
Female	99	27.3
Total	362	100

The majority (72.7%) of the respondents who participated in the study were males and 27.3% females as shown in Table 1. This distribution pattern of the respondents is not strange as it follows the trend of gender distribution in most established institutions and recognized bodies in Ghana. According to the Electoral Commission of Ghana, out of the two hundred and thirty (230) elected parliamentarians in the recently held December 2004 elections, only twenty (20) were women. This figure represents less than 10% of the total legislative body.

Another case in point is the University of Cape Coast where none of the five top executives of the university (the Vice- Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Finance Officer and Internal Auditor) is a woman.

Highest Educational Qualification of Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their highest educational qualification to enable the researcher identify their respective levels in the institution and the roles they play to ensure effective communication in the university. Their reaction to this question is represented in Table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents by Highest Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
PhD	20	5.5
Msc, Med, MA, MPHIL, MBA,	104	28.7
B.ED, BA, B.SC, B.COM	46	13.0
HND	24	6.6
Diploma	20	5.5
G.C.E A'LEVEL, SSCE,		
GCEO'LEVEL & BELOW	147	40.6
TOTAL	362	100

As Table 2 reveals, the highest number of respondents (40.6%) fell within the educational qualification category of GCE A' Level and below. They constitute the lowest level of employees in the university. This can be attributed to the fact that the majority of employees of the university are of the lower level

management rank such as messengers, cleaners and clerks. Next are the respondents with the educational qualification of master's degree and above (34.2%) who form the top management group in the university. They are also the highest decision making body in the institution. They include Registrar, Deputy Registrars, Assistant Registrars, lecturers and other senior members. Those with first degree, higher national diploma and diploma constituted the least of respondents (25.1%) in terms of educational status. They also form the middle management group.

Status of Respondents in the University

The respondents were asked to indicate their status in terms of position in the university. Their responses are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Status of the Respondents in the University

Position	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Senior Members (Teaching)-S.M.T	102	28.2
Senior Members (Non-Teaching) S.M.N-T	20	5.5
Senior Staff (S.S.)	63	17.4
Junior Staff (J.S.)	143	37.5
Student Leaders (S.L.)	34	9.4
Total	362	100.0

Table 3 clearly shows that greater numbers (37.5%) of the respondents were junior staff of the university of Cape Coast. This could be that majority of the staff fell within this category because each unit, department, hall and faculty needs such caliber of people to work in capacities such as messengers, cleaners, typists, and secretaries. The least represented group as shown in Table 3 was those who fell within the Senior Member (non-teaching) category with 5.5%. The others such as the Senior Members (teaching), Senior Staff and Student leaders follow in that order.

Views on Communication in the University of Cape Coast

Research Question 1: What is the general perception of the various categories of internal publics of the University of Cape Coast on communication in the institution? The researcher's main reason for this research question was to ascertain the views of the respondents on the general communication network of the university and how well they fulfill the purpose of disseminating information among its internal publics. Question items 4 – 9 in the questionnaire were used to answer this research question.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether communication was very vital to the effective running of the university. Their responses were as depicted in Table 4.

Table 4**Importance of Communication**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	1	1.0			101	99.0	102	100
S.M.N-T					20	100	20	100
S.S.					63	100	63	100
J.S.	2	1.4	8	5.6	133	93.0	143	100
S.L.					34	100	34	100

In reaction to the question of the importance of communication to the effective running of the university, an average majority of 98.4 % of the respondents agreed that communication is very vital to the effective and efficient running of the university. In most organizations, educational institutions not an exception, communication happens to be the fulcrum around which the organization revolves. According to Kaye (2002), good communication helps to promote closeness between managers and staff and thus improves inter-personal relations. From the response gathered, it is evident that all the categories of respondents do share the view of Kaye. From the positive response gathered then, communication has been and continues to be a very effective tool in the promotion of interpersonal relations among people at different levels of authority within the University of Cape Coast community.

In an interview with the Assistant Registrar in charge of public relations, he stressed that “staff of the university at various levels, interact frequently with each other and this has gone a long way to enhance the attainment of the broad

university's objectives of teaching, learning and promotion of research activities". In his view, this has helped to reduce social conflicts such as strikes and misunderstandings between students and administration and other teaching and non-teaching staff".

Commenting on this issue the Assistant Registrar for publications reiterated the fact that communication is the life blood of every organization. He was of the view that "the university as a corporate entity has a large internal public and thus if the university was to improve significantly then communication should play a major role." Again he stressed that since the university is mainly run with the tax payer's money, he needs to know what goes on in the institution and this can only be conveyed to him through an effective communication system." These views expressed by the university's public relations and publications officers confirm the findings of the research as indicated in the Table.

Again, it could be seen from Table 4 that, 93.0% of the 143 junior staff included in the study agreed with the statement that communication is very vital to the effective running of the university. This represents a balanced cohesion between junior and senior staff on this issue.

The above finding is consistent with Lesikar et al (1999) argument that one's work in business will involve a lot of communication because communication is a major factor and essential part of the work of a business. Lesikar is of the view that because of the importance of communication, businesses must seek to employ people with good communication skills.

However, he laments that business's need for employees with good communication skills is all too often not fulfilled. Most employees do not communicate well. He suggests that the importance of communication to the improvement in productivity of an organization therefore demands that management of institutions such as universities should work to improve the communication skills of their employees. (Lesikar et al, 1999, pp 3).

To determine how smoothly information flows in the University of Cape Coast, the respondents were asked to indicate whether or not communication flow is smooth. The view of the respondents is as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5

Communication Flow in the University of Cape Coast

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	59	57.9	9	8.8	34	33.3	102	100
S.M.N-T	8	40			12	60	20	100
S.S.	35	55.6	8	12.7	20	31.7	63	100
J.S.	63	44.1	27	18.8	53	37.1	143	100
S.L.	18	52.9			16	47.1	34	100

In response to the question of whether communication flow is very smooth in the University of Cape Coast, more than half of the respondents (50.1%) disagreed with the statement. Thus they were of the opinion that communication flow is not as smooth as expected. Smooth communication involves very clear, unambiguous and transparent communication lines. The students were of the view

that information flow is sometimes blocked by many factors which sometimes leads to rift between the university administration and the student body. For instance an SRC representative who pleaded for anonymity was of the view that the university authorities keep some vital information from the students. This normally creates a communication gap between the two parties and sometimes results in student unrest in the universities.

Commenting on the flow of information within the university, one lecturer lamented seriously about the delay in delivery of letters and other correspondence between the twin campuses of the institution (Old site and New site). He was of the opinion that another letter collection point should be established at the new site to facilitate the smooth flow of information. In another development it was interesting to note that most of the university's internal communication system such as the intercom in most sections of the departments had either broken down or is non-existent. At the Faculty of Arts for instance, there is no intercom linkage between the dean's office and the various departments and offices under the faculty. This therefore causes a lot of delays in the delivery of work and thus negatively affects productivity.

In an interview with the Assistant Registrar for publications, he stated that, communication among the internal publics of the university is not the best. He stressed that communication is a complex structure. Unfortunately however, "it is empirically evidenced that there is no absolute, efficient and effective communication lines between the various categories of the university's internal

publics. The Communication network is mainly the top-to-down approach with all its concomitant dangers”.

Communication is Not Only Relevant to the Top Level Management of the University

To ascertain the relevance of communication, the respondents were asked to determine whether communication was relevant to only top level management of the university. The response gathered is as shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Relevance of Communication

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	2	2.0			100	98.0	102	100
S.M.N-T					20	100	20	100
S.S.	5	7.9	1	1.6	57	90.5	63	100
J.S.	38	26.6	6	4.2	99	69.2	143	100
S.L.	15	44.1			19	55.9	34	100

In response to the question of whether communication is only relevant to the top management of the university, an average of 82.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement that communication is not only relevant to the top level management of the university. 17.3% of them however disagreed with the statement. Communication is said to be a process of transmission of common understanding through the use of symbols. The term communication is derived

from the Latin word "communis" which means "common". In other words, unless a common understanding results from the transmission of symbols (verbal and nonverbal) there is no communication. (Donnelly et al, 1987). This view of Donnelly et al clearly suggest that it is only when there is understanding between the sender and the receiver of the message that communication can be said to have taken place. However these interactions do not occur between the top-level management of an organization only and the university is no exception. There is always some level of interaction between superiors and subordinates at the university's administration, faculties, departments, and units. Thus, effective communication is an essential component of organizational success whether it is at the interpersonal, intergroup, intragroup, organizational or external levels. Perhaps, this explains why over 98.0% of the senior members supported the statement. Hence, it can be concluded that the communication process cuts across all the different spectrum of organizational structure. A case in point is where the Vice- Chancellor of the university gives instructions on the day's work to his driver who is his subordinate.

Written Communication

This question was asked to find out the views of the respondents on the use of written communication as a means of disseminating information in the university. Their responses are shown in Table 7.

Table 7**The use of Written Communication**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	1	1			101	99.0	102	100
S.M.N-T					20	100	20	100
S.S.	2	3.2	3	4.8	58	92.0	63	100
J.S.	21	14.7	5	3.5	117	81.8	143	100
S.L.			6	17.6	28	82.4	34	100

From Table 7 we find that an average of 89.0% of the respondents were of the opinion that written communication is commonly used in the dissemination of information in the university. Various forms of written communication are currently being used in the university of Cape Coast. These include notices, letters, memoranda, minutes and many more. This coincides with the assertion of Gibson and Hodgetts (1986) that written communication is word-processed which includes letters, memoranda, reports, minutes, mail-merged circulars, email messages, faxed and telephoned documents, queries, bulletins, house journals and notices. In supporting this view Kaye (2002) says that every official business undertaken in an office should ideally be recorded in writing to maintain a long-term record. The university as an institution is operated on the principle of perpetual existence and thus needs to keep copies of all important documents for future reference. Hence the use of written communication for disseminating

information is in the right direction since it gives room to the authorities to make reference whenever need be.

Oral Communication

In response to a question on the use of oral communication in informal communication among the internal publics of the university, the views of the respondents were as indicated in Table 8.

Table 8

The use of Verbal Communication

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	39	38.2	19	18.6	44	43.2	102	100
S.M.N-T	2	10	1	5.0	17	85	20	100
S.S.	5	7.9	10	15.9	48	76.2	63	100
J.S.	17	11.9	29	20.3	97	67.8	143	100
S.L.	7	20.6			27	79.4	34	100

The data in Table 8 indicates that majority of the respondents (70.3%) were of the view that oral communication is very commonly used in informal communication among the internal publics of the university of Cape Coast. This means that most informal communication among the internal publics of the institution involve the spoken word and may be done either verbally through a medium or in a face to face interaction between the sender and the receiver of the message. They may also take the form of telephone calls, interviews, speeches,

staff meetings, public address systems and inter-com. The table also reveals that 97(67.8%) of the 143 junior staff either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This may be attributed to the fact that most of the junior staff have low level of formal education and thus find it easier to communicate in the local languages, which is mostly done orally. These findings support the view of Mitzberg (1975), which emphasized that managers often spend between 50-90% of their time talking to people. In the University of Cape Coast for instance, people within the university community discuss various personal matters among themselves orally. To a very large extent, this helps to build strong interpersonal relationships among the internal publics and therefore enhances strong human relation, which is a vital tool for the development of the university community.

The use of Nonverbal Communication

On the issue of whether nonverbal communication is normally used to reinforce oral communication among the internal publics of the university, a greater percentage of the respondents (53.3%) agreed to the fact that nonverbal communication is very commonly used to reinforce oral communication as indicated in Table 9.

Table 9**The use of Nonverbal Communication**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	14	13.7	58	56.9	30.0	29.4	102	100
S.M.N-T	9	45.0	4	20.0	7	35.0	20	100
S.S.	10	15.9	22	34.9	31	49.2	63	100
J.S.	29	20.2	9	6.4	105	73.4	143	100
S.L.	1	2.9	6	17.6	27	79.5	34	100

According to Fiske (1994), nonverbal communication is carried on through presentational codes such as gestures, eye movements, or qualities of voice. This means that apart from oral communication, which is a common method of personal and unofficial communication among the internal publics of the university, they also use gestures, eye movements and quality voice to make clearer messages communicated orally. Thus, this may go a long way to reduce the impediments to information flow and enhance inter-personal communication among the inhabitants of the university community.

It also supports the view of Evans (1994) that nonverbal communication may take the form of posture of expressions. He goes further to stress that this medium of communication reinforces oral and simplifies written or spoken word. However, 56.9% of the senior members (teaching) included in the study were uncertain (neither agreed nor disagreed) about the statement. In an informal

discussion with some of the lecturers it came to light that quite a number of them do not really pay particular attention to the nonverbal aspect of the information they put across since their main concentration is normally on the information being carried and not necessarily the kind of gestures that goes with it. One lecturer stated clearly that he really had no time to consider the nonverbal aspect of the information communicated since he had so much work to do at any point in time.

Information gathered from research question one (1) depicts clearly that the role of communication in the day-to-day running of the University of Cape Coast cannot be over emphasized. It actually forms the fulcrum around which the institution revolves. It is clear from the responses received that communication is not as smooth as expected. Information flow from the top management to the other levels of management especially the lower level is sometimes blocked, thereby creating communication gaps which sometimes reflects in all kinds of delays, misunderstanding and unrest among the internal publics of the institution. It was also very clear from the findings that the communication process cuts across all the different spectrum of the organizational structure and it is not only relevant to the top management of the university. In addition to all these, the research also revealed that written and oral communication are the most common form of communication in the University of Cape Coast. Though non-verbal communication is also used, less attention is paid to it.

Channels of Communication Commonly used in the University of Cape Coast

Research Question 2: What kinds of formal and informal channels of communication exists within the University of Cape Coast and to what extent have they been successful in the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the institution. This research question was asked to identify the various kinds of formal and informal channels of communication among the internal publics of the university and examine how effective they have been in the dissemination of information in the institution. Question items 10-14 were used to answer this question.

Downward Communication Channel

In reaction to a question on whether downward communication is used in the dissemination of information within the university's campus, the responses of the various categories of respondents are as presented in table 10.

Table 10

Respondents' View on the use of Downward Communication

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	1	1	5	4.9	96	94.1	102	100
S.M.N-T	7	35.0			13	65.0	20	100
S.S.	1	1.6	4	6.3	58	92.1	63	100
J.S.	13	9.1	17	11.9	113	79.0	143	100
S.L.			7	20.6	27	79.4	34	100

From Table 10, it is evident that majority of the respondents (84.8%) were of the opinion that downward communication is commonly used to disseminate information among the internal publics of the institution out of which more than two-thirds (56.9%) were senior and junior staff. This correlates highly with Table 4, which showed that there was a positive cohesion between senior and junior staff as regards internal communication. The high contribution of these two categories of respondents can be attributed to the fact that they form the bulk of staff that normally receives information from members at the top hierarchy of the university's administration. Thus they agreed that most of the information communicated from people in higher authority such as the Vice- Chancellor, Registrar, Deans of faculties and heads of department and various units take the form of downward communication. This is therefore in line with the assertion of Jablin (1979) that this route of communication carries information from people in position of higher authority to subordinates. In supporting this view, Evans (1994) also said that downward flow of information is most frequently channeled through an organization's line of authority from manager to subordinate in a 'report to' relationship.

Secondly, they were of the view that the information which is normally communicated through the downward communication channel carried information on important issues such as goals, objectives, and policies expected to be achieved over a particular period of time and normally come in the form of bullets, notices, memos, departmental staff meetings, and many more.

Again Jablin (1979) supported this view when he mentioned that the means of downward communication includes the use of loudspeakers, periodicals, telephones, messengers, committees, staff meetings, handbook, company bulletins, or house journals, bells circulars and queries.

Upward Communication Channel

The next question was whether upward communication channel is used in the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the university. The response of the respondents to this question is as depicted in Table 11.

Table 11

Views on the use of Upward Communication

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	26	25.5	7	6.9	69	67.6	102	28.2
S.M.N-T	10	50.0	1	5.5	9	45.0	20	100
S.S.	15	23.8	11	17.5	37	58.7	63	100
J.S.	36	25.2	15	10.5	92	64.3	143	100
S.L.			1	2.9	33	97.1	34	100

From Table 11 it is clear that most of the respondents (66.5%) agree that upward communication channel is used in the University of Cape Coast to disseminate information among the internal publics of the institution. However more than half of the senior members (non-teaching) disagreed with the statement. A further investigation by the researcher revealed that upward

communication channel is mostly used by the junior staff in the institution to communicate feedback on various issues of concern and thus is not normally employed by people in high authority such as the senior members.

This channel of communication according to Wright and Noe (1995) takes the form of progress reports, or information about success and failures of individuals or work groups reporting to the receiver of the message. He further stresses that sometimes, employees also send suggestions or complaints upward through the organization's hierarchy. In the University of Cape Coast too, this channel is usually used by people (staff and students) to carry their views to their superiors (administrators and heads of departments or immediate bosses). One of the laid down principles of channeling information from students to the administrator is through the Junior Common Room Committees (JCRC's) of the various halls. In responding to this question however, some of the student leaders whose views were sought for this study confirmed the use of this channel especially among the students. This is evident in the fact that 33 students constituting over 97.1% of the total of 34 student leaders included in the study agreed with the statement. They however complained about the inadequacy of such media as suggestion boxes on the campus to enable them air their views on various issues of concern when the need arises.

In the view of the senior staff too, even though upward communication channel officially exists it is less utilized because the media such as suggestion boxes are woefully inadequate or do not exist at all in most of the faculties and department.

These sentiments expressed by the respondents are consistent with the assertion of Gibson & Hodgetts (1986) that most of the strategies for upward communication are not well packaged. Also, the view of Gibson & Hodgetts (1990) that employee satisfaction with upward communication in most organizations tends to be lower than their satisfaction with downward communication is clearly upheld by the findings of this research. A comparison of Tables 10 and 11 reveals that whereas 81.9% of the respondents agreed that downward communication is commonly used in the dissemination of information in the University of Cape Coast, 66.5% of them supported upward communication. It is therefore very clear that the necessary measures ought to be taken by the university authorities to ensure that the internal publics appreciate and use this system of communication to enhance effective information flow in the institution.

Horizontal Communication Channel

On the issue of whether horizontal communication is normally used in the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the university, the views of the respondents were as represented in the Table 12.

Table 12**Views on the use of Horizontal Communication**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	8	7.8	5	4.9	89	87.3	102	100
S.M.N-T					20	100	20	100
S.S.	5	7.9	12	19.0	46	73.0	63	100
J.S.	10	7.0	23	16.1	110	76.9	143	100
S.L.	6	17.6	6	17.6	22	64.8	34	9.4

Majority of the respondents (80.4%) agreed with the statement. They were of the opinion that people at various levels within the university's hierarchical structure do communicate more frequently with each other. For instance it is very common to find a head of department of one unit discussing matters of mutual interest with another head of department of another unit. The situation is even more improved as a result of the occasional heads of department meetings organized by various faculties within the university to enhance performance delivery. Most of the faculties have at least two of such meetings every semester. This does not include emergency meetings held periodically. This revelation however, contravenes the assertion of Frank (1984) that studies on lateral communication indicate that it still lags behind those on vertical communication.

Diagonal Communication Channel

Diagonal communication according to Donnelly et al (1987) is probably the least used channel of communication in organizations. This view seems to be true as depicted in Table 13

Table 13

Respondents' Views on Diagonal Communication

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	36	35.2	38	37.2	28	27.6	102	100
S.M.N-T	4	20	12	60	4	20	20	100
S.S.	14	22.2	28	44.4	21	33.4	63	100
J.S.	29	20.2	4	2.8	74	51.7	143	100
S.L.	12	35.3	6	17.6	16	47.1	34	100

Table 13 reveals that an average of less than half of the respondents (39.5%) agreed to the statement that diagonal communication channel is normally used to disseminate information in their departments. Thus, more than half of the respondents (60.5%) do not support the statement. In other words, the assertion of Donnelly et al (1987) that the least used channel of communication is diagonal communication is true. However this state of affairs does not augur well for smooth running of organizations. As identified by Donnelly et al, the use of a diagonal channel would minimize the time and effort expended by the organization.

In the next section, the various categories of respondents were asked to indicate whether the grapevine exist in the university community and is an effective channel of communication. Their answers are presented in Table 14.

Table 14
Grapevine as a Means of Communication

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	38	37.3	19	18.6	45	44.1	102	100
S.M.N-T	4	20.0	14	70.0	2	10.0	20	100
S.S.	19	30.2	19	30.2	25	39.6	63	100
J.S.	38	26.6	35	24.5	70	48.9	143	100
S.L.	15	44.1	1	2.9	18	53.0	34	100

We learn from Table 14 that 44.2% representing less than half of the respondents agreed with the statement. 31.4% of them however disagreed whereas 24.3% were uncertain. This information suggests that more than half of the respondents did not really see the grapevine as an effective means of communication in the university. However, according to Donnelly et al (1978) research indicates that over 75% of the information in the grapevine is accurate. This view was supported by Locker (1992) when he described the grapevine as the informal informational network in an organization, which carries gossips and rumours as well as accurate information. Again, writing on how accurate the

grapevine is, Arnold (1983) stressed that more than 80% of the information that comes over the grapevine is accurate. In an interview with the Assistant Registrar for Publications, he emphasized that the concept of grapevine could be likened to "propaganda". In his view, " whenever a vacuum is created as far as news sharing, soliciting/giving are concerned, it is filled by the grapevine mechanism. It is a basic human behavior which exists, no matter how efficient the communication lines are they are".

It is therefore very important for the university authorities to adopt this informal system of communication to tap information from the internal publics and use it in their daily solutions to problems that may arise. This will also go a long way to prevent unexpected riots and unnecessary tension that crops up at times between the authorities and all the other internal publics.

It can be concluded from the discussions that there are quite a number of communication channels in use at the University of Cape Coast for the dissemination of information among its internal publics. These include downward, upward, horizontal, diagonal and the grapevine communication. From the information gathered, it is evidenced that downward, horizontal and upward communication channels are the mostly used in the university in the dissemination of information. This is because majority of the respondents (an average of 77.0%) of the respondents agreed to the statement that these channels were usually adopted in the dissemination of information. The grapevine and

diagonal communication methods however are not popular with the internal publics in the university. This view is supported by the fact that in both cases less than half of the respondents agreed to the fact that they employed these communication methods in spreading information.

**Media of Communication Commonly used to Disseminate
Information among the Internal Publics of the University**

Research Question 3: In the views of lecturers, administrators, senior and junior staff, as well as students, what medium of communication is used in the dissemination of information within the University of Cape Coast and to what extent are they effective?

This research question was asked to identify the various media through which information is disseminated to the internal publics of the university and examine how effective they have been in achieving this purpose. Question numbers 15-26 in the questionnaire were used to answer this research question.

Bulletin

On the question of how often the respondents obtained information from officially published bulletin of the university, their responses were as presented in Table 15.

Table 15

The Use of Bulletin in the Dissemination of Information

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			6	5.9	96	94.1	102	100
S.M.N-T			10	50.0	10	50.0	20	100
S.S.	3	4.8	11	17.5	49	77.7	63	100
J.S.	3	2.1	32	22.4	108	75.5	143	100
S.L.	7	20.6	12	35.3	15	44.1	34	100

From Table 15, majority of respondents (76.8%) representing more than three-quarters of the respondents said they obtain a lot of information on events that take place in the university through reading of official bulletins. Thus, they often read the bulletins. Out of this, 26.6% were senior members (teaching). This was attributed to the fact that the teaching staff has high level of education and thus knows the essence of gathering information from reliable sources such as the bulletin. On the other hand, 19 out of a total of 34 student leaders said they either seldom or never read the bulletin. Thus, more than half (55.8%) of the student leaders either does not read the bulletins or seldom does so. This according to some of the student leaders can be attributed to the fact that most students have so much work on their hands that they have very little time for other things such as reading of information from the bulletin which is not easily assessable to them.

Others too do not really have any reason for not reading the bulletin. They are just not interested in doing so.

The university of Cape Coast, like many other tertiary institutions in the world publishes a calendar annually. This contains important dates such as re-opening dates, orientation for fresh students, registration of courses, matriculation and graduation dates. When asked about how often the respondents obtain information from this source, their views were as indicated in Table 16.

Table 16

The use the University Calendar in the Dissemination of Information

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			27	26.5	75	73.5	102	100
S.M.N-T			12	60.0	8	40.0	20	100
S.S.	1	1.6	9	14.3	53	84.1	63	100
J.S.	2	1.4	45	31.5	96	67.1	143	100
S.L.	6	17.6	13	38.3	15	44.1	34	100

From Table 16, majority of the respondents (68.3%) said they often obtain information on various activities in the university from the annual calendar. This according to the respondents can be attributed to the fact that all offices in the university as well as senior members (both teaching and non teaching) are supplied with copies of the university calendar annually.

In a discussion with the Assistant Registrar in charge of publications, he stated emphatically that supply of the university calendar to the various offices and staff is one of the university's policies. He stressed that since the institution is an academic enterprise, it is important to keep all the publics of the university well informed of various activities and occasions of the university, hence the publication of the Calendar. He however reiterated that due to inadequacy of funds, the students unlike the other internal publics of the university do not have the privilege of obtaining copies of the University Calendar for free. He was quick to add that students as well as the general public could purchase copies of the University Calendar from the recognized bookshops and Junior Common Room Committees (JCRC's) on the university campus, at affordable prices. Commenting on this very issue, some student leaders suggested that it would be appropriate for the authorities of the university to include the cost of the annual calendar in the students' bill to ensure that students are also well informed. This may account for the fact that more than half (55.9%) of the student leaders included in the study said they seldom or never obtained information on various activities of the university through the annual calendar. In another development, one lecturer passed a comment that, though the calendar is a very effective means of information dissemination, it is sometimes released to the university community later than expected.

The next question the researcher asked was whether the student handbook is a reliable and effective source of information and how often they received

information from this source. The responses of the respondents were as indicated in Table 17

Table 17

The use of the Students' Handbook in the Dissemination of Information

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			26	25.5	76	74.5	102	100
S.M.N-T					20	100	20	100
S.S.	6	9.5	15	23.8	42	66.7	63	100
J.S.	23	16.1	16	11.2	104	72.7	143	100
S.L.	1	2.9	15	44.2	18	52.9	34	100

From Table 17, majority of the respondents (71.8%) indicated that they often received information from the student handbook. The student handbook is an annual publication of the university, which clearly spells out the rules and regulations used in governing the institution with particular emphasis on the students. It is reviewed yearly to reflect any new changes and amendments to the institution's regulations. It is however clear from Table 17 that close to half of the student leaders included in the study said they seldom or never obtained information from the students' handbook. This according to the students can be attributed to the fact that they hardly go through the handbooks after the first semester of the first year. Also, a lot of students misplaced their handbooks before

the end of the first year while others said they had so much work to do that they hardly find time to go through the student handbook.

The respondents were asked whether they obtained information from the annual reports of the Vice- Chancellor on the University. Their responses are presented in Table 18.

Table 18

Information from the Vice -Chancellor's (V.C.'s) Report

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			46	45.1	56	54.9	102	100
S.M.N-T					20	100.0	20	100
S.S.	2	3.2	11	17.5	50	79.4	63	100
J.S.	11	7.7	34	23.8	98	68.5	143	100
S.L.	6	17.6	7	20.6	21	61.8	34	100

As indicated in Table 18, majority (67.7%) of the respondents, agreed to the view that they often obtained information on the institution from the Vice-Chancellor's (V.C's) annual report. A careful glance at the Table depicts that for each of the five categories of respondents, more than 50% actually contacted the V.C's report for information. This to a large extent shows that V.C's report serves as a popular source of information for the university community. Commenting on this, the Assistant Registrar in charge of publications said in a discussion "that the V.C's report is a very reliable source of information for the University community

since it is an embodiment of various issues on all the various sections, departments, faculties and units of the university". Supporting this view, some of the senior members (non teaching) included in the study were of the opinion that the V.C's report touches on all the important issues which need to be addressed and thus gives the reader a broad view of events that have taken place in the institution over the year under review. They also commended the authorities for making the report available to all the teaching and non-teaching staff and urged them to keep up with the good work. Perhaps this explains why all the senior members (non-teaching) responded favorably that they often acquired a lot of important information from the V.C's annual report.

The student leaders interviewed on the other hand were of the view that in as much as they agree that the V.C's report is a reliable source of information; it must be made more accessible to the students. Thus, considering the importance of the source of information to the university community, including students, it would not be out of place for the students to given copies of the V.C's report and the cost included in their annual bills. Also, faculty, departmental and all libraries should be supplied with copies of the V.C's reports.

The next question was how often the respondents obtained information from memoranda. In response to the question, the views of the respondents were as represented in Table 19.

Table 19**Obtaining Information from Memoranda**

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			18	17.6	84	82.4	102	100
S.M.N-T			8	40.0	12	60.0	20	100
S.S.	2	3.2	16	25.4	45	71.4	63	100
J.S.	15	10.5	32	22.4	96	67.1	143	100
S.L.	7	20.6	12	35.3	15	44.1	34	100

The information in Table 19 clearly shows that memoranda serve as one of the main sources of information for the university's internal publics. Majority of the respondents (69.6%) said they often obtained information from this source. When asked further why they relied so much on the memoranda for information, most of the respondents said it is more reliable since one could easily trace its source. Also, it was observed that the university authorities use it to remind the various departments, units and faculties of important meetings, workshop and seminars. Even within the various faculties and departments, the memoranda have always been and continue to be one of the most reliable sources of information. It is said to be one of the most popular media of communication among the internal publics of the institution.

However, according to the research findings, memoranda do not seem so popular among students as a medium of communication. This is evidenced in the

fact that a greater percentage of the student leaders included in the study (about 56%) shared the view that they seldom or never obtained information from memoranda. In his bid to know what accoutered for this, the researcher engaged some of the student leaders in a discussion. It came to light that since the student leaders do not fall within mainstream administration, they receive a minimal amount of memorandum on matters that concern them.

In response to the question of whether notice boards are effective communication media and how often the internal publics of the university obtained information from this source the perception of the respondents were as indicated in Table 20.

Table 20

Information from Notice Boards

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			2	2.0	100	98.0	102	100
S.M.N-T					20	100	20	100
S.S.	1	1.6	3	4.7	59	93.7	63	100
J.S.			4	2.8	139	97.2	143	100
S.L.					34	100	34	100

Table 20 shows that average majority of the respondents (97.2%) agree to the statement that notice boards are an effective medium of communication and thus they often obtain a lot of information on the activities in the university from

this source. In an observation made by the researcher while on visit to various departments, faculties and units of the university, it was observed that almost all the various sections of the university had notice boards fixed on walls with numerous notices and posters fixed on them. It was also noted that the departments in the various faculties had notice boards on which information such as students' examination results, time tables for departmental lectures, seminars and workshops are displayed. In a chat with some of the respondents, they pointed out that, to them the notice boards have been instrumental in the dissemination of information. This is because they can be found in various departments and sections of the university including the halls of residence. They however condemned the situation where some notices are displayed at unauthorized places on the university campus other than the notice boards. These include walls, trees and electric poles. According to them, acts of this nature tend to degrade the beauty of the institution. In the view of the lecturers, the notice boards have been a source of reminder for them, especially those fixed in their offices. Records of important meetings, seminars, workshops and other official as well as personal appointments are kept on them.

A question was asked to find out whether the electronic media such as the FM Station on Campus served as an effective medium of communication for the University community. In reaction to the question of how often the respondents received information from this source, their views were as presented in Table 21.

Table 21**The use of the Electronic Media in the Dissemination of Information in the University**

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			28	27.5	74	72.5	102	100
S.M.N-T			1	5.0	19	95.0	20	100
S.S.	2	3.2	12	19.0	49	77.8	63	100
J.S.	5	3.3	21	14.8	117	81.9	143	100
S.L.	1	2.9	18	52.9	15	44.2	34	100

Table 21 reveals that most of the respondents (75. 7%) said the electronic media is an effective source of information for the internal publics of the institution and thus they often receive a lot of information from this source. The respondents made particular reference to the FM Stations on the University Campus. There are two FM Stations on Campus. These are Radio Valco (93.5MHz) and Radio ATL (100.5MHz). All the various categories of respondents shared the view that these radio stations have contributed tremendously in the dissemination of information on the University Campus. The student leaders said they receive a lot of information on meetings, lecture schedules, announcement of important events on Campus and a variety of general information from these FM Stations. Some of the students also perceived these FM Stations as very useful since it is easy for one to retrieve lost properties

through announcements on these networks, which cost for lesser than those in town.

The lecturers also supported the perception of the students. They indicated the FM Stations have been beneficial to them because they obtain a lot of news on variety of subjects of concern from these stations, which also enrich their content for lectures. In addition to all these, they enjoy various discussions and interviews broadcast by the Stations. It is equally easier for them to pass on information to their students through these stations.

The views of the Junior and Senior Staff as well as the Senior Members (non-teaching) did not differ from that of the lecturers and students. The Junior Staff reiterated that the presence of the FM Stations on the University Campus has made it far easier to call members of various associations on campus to various meetings, especially the Teachers and Educational Workers Union (TEWU).

However, all categories of respondents expressed some misgivings about these FM stations. They were of the opinion that since they are established on the university's premises, these FM stations should not charge anything for certain categories of services such as announcement on a lost item for members of the university community. Also other announcements by the various faculties, departments, and units should cost lesser than the current rates being charged.

One other electronic source of information that the lecturers in particular mentioned is the computer. To catch up with the advanced world of technology, the University of Cape Coast introduced the Online Student Information Service (OSIS) into its data process system at the commencement of the 2001/2002

academic year. This computer software makes it possible for all lecturers to key in examination scores of their students periodically.

The study also sought to find out how often the respondents obtained information about the institution from billboards displayed on the university's campus and how effective they are in the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the institution. The answers provided are presented in Table 22.

Table 22

The Use of Billboards for the Dissemination of Information

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	23	22.5	59	57.8	20	19.6	102	100
S.M.N-T	1	5.0	13	65.0	6	30.0	20	100
S.S.	19	30.2	24	38.1	20	31.7	63	100
J.S.	81	56.6	43	30.1	19	13.3	143	100
S.L.	28	82.4	6	17.6			34	100

Majority of the respondents (82.0%) stated that they seldom or never had information on the institution and its activities from the billboards. Among the reasons given for their view was the fact that there are very few billboards on the university campus for the transfer of information to the university community. In fact, careful observation round the campus confirms the assertion of the respondents. At both the old and new site campus there are a few billboards, which can best be described as directional signs since they basically give

information on the location of specific places such as halls of residence, faculties and schools, departments and units in the university. There is therefore the need for the institution to maximize the use of billboards in the dissemination of information. In the view of respondents, the Public Relations unit should be made to champion this course.

When asked how often the respondents gave comments on the university's activities through suggestion boxes placed at vantage points on the university campus, their responses were as indicated in Table 23.

Table 23

The Use of Suggestion Box for the Dissemination of Information

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	63	61.8	34	33.3	5	4.9	102	100
S.M.N-T	12	60.0	5	25.0	3	15.0	20	100
S.S.	18	28.6	35	55.6	10	15.8	63	100
J.S.	76	53.1	57	39.9	10	7.0	143	100
S.L.	19	55.9	15	44.1			34	100

It is clear in Table 23 that only an average of 8.4% of the respondents said they often expressed their views on various activities of the university through the use of suggestion boxes. Again, the Table shows that 91.6% of the respondents intimated that they never or seldom give comments on various issues of the university through suggestion boxes. The researcher found this situation

worrisome since the expression of one's view of issues of interest helps to reduce the occurrence of unpleasant situations such as conflicts and misunderstanding. It is evident from table 23 that the use of suggestion box as a medium of communication is not popular with most of the departments of the University of Cape Coast. During an observation exercise to confirm the responses to the questionnaire, the poor usage of the suggestion box as a medium of communication in the university was found to be true. In fact, apart from the halls of residence most of the departments, sections, units, and faculties in the university have no suggestion boxes placed at vantage points for this purpose. In a discussion with some of the student leaders, they were of the opinion that, though this medium could have helped prevent a lot of the riots and misunderstanding in the university, it is virtually impossible for the students to utilize it because the boxes are not even present. Asked whether in the absence of the boxes it is not possible to submit their suggestions directly to the officers concerned, they were quick to respond that though that would have been possible, for fear of being victimized, they prefer to keep their comment than to disclose them directly to whoever is concerned. Interestingly however, the lecturers who occupy a high position on the university's organizational structure are also faced with a similar problem. This is evidenced in the fact that less than half (38.2%) of the lecturers said they often communicate their views on matters of concern through the use of the suggestion box. In a discussion with the Assistant Registrar in charge of public relations however, he was of the view that the absence of suggestion boxes on the university campus might be due to the fact that the major clients of the

institution (students) are in direct relationship with the university authorities. So all their complaints could be directed to the to the institution's authorities through various channels such as the Junior Common Room Committees (J.C. R. C) and the office of the Faculty of Students' Affairs.

It is an undeniable fact that seminars and workshops are held by various institutions and organizations to address specific needs of both individuals and groups of people. They are usually brief intensive educational programmes for a relatively small group that focuses especially on techniques and skills in a particular field. In fact, they are meetings where information is given and discussed. To enquire the extent to which this important source of information is utilized in the University of Cape Coast in the dissemination of information among its internal publics, the researcher asked the respondents how often they obtained information on the university's activities from seminars and workshops .The views of the respondents were as presented in Table 24.

Table 24

The Use of Seminars and Workshops in the Dissemination of Information

Category	Never		Seldom		Often		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			26	25.5	76	74.5	102	100
S.M.N-T			4	1.1	16	4.4	20	100
S.S.	6	1.7	18	5.0	39	10.8	63	100
J.S.	23	6.4	51	14.1	69	19	143	100
S.L.	6	1.7	1	27	7.5		34	100

From Table 24, 62.7% of the respondents explained that they often obtain information on the university's activities from seminars and workshops. This means that, various faculties, departments and units of the institution organize seminars and workshops for the staff in order to update their knowledge and skills in their various fields of specialization. Some staff of the accounts section for instance said periodic seminars and workshops are organized by the department to brief them on current trends in their field of specialization such as new financial regulations and amendments to the existing ones.

In the view of the lecturers, periodic seminars and workshops are organized to review their performance in delivering of their subjects. This is done on departmental and subject basis. Various topics of interest such as curricular review, new teaching methods, and methods of assessment are treated at such meetings to equip them with the needed skills for enhanced delivery of performance in their various fields of specialization. One lecturer however said all efforts must be made by the university authorities to increase the frequency with which such important activities are held for its staff.

For the administrators (senior members-non teaching) seminars and workshops are regular features and in fact part of their normal routine work. This may not necessarily be linked directly to their work but for the fact that they occupy such offices, they need to attend some of these. For instance, the Assistant Registrar in charge of student Affairs may have to attend a function organized by student leaders for the entire students' body or a cross section of it.

From the discussion above it can be deduced that there are many media through which information is communicated to the various internal publics of the University of Cape Coast. Media such as Notice Boards, Bulletins, Electronic Media, Students handbook, Memoranda, V.C.'s Report, Seminars and Workshops, are most of the time used in disseminating information to the internal publics of the university. According to the Senior Assistant Registrar for public relations, other media such as telephones and flyers help a lot in the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the university. On the other hand, Billboards and suggestion box are not that popular with the university in the spread of information.

Barriers to Communication Flow in the University of Cape Coast

Research Question 4: In the perception of the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast, what are some of the impediments to smooth flow of information within the institution? This research question was meant to identify the barriers to the smooth flow of information among the internal publics of the university. Question items 27 – 35 in the questionnaire were used to elicit responses from the respondents to answer this research question.

Semantic Problem

Semantic problem refers to the use of words that have several meanings in different context. As cited in Donnelly et al (1987) it is the unfortunate situation where the same words may mean entirely different things to different people. The views of the respondents on the extent to which semantic problems serve as barriers to communication and information flow were as stated in Table 25.

Table 25**Views on Semantic Problems**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	51	50.0	2	2.0	49	48.0	102	100
S.M.N-T	14	70.0	2	10.0	4	20.0	20	100
S.S.	20	31.7	4	6.4	39	61.9	63	100
J.S.	55	38.5	7	4.9	81	56.6	143	100
S.L.	13	38.2			21	61.8	34	100

Data obtained as shown in Table 25 indicates that more than half (53.6%) of the respondents agreed that semantic problem is a barrier to effective communication flow in the university of Cape Coast. This situation is not good for efficient delivery in an academic environment like the university, because one's ability to communicate effectively is somehow dependent on the meaning derived from the message being communicated.

Commenting on this issue, the junior staff was of the opinion that their superiors sometimes use big words, which they find difficult to understand. Also, the meaning they give to their superiors' words; sometimes differ from what they (superiors) want to convey to them (junior staff). These views expressed by the junior staff ties in with the asession of Donnelly et al (1987) that because words mean different things to different people it is possible for a communicator to speak the same language as a receiver but still not transmit understanding. They

went further to emphasize that because different groups use words differently, communication often can be impeded. This is especially true with abstract or technical terms and phrases. As indicated in Table 2, the bulk of the junior staff had the lowest qualification in terms of educational background. They therefore find it difficult to assimilate the instruction given by their superiors especially if it is too technical or abstract.

In the view of the senior members, though the terms used in their communication with subordinates may not be that easy for them to understand, they have every right to ask for further explanation. On whether poor listening habits of members of the university community is a barrier to communication flow in the institution, more than half of the respondents (54.7) supported the statement as indicated in Table 26.

Table 26

Views on Poor Listening Habits

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	43	42.2	9	8.8	50	49	102	100
S.M.N-T	13	65.0			7	35.0	20	100
S.S.	26	41.3	6	9.5	33	52.4	63	100
J.S.	52	36.4	9	6.3	80	55.9	143	100
S.L.	6	17.6			28	82.4	34	100

Thus they agreed that the listening habits of the members of the community, to a very large extent hindered smooth flow of information among the internal public of the institution, especially superiors and subordinates. Listening should consume about half of the time that a superior and subordinate spend together (Hemstreet & Batty, 1984 p.308). Unfortunately this is not the case in the University of Cape Coast as shown in Table 26. This may be so because most of the time the receiver and the sender fail to listen. The situation is even worse if the exchange of information is between a superior and a subordinate. In the case of UCC, administrators and subordinates interact a lot in the normal course of work. Thus any instance of divided attention on the part of either superiors or subordinates greatly impact negatively on delivery of their daily expected output, which sometimes lead to conflicts and tension among them. In addition to this, some of the respondents said they genuinely have hearing impairment problems, which sometimes affects their ability to listen and interpret the views of their work colleagues as they (the senders) expect them (the receivers) to perceive it.

The respondents were requested to indicate whether the emotional state of the senders and receivers of information serves as hindrance to communication flow in the university community. Table 27 indicates their responses.

Table 27**Emotional State of the Sender and Receiver**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	5	4.5	34	33.3	63	61.8	102	100
S.M.N-T	1	5.0	7	35.0	12	60.0	20	100
S.S.	2	3.2	14	22.2	47	74.6	63	100
J.S.	10	7.0	20	14.0	113	79.0	143	100
S.L.	1	2.9	5	14.7	28	82.4	34	9.4

It can be observed from the table that majority of the respondents (71.6%) were of the view that the emotional state of the internal publics of the institution sometimes hinders the smooth flow of information. This is because the university is made up of people from different cultures with varied attitudes, beliefs and emotions. An issue bothering a communicator (sender or receiver) is therefore likely to influence his reaction to various issues he or she is confronted with. For instance, when the sender of information is angry, he is very likely to portray his anger in the tone in which the message is communicated though the recipient might not necessarily be the cause of his anger. This could change the actual meaning of the information.

Again, from Table 27, it is clear that the student leaders (82.4%), junior (79.0%) and senior staff (74.6%) greatly supported the statement. This may be

due to the fact that those in this category of respondents out number the senior members by far.

The researcher asked a question on whether mistrust or credibility is a barrier to communication in the university of Cape Coast. The respondents' views were as summarized in Table 27.

Table 28

Views on Mistrust and Credibility

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	39	38.2			63	61.8	102	100
S.M.N-T	5	25.0	4	20.0	11	55.0	20	100
S.S.	14	22.2	10	15.9	39	61.9	63	100
J.S.	25	17.5	12	8.4	106	74.1	143	100
S.L.	6	17.6			28	82.4	34	100

From Table 28, an average of 67.0% of the respondents supported the statement. The statistical information gathered indicates that mistrust is a great barrier to communication and information flow in the institution. This affirms the view of Donnelly et al (1987) that 'the level of credibility that the receiver assigns to the communication directly affects how the receiver views and reacts to the words, and actions of the communicator. Again, as the figures indicate, there is a high level of mistrust among the internal publics of the university. In an attempt to get to the root cause of the situation, the researcher had an informal discussion

with some staff (both junior and senior) as well as a cross-section of the student leaders. It came to light that since the university's communication process moves along the various lines of authority as depicted in the organizational structure, subordinates in particular have had some previous experience with superiors and this has affected the degree of credibility they attach to communication with such people in authority. One worker put it bluntly that "some of the superiors are dishonest, manipulative and cannot be trusted".

In another instance, some workers said anytime they discussed issues with their superiors, parts of the information gets leaked to the university community and they strongly believe it is their bosses who let out such vital information.

In order to determine whether poor human relations among the internal publics of the University is a barrier to communication in the institution, the respondents were asked to show their response by choosing one of the alternatives given for this question.

Table 29

Views on Poor Human Relations

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	5	4.9	2	2.0	95	93.1	102	100
S.M.N-T	6	1.6	1	5.0	13	65.0	20	100
S.S.	15	23.8	13	20.6	35	55.6	63	100
J.S.	14	9.8	21	14.7	108	75.5	143	100
S.L.					34	100.0	34	100

From Table 29, an average of 77.8% of the respondents agreed that poor human relations among the internal publics of the University is a barrier to communication flow. To ascertain the reason for this state of affairs, the researcher enquired from some of the respondents what accounts for this. Most of them were of the opinion that because the University system classifies the various levels of authority, most people who do not belong to a particular group may not want to mix with that group. The case is even worse if it turns out to be the superior-subordinate kind of relationship. For instance, it is quite difficult for a conservancy labourer to be seen in the mist of administrators. In most cases where this happens, it normally turns out that the superior would be issuing out instructions to the subordinate about a particular work that ought to be performed.

Communication equipment such as telephones, computers and public address systems, contribute a lot to effective communication the world over. To enquire of what impact such equipment can have on general communication in the University of Cape Coast if faulty the researcher asked the respondents to indicate whether faulty communication equipment are a barrier to communication flow in the University. Their views were as presented in Table 30

Table 30**Faulty Communication Equipment**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	34	33.3	5	4.9	63	61.8	102	100
S.M.N-T	4	20.0			16	80.0	20	100
S.S.	9	14.3	2	3.2	52	82.5	63	100
J.S.	10	7.0	10	7.0	123	86.0	143	100
S.L.	4	11.8	2	5.9	28	82.3	34	100

As depicted in Table 30, most of the respondents were in support of the statement. An average of 78.5% of all the different categories of respondents shared the view that communication in the University setting is rendered ineffective when communication equipments such as telephone sets, computers get faulty. Not only does it render communication ineffective but also slows down the rate of productivity in the institution considerably. In the case of the University of Cape Coast, it is worrying to note from the research conducted that a lot of offices have phones that are not working. These include fixed telephone lines as well as intercom. When the staff especially were interviewed to ascertain the reason for this state of affair, majority of them blamed it on the poor delivery of services by the only fixed line telecommunication providers in the Central Region – Ghana Telecom Company Ltd. The Senior Staff in particular were

worried about the slow response by the Ghana Telecommunication Company to remedy faults that are reported.

Also, as an institution of higher learning, the University of Cape Coast is gradually expanding its communication system through the use of the ICT. However whenever there are breakdowns in machines used for this purpose such as the computers, switches and Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) it takes a long time to repair and replace the worn out parts. This sometimes causes delays in the prompt delivery of information, thereby impacting negatively on the rate at which decisions are made on issues and implementation of such. It is gratifying to note however that in spite of all these problems the students in the various halls of residence have taken communication in the halls a step further by instituting new techniques to enhance smooth flow of information in the institution. For instance, the Junior Common Room Committees (JCRC's) have installed additional fixed telephone lines at the Porters Lodge to enhance communication between students of the halls and the general public as well as among themselves. In furtherance of this, they have also added intercom equipment that enables incoming calls to be transferred to the appropriate floors and the respective students. An example is the Kwame Nkrumah Hall.

With particular reference to communication between the University administration and the student body, the research revealed that the FM Stations on Campus serve as a major medium of communication between these two groups of respondents. Information on lectures, quizzes, tutorials, etc. are conveyed to students through this electronic media. Any breakdown at the FM Stations thus

affects effective communication between the students' body and the University's authorities. Respondents were asked to express their views on whether or not they perceive noise as a barrier to communication. The information gathered from their responses is as depicted in Table 31.

Table 31

Noise as a Barrier to Communication

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	2	2.0	1	1.0	99	97.0	102	100
S.M.N-T	1	5.0	1	5.0	18	90.0	20	100
S.S.	5	7.9	7	11.1	51	81.0	63	100
J.S.	18	12.6	40	28.0	85	59.4	143	100
S.L.	7	20.6			27	79.4	34	100

It is very clear from Table 31 that an average majority of the respondents are of the opinion that noise is a barrier to communication and information flow in the University of Cape Coast. Whereas as high as 97.0% of the senior members (Teaching) were in favour, 59.4% of the junior staff responded in affirmation to the statement. It is interesting to note however that, 90.0%, 81.0%, 79.4% of senior members (non teaching), senior staff, and student leaders respectively agreed with the statement.

The findings above give credence to the assertion of Mc Quail (1972) that noise may occur in the communication process. This, he said it is anything that is added to the signal between its transmission and reception that is not intended by the source". Again, Wright and Noe(1995) see noise as "anything that distorts a message by interfering with the communication process". It can be very destructive to the organization and takes different forms such as a worn out printer ribbon that impairs vision as one reads a document, crackling in a phone, or 'snow' on a television screen

In order to capture other barriers to communication flow in the University of Cape Coast that were not mentioned in the alternatives given, the researcher asked the respondents whether they have identified any problems with the communication system. Respondents were to choose either YES or NO. Their views were as depicted in Table 32

Table 32

Other problems with the University Communication System

Category	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%		
S.M.T	55	53.9	47	46.1	102	100
S.M.N-T	19	95.0	1	5.0	20	100
S.S.	27	42.9	36	57.1	63	100
J.S.	47	32.9	96	67.1	143	100
S.L.	24	70.6	10	29.4	34	100

From Table 32, it is clear that an average majority of the respondents (59.1%) said they have identified some problems with the communication system in the university. Their views point to the fact that all is not well in the communication system currently used in the university. A follow up question to ascertain some of the impediments to information flow identified gave credence to the opinion shared by the greater percentage of respondents on this item.

The first and major problem that seemed to cut across the various classes of respondents is the beauraucracy and red-tapism within the communication process. Since the university as an organization has a wide organizational structure, some information which must be received and acted on, get stacked along the organizational structure and thus create communication gaps among the various classes of internal publics in the university.

Secondly, information delay is another hindrance to smooth communication flow. At times, those who are expected to act on particular issues, take so much time to do so. For instance a letter of invitation for promotional interview from the personnel's section may take a long time to reach the interviewee. In some situations, some prospective interviewee's promotion is postponed because the invitation might not have gotten to him on time. These scenarios bread a lot of dissatisfactions among affected staffs and at times demoralize them completely. Also, productivity is adversely affected when especially deadlines are very near or in some situations, passes before the delivery of information to be acted upon by the expected people.

In addition to all these is the fact that some workers can simply not be bothered about what happens at the units of the institution because such hindrances do not affect them directly. A case in point is where the Assistant Registrar in charge of publications lamented seriously about the fact that some units retard the progress of his outfit by failing to provide requisite information for publications time. He also lamented that "lack of sophisticated equipment (for example Laptops and modern printers, inadequacy of skilled personnel and absence of transparency in the delivery of news items as it emanates from the authorities" are some of the major problems he has personally identified.

Lastly, the junior staff complained seriously about the unavailability of equipment to facilitate their activities. Particular reference can be made to the unavailability of bicycles for the messengers to ensure prompt delivery of information. In reaction to this however, the senior members were of the opinion that, excuse by the messengers does not hold because the various departments have vehicles which are meant for such purposes.

Minimize the Impediments to Communication Flow in the University of Cape Coast

Research Question 5 : What strategies can be employed to minimize the impediments to communication flow in the University of Cape Coast?

From our discussions, it is very clear that there are a number of sources of interference to the communication process. In a working setting, it is even more common since interactions involve people who do not only have years of

experience with each other, but communication is complicated by the complex and often a conflictual relationship that exists at work.

The research question five (5) therefore, is aimed at identifying some of the means by which impediments to communication flow can be minimized among the internal publics of the university of Cape Coast in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in information delivery, decision making and implementation of such decisions.

The researcher sought to identify whether the utilization of feedback among the university's internal publics is a strategy that the university authorities have identified and implemented to improve communication in the institution. The information gathered is as depicted in Table 33.

Table 33

Utilizing Feedback

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	1	1.0	10	9.8	91	89.2	102	100
S.M.N-T	1	5.0	3	15.0	16	80.0	20	100
S.S.	1	1.6	10	15.9	52	82.5	63	100
J.S.	5	3.5	22	15.4	116	81.1	143	100
S.L.	6	17.6			28	82.4	34	100

From Table 33, a greater percentage of the respondents (83.0%) supported this statement. Thus, they agree that utilization of feedback is a strategy already in

use by the university as an institution to improve communication/information flow. It is interesting to note that for each of the categories of respondents, not less than 80% support this statement, thus, signifying the fact that most of them accept that effective communication is achieved when feedback is fully utilized.

Feedback as an administrative tool for improvement of communication, taps basic human needs to improve, to compete, to be accurate. If given properly, it is almost always appreciated and motivates people to improve. In the view of Barry (1999), feedback is very important and can be rewarding but it requires skill, understanding, courage and respect for self and others. Thus, though feedback is already utilized, it is very important for the university authorities to continually educate its internal publics on the uses of feedback and what it takes to maintain an effective feedback system within the institution. This can be done at the various departmental units and faculty levels. As Pearson (1983) puts it, "Withholding constructive feedback is like sending people out on a dangerous hike without a compass". This is especially true in today's fast changing and demanding workplace.

Organizational success is achieved as a result of a combination of many variables. One such ingredient is decision making. Informed decisions are made only when the accurate information is received by decision makers. In an attempt to assess the views of the respondents on whether timely delivery of information would help improve communication in the University of Cape Coast, the views of the respondents were as captured in Table 34.

Table 34**Timely Delivery of Information**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	2	2.0	15	14.7	85	83.3	102	100
S.M.N-T	1	5.0	4	20.0	15	75.0	20	100
S.S.			6	9.5	57	90.5	63	100
J.S.	4	2.8	21	14.7	118	82.5	143	100
S.L.	6	17.6	4	11.8	24	70.6	34	100

From Table 34 the trend of responses regarding the perception of respondents to the usage of timely delivery of information to improve communication, 90.5% of the senior staff respondents agreed with this view, as opposed to 83.3% of Senior Members Non-Teaching. In all, 82.5% of the junior staff, 75.0% of the senior members non-teaching and 70.0% of the student leaders, agreed to the statement in that order. The trend here means that the category of staff that has the highest positive perception of the use of timely delivery of information for improving communication is the senior staff. This can be attributed to the fact that they mostly serve as intermediary between the senior members and the junior staff in the organizational structure.

One other question the researcher asked was on the perception of respondents on the clarity of information as a tool for enhancement of

communication in an organizational setting such as the university. Various views were expressed and these have been summarized in Table 35.

Table 35

Clarity of Information

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	1	1.0	20	19.6	81	79.4	102	100
S.M.N-T	1	5.0			19	95.0	20	100
S.S.	1	1.6	14	22.2	48	76.2	63	100
J.S.	10	7.0	28	19.6	105	73.4	143	100
S.L.			6	17.6	28	82.4	34	100

Clearly portrayed in Table 35 is the fact that an overall majority of the respondents included in the study, share the view that clarity of information would aid the improvement of information flow in the institution. The senior members (non-teaching) formed the group with the most positive perception (95.0 %) of clarity of information as an important tool for enhancement of information flow in the institution. This trend of response, may be attributed to the fact that majority of this group of respondents interact frequently with the other categories of respondents due to the peculiar nature of their jobs. They occupy such positions as Assistant registrars, senior assistant registrars, and deputy registrars of various faculties, schools, departments and centers.

The next questionnaire item sought to determine the views of respondents on the usage of the right choice of media as a means of improving communication and information flow in the university. Their perception on this issue is depicted in Table 35

Table 36

Choice of Media

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			10	9.8	92	90.2	102	100
S.M.N-T	1	5.0	3	15.0	16	80.0	20	100
S.S.	1	1.6	12	19.0	50	79.4	63	100
J.S.	8	5.6	22	15.4	113	79.0	143	100
S.L.			6	17.6	28	82.4	34	100

The data shown in Table 36 portrays clearly the immense support of the various categories of respondents for the statement. Thus an average of 82.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that indeed the choice of media for the conveyance of a message could help improve communication in the institution. This implies that communication is more effective if it is channeled from the sender to the receiver through the appropriate media. Their perception is supported by Bush and Frohman (1991) who stressed that it is important for the most appropriate media to be used in communicating among people. Therefore, in a complex educational environment such as the university, face-to-face

communication must be used for interview, meetings and conferences, oral communication must make use of telephones, radio, etc and memos, letters, circulars, manuals and newspapers for the written communication

The respondents were required to indicate whether the use of the internet would help to improve communication among the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast. Their responses were as indicated in Table 37

Table 37

The use of the Internet

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	10	9.8	22	21.6	70	68.6	102	100
S.M.N-T	3	15.0	4	20.0	13	65.0	20	100
S.S.	4	6.3	18	28.6	41	65.1	63	100
J.S.	7	4.9	59	41.3	77	53.8	143	100
S.L.	7	20.6	6	17.6	21	61.8	34	100

The result as shown in Table 37 depicts that 68.6% of the Senior Members (Teaching) supported this view as against 65.1% of the Senior Staff. The pattern here means that the group of respondents that have the highest positive attitude to the use of the internet in improving information and communication flow in the university is the S.S.T. The outcome might be due to the availability of internet connectivity points in almost all the offices of lecturers in the institution. Also, most of the departments have purchased computers for

their lecturers from the annual vaults allocated to them. In the department for Religious Studies and the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration for instance most lecturers have been supplied with Personal Computers (P.C.'s). In other offices that have no P.C.'s fixed, there are internet connectivity points which can be accessed by lecturers provided they have laptops or personal Computers (P.C.'s). Furthermore, a special section of the University's ultra-modern ICT Centre has been allocated to Senior Members (both teaching and non-teaching). In spite of all these, there are hosts of privately operated Cyber cafe's which provide 24 hours internet service.

With particular reference to the student body, most of them visit the university's I.C.T. Centre for information on the internet. They also benefit from the numerous internet Café's on the university campus. A lot of students get information on various issues of concern from the net. It is unfortunate however that till date students keep complaining about the high cost associated with such services on Campus.

Again, it is regrettable to note that no conscious effort has been made by the university authorities to promote the sharing of vital information among the internal publics of the university through the net. Information such as memoranda, notice of meetings and events advertisements can be put in private e-mails for easy access and appropriate response from the concerned publics. Downward, upward and horizontal communication could be enhanced greatly with the use of the internet especially the use of the e-mail. This view is contrary to the assertion of Leiner et al (2000) and Singh (2002) that the internet is a mechanism for

information dissemination and a medium for collaborative interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic limitation of space.

Again, from Table 37 it is clear that the least group (53.8%) who have positive perception of the internet as a tool for improvement in communication among the internal publics is the Senior Staff (S.S.). This may be so because apart from secretaries at the various sections of the university, most junior staff do not have access to computers and thus might not be able to communicate through the internet.

Respondents were questioned on whether communication in the university could be improved through frequent departmental meetings. Table 38 brings out their responses.

Table 38

Frequent Departmental Meetings

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T			10	9.8	92	91.2	102	100
S.M.N-T	4	20.0	3	15.0	13	65.0	20	100
S.S.	10	15.9	3	4.8	50	79.4	63	100
J.S.	5	3.5	40	30.0	98	68.5	143	100
S.L.			7	20.6	27	79.4	34	100

As indicated in Table 38, majority of all the groups of respondents share the common view that frequent departmental meetings would help to enhance communication in the institution. It is evident from table 38 that 91.2% of S.M.T, 79.4% of S.S, 79.4% of S.L, 68.5% of J.S. and 65.0% of S.M.N.T agree with the

statement. They were of the opinion that improvement in communication could be achieved through frequent interaction among the different groups of internal publics. This is because as people engage in consistent interactive activities they get to know each other and thus relate better among themselves, thereby encouraging good interpersonal relationship which is so vital for effective communication. It would also encourage receivers of information to empathize with the senders by putting themselves in the shoes of the senders of messages for the purpose of anticipating how the message is likely to be decoded. (Donnelly et al, 1987). This is because decoding involves perceptions and the message would be filtered through the perception of the receiver.

Additionally, departmental meetings could be used to interpret various issues of concern to the internal publics of the university. These include the explanation of the organizational communication channel and new policies.

Lastly, the senior members (both teaching and non-teaching) were of the view that the superior-subordinate relationship among the internal publics of the university stands a great chance of improvement since frequent staff meetings are sometimes held for the members of the department.

A question also looked at whether clearly defined communication channels would aid smooth information flow in the university of Cape Coast. Table 39 illustrates the responses made by the respondents.

Table 39**Clearly Defined Communication Channels**

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	10	9.8	22	21.6	70	68.6	102	100
S.M.N-T	3	15.0	4	20.0	13	65.0	20	100
S.S.	4	6.3	18	28.6	41	65.1	63	100
J.S.	7	4.9	59	41.3	77	53.8	143	100
S.L.	7	20.6	6	17.6	21	61.8	34	100

Table 39 indicates that an average majority of the respondents (62.9%) agree that clearly defined communication channels would enhance smooth flow of information in the institution. The organizational communication channel refers to the pattern of flow of information from the topmost employee of the institution to the lowest employee in terms of rank and placement on the organizational structure. The views expressed by the respondents therefore indicate that when there is a clearly defined communication channel, information flow is enhanced. This is probably due to the fact that the university's communication channel moves along the organizational chart of the institution. Therefore, all the internal publics play key roles in the dissemination of information in the institution and thus, need to be continuously updated on the laid down channel and procedure for information flow. To this extent, copies of the organizational structure and

channel for communication must be placed in all the main offices of the institution such as faculties, departments and units.

It is evident that as a teaching – learning enterprise students form a major component of the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast. A question was therefore asked whether organizing fora for students would help improve communication in the institution. Table 39 clearly depicts the responses of the respondents.

Table 40

Organizing Fora for Students

Category	Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
S.M.T	16	15.7	10	9.8	76	74.5	102	100
S.M.N-T	3	15.0	4	20.0	13	65.0	20	100
S.S.	1	1.6	24	38.1	38	60.3	63	100
J.S.	25	17.5	20	14.0	98	68.5	143	100
S.L.	1	2.9	1	2.9	32	94.2	34	100

As Table 40 shows, majority of all the five groups of respondents (94.2% of S.L, 74.5% of S.M.T, 68.5% of J.S, 65% of S.M.N.T and 60.3% of S.S) supported the statement that frequent fora for students would enhance communication and information flow in the institution. The student leaders (S.L) in particular opined that, the role of the students in the university could not be overemphasized. Therefore regular interaction between the university authorities

and the students body would go a long way to impact positively on the communication in the university in general and the relationship between the two publics in particular. Asked whether this has been the practice, the student leaders included in the study responded in the affirmative. They said this is normally carried out by the university authorities through the Dean of student affairs.

Also the students are represented on the University Council by presidents of the Students Representative Council (SRC) and the Graduate Students Association of Ghana (GRASAG). These two personalities are the mouthpiece of Students in the University's highest governing body and also serve as the link between the university's topmost body and students.

The existing relationship between the university authorities and the student body as mentioned notwithstanding, the student leaders, were of the opinion that communication in the institution could be taken a step further if the authorities could occasionally organize open fora for students where the main principal officers of the institution such as the Vice- Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar and Finance Officer, could be available for personal interaction with the students. These important personalities could use the opportunity to enlighten students on current issues that affect them.

At such meetings various issues such as new university policies could be discussed and the students should be given the opportunity to ask questions that boarder them. This all-important event could be held once every academic year and captioned "A day with the V.C". As the overall head of the large university community, the Vice- Chancellor has a tight schedule, which takes a greater part

of his time. As Morris et' al (1984) have stated the head is the "authoritative manager of an increasingly complex educational enterprise with a variety of non-educational sectors of responsibility included in the jurisdiction". It is hoped that this practice would go a long way to enrich the relationship between the university authorities and the student body and therefore promote an atmosphere of peace, for effective teaching, learning and research, as well as reduce unhealthy occurrences such as student protests and unnecessary student unrest.

In the view to capture other strategies to help minimize the impediments to communication flow that were not included in the alternatives given in the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to state some of the strategies that can be employed. One strategy that engaged the attention of most of the respondents was the need for senders of information to desist from the use of complex language and rather adopt very simple words that are easy to assimilate and interpret. Again, professional people such as lecturers in particular areas should try as much as possible to avoid using in-group language in communicating with individuals outside their group. Their assertion supports the view of Donnelly etal (1987) who opines that senders must remember that effective communication involves transmitting understanding as well as information. Indeed, there is no communication if the receiver is unable to comprehend the information sent.

Secondly, the respondents were of the view that all efforts must be made to maximize the utilization of the grapevine. They stressed that the grapevine surely exists in the university and thus the authorities must take advantage of it. This view expressed, is supported by the view of Davis (1969) that "the grapevine

is a natural part of a company's total communication system". He further stated that the grapevine is 75-95% correct. Hence every effort must be made to enhance its adoption and usage.

Thirdly, the Assistant Registrar for publications observed that "there is the need for the university's authorities to ensure transparent, unadulterated, efficient and effective communication lines. In the case of publications, secretaries to committees should be up and doing by sending to the section copies of all meetings that bother on the welfare of staff".

Finally, it was the hope of the respondents that the university authorities would periodically organize programmes that would particularly aim at encouraging good interpersonal relationship among the internal publics of the institution.

In their opinion, such events are necessary since a lot of the impediments to information flow could be minimized if both the senders and receivers understand each other and accept the fact that they all belong to a common institution and have a common objective-a successful organization. From the discussion, it is evidenced that in spite of all the problems associated with communication in the University of Cape Coast, various measures can be implemented to reduce its effect on the running of the institution. These include organizing regular staff meetings, student fora, instituting clearly defined communication channel, choosing the right media for the dissemination of information and effective utilization of feedback.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this concluding chapter, the findings of the study are summarized, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made.

Summary

The purpose of the research was to examine the perception of respondents (senior members, administrative staff and students) on communication and the flow of information on the university campus. It also sought to identify the kinds of formal and informal communication channels that exist within the University of Cape Coast and the extent to which they have been successful in the dissemination of information among the internal publics of the institution.

Again, the study was meant to further investigate the perception of the internal publics of the university on the medium of communication used in the dissemination of information within the University of Cape Coast and the extent to which they have been effective. Furthermore, it was meant to identify perception of the respondents on the impediments to the smooth flow of information within the institution. Finally, the study aimed at finding out the strategies that could be employed to minimize the impediments to information flow. Five research questions were derived out of the above purposes.

The study sought to examine five main issues.

These are:

1. Perception on communication and information flow among the internal publics of the university of Cape Coast
2. Existence of formal and informal communications channels in the university of Cape Coast
3. Media used in the dissemination of information
4. Impediments to the smooth flow of information within the institution.
5. Strategies to be employed to minimize the impediments to information flow.

The population was made up of 43 senior members in administration, 294 Senior Members (lecturers), 470 Senior Staff, 1510 Junior Staff and 35 student leaders. In all, the population size was 2,352 out of which a sample size of 378 respondents was used. This included 20 Senior Members in administration, 107 Senior Members (lecturers), 65 Senior Staff, 151 Junior Staff and 35 Student Leaders.

The research design adopted for the study was the descriptive survey, which was considered most appropriate for conducting the investigation with the questionnaire being used as the main instrument for the study. A few of the respondents were however interviewed using the same questionnaire as the interview guide. Also, the Senior Assistant Registrar for Public Relations and Assistant Registrar for Publications were interviewed using an interview guide.

The questionnaire was made up of six sections of both close-ended and open-ended items. The sections were on basic information (biographical data),

views on communication, views on channels of communication, media of communication, barriers to effective communication flow in the university, strategies and ways the respondents have found useful in minimizing the impediments to communication flow.

A pilot study was conducted to remove ambiguities, inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the questionnaire. The University of Education, Winneba was used for that purpose. The SPSS was used in analyzing the data. Descriptive statistics were used to obtain frequencies and percentages.

Summary of Findings

The main findings of the study are summarized below:

- (1) From the study it is clear that communication in the university is not as effective as expected. Information flow from especially the employees at the lower levels of the organization to the superior and vice-versa is sometimes blocked, and thus creates a lot of communication gaps, which at times results in all kinds of delays, misunderstanding and unrest among the internal publics of the institution.
- (2) Respondents established the fact that written and oral communications are the most common forms of communication in the University of Cape Coast. The written communication usually takes the form of memorandum, circulars, notices bulleting, student handbook, billboards and annual reports.
- (3) The respondents conceded that there are a number of communication channels employed by the university to disseminate information among

the internal publics. These include downward, upward, horizontal and diagonal channels, which are very popular and have been effective to a very large extent in the dissemination of information. The grapevine and diagonal communication channels are not popular with the internal publics of the university for the dissemination of information. This view is supported by the fact that in both cases, less than half of the respondents agreed to the fact that they employed these means in spreading information.

- (4) Again, the study showed the respondents believed that information is communicated among the internal publics mostly through media such as notice boards, bulletins, electronic media, student's handbook, memoranda, the Vice- Chancellors report, seminars and workshops. These have been very efficient in the spread of information on the university campus. It was however clear from the research that billboards and suggestion boxes are unpopular with the university in the spread of information.
- (5) Furthermore, the respondents felt that semantic problems, poor listening habits, mistrust, poor human relations, faulty communication equipment, noise in the communication process and emotional state of both the senders and receivers of information serve as major barriers to information flow.

- (6) Again, the respondents opined that beauracracy and red-tapism within the communication process create communication gaps among the various classes of internal publics in the university.

Conclusions

Effective communication is very necessary if efficiency and productivity are to be achieved in every enterprise including education. This is because "problems arise when directives are misunderstood, rumors spread, informal remarks are misinterpreted or distorted, or when casual kidding in a work group leads to anger" (Donnelly et al, 1987 p. 416). Without effective communication goals will not be achieved. It is in the light of this that the barriers to information flow will have to be identified and proper measures implemented to reduce it.

An attempt has been made to evaluate the perception of the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast on the general communication situation in the institution with particular reference to the impediments that hinder the smooth flow of information within the university community. According to the data, discussions with respondents, and by analysis, it can be concluded that the various internal publics interact with each other on regular basis. However, communication among them is not as smooth as expected. This is due to the numerous barriers that have hindered information flow within the university community as identified in this study. These include: semantic problems, poor human relations, noise in the communication process, poor listening habits, bureaucracy and red-tapism.

The research also revealed that the U.C.C has various laid down channels of communication with formal channels such downward and upward, horizontal and diagonal communication and informal ones such as grapevine communication .Whereas the first three kinds of channel were very popular among the internal publics of the institution; the publics proved to be quite unconversant with diagonal and grapevine communication.

It was also discovered that there are various media through which the internal publics of the university interact with each other. Notable among them are notice boards, bulletins, electronic media, memoranda, and Vice- Chancellor's reports. Other media such as billboards and suggestion boxes were seen to be unpopular in the spread of information on campus.

Recommendations will therefore be made, which if effectively implemented, would at least minimize the barriers to information flow in the institution.

Recommendations

In order for the findings of the study as outlined earlier to bring about the necessary remedial measures to be effected, the researcher suggests that the following recommendations should be considered seriously by the university authorities particularly the main administration, faculties departments, schools and other units to ensure that communication amongst the internal publics is enhanced. The recommendations are:

- (1) All efforts should be made by the university authorities to encourage good interpersonal communication among the internal publics of the institution.

The authorities should impress upon the various faculties, departments and units to hold regular staff meetings in order to achieve excellent human relations and thus good interpersonal communication.

- (2) Every effort should be made to ensure that communication equipments such as telephones, computers and accessories are regularly maintained to reduce breakdown in information flow.
- (3) Suggestion boxes must be provided at the various faculties, departments, units and other sections of the university to enhance information flow within the university community. This would also impact positively on upward communication channel (i.e. from subordinates to superiors).
- (4) All efforts must be geared towards reducing noise in the communication process in the university to the barest minimum. Bottlenecks such as beauraucracy and red-tapism should be minimized as much as possible..
- (5) Periodic seminars and workshops should be organized for the employees of the university on important issues such as utilizing feedback and new communication methods like the internet to help improve communication within the system.
- (6) All the faculties, departments units and halls of residence of the university must be provided with modern functional inter-communication facilities, to promote and enhance excellent internal communication within the university.
- (7) The university authorities should ensure that the cost of important documents such as V.C.'s report and Calendar are inculcated in the

students annual bill so as to keep them informed on important occasions and issues of the university.

- (8) The faculty of student affairs must organize regular and well-planned fora for students to give updates on pertinent issues in the university.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

INSTITUTION FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

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April 28, 2004

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LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The bearer of this letter, Mr. Samuel Yaw Ampofo, is a graduate student of the University of Cape Coast. He is collecting data/information in your outfit, for the purpose of writing a thesis as a requirement of the programme.

I would be grateful if you could help him with the collection of the data/information.

Kindly give the necessary assistance that Mr. Samuel Yaw Ampofo, needs.

Thank you.

SGD.

C. S. Kpeglo (Ms)

Secretary

for Ag. Director

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

AND ADMINISTRATION

Questionnaire for Faculty Members, Administrative Staff and Students on

Issues in Communication Flow in the University of Cape Coast

The purpose of this study is to gather information on communication flow in the University of Cape Coast. This exercise is purely for an academic pursuit. Please feel free to answer the questions as objectively and truthfully as you can. Your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

Please respond to each item only once.

SECTION A: BASIC INFORMATION

Please indicate your response by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

1. Gender

- 1.1 [] Male
1.2 [] Female

2. Highest Educational Qualification

- 2.1 [] PhD
2.2 [] M.ED, M.A, MPhil, MBA
2.3 [] PGCE, PGDE
2.4 [] B.ED, B.A, B.SC
2.5 [] Higher National Diploma (HND)
2.6 [] Diploma
2.7 [] GCE A'LEVEL/ SSCE/ GCE O'LEVEL & BELOW

3. Status of respondent in the University
- 3.1 [] Senior Member [Teaching]
 - 3.2 [] Senior Member [Non-Teaching]
 - 3.3 [] Senior Administrative Staff
 - 3.4 [] Junior Administrative Staff
 - 3.5 [] Student

SECTION B: VIEWS ON COMMUNICATION

This section seeks to find out views on communication in the University of Cape Coast. In your own opinion please indicate your response by placing a tick (✓) under one of the following:

- Strongly Agree - SA
- Agree - A
- Uncertain - U
- Disagree - D
- Strongly disagree - SD

	SA	A	U	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
5. Communication is very vital to the effective running of the university					
6. Communication flow is very smooth in the university					
7. Communication is not only relevant to the top management of the university					

	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1
8. Written communication is commonly used in disseminating information in the university					
9 Verbal communication is very commonly used in informal communication among the internal publics of the university.					
10. Non-verbal communication is normally used to reinforce oral communication among the internal publics of the university					

SECTION C: VIEWS ON CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

This section aims at considering the various channels of communication commonly used in the University of Cape Coast. Please indicate your response by placing a tick (✓) under one of the following:

- Strong Agree - SA
- Agree - A
- Uncertain - U
- Disagree - D
- Strongly Disagree - SD

The channel of communication commonly used at your department is

	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1
11. Downward communication channel (from superior to subordinates)					
12. Upward communication channel (from subordinate to superior)					
13. Horizontal communication channel (from colleague to colleague)					
14. Diagonal communication channel (from superior in one department to subordinate in another department)					
15. Grapevine (rumours and gossips)					

SECTION D: MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION

Kindly indicate how often the underlisted media of communication is used to disseminate information to the internal publics of the institution. Please tick (✓) the appropriate response from the following:

- Very often - VO
- Often - O
- Seldom - S
- Never - N

	VO 4	O 3	S 2	N 1
16. Bulletin				
17. Calendar				
18. Student Handbook				
19. Annual Report				
20. Memoranda				
21. Notice Boards				
22. The Electronic Media (Eg. FM Stations on campus)				
23. Bill Boards				
24. Suggestion Boxes				
25. Seminars/Workshops				

25. Apart from the listed media of communication, what are the other means by which you obtain information in the university?

.....

SECTION E: BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION FLOW IN THE UNIVERSITY

The following impediments occur and thus, serves as barriers to information flow among the internal publics of the University of Cape Coast. Please tick (✓) the appropriate response from the following:

- Strongly Agree - SA
 Agree - A
 Uncertain - U
 Disagree - D
 Strongly disagree - SD

	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1
26. Differing perception (people observe, analyse, and react differently to an event).					
27. Semantic problems (using words which have several meanings in different context)					
28. Poor listening habits					
29. Mistrust or lack of credibility					
30. Faulty communication equipments such as telephones, fax machines, computers, etc.					
31. Poor human relations among workers					
32. Emotional state (emotional reaction like anger, love, fear, etc influence how we understand each other)					
33. Noise (any factor that disturbs, confuses or interferes with the message)					

34. Have you noticed any problem with the communication system in the university? Yes [] No []

35. If your answer for question 52 is "Yes", what are some of the impediments you have identified with the communication flow? State two

.....

36. What has been the effect of those impediments?

.....

SECTION F: STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE EMPLOYED TO HELP MINIMIZE THE IMPEDIMENTS TO COMMUNICATION FLOW IN THE UNIVERSITY

The underlisted strategies are employed in helping to minimize the impediments to communication in the University of Cape Coast. Please show your response by ticking (✓) one of the following:

- Strongly Agree - SA
- Agree - A
- Uncertain - U
- Disagree - D
- Strongly disagree - SD

	SA	A	S	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
37. Utilizing Feed back					
38. Timely delivery of information					
39. Clarity of information					
40. Choice of media					
41. The use of the internet					
42. Frequent departmental meetings					

43. Clearly defined communication Channels.					
44. Organising fora, especially for students					

45. In your opinion, what other strategies apart from those mentioned can be employed to improve communication flow in the university? State any two.

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide for the Senior Assistant Registrar for Public Relations on Issues in Communication Flow in the University of Cape Coast

1. What is your view on communication among the internal publics of the university of Cape Coast?
2. Do you think communication is important to the university? In what sense is it important?
3. What media are used in disseminating information to the internal publics of the university?
4. How effective have these media been in the dissemination of information?
5. Are there any officially laid down channels of communication?
6. How effective have these channels been in the spread of information among the internal publics of the institution?
7. What is your view on the statement that the grapevine exists as an informal channel of communication?
8. As the Public relations officer of the institution, have you identified any barriers to communication flow in the university of Cape Coast?
9. What are some of them?
10. In your opinion, what has been the effect of these barriers on the operations of the university?
11. What strategies do you think can be adopted and implemented to at least reduce or minimize the impediments if not totally eradicate it?

APPENDIX D

Interview Guide for the Senior Assistant Registrar for Publications on Issues in Communication Flow in the University of Cape Coast

1. What is your view on communication among the internal publics of the university of Cape Coast?
2. Do you think communication is important to the university? In what sense is it important?
3. What media are used in disseminating information to the internal publics of the university?
4. How effective have these media been in the dissemination of information?
5. Are there any officially laid down channels of communication?
6. How effective have these channels been in the spread of information among the internal publics of the institution?
7. What is your view on the statement that the grapevine exists as an informal channel of communication?
8. As the Publications officer of the institution, have you identified any barriers to communication flow in the university of Cape Coast?
9. What are some of them?
10. In your opinion, what has been the effect of these barriers on the operations of the university?
11. What strategies do you think can be adopted and implemented to at least reduce or minimize the impediments if not totally eradicate it?