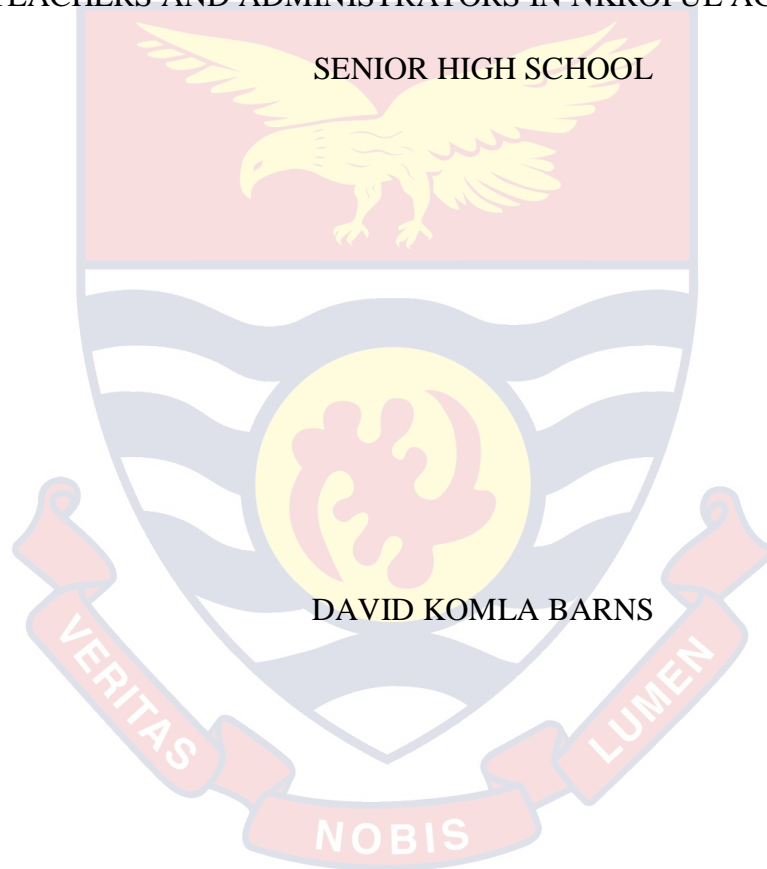UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FORMAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES AMONG STUDENTS,

TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN NKROFUL AGRICULTURAL

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

DAVID KOMLA BARNS

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

BY

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Administration

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

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

Name: David Komla Barns

Supervisors' Declaration

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

Principal Supervisor's Signature: …………………. Date: ……………………

Name: Dr. Marie Afua Baah Bakah

Co-Supervisor's Signature: …………………….… Date: ……………………

Name: Dr. Hope Nudzor

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. The convergent parallel mixed method design was employed in the study. Questionnaire (structured) and interview guide (semi-structured) were used to collect the data and were administered personally by the researcher. In all, 352 respondents participated in the study. 351 students and teachers were stratified and then randomly selected. The head of the school was purposively selected. The study revealed that downward channel of communication was the most prevalent in the school. Staff meetings served as the main platform through which teachers received and communicated with administration while on the part of students, it was general assembly and SRC meetings. Additionally, formal communication in the school was found to be impeded by the following: failure on the part of committees to submit reports to the administration regularly; teachers' and students' distrust for the school administrators for any information given, and failure on the part of administrators to give prompt feedback to teachers' and students' needs or reports. These hindrances have made both teachers and students feel reluctant in reporting their grievances to the administration hence causing the communication process in the school to become a one-way process instead of a two-way process which is a recipe for agitations. It is recommended that the upward, diagonal and horizontal channels of formal communication should be encouraged in the school. Also, the use of other modes of communication such as letters, memos and the use of notice boards should be encouraged in the school.

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DEDICATION

To my family

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Communication covers a huge space of human interaction and forms an integral part of human existence. Human action is needed to accomplish goals in schools. Communication is also widely acknowledged as a driver of change such that communication failure in any organisation may not only spur on rife, discontent and misrepresentation but also drain scarce resources. Typically, an organisation's structure defines and shapes its communication pathways and relationships.

The school as a formal organisation is to ensure a congenial teaching and learning environment so as to achieve the goals and objectives. Ineffective formal communication in the school can lead to agitations and riot that will lead to the destruction of lives and properties. It is against this background that the study sought to investigate the formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. It is hoped that this will inform the management of educational institutions and all the major stakeholders to adopt pragmatic attitude to ensure this congenial environment. The study is also a furtherance to previous works that have been done on communication practices by Ama (2009), Baah (2006) and Dali (2010).

Background to the Study

According to Archer, Adentwi and Sam (2008), communication is the transmission of information across persons in such a way that it results in the desired responds. It is the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another (Keyton, 2011). "It is a relational process during which senders transmit messages using symbols, signs, and

contextual cues to express meaning, to have receivers construct similar understandings, and to influence behaviour" (Hoy & Miskel, 2013, p. 390). The above definitions underscore the fact that communication has to do with purposeful interactions that involve sharing information and meanings among people.

Cheney (2011) posits that the components of communication are sender, encoding, message, channel, decoding, receiver, and feedback. The sender initiates a message by encoding a thought. The message is the actual physical product from the source encoding. When one speaks, the speech is the message. When one writes, the writing is the message. When one gestures, the movement of the arms and the expressions on the face are the message. The channel is the medium through which the message travels. It is selected by the sender. Decoding refers to the receiver translating the words or symbols into concepts that can be understood. Feedback occurs when the receiver responds to the sender's message.

Conceptually, two types of communication exist in schools; formal and informal communications. However, this work seeks to look at formal communication practices. This is because "the school as a formal organisation comprises a hierarchy of authority, division of labour, formal rules and regulations, impersonality, formal communication structure, developed and implemented to achieve school goals" (Hoy & Miskel, 2013, p. 103). Besides, the same authors assert that, schools are formal organizations with many of the same characteristics as bureaucratic organization. Formal communication practices are the major means of administering activities in a formal establishment such as a school.

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"Formal communication has to do with the kind of interactions that are prescribed or officially approved or recognised by management" (Archer, Adentwi & Sam, 2008, p. 124). Also, "it is information that passes through the laid down channels in an organization" (Attieku, Marfo-Yiadom, Dorkey & Tekyi, 2009 p. 110). It is organized and managed information that is shared with relevant individuals in order to secure coordinated action throughout the organization. The flow of information is controlled and this makes it possible for the information to reach the desired destination without much hindrance. Formal messages can be written or oral, but should take on a formal tone, using accepted standards for communication within the specific organization (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Formal channels of communication describe the pattern of communication which are officially designed and recognised by the organisation for the transmission of official messages (Archer et al., 2008). Hoy & Miskel (2013) purport that formal channels of communication are networks sanctioned by the organization and directed toward organizational goals. They describe the pattern of communication stipulated by the blueprint of the organization which prescribes the ways in which subordinates, super-ordinates and peers should relate to each other for the attainment of organizational objectives. According to Archer et al. (2008), in terms directional flow of information, formal communication may be classified into three main types; namely, vertical communication (the downward and upward flow of information across persons through the chain of command), horizontal communication (communication between peers or equals and between the various departments, sections and units within the organisation) and diagonal

communication (sharing of information among different structural levels within an organisation). The use of formal channels of communication ensures that the message sent is clearly understood by the receiver and it is also given in full with no gaps that could be filled in through rumours.

Communication is vital to good management and the key factor in the success of an organization (Mowlana, 2018). Indeed, there cannot be any meaningful organizational life without effective interactions among members. It is in recognition of this fact that Rogers and Rogers (1976) described communication as the life-blood of every organization. Like the blood stream that flows through the veins and arteries of living organisms, communication revitalizes and triggers organizational activity.

People are by nature social beings, and the means of living in a manner that is healthy and that would enhance this social life is through communication. Human action is needed to accomplish goals in schools. Goal directed behaviour is elicited through communication; hence, the greater the clarity and understanding of the message, the more likely the administrators, teachers and students' actions will proceed in fruitful, goal-oriented directions. "Within an effectively operating school, for example, administrators, teachers, and students want to understand and accept each other's ideas and to act on them" (Hoy & Miskel, 2013, p. 409). School goals and guidelines for their accomplishment are developed through extensive dialogue.

Formal organizations, like the school, follow authority hierarchy where guidelines and policies are outlined for every member to follow. Since policies or rules are disseminated to the administrators, teachers, students and other stakeholders, communication performs control functions. Communication

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fosters motivation by clarifying to administrators, teachers and students what is to be done, how well they are doing and what can be done. For a school to perform effectively and efficiently, the leadership needs to maintain some form of control, stimulate the teachers, students and other stakeholders to perform, provide a means for emotional expression and also make choices. Communication permeates every aspect of school life since it strengthens relationships, reinforces goal-directed behaviour, and helps to create a bond of affection and confidence among individuals in a school setup. The effectiveness with which the school administrator communicates with others impacts significantly on the overall performance of the school. Effective two-way communication is a necessary trait for success at all levels of education.

Leaders of educational institutions spend majority of their time communicating to ensure sanity. Chung and Miskel (1989) affirm that the primary activity of school administrators is talking to others. A school administrator has no greater responsibility than to develop effective communication (Pauley, 2010). The leaders who win are those who communicate openly and often, have a clear and committed communication policy, initiate programmes and assess their own performance. Every administrative function and activity involves some form of direct or indirect communication. Whether planning and organizing or leading and monitoring, school administrators communicate with and through other people. Gronn (1983) uphold that administrators use talk to tighten and loosen their control in organizing and allocating school resources.

Educational institutions' failures or successes largely depend on how school administrators communicate formally their management competence to

their staff, students and other stakeholders. The Ghanaian Times Tuesday 4, August 2015, p.3, reported that Nalerigu Senior School in the Northern Region experienced students riots which destroyed some school property. According to the students, this was to register their displeasure about the postponement of their evening jam. Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School has also experienced agitations ranging from change in menu and mode of punishment. The above agitations could be linked to the failure of the administrators of the schools to employ effective formal communication practices. Administrator's professional attributes and qualities that include management of communication practices and problems need objective appraisal as they are deemed important factors for achieving objectives and maximum internal efficiency. One of the most inhibiting forces to organizational effectiveness is a lack of effective communication (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010). Communication reveals, hides, as well as eliminates problems (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

In conclusion, open and continuous formal communication enhance teaching and learning in schools. The key for being successful in the contemporary school is the ability of the administrators to work with teachers, students and other stakeholders to develop a shared sense of what the school is attempting to accomplish, where it wants to go and the commitments that people have to make in order to advance the school toward a shared vision. As administrators are able to build a shared mission, vision, values, and goals, the school will become more effective. Building a relationship between administrators, teachers, students and other stakeholders of school requires the use of effective formal communication practices.

Statement of the Problem

The need to ensure a congenial teaching and learning environment is seen as a necessary condition to achieve academic goals and objectives and no wonder it features in the mission statement of nearly all schools in Ghana. However, a recent threat to this necessary condition is the ascendency of riots in Senior High Schools in Ghana. From the researcher's observation as a teacher, some of these riots could be attributed to ineffective formal communication practices in the schools. For example, in the Ghanaian Times Tuesday 4, August 2015, p.3, Abdul-Majeed, a journalist, reported that students of Nalerigu Senior High School in the Northern Region went on rampage and destroyed a lot of the school's property. The action by the students was to register their displeasure against the headmaster's decision to postpone their evening jam until the end of term examination which was in progress.

Again, in the Ghanaian Times of February 9, 2015, p. 3 Mario Noretti, a journalist, reported that a student of St. Paul's Senior High School at Denu in the Volta Region was killed by a bullet from police warning shots to quell a riot by some of the students on campus. The riot erupted when a section of the students were prevented by the school authorities from lynching two of their colleagues for allegedly engaging in homosexual acts in the school. It appeared the cause of the incidents reported above which perhaps led to the numerous agitations might have been due to a communication gap among the administrators, teachers and students.

In addition, research works conducted on communication practices in schools by some scholars such as Ama (2009), Baah (2006), and Dali (2010)

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also acknowledged that ineffective communication practices in schools is a contributing factor to riots in schools. Dali (2010) who conducted similar study in the public Senior High Schools in Keta Municipality suggested a replication of such studies so that generalization of the findings can be made for all schools in Ghana.

Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School is located in the Ellembelle District of the Western Region. It is one of the schools in the region where there are always agitations on issues among students, teachers and administrators. For example, in February 2012, some teachers and students became unhappy about the punishment procedures used by the domestic council to correct the students and this resulted in a demonstration that affected classes for a week. This situation arose owing to a clear gap in communication of procedures for punishments in the school. Again, in 2013 and 2015 the school authorities delayed in serving food to the students and even served them with different foods that were not on the menu without informing the students through the Students Representative Council (SRC). As a result, there were agitations from the students against the authorities. With the two instances stated above, the researcher observed that formal communication practices are poorly patronised in the school. It is because of the above considerations that this study is being undertaken in the school. The researcher's commitment is to investigate the state of formal communication practices in the school.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to investigate the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. This was done with the

view to deepening knowledge and understanding of the causes of agitations in the school.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What formal channels of communication are available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

2. What modes of formal communication are employed in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

3. What are the hindrances to formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

4. In what ways do the hindrances affect formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

Significance of the Study

Riots, agitations and other disturbances in schools leading to the destruction of school property have been a matter of concern to all stakeholders in educational institutions. However, through the use of formal communication practices, cooperation is fostered among administrators, teachers and students. School administrators need sound formal communication practices to strengthen connections and build cooperation. The school as an organization relies heavily on sound formal communication to carry out reforms and adapt to changes in the environment.

The study will add to existing literature on the use of formal communication practices in school administration of second cycle schools in Ghana by enlightening administrators, teachers and students on the appropriate use of formal communication practices in addressing issues in schools. It is

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also meant to give guidelines to ensure the use of effective formal communication practices in order to avert riots in second cycle schools in Ghana. Effective use of formal communication practices in schools will also lead to the creation of harmony and effective working relations which will in turn help reduce conflict drastically in schools. Finally, the study will be significant to the target population because the findings will be communicated through workshops and seminars that will be organized by the researcher. These workshops and seminars will help to deepen knowledge and understanding of formal communication practices in schools so that the administrators, teachers and students in Nkroful Senior High School will see their weaknesses and patronise its use in their day-to-day work in order to realize the goals of the school.

Delimitation of the Study

The study is limited in scope to formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. The study is being undertaken in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School instead of all the SHSs in the Ellembelle District of the Western Region of Ghana. The researcher chose this school because it is known to be one of the schools in the region with rampant students' agitations and disturbances. Also, the study will involve only the administrators, teachers and students but excluding the non-teaching staff. This is because it is clear from the school's organogram that communication of urgent information of programmes, policies, rules and regulations must necessarily emanate from top administrators (headmistress, assistant heads senior housemaster/mistress). Nonetheless, non-teaching staff must pass any information to the administrators to be passed on to students hence in Senior

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High Schools, students are communicated to formally by or through the top administrators and teachers only.

Limitations of the Study

The headmistress of Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School could not participate in the study due to time constraints. The assistant headmaster in charge of administration responded to the interview on her behalf.   As a result, relevant pieces of information which could have served as inputs were whittled down.

Definition of Terms

1. **Administrators** in this thesis are taken to mean the headmistress, two assistant headmasters, senior housemaster and mistress.

2. **Communication** in this thesis is taken to mean the use of language, gestures or both. Communication through language could be oral or in a written form.

3. **Decoding** in this thesis refers to the process in which the receiver translates the words or symbols into concepts or information that can be understood.

4. **Diagonal Communication** in this thesis refers to communication from one department to the other either in an ascending or descending order.

5. **Encoding** refers to a message sent to the receiver in words or symbols.

6. **Feedback** as used in the context of this study is a response from a person who has received a message.

7. **Formal communication** as used in the context of this study refers to organized and managed information that is shared with relevant

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individuals in order to secure coordinated action throughout the organization.

8. **Formal channels of communication** as used in the context of this study are the various pathways by which information reaches people in an organization such as schools. This includes vertical, horizontal and diagonal communications.

9. **Horizontal Communication** in this thesis refers to communication between people of the same rank or level in an organization

10. **Leadership** in this thesis refers to as a social process in which an individual or a group influences behaviour toward a shared goal.

11. **Messages** as used in the context of this study are verbal or nonverbal cues or symbols representing ideas and information that senders hope to communicate or transfer to others.

12. **Noise** as used in the context of this study is anything that distorts the message.

13. **Senders** as used in the context of this study are sources, speakers, and signallers.

14. **Vertical Communication** in this thesis describes the downward and upward flow of information across persons through the chain of command.

Organization of the Study

This study is systematically arranged into five chapters. Chapter one bothers on the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, and definition of terms. Chapter two contains

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the review of related literature. Chapter three is about the research methodology which covers the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis. The results and discussion are presented in chapter four. Chapter five covers the summary, conclusions and the recommendations of the study. It also offers suggestions for further research.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This section describes the literature relevant to the research topic and purpose of this study. Themes covered in the review of the related literature included the following: Theoretical framework (a general model of communication process, the application of the model in a school situation, two-way communication); feedback in communication; formal communication; advantages and disadvantages of formal communication; formal communication in schools; the organogram of Nkroful Agricultural Senior high school (NASHS); directional flow of formal communication in NASHS; purposes of formal communication in schools; formal channels of communication (vertical communication, horizontal and diagonal communication); modes or methods of formal communication; oral communication; written communication; non-verbal communication; barriers of formal communication; ways of ensuring effective formal communication; notice board; school assembly; suggestion boxes; meetings and memorandum.

Theoretical Framework

Theories of Communication

Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Communication

Max Weber's theory of bureaucratic organizations is the first attempt to define organizational structure and give meaning to the communication processes that happen within organizations. The Weberian theory holds that organizations have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and hence communication is hierarchical, structured, and clear. In formal

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communication, all decisions, rules, regulations, and behaviours are recorded. Thus, communication is shown in terms of the chain of command hence, everything is documented and accounted. There is no question in what needs to be done because it is written (Weber, 1947). He further posits that, there is no scope for confusion in the messages being sent from the top (the theory is inherently a top down one) and hence organizations have rigid machine like structures where each individual contributes by way of defined and unambiguous roles and responsibilities. Weberian analysis gives a place of prominence to merit and the way organizations work, is by allocating work according to capabilities and seniority determined by fixed notions of these concepts.

Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory

Tompkins and Cheney's organizational control theory holds that there are four kinds of control that determine how organizations exercise power within and they are simple, technical, bureaucratic, and concertive. In a way, these four types of control are defined according to the progression of the organization from very simple organizational models to pure bureaucracies to overly technical and finally an organization where everyone knows what is expected of him or her and has the purpose of the organization's mission and vision clearly etched within them. The point here is that Tompkins and Cheney posit a model where control and communication is more than what Weber had envisaged and less than what post modern theorists say about organizational control and communication.

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Deetz's Managerialism Theory

Deetz's Managerialism Theory is one such attempt to define how organizational communication and organizational control happens in the companies where classical notions are replaced with an acknowledgement of the political and economic interests as well as the need to represent and give voice to these diverse interests. The highlight of this theory is that Deetz goes beyond fixed notions of organizations and instead, posits a view of organizations that take into account the democratic aspirations of the people and the power centers in the organization. This combination of recognizing the fact that meaning lies in people and not their words and to find out the interests behind these meanings is indeed a progression from the faceless and nameless bureaucratic model of Weber and the slightly improved control theory of Tompkins and Cheney. The point here is that Deetz's theory arose out of the need to recognize the preeminence of the managerial class as a force to reckon with in organizations in the latter part of the 20th century and hence represents the natural evolution of organizational theory of control and communication.

A General Model of Communication Processes

"Communication is a relational process during which sources transmit messages using symbols, signs, and contextual cues to express meaning, to have receivers construct similar understandings, and to influence behaviour" (Hoy & Miskel, 2013, p. 390).
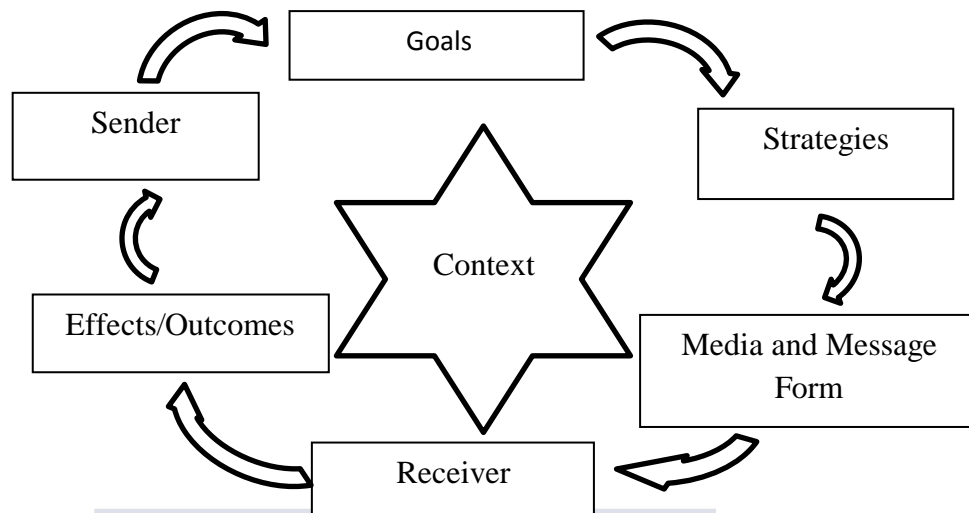
Figure 1: Model of Communication Process

Adapted from Hoy and Miskel (2013, p. 391)

According to Hoy and Miskel (2013), senders (sources, speakers, and signallers) are individuals, groups, and organizational units distributing messages to other individuals, groups, and organizations. Messages are verbal or nonverbal cues or symbols representing ideas and information that senders hope to communicate or transfer to others. Senders explicitly and implicitly formulate goals and strategies for their messages before converting them into symbolic forms. Examples of communication goals include instructing the receiver to act in a particular way, and influencing the behaviour and attitude of the receiver. Senders employ a variety of communication strategies to achieve these goals. These communication strategies include providing the context and specificity in the messages, setting proper effective tone, adjusting messages using prior feedback from the receivers, controlling the message by coordinating the communication process, accounting for the perspectives of the receivers, and directing or manipulating the receivers' information processing.

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Te'eni, (as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 2013) asserts that in converting messages into symbols, the sender has to decide on the appropriate media and form to use. Media are the vehicles carrying the messages. They range from light waves of nonverbal cues and signals; to sound waves of talking face-to-face; to electronic signals in telephones, e-mail and video conferencing; to written letters and memos. Criteria for selecting a particular medium consist of its interactivity, capacity, and adaptability. The message form refers to the configuration and style of the message. It includes it size, how widely it is to be distributed, how well the ideas are organised, and the degree of formality.

Receivers mark the destination of the message of the individuals who decipher it. By reading, listening, and watching, individuals construct meanings by interpreting or making sense of the messages they accept. Words and nonverbal behaviours and symbols do not have inherent meaning. Rather, meaning occurs when the receiver gives words and nonverbal signals meaning. Stereotyping, poor message construction, past experiences, attentiveness, and selective perceptions, for instance, influence how a receiver constructs meaning for verbal and nonverbal messages. As a result, a sender needs to use words and other symbols that are likely to have the same meaning for the receiver as the sender.

Communication effects are the outcomes of the message. Examples of outcomes include new knowledge, mutual understanding, different attitudes, a change in school culture, modified job satisfaction levels, new or enhanced relationships between the sender and receiver. The understanding and relationship resulting from the communication serve as feedback, providing the original sender with knowledge about the effects of the message. Using

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feedback enables the sender to make corrections and enhance mutual understandings.

The context takes a central role in the model because it influences all the other components in the model. The openness of school climate, level of bureaucratization, and trust levels among administrators and students, for example, will dramatically impact the efficiency and effectiveness of communication efforts. If these and other contextual factors are positive, they facilitate effective communications (e.g., mutual understanding and interpersonal relationships). On the other hand, negative climates, high bureaucratization, low trust, and other adverse contextual factors increase the cost of communication and distort, impede, or even block communication in schools.

Application of the model of Communication in a School Situation

Assuming that as a result of scarcity of certain food items in the market, changes will have to be made on the menu of the students or due to WASCE there should be changes on the school's time table to pave room for serene atmosphere for the examination. As the administrators of the school, you must inform or communicate these recent developments to the teachers and students (receivers). As part of developing the message, the administrators need to consider what desired effects or goals they want and need to achieve. The administrator' s goal may be providing factual information about the issue, influence the teachers' and students' attitude about the issues, to motivate the teachers and students to adjust to or develop new attitudes towards the menu (food) and the time on the time table. The attainment of these goals will require formulating communication strategies. For example, the administrator

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needs to convey extensive contextual information about the new changes that might be required, get the teachers' and students' (SRC) attention by emphasizing the importance of the change to the welfare of the students.

Given the nature of the information and the teachers' and students' likely negative reactions to the new change, the administrator's message to them will have to be well organized, widely distributed and have formal aspects (tone). In communicating this form of message, the administrator may decide to use multiple type of media such as structured and detailed memo distributed to both the teachers and SRC shortly before a staff meeting, meeting the SRC before meeting the general students' body at an open forum. As the teachers and students decode the message, the communication effects or outcomes include new understandings and relationship among the teachers and students and with the administrator. The administrator, teachers and students are now communicators and the process has become interactive and transactional with the message about the new change flowing back and forth, as one talks and the other listens and gives feedback through verbal and nonverbal cues. From the above model of communication, communication in schools must necessarily be a two-way process which underpins this research study.

Two-Way Communication

Two-way communication is reciprocal, interactive process in which all participants in the process initiate and receive messages. It requires continuous exchanges and transactions and this reduces the chance of major disparities between the information received and the one intended (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). According to Burbules (1993), the four types of individual dialogue that exist are conversation, inquiry, debate, and instruction. Dialogue as a two-way

communication, investigates alternatives and examines possible answers within a structure that encourages a range of perspectives and approaches to the problem. Two-way communication in the form of debate, may need no necessary agreement but for participants to see that their alternative ideas and opinions receive the most intense challenge possible. This helps to clarify and strengthen alternative perspectives. Communication should be two-way with equal access to information offered from multiple perspectives. According to Hoy and Miskel (2013, p. 408), "the lack of two-way communication, the use of conflicting media and messages, and the existence of situational noise constitute serious problems for understanding in educational organizations.
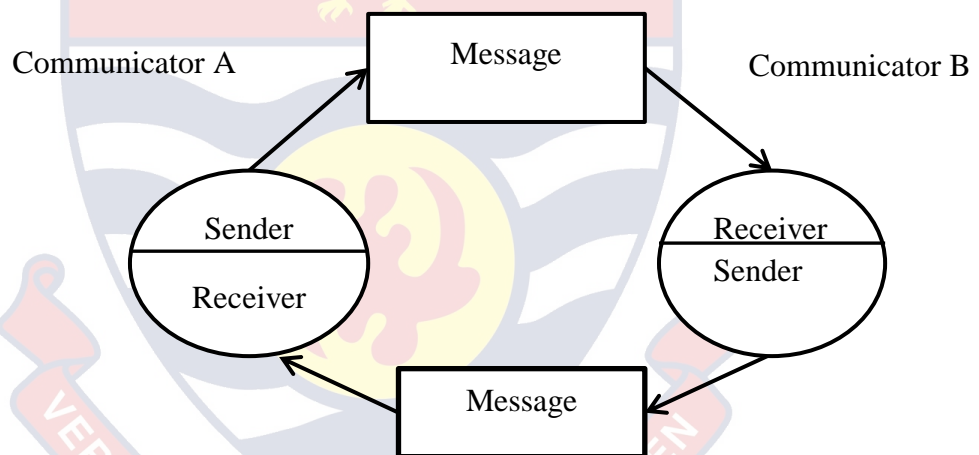
Figure 2: Two-Way Communication

Adapted from Hoy and Miskel (2013, p.395)

Feedback in Communication

According to Hoy and Miskel (2013), feedback in communication is the response from a person who has received a message. It provides knowledge about the meaning and impact of the message on the receiver and an opportunity for the sender to correct any problems. Hence, if a dialogue is to continue for any length of time and still have meaning, feedback is important.

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According to Ashford (1986), feedback supplies clues about the success of the communication and improves the accuracy and clarity of a message. In addition, the knowledge of results forms a basis for correcting or modifying future communication. It allows the sender to determine whether the message has been received and understood.

In work settings such as the school, feedback may be thought of involving information about task performance or how others perceive and evaluate an individual's behaviour (Ashford, 1986; Cusella, 1987). When feedback reinforces, accentuates, or adds to the direction the person or school is taking, it is positive. However, feedback is negative when it corrects a deviation (Harris, 1993). For example, a student who falls asleep during a class or lesson may provide as much feedback to the teacher as the student who responds to examination questions. Feedback can be communicated either verbally or nonverbally, consciously or unconsciously. When feedback does not occur, the communication process is referred to as one-way communication. Two-way communication occurs with feedback and is more desirable.

Formal (Official) Communication

According to Attieku et al. (2009, p. 110), formal communication is, "communication that has been authorized". "It describes the pattern of communication which is officially designed and recognised by the organization for the transmission of official messages inside or outside it" (Archer et al., 2008, p. 124). From the definitions above, formal communication means passing information between positions within an organization through officially designated channels. It involves the exchange of information regarding the official work of the organization. The flow of

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information is controlled. It is usually described in an organization's official documents, such as policy manuals and organizational structures, to ensure that everyone in the institution understands them. The same authors assert that in formal communication, message can be in a written form such as emails, memos, and formal letters, etc. or oral form where messages are passed on to others through verbal means such as formal speeches, discussions at meetings, conferences, joint consultations etc.

According to Barnard (as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 2013, p. 412), several factors must be considered when developing and using the formal communication system: the channels of communication must be known; the channels must link every member of the organization; lines of communication must be as direct and as short as possible; the complete network of communication should typically be used and every communication must be authenticated as being from the correct person occupying the position and within his or her authority to issue the message.

According to Hoy and Miskel (2013), three characteristics of school bureaucracies are particularly critical to the formal system of communication. They are centralization in the hierarchy, the organization's shape or configuration, and the level of information technology. Centralization is the degree to which authority is not delegated but concentrated in a single source in the organization. It is important to the effectiveness of communication system (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). In centralized schools, a few positions in the structure have most of the information obtaining ability. Centralized structures are more efficient when the problems and tasks are relatively simple and straight forward. However, when the problems and tasks become more

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complex, decentralized hierarchies appear to be more efficient (Argote, Turner, & Fichman, 1989). Similarly, Centralized School tends to rely on less-rich media, such as memos and employee manuals, than decentralized schools (Jablin & Sias, 2001). Shape, the number of hierarchical level or tallness versus flatness of the school organization also affects the communication process. The number of levels can be seen as the distance a message must travel. As the distances increase, the chance for message distortion increases and the satisfaction with the quality and quantity of communication decreases (Clampitt, 2001). In addition, organizational size is negatively related to communication quality; as the organization becomes lager, communication becomes more impersonal and quality declines (Jablin, 1987).

Advantages of Formal Communication

According to Attieku et al. (2009), the principle of unity of command is strictly followed in formal communication. This maintains constant relations among the superiors and subordinates and as a result the dignity or authority of the superiors is maintained. Besides, formal communication helps students, teachers and administrators to know where to get particular information from. Furthermore, formal communications are planned to the specific requirements of an organization. There is an orderly and systematic flow of information. The source of each piece of information can be easily located. The copy of formal communication is always preserved in the file and it is used as reference. Finally, formal communication helps control the behaviour of students, teachers and administrators in a school. This is because it sets out written policies and procedures which must be followed.

Disadvantages of Formal Communication

Attieku et al. (2009) purport that formal communication encourages bureaucracy in a school. Pieces of information are routed through a definite channel and this consumes time. Administrators communicate with their teachers and students and vice versa by maintaining the board of succession, not by-passing any level. That is why it takes a lot of time. Sometimes the distance between the sender and the receiver is so wide that the information has to pass through many hands and by the time it reaches the receiver it is distorted. Also, under this communication system everybody does their duty by following specific predetermined rules or instructions. So it makes the obstacle to develop the creativeness of teachers and students. This creates an authoritarian culture in the school since the administrator's order cannot be disobeyed by teachers and students.

Formal Communication in Schools

Organizational structure refers to the formally prescribed pattern of relationships existing between various units of an organization (Ivancevich, 2011). According to Hall (2002), the very establishment of an organization structure is a sign that communications are supposed to follow a particular path. One explanation of why organizations develop is their superior capacity to manage flows of information (Scott, 2003). The hierarchal structure of schools incorporates several features, such as status and power differences among position. "Communication is embedded in all schools structures" (Hoy & Miskel, 2013, p 412).

Schools are structured in ways that dictate the communication patterns that exist. The structure reveals who communicates with whom. The school's

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structure is described using a chart (an organizational chart). Such a chart provides graphical representation of the formal pattern of communication in the school. Organizational charts detail the lines of authority, responsibility and accountability within the organization. Argyris (2011) adds that an organizational chart may be likened to an X-ray showing the organization's skeleton, an outline of the plan, and formal connections between individuals in various departments or units. The diagrams below illustrate the directional flow of formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School (administrators, teachers and students).

Formal communication in schools is expected to follow the structure of hierarchy (Friebel & Raith, 2004). As the number of levels in the structure increases, the chance for message distortion increases and the satisfaction with the quality and quantity of communication decreases (Clampitt, 2001; Zaln, 1991).

ORGANOGRAM OF NKROFUL AGRICULTURAL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

HEADMISTRESS

ASST. HEADMASTER ADMINISTRATION — **ASST. HEADMASTER ACADEMIC** — **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT**

- SENIOR HOUSE MASTER
- SENIOR HOUSE MISTRESS
- ADMIN OFFICER
- HEAD OF DEPT
- LIBERIAN
- ACCOUNT CLERK
- FARM MANAGER
- STORE KEEPER
- DOMESTIC BURSAR

- HOUSE MASTERS
- HOUSE MISTRESSES
- TYPIST
- TEACHING STAFF/ FORM MASTERS & MISTRESSES
- LIBRARY PREFECT
- TRANSPORT OFFICER
- MAINTENANCE STAFF/ FARM HANDS/ ARTISANS/ LABOURERS/ SECURITIES
- MATRON

- HOUSE CAPTAINS
- HOUSE CAPTAINS
- FORM CAPTAINS
- DRIVERS
- COOKS/ PANTRY

- STUDENTS BOYS
- STUDENTS GIRLS
- STUDENTS
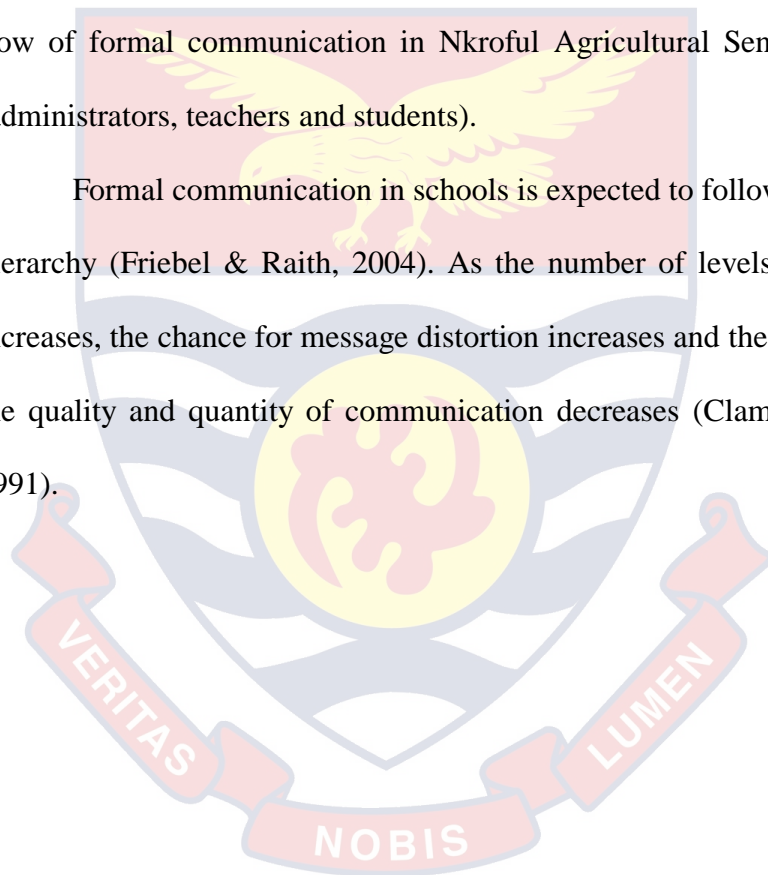
Figure 3: Organogram of Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School
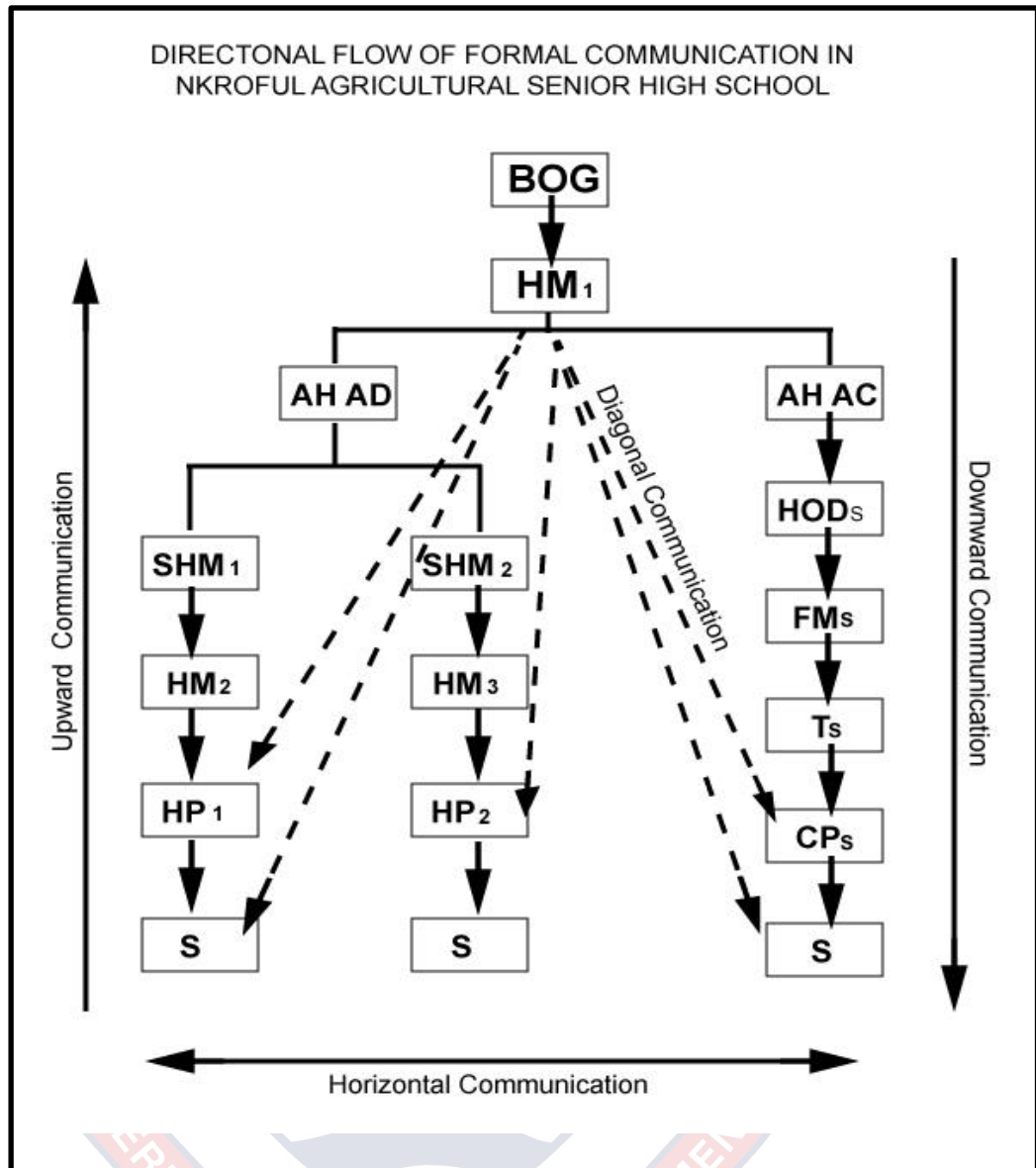
Figure 4: Directional Flow of Formal Communication in Nkroful Agricultural

Senior High School.

BOG ─ Board of Governors   HM₁ ─ Headmaster/mistress

AH AD ─ Assistant Head Administration AH AC ─ Assistant Head
Academic

SHM₁ ─Senior Housemaster   SHM₂ ─ Senior Housemistress

HM₂ ─ Housemaster   HM₃ ─ Housemistress

HPB ─ House Prefect Boys   HPG ─ House Prefect Girls

S ─ Students   HODₛ ─ Heads of Departments

FM$_S$ ─ Form master/mistress   T$_S$ ─ Teachers

CP$_S$ ─ Class Prefects

Formal communication in schools is expected to follow the structure of hierarchy (Friebel & Raith, 2004). As the number of levels in the structure increases, the chance for message distortion increases and the satisfaction with the quality and quantity of communication decreases (Clampitt, 2001; Zaln, 1991).

Purposes of Communication in Schools

Myers and Myers, (as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 2013) postulate that communication in organization such as schools serves a number of key purposes; production and regulation, innovation, and individual socialization and maintenance. Production and regulation purposes include activities aimed at doing the primary work of the organizations, such as teaching and learning in schools. These include setting goals and standards, transmitting facts and information, making decisions, leading and influencing others, and assessing outcomes. Innovation purposes include messages about generating new ideas and changing programme, structures, and procedures in school. Socialization and maintenance purposes of communication affect the participants' self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and motivation to integrate their individual goals with the school's objectives. The capacity of a school to maintain such complex, highly interdependent patterns of activity is limited by its ability to handle communication for these purposes. To serve the multiple purposes of production and regulation, innovation, socialization and maintenance in schools, communication must promote high levels of shared understanding.

Dixon (as cited in Archer et al., 2008) also discusses the purposes of communication in terms of its relationship with the elements or functions of management. Dixon points out that communication is an important ingredient in the planning process because information is needed to formulate goals and objectives. According to him, without accurate information administrators cannot formulate relevant plans, let alone to pass them down the organization to subordinates to put the plans into effect. In respect of organizing, Dixon argues that information is needed to create the necessary structures and to appoint qualified staff to undertake designated task or duties.

Moreover, Dixon asserts that communication serves as the main tool for leading and motivating workers. It provides the means for issuing out guidelines and instructions for workers to put up the desired behaviour. To achieve the purposes of communication in this regard, it must be viewed as a two-way process which allows both the superiors and subordinates to effect changes in the behaviour of each other for their mutual benefit. Communication is used to inform, educate, persuade and activate workers to put up the desired behaviour. Communication helps to undertake the control function such as setting standards, monitoring performance and correcting deviations from these standards. These processes require accurate, timely and appropriate feedback for the corrections to be introduced. It must be added that communication is also essential for co-ordinating the activities of individuals and groups within the organization. Adequate communication is required for greater productivity through greater co-operation on the part of the workers

Formal Channels of Communication

"Formal channels of communication are the various pathways by which information reaches people in the organization" (Attieku et al., 2009, p. 105). They are determined by the organizational structure. They prescribe the way in which subordinates, super-ordinates and equals within the organization should relate to each other in order to realize organizational goals. According to these same authors, channels of communication include vertical communication, horizontal communication and diagonal communication.

Vertical Communication

Vertical communication describes the downward and upward flow of information across persons through the chain of command i.e. between superiors and subordinates. "Vertical communication emphasizes the idea that effective communication is a two-way interaction process" (Archer eta al., 2008, p. 126).

Downward communication

Downward communication is the transmission of information from top management down the organizational ladder (Attieku et al., 2009, p. 105). It is the official channel of communication through which information flows from superiors to subordinates. In the case of the school, information flows from the administrators towards teachers and students. According to Katz and Kaln (1978), the five types of communication from superior to subordinates are instructions about specific tasks; rationale about why the task needs to be done and how it relates to other tasks; information about organizational procedures and practices and information regarding the organization's goal. The School Administrator communicating with the various heads of department, the head

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of department giving instructions to the individual teachers and the teachers instructing students are all examples of downward communication. The most common forms of downward communication are verbal instructions, orders and directives, official memos, letters, notices placed on the notice board and circulars (Archer et al., 2008).

According to Canary (2011), downward communication helps in the implementation of goals, strategies, and objectives of the organization. In downward communication, formal messages typically reaffirm the chain of command and reinforce control (Harris, 1993). This channel of communication helps to explain school policies and procedures to teachers and students so that they can play the roles expected of them effectively. Fuller knowledge of school policies, rules and procedures enhances cooperation and helps to achieve group consensus on matters where it is felt that the total consent of all levels of the school community members is essential. Besides, downward communication channel is used as a means for performance feedback. In this case departmental progress reports, individual performance appraisals, and other means are used to tell departments or individuals how well they are doing with respect to performance standards and goals. By means of such communication teachers and students are given word of encouragement to keep up with their good work, whereas those who are found not to be performing satisfactorily are cautioned and supported to give of their best (Archer et al., 2008)

Nevertheless, downward communication has some shortcomings. These include the problems of over-communication and under-communication. Over-communication occurs where superiors (administrators)

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are so talkative and indiscreet that important administrative secrets are let loose or certain things that need not be said are divulged, thereby creating disaffection among certain sections of the organization (school). Under-communication also has to do with the situation where superiors communicate so little with subordinates (teachers and students). The effect of this is that teachers and students do not have complete information, and as a result are left in doubt as to exactly what they should do.

Archer et al.,(2008) correspondingly said where there are so many hierarchical levels in a school, unnecessary delays result in the process of transmitting information from the administrators of the school to the students. Such delays may sometimes lead to costly errors in the school. Another common problem associated with a tall hierarchical structure is distortion. The message can be distorted if it travels a great distance from its sender to the receiver down through the school hierarchy. One other negative impact of downward communication is that it may create an authoritative atmosphere within the school. This may be detrimental to the morale and motivation of teachers and students. Too much reliance on downward communication sometimes results in a situation where teachers and students are hardly given any opportunity to participate in the decision making process. This scenario creates the problem whereby teachers and students are expected to receive the policy decisions and directives of administration without questioning their appropriateness, as situation which they usually resent.

Upward Communication

Upward communication is the transmission of information from the lower level of the organization to the top management (Attieku et al., 2009). It

is one means by which subordinates are made accountable to superiors. It provides four types of messages. These are routine operations message; reports on problems; suggestions for improvement; and information on how subordinates feel about each other and the job (Katz & Kahn, 1978; DeFleur, Kearney, & Plax, 1993). Canary (2011) also said that five types of information communicated upward in a school include problems and exceptions, messages describing serious problems and exceptions to routine performance in order to make the leader aware of difficulties; suggestions for improvement, ideas for improving task related procedures to increase the quality or efficiency of organization members; performance reports, periodic reports that inform the administrators about how students, teachers and departments are performing; grievances and disputes, complaints or issues of misunderstanding from students and teachers that travel up the school hierarchy for a hearing and possible resolution; financial and accounting information, messages pertaining to levies and other financial matters. But sometimes in such communication, subordinates have the tendency to emphasize positive information, withhold negative data, communicate what they think the "boss wants to hear", or simply remain silent (Milliken & Morrison, 2003).

The importance of upward communication for effective decision-making and implementation cannot be overemphasized. "There is so much emphasis on upward communication these days because of the quest for more worker participation in the decision-making process" (Archer et al., 2008 p. 129). According to these same authors, the purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback to superiors to enable them effectively monitor what is happening at the lower levels of the organization for proper direction and

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motivation. By means of such feedback the school administrators are able to ascertain whether directives issued to teachers and students have been properly understood and acted upon. Also, feedback from teachers and students helps the school administrators to know what the teachers and students think about certain school policies and programmes. Upward communication facilitates commitment to organizational policies and programmes and ensures greater harmony and cohesion between the teaching staff and the students.

Conversely, Cheney (2011) postulates some barriers to effective upward communication in schools. The failure of administrators to respond to issues or complaints from students and teachers will ultimately result in no communication. The administrators' attitude play critical role in the upward communication flow. If the administrators listen to students and teachers and show concern, then upward communication improves. Also, time lags between the complaints and the action can inhibit upward communication. That is if it takes months for the various levels of administration to approve or solve students' or teachers' suggestion or grievances, then upward communication will be hindered. In addition, when administrators tend to be defensive about less-than-perfect actions then information will be withheld.

According to Archer et al. (2008, p. 130), "upward communication can be improved in schools using the open-door policy". The open-door policy literally means that the administrator's door is always open to students and teachers to come in and discuss matters that bother them, to seek solutions to their problems or to make suggestions for improvement in the school. Another way of improving upward communication is the use of complaints and suggestion boxes. In this case these boxes are placed at various points in the

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school for the students and teachers to drop in their complaints and suggestions, if any. For this to be effectively used, the boxes must be opened at regular time intervals and the suggestions and complaints made given due attention. Furthermore, social gatherings like open fora, founder's day celebrations, and school durbars can be deliberately organized to pass on information to members of the school community and to solicit their understanding, co-operation and support for school policies and programmes. Sometimes too students and teachers should be encouraged to write letters and memorandums and addressed them to the administrators for specific things to be done or seek clarification on issues. Heads of departments, class teachers and prefects, committees, housemasters/mistresses, teachers and students on duty should be encouraged to submit reports on aspects of their job on regular basis. Such reports serve as one major means of feedback on how well they are performing on their jobs and provide the basis for the evaluation of their work as well as remedial action where they are found wanting in some respects. Last but not the least, general staff meetings, committee meetings, meetings with students provide another avenue of upward communication. Where the administrators have earned the reputation of being democratic and tolerant of other people's views, teachers and students in the school will be encouraged to make very useful suggestions and other information input.

Horizontal (Lateral) Communication

Horizontal or Lateral communication refers to communication between peers or equals and between the various departments, sections and units within the organization (Boundless, 2016). "It is communication between people of the same rank or level in an organization" (Attieku et al., 2009, p. 105). The

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two definitions indicate that communication moves across organizational members at the same hierarchical level. A head of a department in a school, for instance, may provide information to another head of department, who in turn passes it to still other heads of departments. Communication within a team is also an example of horizontal communication. Members of teams coordinate tasks, work together, and resolve conflicts. Horizontal communication occurs formally in meetings, presentations, and formal electronic communication.

The major purposes of horizontal communication are coordinating tasks, solving problems, sharing information with colleagues, resolving conflicts, and building rapport (Harris, 1993). Archer et al. (2008) also hypothesize that horizontal communication provides the mechanism for organizational members to see the need for uniting their efforts in the pursuit of total organizational goals. This makes way for co-operation and harmony and prevents friction and sub-optimization among the groups, units, sections and departments within the organization. Besides, lateral communication is used to socialize people at the workplace and allows peers to share information on regular basis and this makes for cooperation and helps to avoid antagonism. Again, this form of communication reduces inaccuracies and distortion of messages by putting the relevant people in direct contact with each other. This facilitates problem solving of all kinds within an organization.

Some barriers to horizontal communication are differences in style, personality, or roles amongst co-workers. Papa, M. J., Daniels, T. D and Spiker, B. K. (2007) observe that horizontal communication problems can

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occur because of territoriality, rivalry, specialization, and simple lack of motivation. Territoriality occurs when members of an organization regard other people's involvement in their area as inappropriate or unwelcome. Rivalry between individuals or teams can lead to reluctance to cooperate and share information. Specialization is a problem that occurs when there is a lack of uniform knowledge or vocabulary within or between departments. Horizontal communication often fails simply because organization members are unwilling to expend the additional effort to reach out beyond their immediate team to others at the same level.

Diagonal Communication

"Diagonal communication is communication from one department to the other either in an ascending or descending order" (Attieku et al., 2009, p. 106). According to the Business Dictionary (2016), it is the sharing of information among different structural levels within an organisation. It could involve higher level management communicating to lower level management. It is probably the least used of all channels of communication in an organization. Nonetheless, it has been found to be the most effective channel in many instances where it is realized that using the traditional channels might result in red-tape, and unnecessary delays (Archer et al., 2008). For example, to help deal with the problems of classroom discipline, the school head may decide to assign class prefects tasks and request them to report directly. A diagonal communication route allows diverse groups within an organization to share information directly, rather than according to a hierarchy. In addition, it eliminates the risks of miscommunication as the message passes from one individual to another. Communications that are

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zigzag along horizontal and vertical routes are vulnerable to the schedules and whims of the individuals who pass them along.

Modes of Formal Communication

According to Archer et al. (2008, p. 142), "the modes of formal communication are the opportunities that exist for administrators, teachers and students to get their pieces of information across to one another". The modes for transmitting messages in the school can be classified as oral, written and non-verbal.

Oral Communication

"Oral communication is where messages are passed on to others through verbal means" (Archer et al., 2008, p. 143). According to these authors, oral communication in a formal setting will take the form of formal speeches and presentations, discussions at meetings, conferences, joint consultations, workshops and seminars. Most of the messages transmitted in schools, take verbal form because it is the most natural and automatic means of passing on messages across people. Compared with other modes of communication, it tends to be both accurate and timely. It also offers opportunity for immediate feedback in that questions can be asked on issues that are not clear, and again, feedback is immediate and direct. The receiver can also have a feel as to whether his informer is sincere or not. Oral communication has also been observed to have more persuasive power over the recipient than the written mode. Furthermore, it is noted for its effectiveness in giving a feeling of importance to subordinates at a meeting and securing their enthusiastic support for decisions making.

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However, Archer et al. (2008) posit that oral communication has a major limitation of being susceptible to misinterpretations and distortions as no recordings are made of the discussion that takes place. Again, it often leads to ill-considered statements and regret. Furthermore, so much time may be wasted at meetings in which no results or agreements are achieved. Also, some people who lack the democratic temper or tolerating other people's views have been known to dominate discussions at meetings. Where there is lack of direction, people may deviate from the issues of importance at a meeting.

Written Communication

Attieku et al. (2009, p. 108) define written communication as "the transmission of information from one person to the other in the form of writing". Many official matters in a school set-up are handled by means of written communication (Archer et al., 2008). This may include memos, letters, reports, proposals, procedures, manuals, notices on bulletin boards, computer printouts, minutes of meetings, journals and so on. Written communication offers many advantages over oral communication including the fact that because it is recorded, it can be kept and used for reference purposes and may provide a means of legal defence. Secondly, the message can be polished up by being revised several times. Thirdly, the message may not be distorted even when it is relayed through many people up and down the organizational ladder. Furthermore, the receiver of a written communication has a better chance to study, analyse and consider its content before responding to it. Finally, written communication has a greater potential to ensure uniformity in policies and procedures, and it can also reach large audience over a larger duration of time.

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The disadvantages of written communication include the fact that ill-educated persons may not be able to convey their messages effectively in a written form. Similarly, the communicator has very little control over where, when, or whether the message is read. There is also little opportunity for immediate feedback as to whether the message has been received or not. In some cases, it is also difficult to clarify issues with the communicator immediately where parts of the message are not understood. Once more, where the volume of the recorded information is large, the receiver may not be encouraged to read it. It creates mountains of papers (Attieku et al., 2009). Lastly, it cannot be used where the receivers of the information are illiterate.

Non-Verbal Communication

According Archer et al. (2008), non-verbal communication has to do with the passing on of information without the use of the spoken or written word. It can be physical or in the form of body language. Physical non-verbal communication takes the form of visual symbols such as charts, films and slides, the traffic light, road signs, skywriting, posters, and some distinctive signs, symbols and sounds. These physical phenomena communicate certain things to us because of the meanings we associate with such things. Body language, on the other hand, refers to gestures, body movements, facial expressions, vocal cues, eye-movement and mannerisms through which human beings express their feelings and attitudes toward certain things. Other non-verbal symbols include "intonation, accents, pitch, intensity of the voice, and rate of speech" (Hoy & Miskel, 2013, p. 402). Much of such body language may accompany the spoken word and may illustrate the mood of the communicator. However, sometimes such body language may be used alone

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to communicate our thoughts, attitudes and feelings. By carefully observing, studying and interpreting such body language, the school head can gain insights into the attitudes and feelings of his subordinates and respond appropriately. Also, to communicate effectively, the school head needs to ensure that his oral, written and non-verbal communication correspond with each other and give the same impression.

Barriers to Formal Communication

Archer et al. (2008) posit the following as obstructions to formal communication.

1. Ineffective Planning: Effective formal communication requires effective planning. The communicator needs to be very clear as to the objective to be achieved through communicating. He needs to consider various alternatives and then select the best message, mode of transmission, etc. that will ensure maximum success. When such important considerations are neglected, the result is often a failure to make the desired impression and to realize the intended response.

2. Differences in Perception: Sometimes people fail to communicate effectively in an organization because of differences in the way they see and interpret certain things. Quite often this happens because of the differences in education or training, differences in age, sex, social status, economic, socio-cultural and other background factors. Such differences often result in two kinds of perceptual errors; namely stereotyping and halo effect. In stereotyping, people try to simplify their understanding of things by putting people and things into certain categories based upon similarity in certain characteristics and placing a 'tag' on these various

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categories.   Thus, for example, a school head may not take the suggestions of a youthful teacher because he has stereotyped young staff members as 'lacking experience'. Such stereotyping may create serious communication problems between the school head and his staff. With the halo effect, communication problems result because of the tendency to be unduly influenced in our judgment of issues because of certain predominant features about the things or people over whom we exercise judgment. Where a school head, does not, as much as possible, take the trouble to bridge the perceptual gap between members of the school organization, serious communication problems may result.

3. Semantic Block: Sometimes communication problems result because of inability on the part of the receiver to understand the language used by the communicator. Inability to understand a piece of information may be caused by inadequate vocabulary, the use of verbose expressions, and complex and winding statements. It may also be the result of the excessive use of technical jargon or slang language. Such language result in lack of clarity in the message communicated and leads to wrong responses on the part of the receiver. Therefore, if administrators do not make special efforts to use the kind of language that their teachers and students understand, serious communication problems may be created.

4. Organizational Block: the number of successive levels in the organizational hierarchy may affect the accuracy with which information is transmitted across the organizational ladder. Information gets more distorted in a 'tall' organization than in a 'flat' one. This is because the information passes through many different persons in a tall organization,

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thus giving rise to a greater likelihood of distortion. Secondly, the authenticity of communication in an organization is also affected by the relative position or rank of the persons engaged in the information exchange. There is a known tendency for subordinates to 'filter' or put messages in the form that would be favourably received by their superiors. This often leads to distortion of the information. Again, information or instructions given by relatively junior members of the organization are often less respected than the same information given by a more superior member. Also, there is a higher tendency for information to be better managed in small organization than in a larger one. This means that communication tends to be less accurate in a larger organization than in a small one.

Bass (2008) has explained the problems of communication associated with the hierarchical levels and size of organizations in terms of condensation, closure and expectation. Condensation refers to the tendency for a piece of communication that one repeats to be shorter and less detailed than what one originally received. This process is the result of an editing process that naturally takes place as a result of the fact that part of the message that is received is either forgotten or deliberately dropped. Closure also refers to the tendency for those relaying a piece of communication to embellish it by trying to fill in obvious gaps in the communication. Expectation also describes the situation whereby people receiving any piece of information tend to pay selective attention to only aspects of the information that fit within their own preconceived notions

or prejudiced expectations. All these three processes may serve to distort communication in a school set-up and create communication problems.

5. Human Relations Barriers: Interpersonal factors such as the trustworthiness of organizational members, the level of rapport, the organizational tone or climate, and sensitivity to the emotional content of transmitted messages all affect the effectiveness of communication. The credibility of the sender influences the effectiveness of a message (Adler & Rodman, 1991). The level of credibility, in turn, influences the reactions of the receiver to the words and actions of the communicator (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 2000). Where administrators always act upon their promises, teachers and students are bound to take what they say seriously. On the other hand, where administrators are noted for their failure to honour their promises, teachers and students will mistrust them and will not take their words seriously. Also, where there are no amicable relations between superiors and subordinates, communication barriers develop in the sense that subordinates will not feel free to air their grievances or make frank suggestions. The organizational climate affects communication in the sense that where democratic values are cherished, people tolerate each other's views and this leads to fair and frank information exchanges among organizational members. In like manner, in a school where the tone of discipline is good, teachers and students alike place much emphasis on positive human values and the pattern of communication is affected by such values. Finally, communication is affected by sensitivity to the emotional content of messages transmitted in the sense that the emotion that is carried in a piece of communication

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determines the reaction of the recipient to it. Thus, for example, messages that convey a sense of anger, jealousy, hatred and pride may lead to negative reactions on the part of the recipients. A school head who demonstrates a lack of empathy and sensitivity to the plight of his subordinates might sooner or later find that he fails to win their loyalty and enthusiastic support.

6. Noise: Noise is anything that interferes, confuses, disturbs or impedes the free exchange of meanings. Noise consists of the external factors in the channels and the internal perceptions and experiences within the source and the receiver that affect communication. Communicating may be impeded by noise coming from the neighbourhood. An aeroplane or 'rickety' vehicle may move about and make so much noise as to distort a lecture being given in a classroom. Also, a piece of information being transmitted through the radio, television or telephone may be impeded by noise, which prevents the receiver from hearing anything.

7. Poor Listening: Sometimes communication fails because some people have not trained themselves to listen carefully. Such people may either lack the habit of effective concentration or they may be in the habit of interfering with what they are listening with their own unsolicited comments. Such behaviour results in inattention, which leads to so much information loss. Some key to effective listening are learning to tolerate other people's views, keeping silent and concentrating on the speaker, by maintaining eye contact and observing body ask questions for the clarification of issues.

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Ways of Ensuring Effective Formal Communication

According to Archer et al. (2008, p. 153), the first step in ensuring effective communication is the planning of communication. The senders of pieces of information must be clear about the purpose to be realized through communicating, the characteristics of the receiver(s) and the mode of transmission by which they can make the maximum impact. They need to decide on the right time in which to release the information. Sometimes it may be necessary to hold consultations with others in order to come out with the right content of the message being sent. At other times, consulting with others may provide the means of securing the loyalty of organizational members in the implementation of decisions entailed in the communicated information.

Besides, semantic difficulties in communication can be dealt with, by making conscious effort to ensure clarity and precision in the message communicated. This means, of course, that the senders of information must ensure that the language that is used is intelligible to the receiver in the sense that the symbols, vocabulary and expressions used are commonly understood by all. The administrators must make conscious efforts to explain technical terms that are used when talking to their teachers and students. They should speak at the level that will be easily understood and appreciated by the teachers and students.

Moreover, the distortion of information due to many channels or the tall organizational structure can be avoided by keeping it as 'flat' as possible, and thereby reducing the successive levels of positions on the hierarchy. The tendency to 'filter' information being passed on to the higher levels of the

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organization could be minimized by reducing the fear of the consequences of failure and creating goodwill and rapport among organizational members.

In addition, communication problems resulting from poor human relation within the school set-up could also be dealt with if the school administrators practice empathy. Deliberate efforts should be made to create the right sense of values among members so that they can develop the right communications climate in the school. Such a climate should be marked by the democratic principles of tolerance of other people's views, disciplined behaviour, fair and frank discussion and sensitivity to other people's emotions and feelings. Administrators, teachers and students alike should make serious effort to ensure that they keep their promises to one another, and that none is taken for a ride.

Furthermore, school administrators should seek to make effective use of feedback to ensure that the full impact and meaning of their messages are effectively grasped. To ensure the maximum use of feedback, they may use such devices as attitude surveys, the suggestion box, the grievance procedure, joint consultation, consultative leadership and maximum participation of teachers and student leaders in the decision-making process. Moreover, to curtail the problems of communication due to inattention, administrators, teachers and students alike should deliberatively practice the skill of listening attentively to what is being said before they respond to it. Notices, handbooks, reports, minutes, and memos must be carefully read to get the real substance of the messages before acting upon them. Skilful listening requires the use of empathy and the discipline of avoiding hasty judgment.

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Also, school administrators must be sensitive to their use of non-verbal communication. They must ensure that they reconcile their words with their gestures and actions in order not to confuse receivers of their messages about the real meaning of the messages they transmit. For example, if a school head should say to the students that 'you are a good person' whiles he has frowns, the students will only be confused as to what he really means.

Peretomode (1992) suggests that school administrators should use face-to-face communication whenever necessary, follow-up important verbal discussions with a note, carefully cross-check pieces of communication by reading through letters, memos, etc. before dispatching them, time messages properly, strive to remove inter-group hostility and be mindful of the overtones as well as the basic content of the messages they communicate.

Finally, to deal with the problem of information overload, the school administrators need to establish procedures that will enable them monitor all pieces of information coming in so that they can give due attention to important messages and prevent them from being lost in the midst of many less important or irrelevant messages.

Notice Board

Notice board (pin board or bulletin board) is a surface intended for the posting of public messages, for example, to advertise items wanted, announce events, or provide information. Webster dictionary defines notice board as a thin, flat piece of cut wood or other hard material on vertical structure, often made of stone or brick on which a piece of paper is pasted. It is often made of a material such as cork to facilitate addition and removal of messages, or it can be placed on computer networks so that people can leave and erase messages

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for other people to see and read. According to Attieku et al. (2009), notice board is placed at vantage point where information is pasted. An online board can serve the same purpose as a physical notice board. Magnet boards are a popular substitute for cork boards because they lack the problem of board deterioration from the insertion and removal of pins over time.

Notice board provides students, teachers and administrators with key pieces of information that can be narrow (specific classroom events) or broad (current events happening in various parts of the school, country or world) in scope. It serves as a means of communication among different school stakeholders such as teachers, students and school administration. Meetings, announcements or events can be continuously updated. It also provides directions to students and teachers and can act as a place where previously taught information can be retrieved for use on current and future tasks. Administrators who do not encourage students and teachers to make good use of notice boards are robbing them of a great opportunity to 'get relevant pieces of information.

Uses of Notice Boards

Notice boards are used to display schedules of upcoming events such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, sports, or other school activities. They are also used to display posters, photographs, and other information relating to the school. These displays add valuable visual support to current issues and announcements. Moreover, they display posters of the classroom or school rules, rewards, and consequences. Create a visual representation of the school or classroom management system, for example, the school organogram showing the organisational (school) structure. The students will be more

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conscious of their behaviour when they have something visual on which to focus. In addition, it is used in posting school vision and mission statements. These may reflect classroom or school priorities. Lastly, it is used for posting daily or weekly schedule for the school.

School Assembly

An assembly is when the school community (administrators, teachers and students), or a part of it, meets together to share aspects of life that are of worth to the school. It acts as a medium for communicating matters of significance from one generation to another.

The Role and Purpose of Assembly

School assembly acts as one of the main ways by which we create our positive reflective ethos and promote our values-based education. The teaching staff with positive attitude, who involve themselves in assemblies, act as role models for the students to emulate. Moreover, school assembly contains times of quiet reflection that enable students to develop the deepest values and aspirations of the human spirit. It creates, nurtures and sustains a sense of community. It can serve to develop a positive school ethos that affirms the school's identity and aspirations. The result being that the school lives in cohesive harmony that sustains the pursuit of excellence in all its forms.

Complaints and Suggestion Boxes

These are placed at various points in the offices and elsewhere for members of the school community to drop in their complaints and suggestions, if any (Archer et al., 2008). "The use of the suggestion box encourages the feedback system where subordinates express their views on pertinent issues of

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the organization" (Attieku et al., 2009, p. 111). For this to be effectively used, the boxes must be opened at regular time intervals and the suggestions and complaints made given due attention.

Meetings

Meetings are events in which groups of people come together to discuss issues or make decisions. At meetings, two-way flow of communications is encouraged. Information is exchanged by the superiors and the subordinates on issues affecting them (Attieku et al., 2009).

Memorandum

A memorandum is a written report that is prepared for a person or committee in order to provide them with information about a particular matter. It serves a lot of purposes like informing staff and students of decisions or actions taken, reminding them of action required, providing information of any kind, requesting decisions or actions (Attieku et al., 2009).

Empirical Studies

Related studies on communication in Schools have been conducted and the findings have shown that it is a necessary ingredient in the management of Schools. In 2010, Dali conducted a research on communication practices in Senior High Schools in the Keta Municipality and the key findings were as follows: It came to light that the modes of communication that were mostly used by the heads in giving out information were staff and Students Representative Council (SRC) Meetings, notice boards and school assembly.

The study also revealed that there were some challenges faced by the students. These include: Students not understanding instructions from their headmasters, students not being able to approach their headmasters

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because of the position of the heads and also complains from students got distorted before they got to the headmasters. On the effectiveness of communication in the SHSs in the municipality, majority of the students did not agree with the statement that "it is always easy sending information to the head". Furthermore, the study revealed that the heads were not specific in giving out instructions to the students. This was evident in the responses of the students, where many of the students disagreed with the statement that "the head is specific in giving out instructions".

It was recommended that heads of Senior High Schools in the Keta Municipality should encouraged the use of other means of communication such as letters, memos, sarine, magazines etc. to supplement the already existing ones for effective communication in the schools. The use of the circular letters would help to reduce the workload of the headmasters and also to avoid frequent meetings which interrupt classes. The use of the siren system would also help both staff and students to be time conscious.

Also, the heads should make time with their students and staff beyond the official lines of communication. That is, the heads could organize open fora and interact with the students. The human face of the organization should not be downplayed, since it helps create a healthy environment for the realization of the organizational goals. Again, the heads should be specific in giving out instructions to the students for the expected feedback to be achieved. They should try and run an open door system, where students can see the heads as their fathers and run to them in times of problem. Finally, the heads should avoid the use of too many middle men in giving out information to the students since this may contribute to lose of vital information.

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Another study conducted by Baah (2006) concerning communication practices in Senior High Schools in the New Juaben Municipality, revealed that notice board, school assembly, staff meetings and SRC meetings, circular letters were frequently used. The six feedback techniques mentioned in the study, only three of them namely, "members submission of written and verbal reports to the head after attending seminars, in-service training and symposia", members submission of written and verbal reports on issues raised at meetings" and "members giving their views on issues raised at staff meetings" were mostly used. In the study again, students' lack of proficiency in the use of the English Language, the use of big words which most students do not understand, were found to be the barriers to communication in the schools. Finally, it was found that school durbars were occasionally organized in the schools in the New Juaben Municipality. '

Trends of Formal Communication Practices in Senior High Schools in Ghana

Education is the act of transferring knowledge in the form of experiences, ideas, skills, customs and values from one person to another or from generation to another generation (Hunt, 2007). Education is the foundation of civilization and development. Reform is used to describe changes in policy practice in organization. The school is where policies are put into practice and where educational stakeholders want to see change in practices in education. Effective communication in schools has to take place at a range of levels and include diverse groups of actors depending on the message, ideas being communicated.

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While conventionally much of the communications between the school and national authorities has been top down, increasingly the need for bottom up communication has been recognized. Moreover, as responsibility in education management seemingly shifts toward the school and community level, this requires capacity development for communication as well as spaces and opportunities for communicating. The role that communication might play could be influenced by education levels. Thus, using certain forms of media, certain population groups are more likely to be marginalised and being involved in decision-making.

In Senior High Schools nowadays, students are getting connected to one another through the use of technological innovations of mass communication. Technological advancements have not only allowed for the widespread usage of the internet, but they have also allowed for the dissemination of information through other modes of mass communication such as television, radio, newspaper.

Summary of the Literature Review

The chapter firstly looked at the theoretical framework of the study. The Theoretical framework consisted of a general model of communication process, application of the model in school situation, two-way communication and feedback in communication process. The general model of communication was adapted from Hoy and Miskel (2013) which explained that communication is a relational process during which sources transmit messages using symbols, signs and contextual cues to express meaning to have receivers construct similar understanding, and influence behaviour. This makes communication a two-way process. Two-way communication is reciprocal,

interactive process in which all the participants in the process initiate and receive message. It occurs with feedback hence, schools communication should be a two-way process.

The chapter further discussed formal communication. Here, formal communication was seen as a form of communication that has been authorized in an organization (school). Advantages of formal communication in schools included: the principle of unity of command is strictly followed; it is planned to the specific requirement of the organization etc. Disadvantages of formal communication consisted of: it encourages bureaucracy and creates an authoritarian culture in schools. Purposes of formal communication in schools included production and regulation, innovation and individual socialization and maintenance.

Furthermore, the chapter dilated on the formal channels of communication that included vertical (downward and upward), horizontal and diagonal channels of communication. These channels of communication serve as the pathways by which information reaches people in the organization, and they are determined by the organizational structure.

The chapter again looked at oral communication and written communication. Oral communication in formal setting takes the form of formal speeches and presentations, discussions at meetings, conferences, joint consultations, workshops and seminars. Written communication consists of memos, letters, reports, manuals, proposals etc. The advantages and the disadvantages of oral and written communications were also discussed.

Barriers of formal communication were also looked at. These consisted of ineffective planning, differences in perception, semantic block,

organizational Block, human relation barriers, noise and poor listening. Ways of ensuring effective formal communication were also discussed as planning of communication, making conscious effort to ensure clarity and precision in the message, tall organizational structure can be avoided by keeping it 'flat' as possible, administrators should seek to make effective use of feedback, administrators should practise empathy and reconcile their words with their gestures and actions in order not to confuse receivers of their messages about the real meaning of the message they transmit.

The chapter finally looked at the purposes of notice board, school assembly, suggestion box, meeting and memorandum in schools.

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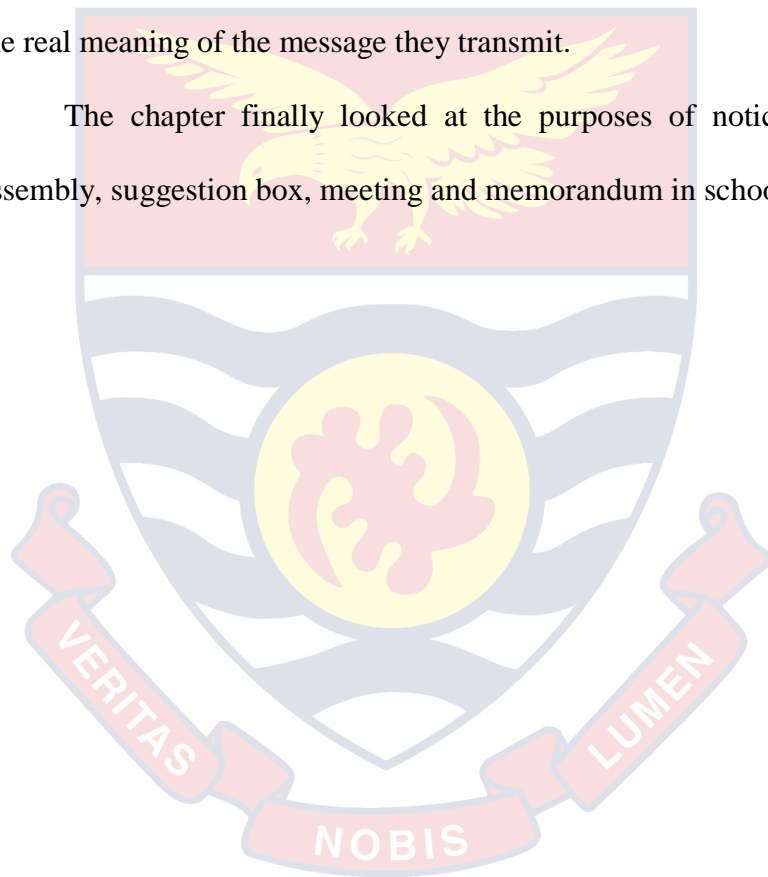
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presented the methodology that was adopted for the study. This comprised the research design, the population, the sample and sampling procedure, data collection procedure as well as the instruments for data collection. It also discussed the pre-testing and the procedure for the data analysis.

Research Design

Research design is a logical set of procedures that researchers use to collect, analyse and report their data in a study (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). It is the researcher's overall plan for obtaining answers to the research questions or testing hypotheses (Asamoah-Gyimah, 2012). It spells out the basic strategies that the researcher adopts to develop information that is accurate and interpretable. The study used the mixed methods approach with particular focus on convergent parallel mixed methods design. According to Plano Clark and Creswell (2015), the convergent parallel mixed methods design is to concurrently or simultaneously collect both quantitative and qualitative data, analyse the two datasets separately, compare the two sets of separate results, and make an overall interpretation as to whether the results support or contradict each other.

The convergent parallel mixed methods design was considered most appropriate for the study because it has usefulness for both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In relation to this particular study which sought to investigate the state of formal communication practices in

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Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School (NASHS), the findings from the interview and the results from the questionnaire helped to make the work more reliable. The main justification for the convergent parallel design is that all data forms have strengths and weaknesses, but if combined thoughtfully, then the strengths of one data form may be able to offset the weaknesses of the other form. For example, in this study on formal communication practices in NASHS, the quantitative scores on formal channels of communication available, modes of formal communication, the hindrances to formal communication and ways in which the hindrance to formal communication affect NASHS provided overall trends or strengths of quantitative data that may offset the weakness of interview of a person. Alternatively, qualitative in-depth interview of the key informants provided important and detailed insight into formal channels of communication available, modes of formal communication, the hindrances to formal communication and ways in which the hindrance to formal communication affect Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School served as strong footing that helped to offset the inherent weaknesses of quantitative scores that did not adequately provide detailed information

Besides, application of the convergent parallel design, helped the researcher to carefully combine the quantitative and qualitative data forms to develop results and conclusions about the topic that are more complete and/or more valid. More valid results are established within a convergent parallel design when researchers agree and disagree on results from both quantitative and qualitative information. This design helped the researcher to discover inconsistencies in the results when the quantitative and qualitative

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information do not agree. According to Plano Clark and Creswell (2015), this disagreement offers an ideal opportunity for the researchers to learn more about the phenomenon by examining why the inconsistent results. Figure 5 shows the approach to follow in using the convergent parallel design.
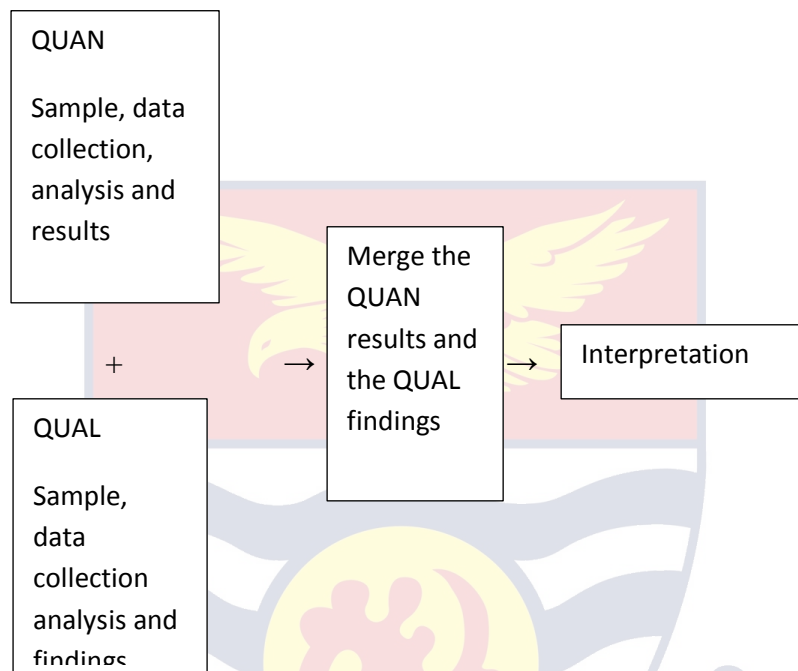
Figure 5: The Convergent parallel (QUAN and QUAL) mixed method design Adopted from Plano Clark and Creswell (2015)

Figure 5 shows the procedural framework for data collection and analysis. The quantitative and qualitative datasets are concurrently collected and the datasets are analysed separately. The findings are later merged to discover the similarities and differences in the views of respondents which help to make sound interpretation or judgement of the findings. The convergent parallel mixed method design requires that equal value or premium is placed on both datasets.

Population

The study covered the teaching staff and students in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. according The study population was 1,236 people. It was made up of 1174 (SHS 1=453, SHS 2=393, SHS 3=328) students, 62 teaching staff including the headmistress and two assistants.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

"A sample consists of a carefully selected subset of the units that comprise the population" (Asamoah-Gyimah, 2012, p. 56). The sample is selected such that it will be representative of the population. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a population size of 1200 should have a sample size of 291. Based on this information, the researcher decided to use a sample size of 371 for the population size of 1236 so that in case of non-response the minimum sample size of 291 respondents can be guaranteed. Besides, the larger a sample becomes the more representative of the population it becomes (Nwana, 1992). Babbie (2004) also posits that a study which employs a mixed method approach should be guided by a sample size that is moderately small in order to allow a proper interrogation of issues. The sample size of 371 comprised 1 headmistress, 18 teachers, and 352 students (SHS 1s = 136, SHS 2s = 118, SHS 3s = 98). The researcher decided to use these numbers of respondents which represented 30 percent from each group so as to get representative sample.

According to Asamoah-Gyimah (2012), sampling refers to the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population. It was the procedures the researcher used to select the sample to ensure representativeness. The purposive sampling was used in the first place to

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select the headmistress who was more knowledgeable, experienced and relevant to the research topic. The head is an authentic source of information since it is clear from the school's organogram that communication of urgent information of programmes, policies, rules and regulations must necessarily emanate from top administrator (headmistress). The head is a key stakeholder in encouraging the use of formal communication in schools.

Stratified sampling was used for the selection students and teachers. That means the rest of the population was divided into groups as teachers, SHS 1 students, SHS 2 students and SHS 3 students. Thirty (30) percent of the respondents were drawn from each stratum (30% of 61 teachers=18 approximately, 30% of 453 SHS 1s=136 approximately, 30% of 393 SHS 2s=118 approximately, 30% of 328 SHS 3s=98 approximately) using the simple random sampling (the lottery method). In each group, sampling frame was constructed by preparing a list of names of the members in that group in an alphabetical order.

The researcher then substituted these names for numbered pieces of paper so that each piece of paper corresponded to a name in the sampling frames. The numbered pieces of papers for each stratum were folded and put in different containers and mixed well. In each group, one numbered piece of paper was picked randomly with replacement and the corresponded names recorded. This process continued until the required numbers of respondents in each stratum were recorded.

Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire (structured) and interview guide (semi-structured) were the instruments used to collect data for the study. The researcher chose these

instruments based on the mixed-method approach adopted. The two instruments were used to overcome the weaknesses of either the questionnaire or the interview guide and to create a balance by ensuring that the particular biases and flaws associated with a single data collection instruments are counteracted. Taking the purpose of the study, the research questions and the magnitude of the sample size into consideration, the use of questionnaire and interview guide enabled the researcher gather the views, feelings and experiences of the administrators, teachers and students about the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. This could lead to deepening knowledge and better understanding of the causes of agitations in the school for the purpose of redress. Questionnaires (structured questionnaire) were used to collect data from the teachers and students and interview guide (semi-structured interview) was used to collect data from the Assistant Head (Administration).

Questionnaire is a device consisting of series of questions dealing with some demographical, psychological, social, educational and other related issues which are sent to or given out to an individual or a group of individuals, with the aim of obtaining data with regard to the problems under investigation (Oppenheim, 2000). It is widely used for collecting data in educational research because of its effectiveness for securing factual information about practices and conditions of which the respondents are presumed to have the relevant or sound knowledge (Kerlinger, 1973). Structured questionnaire contains predetermined standardised questions meant to collect numerical data that can be subjected to statistical analysis (Kusi, 2012). Moreover, most research participants feel more comfortable responding to pre-determined

responses than items that require them to express their views and feelings. Furthermore, structured questionnaire was used by the researcher because of the large number of sample size. According to Sarantakos (1997), even though the use of questionnaire does not allow for probing, prompting and clarification of questions and does not also provide opportunities for motivating the respondents to answer the questions, the researcher used it because it offers a greater assurance of anonymity. Besides, data collected through this instrument can easily be analysed.

The questions in the schedule were close ended and answers outlined, giving respondents the opportunity to respond to simple (multiple) questions and Likert scales (those that require responses such as "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", and "strongly disagree"). The questionnaires for the teachers and students consisted of five main sections with 44 and 46 items respectively. These items on the questionnaires were put into five sections (A, B, C, D and E) Section A comprised the bio data of the respondents. For the teachers' questionnaire, the bio data focused on gender, professional status, position or office, number of years in the school and the rank. For the students' questionnaire, the bio data concerned gender, class and position or office. These pieces of information were relevant in knowing the category of respondents who took part in the study. Frequency counts were used to measure the bio data of both teachers and students. Section B concerned the formal communication channels available in the school. Section C was about the modes or methods of formal communication employed in the school. Section D dealt with the hindrances to effective formal communication in the school. Section E was based on ways in which these hindrances affect formal

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communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. Sections B, part of C, D and E of the questionnaire were set in four point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree, agree, disagree to strongly disagree was used to measure the responses. The reason for the grouping into sections under the research questions was to help analyse the data easily.

Interviewing is a form of questioning characterised by the fact that it employs verbal questioning as its principal technique of data collection (Sarantakos, 1997). Semi-structured interview was used to gather data from the assistant headmaster. Kusi (2012) asserts that the openness of some of the questions in the schedule leads to gathering of massive volumes of qualitative data, which is time consuming to analyse. However, Wragg (2002) indicates that this instrument allows the interviewer to ask initial questions, followed by probes meant to seek clarification of issues raised. The researcher chose this instrument because he got the opportunity to seek clarification through probing and expanded the responses of the interviewee (assistant headmaster) to ascertain his feelings and experiences to confirm the responses of the teachers and students. The interview guide consisted of twenty-five question items which were categorized into five sections. These sections covered the same areas as were in the questionnaires.

Pilot Test

Pilot Test is a small-scale replica and a rehearsal of the main study. The purpose is to discover possible weaknesses, inadequacies, ambiguities and problems in all aspect of the research so that they can be corrected before actual data collection take place (Sarantakos, 1997). The Pilot test was conducted in Bonzo Kaku Senior High School (BOKASHS) which was closer

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and had similar relevant characteristics to Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School (NASHS). Examples of these characteristics included: they are both in the same geographical area and therefore are fed with students from the same catchment area. These students speak to a large extent a common language i.e. Nzema. Besides, majority of the teachers are also from the catchment area. This implies that both students and teachers are likely to exhibit similar characteristics. Lastly, students in BOKASHS and NASHS are in the same age-group (15-18 years).

According to Sarantakos (1997), sample for pilot test may include one percent or more of the respondents. Based on this information, the researcher decided to use two percent of the population in BOKASHS. The population of BOKASHS was 850 (1 headmaster, 44 teachers and 805 students). Therefore two percent of 850 is 17 (i.e.1 headmaster, 4 teachers and 12 students: 4 SHS 1s, 4 SHS 2s and 4 SHS 3s). Purposive sampling was applied to select the headmaster because he is at the centre of communication in the School. Stratified sampling was used to select the teachers' and students' samples. The stratified sampling was employed because there was the need to represent all the groups (teachers, SHS 1, SHS 2 and SHS 3) of the target population in the sample. Structured questionnaires were used for both teachers and students to solicit their views on the issues under investigation. Semi-structured interview was used to solicit views from the headmaster. The question items on the interview guide for the headmaster were also based on the issues under investigation.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to process the data obtained from the questionnaire.. The co-efficient alpha(x)

developed by Cronbach (1951) was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument (Amoatey, as cited in Alhassan, 2009). Reliability was calculated separately for channel of communication available, modes or methods of communication, hindrances to formal communication and ways in which these hindrances affect formal communication. Since the majority of the items were multiple-scored, especially on the Likert Scale, the Cronbach's co-efficient was deemed most appropriate. According to DeVellis (2003), the Cronbach alpha coefficient of a good scale should be above 0.7. In the current study, the least Cronbach alpha coefficient recorded was 0.76 while the highest was 0.88. Both values fall within the accepted Cronbach alpha coefficient of a good scale.

The validity of the items in the questionnaire and the interview guide was ascertained through content related validity whereby items in both instruments were considered by the researcher's supervisors as valid to elicit the right responses from the respondents. The pilot test exercise helped the researcher in assessing the appropriateness and reliability of the questionnaire. It also aided in rehearsing the data collection procedure in order to assess its suitability. The weaknesses identified through the pilot test exercise created the opportunity for effecting necessary changes, modifications, corrections and adjustments as deemed appropriate especially as regards to the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection instruments, notably questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data within three days. The researcher obtained letter of introduction from the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration

(IEPA), UCC, after preparing the research instruments, formally sought for permission from the head of the school and personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. Kusi (2012) asserts that the self-administered approach offers the respondents (administrators, teachers and students) the opportunity to seek for clarification about issues relating to the questions on the questionnaires. It also gives the researcher the opportunity to persuade the respondents to respond to the items leading to increased return rate. Time was booked with the headmistress for the interview. Nevertheless, the headmistress asked the assistant headmaster in charge of administration to do it on her behalf due to time constraint.

All the students who were selected for the study were made to gather in the school's assembly hall and the purpose of the study explained to them by the researcher after which the questionnaires were distributed to them. The items on the questionnaires were explained to the student-respondents and were asked to respond to the items independently. The teachers who were also selected for the study were taken through similar process in the staff common room. The questionnaires were collected back after three days. This was to give the respondents sufficient time to respond to the items on the questionnaires.

According to Kusi (2012), before conducting interviews with participants, it is important to contact them for their availability. The researcher contacted the assistant headmaster first through a letter to inform him about his selection for the interview. The researcher asked for his date and time; discussed the purpose of the study, venue, and duration (30 minutes) of the interview session and explained the steps to be taken to ensure

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confidentiality of the information. The researcher discussed with him how the responses would be recorded (tape-recording). This discussion was made to seek for his consent about the tape-recording before using it so that he could be comfortable. The interview was conducted at his office which was free from disturbances and noise. It was conducted on Thursday, 29th September, 2016. It started at 09.18 am and ended at 09.48 am.

During the conversation, some unexpected issues emerged and therefore the researcher deepened his understanding of those issues by using probes. Before ending the interview session, the researcher gave the assistant headmaster the opportunity to comment on any issue that was relevant to the research topic that was not covered in the instrument. This was to make him feel that his interaction with the researcher has been productive. To remove the element of doubtfulness, the researcher expressed appreciation to him for the useful data provided and for the cooperation and participation.

Ethical Consideration

Ethics regarding the conduct of research were accordingly observed in this study. Respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality about the information that they provided. Consequently, all the respondents who participated in the research did so willingly without any pretence. The interviewee's consent was sought before the researcher proceeded with the interview. Also, references to other people's work were made to avoid plagiarism.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected through questionnaires for teachers and students were coded and processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics was used to describe the basic features of the data in the study. It provided simple summaries about the sample and the measures. Each descriptive statistic reduces lots of data into a simpler summary.

With research question two (RQ2), the researcher used bar graph (bar chart) to analyse part of the data. This is because bar graph consists of bars that indicate the strength of the variable and presents single values at a time (Sarantakos, 1997). With regard to items on RQ1, RQ3 and RQ4, the frequency or percentage of respondents who selected each option on the Likert Scale was used to measure the degree to which they agree or disagree with a statement. The 4 point scale was collapsed for the analysis of the responses as i. Scale 1 and 2 were put together as "agree" and ii. Scale 3 and 4 were put together as "disagree". This was done to make the analysis more convenient. Based on the results from the SPSS, focus by group strategy was used by the researcher to discuss and analyse the responses. Reponses were organised about each group (students and teachers). How each group responded to related questions.

For the interview, the researcher first transcribed the recorded interview. Transcription is the process of converting audiotape recordings or field notes into text data (Creswell, 2008). That is the researcher listened to the tape repeatedly and carefully wrote the conversations down in the words of the interviewee. The researcher then related the responses and arranged them in

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themes to correspond with the research questions. Later, the quantitative results (from the responses teachers and students) were merged with the qualitative result (from the responses of the interviewee), connections and differences in the responses were drawn.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This study sought to investigate the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. The study focused on the formal channels of communication available, modes or methods of formal communication that are employed, the hindrances to formal communication and the ways in which the hindrances affect formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School.   The study used the mixed methods approach with particular focus on convergent parallel mixed methods design.

In all, 352 questionnaires were administered to the students while 18 questionnaires were administered to the teachers. However, out of 352 questionnaires that were administered to the students, only 333 were received; hence the response rate was 94.6%. With regard to the 18 questionnaires that were administered to the teachers, all were received; hence the response rate was 100%. That is a total of 352 respondents comprising 333 students, 18 teaching staff and 1 Assistant Head (Administration) were selected using stratified, simple random, and purposive sampling techniques. Questionnaire and interview guide were employed in gathering data on the problem understudy. The data from the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics. The data from the interview was transcribed and analysed thematically.

The chapter presented an analysis and discussion of the results from the quantitative and qualitative data sets. The first aspect of the presentation

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was on the background information of respondents to the questionnaire while the second part presented the main results from the questionnaire. The third part dealt with the transcribed data, followed by the discussion and merging of the results according to the research questions. The final aspect dealt with the key findings from the results.

Demographic Information

Section A of the teachers' and students' questionnaires as well as the interview guide for the Assistant Headmaster (Administration) sought to obtain information on their demographic characteristics. These pieces of information were relevant in knowing the category of respondents who took part in the study. The demographic characteristics of the teachers were presented first, followed by that of the students and then the Assistant Headmaster.

The first piece of information regarding the demographic characteristics of the teachers was information on their gender. The results are presented in Figure 6.
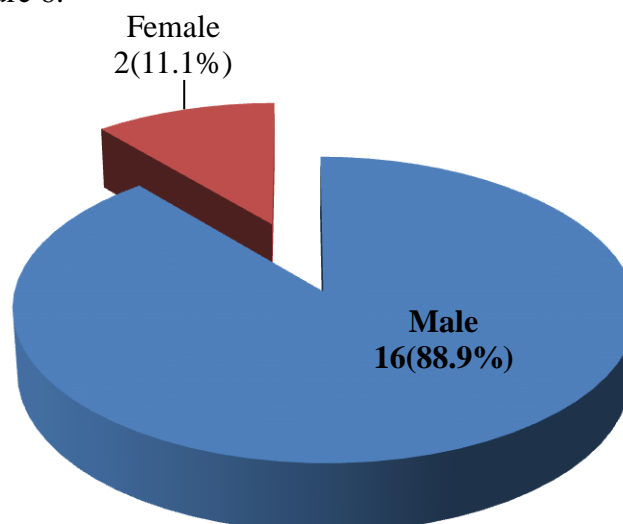
Figure 6: Gender of Teachers

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Result from Figure 6 shows that out of eighteen (18) teachers who participated in the study, 16 (88.9%) of them were males whilst the remaining 2 (11.1%) were females. By implication, the study was dominated by male teachers. Additionally, the result suggested that the Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School had more male teachers than females.

Having identified the gender distribution of the respondents, the researcher again sought to find out the professional status of the teachers. In other words, the researcher sought to find out the number of teachers who had been professionally trained as teachers and those who had not undergone any professional training in teaching. The results are presented in Figure 7.
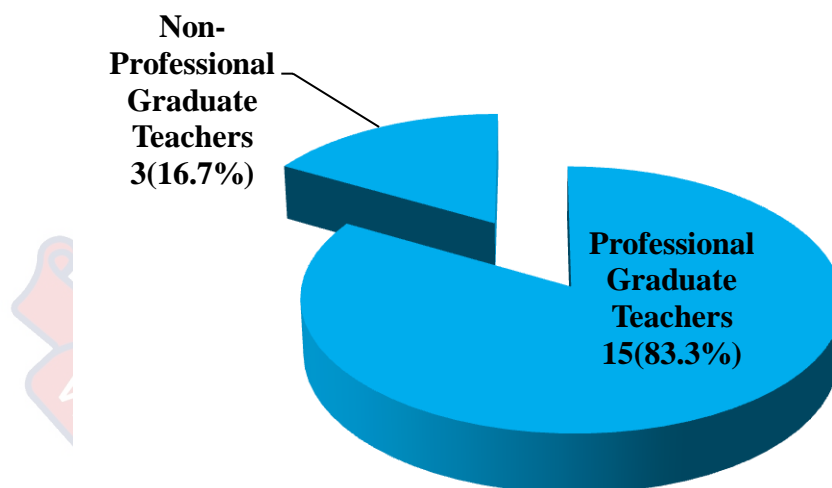
Figure 7: Professional Status of Teacher

Result from Figure 7 indicates that 15(83.3%) of the teachers who participated in the study were Professional Graduate Teachers whilst 3(16.7%) were Non-Professional Graduate Teachers. The result suggests that the teaching-force in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School was dominated by Professional Graduate Teachers.

Apart from the gender distribution and professional status of the teachers, the researcher further sought to find out the rank of the teachers

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within the Ghana Education Service (G.E.S.), number of years a teacher had taught in the school, and their positions in the school. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1*: Other Demographic Characteristics of Teachers*

Demographic Characteristic	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Position Held in the School		
Head of Department	2	11.1
Assistant Headmaster/mistress	1	5.6
Senior Housemaster/mistress	1	5.6
House master/mistress	2	11.1
Form master/mistress	8	44.4
No position	4	22.2
Number of Years Taught		
Under 5years	5	27.8
5-10years	12	66.7
11-15years	1	5.5
Rank in G.E.S.		
Principal Superintendent	10	55.6
Assistant Director II	5	27.7
Assistant Director I	1	5.6
Deputy Director	2	11.1

Source: field survey, 2016

Results in Table 1 shows that 8 (44.4%) of the teachers who took part in the study were Form Masters/Mistresses. This was followed by those who were Heads of Department 2(11.1%), House Masters/Mistresses 2(11.1%), Assistant Headmaster/mistress 1(5.6%), and Senior Housemaster/mistress 1(5.6%). Four of the teachers representing 22.2% were however not found to be occupying any position in the school. Thus, they were merely subject teachers.

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With regard to the number of years taught, it was found that 12 (66.7%) respondents had taught 5-10years, 5(27.8%) respondents had taught for less than 5years and 1(5.5%) respondent had taught for between 10-15years.

Results from Table 1 further depict that 10(55.6%) respondents were at the rank of Principal Superintendent, 5(27.7%) were Assistant Directors II, 2(11.1%) respondents were Deputy Directors, and 1 (5.6%) respondent was an Assistant Director 1. Majority of the teachers being Principal Superintendents suggested that they obtained their degrees from universities not too long ago.

Having found out the demographic characteristics of the teachers, the demographic characteristics of the students were also explored. The first item explored was students' gender distribution. The results are presented in Figure 8.
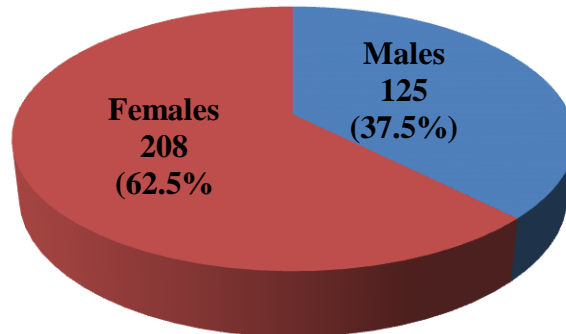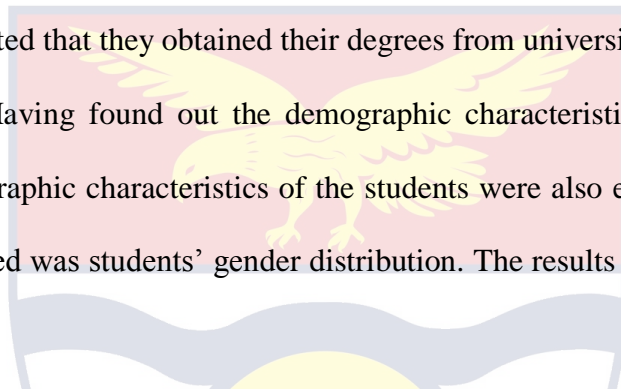
Figure 8: Gender Distribution of Students

Results from Figure 8 showed that majority 208(62.5%) of the students who took part in the study were females whilst 125(37.5%) were males. This means that the sample for the study was dominated by female students.

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The next piece of information that the researcher sought to find out under the demographic characteristics of the students was their form or academic level. The results are presented in Figure 9.
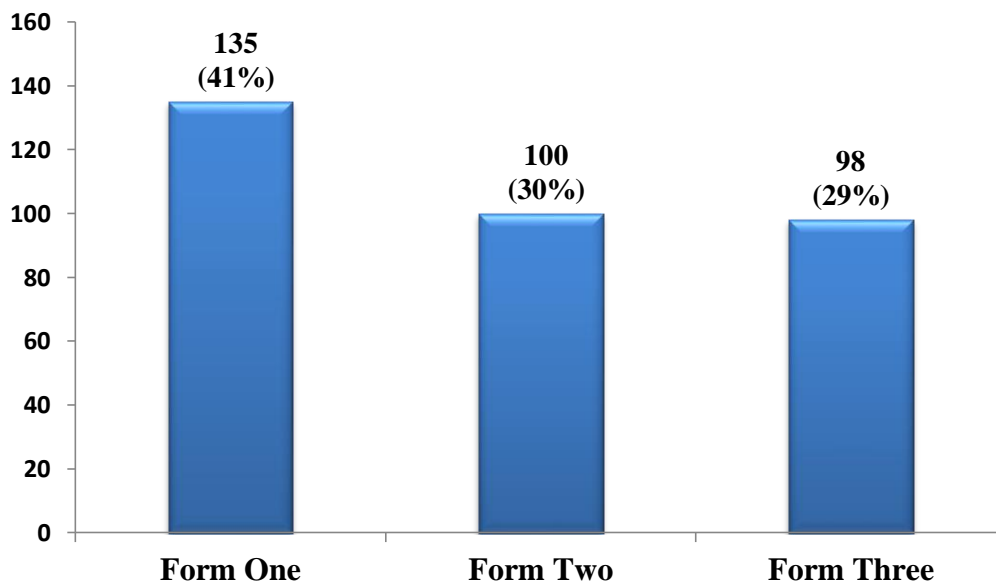
Figure 9: Academic Level of Students

Results from Figure 9 shows that most 135(41%) of the students who participated in the study were in Form One. Form Two and Form Three students also constituted 100(30%) and 98(29%) of the respondents respectively.

The last piece of information that the researcher explored under the demographic characteristics of the students was information on their involvement in school administration. The results are presented in Figure 10.
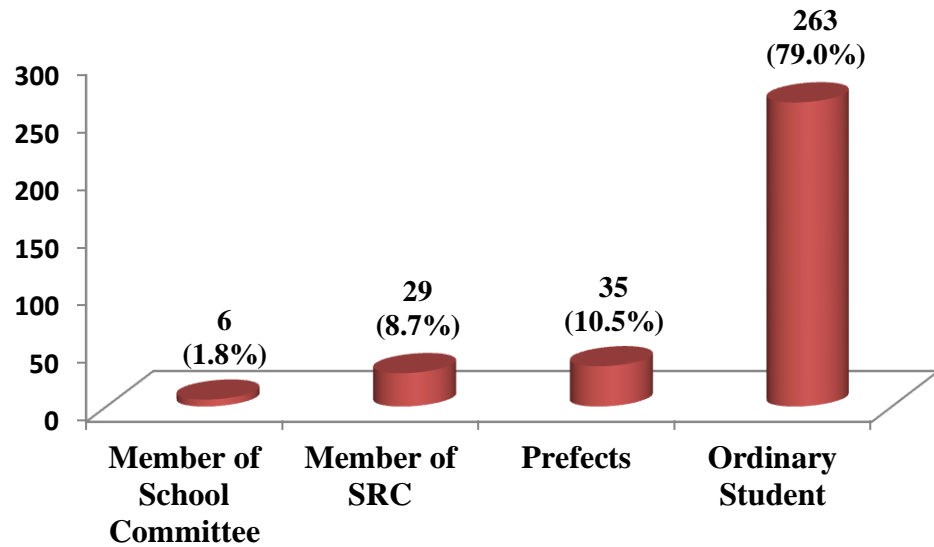
Figure 10: Students' Involvement in School Administration

Results from Figure 10 shows that majority 263(79.0%) of the students who participated in the study were not holding any position in the school. Those who were prefects, members of the SRC, and members of the various committees in the school constituted 35(10.5%), 29(8.7%) and 6(1.8%) of the respondents respectively.

The demographic characteristics of the interviewee (Assistant Headmaster Administration) were also explored by the researcher. The response from the interviewee revealed that he had been in the school for the past three years. With regard to his rank in the Ghana Education Service, he indicated that he was a Deputy Director.

In response to the question on his responsibility as the assistant headmaster (admin.), the interviewee enumerated the following, "*the one who takes charge of all activities in the school in the absence of the headmistress. These activities include: in charge of admissions, WASSCE registration, discipline and Student Representative Council, students and teachers*

statistics, appraisal, secretary to the school board, liaise with the executives of the Parents Teachers Association to solve problems".

Analysis of the Main Data

RQ1: What Formal Channels of Communication are Available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

The first research question sought to identify formal channels of communication available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. The results are presented in Table 2 and Table 3 for the teachers and students respectively.

Table 2*: Formal Channels of Communication Available to Teachers*

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The headmistress encourages upward communication procedures.	2	11.1	12	66.7	3	16.7	1	5.6
The headmistress responds promptly to teachers' needs or reports.	1	5.6	5	27.8	8	44.4	4	22.2
The headmistress often discusses the policies of the school with the teachers.	2	11.1	9	50.0	6	33.3	1	5.6
There is optimum flow of information between the school administration and teachers.	1	5.6	11	61.1	5	27.8	1	5.6
Information reaches teachers from administration at the right time.	2	11.1	8	44.4	5	27.8	3	16.7

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Table 2 con'd

Teachers find it easy sending information to the administration.	4	22.2	8	44.4	5	27.8	1	5.6
The headmistress sometimes delivers pieces of information through other teaching staff members.	2	11.1	13	72.2	1	5.6	2	11.1
The pieces of information given by the headmistress to these teaching staff are delivered accurately.	4	22.2	3	16.7	5	27.8	6	33.3
There are committees in the school and these committees meet regularly to deliberate on issues on behalf of the school administration	4	22.2	4	22.2	8	44.4	2	11.1
Teachers most at times call one another on mobile phones to discuss issues that relate to them and the school.	3	16.7	10	55.6	3	16.7	2	11.1
The headmistress is always available and her doors are open for views and complaints from teacher.	5	27.8	12	66.7	0	0.0	1	5.6

Source: field survey, Barns (2016)

Results from Table 2 shows that 77.8% teacher respondents agreed that the head of the school encouraged upward communication procedures, 66.6% disagreed that the headmistress promptly responded to teachers' need or reports, 61.6% agreed that the head often discussed the policies of the school with the teachers, 66.7% agreed that there was optimum flow of

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information between the administration and teachers, 55.5% agreed that information from the administration reached teachers at the right time, 66.6% agreed that there was easy flow of information by the teachers to the administration, 83% respondents agreed that the headmistress sometimes delivered pieces of information through other teaching staff members, 60.8% disagreed that the pieces of information given by the headmistress to these teaching staff were delivered accurately. Furthermore, 55.5% respondents disagreed that there are committees in the school and these committees meet regularly to deliberate on issues on behalf of the school administration, 72.3% agreed that teachers most at times called one another on mobile phones to discuss issues that relate to them and the school, 94.5% agreed that the headmistress was always available and her doors were open for views and complaints from teachers.

In the result, it was found that majority (66.6%) of teacher respondents said the head of the school did not promptly respond to the teachers' needs and reports. Such a situation was quite unfortunate because according to DeFleur, Kearney and Plax (1993), vertical communication emphasizes the idea that effective communication is a two-way interaction process. Messages that are sent through a formal network are extremely important to the people who send them and those who receive them. Also, the effectiveness of the jobs performed by individuals in an organization largely depends on the feedback that they receive from such messages. Hoy and Miskel (2013) assert that if a dialogue is to continue for any length of time and still have meaning, feedback is important. "Upward formal communication is often inhibited by the willingness and promptness with which information communicated to

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superiors is acted upon. Where superiors provide quick responses, upward communication is encouraged. On the other hand, where upward communication is not responded to, further upward communication is suppressed" (Archer et al, 2008., p. 134). This practice has the tendency to negatively affect the teachers in the performance of their duties. This is because the failure on the part of the school head to provide the teachers with immediate and positive feedback can leave the teachers in a dilemma, thus not knowing exactly what to do at a point in time. It also has the potential to demoralize some of the teachers as they may feel that the headmistress does not take their views seriously.

Again, the results from Table 2 indicates that 61.6% of the teacher respondents agreed that the head often discussed the policies of the school with the teachers. This confirms Katz and Kaln's (1978) assession that most superiors such as school administrators use the vertical channel, precisely the downward channel of communication to send information.

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Table 3*: Formal Channels of Communication Available to Students*

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The headmistress encourages upward communication.	19	5.7	60	18.0	63	18.9	191	57.4
The headmistress response promptly to students' needs or reports.	25	7.5	91	27.3	147	44.1	70	21.0
The headmistress discusses the policies of the school with students.	68	20.4	75	22.5	111	33.3	79	23.7
Suggestions from students are well taken by the school administration.	22	6.6	99	29.7	73	21.9	139	41.7
There is optimum flow of information between administration and students.	40	12.0	96	28.8	138	41.4	59	17.7
Information from the administration reaches students at the right time	77	23.1	98	29.4	86	25.8	72	21.6
Students find it easy sending information to the administration.	15	4.5	107	32.1	136	40.8	75	22.5
The headmistress sometimes delivers pieces of information through teachers and SRC members.	64	19.2	152	45.6	66	19.8	51	15.3
The pieces of information given by the headmistress to these teachers and SRC members are delivered accurately.	102	30.6	91	27.3	57	17.1	83	24.9

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Table 3 con'd

There are committees of teachers in the school on which students are represented and these committees meet regularly to deliberate on issues on behalf of administration.	31	9.3	62	18.6	88	26.4	152	45.6
Suggestion boxes are available in the school and students are encouraged to send their suggestions through these suggestion boxes.	53	15.9	174	52.3	66	19.8	40	12.0
Class prefects communicate class members' grievances to SRC for onwards discussion with administration.	26	7.8	110	33.0	126	37.8	71	21.3
The headmistress often assigns tasks to class prefects and other prefects.	29	8.7	68	20.4	137	41.1	99	29.7
The school prefects often meet regularly to deliberate on issues affecting them in the school.	91	27.3	56	16.8	112	33.6	74	22.2
Form meetings are regularly held.	66	19.8	179	53.8	51	15.3	37	11.1

Source: field survey, Barns (2016)

Results in Table 3 reveals that 52.5% of the student respondents agreed that information from the administration reached students at the right time; 64.8% agreed that the headmistress sometimes delivered pieces of information through teachers and SRC members. The results imply that the vertical channel, precisely the downward channel of communication was the main

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channel of formal communication that was available to students in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School.

Nonetheless, the results suggest that the state of upward formal communication between the school administration, particularly the head of the school and the students was not really the best. Results from Table 3 shows that majority (76.3%) of the student respondents disagreed that the head of the school encouraged upward communication procedures; 65.1% disagreed that the headmistress promptly responded to students' need or reports, 59.1% disagreed that there was optimum flow of information between administration and students. The results imply that the students did not really have the opportunity to communicate with the headmistress on issues affecting them. In other words, communication that took place between the administration and students were usually in the form of instructions and directives from the headmistress.

The importance of upward communication for effective decision-making and implementation cannot be overemphasized. "There is so much emphasis on upward communication these days because of the quest for more worker participation in the decision-making process" (Archer et al., 2008 p. 129). According to these same authors, the purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback to superiors to enable them effectively monitor what is happening at the lower levels of the organization for proper direction and motivation. By means of such feedback, the school administrators are able to ascertain whether directives issued to teachers and students have been properly understood and acted upon. Also, feedback from teachers and students helps

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the school administrators to know what the teachers and students think about certain school policies and programmes. Upward communication facilitates commitment to organizational policies and programmes and ensures greater harmony and cohesion between the teaching staff and the students.

Conversely, Cheney (2011) postulates that the failure of administrators to respond to issues or complaints from students and teachers will ultimately result in no communication. The administrators' attitude play critical role in the upward communication flow. If the administrators listen to students and teachers and show concern, then upward communication improves. Also, time lags between the complaints and the action can inhibit upward communication. That is if it takes months for administration to approve or solve students' or teachers' suggestion or grievances, then upward communication will be hindered (Archer et al., 2008). In addition, when administrators tend to be defensive about less-than-perfect actions then information will be withheld.

The results from Table 3 indicates that 70.8% of the students disagreed that the headmistress often assigns tasks to class prefects and other prefects. "Diagonal communication is communication from one department to the other either in an ascending or descending order" (Attieku et al., 2009 p. 106). That is the sharing of information among different structural levels within an organisation. It could involve higher level management communicating to lower level management. It is probably the least used of all channels of communication in an organization. This statement was confirmed by the responses given by the students that the headmistress hardly assigned tasks to class prefects and other prefects. Nonetheless, it has been found to be the most

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effective channel in many instances where it is realized that using the traditional channels might result in red-tape, and unnecessary delays (Archer et al., 2008). For example, to help deal with the problems of classroom discipline, the school head may decide to assign class prefects tasks and request them to report directly. A diagonal communication route allows diverse groups within an organization to share information directly, rather than according to a hierarchy. In addition, it eliminates the risks of miscommunication as the message passes from one individual to another. Communications that are zigzag along horizontal and vertical routes are vulnerable to the schedules and whims of the individuals who pass them along.

Results in Table 3 also reveal 72% disagreed that there were committees of teachers in the school on which students were represented and these committees meet regularly to deliberate on issues on behalf of administration. This means that horizontal communication was poorly patronised in the school. However, it must be noted that horizontal communication is very necessary in the School since Lewis (1975) opines that it is the strongest and most easily understood.

Horizontal communication refers to communication between people of the same rank or level in an organization (Attieku et al., 2009, p. 105). A head of a department in a school, for instance, may provide information to another head of department, who in turn passes it to still other heads of department. Communication within a team is also an example of horizontal communication. Members of teams coordinate tasks, work together, and

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resolve conflicts. Horizontal communication occurs formally in meetings, presentations, and formal electronic communication.

The major purposes of horizontal communication are coordinating tasks, solving problems, sharing information with colleagues, resolving conflicts, and building rapport (Harris, 1993). Archer et al. (2008) also hypothesize that horizontal communication provides the mechanism for organizational members to see the need for uniting their efforts in the pursuit of total organizational goals. This makes way for co-operation and harmony and prevents friction and sub-optimization among the groups, units, sections and departments within the organization. Besides, it is used to socialize people at the workplace and allows peers to share information on regular basis and this makes for cooperation and helps to avoid antagonism. Again, this form of communication reduces inaccuracies and distortion of messages by putting the relevant people in direct contact with each other. Indeed, experience has shown that effective solutions to organizational problems usually result from interactions among peers, rather than being imposed from above (Sam et al, 2008, p. 136).

RQ2: Modes of Formal Communication Employed in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

The second research question of the study sought to identify the modes or methods of formal communication employed in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. The results have been captured in the ensuing figures.
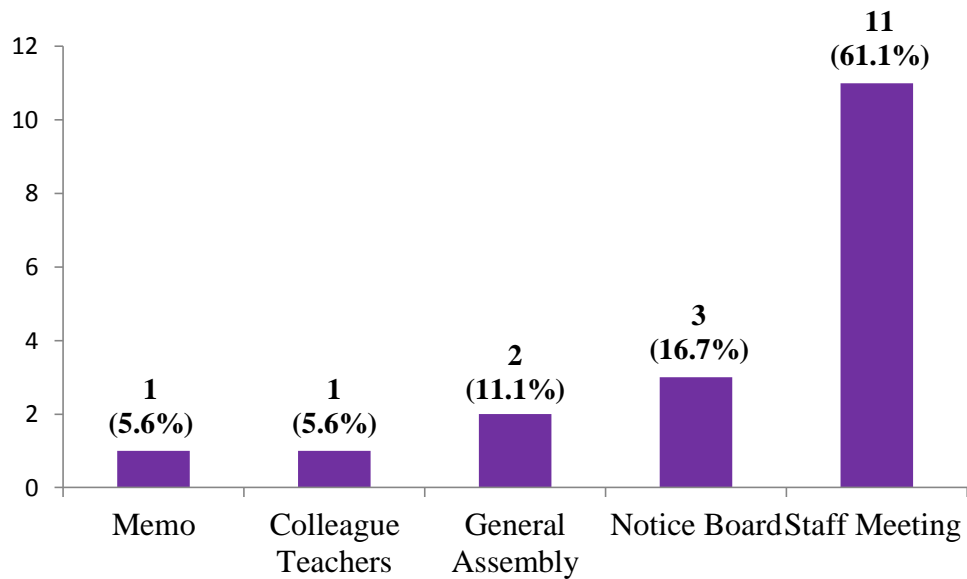
Figure 11: Teachers' Means of Receiving Information from the
Headmistress

Figure 11: Teachers' Means of Receiving Information from the

Headmistress

Results from Figure 11 reveal that Staff Meeting (61.1%) served as the

main platform that helped teachers to receive information from the

headmistress in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School, while memo (5.6%)

and colleague teachers (5.6%) were the least means through which the

teachers received information from the headmistress.

At meetings, two-way flow of communications is encouraged. This

offers the opportunity for administrators, teachers and students to interact. It

also confirms the assertion that at meetings information is exchanged by the

superiors and the subordinates on issues affecting them (Attieku et al, 2009 p.

111).
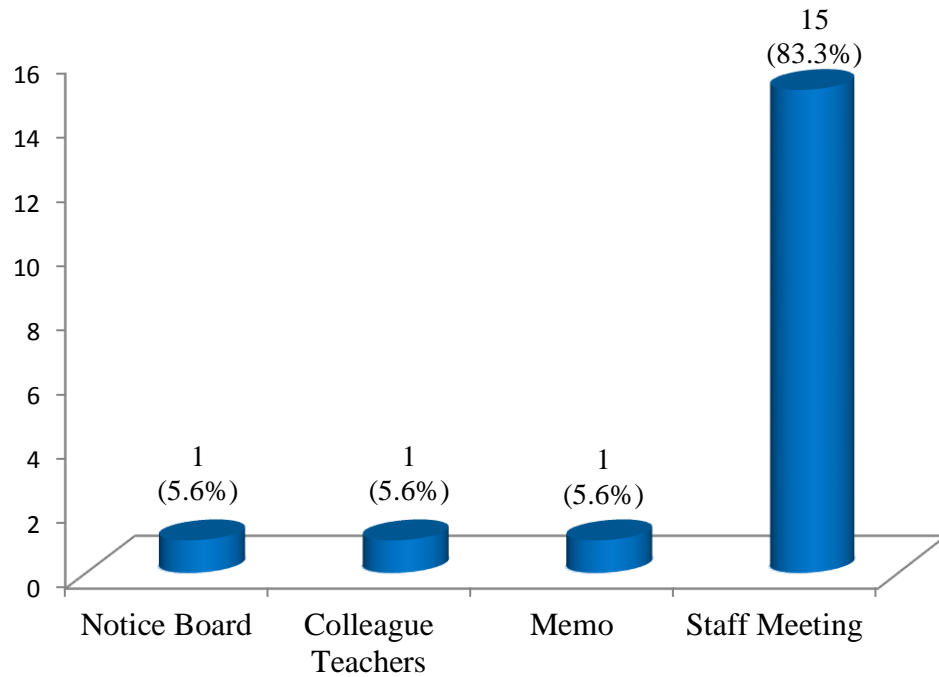
Figure 12: Teachers' Means of Communicating Ideas,   Suggestions and

Grievances to the Headmistress

Based on figure 12, it is observed that 15(83.3%) respondents held the view that the means by which teachers communicated with the headmistress was through staff meeting, 1(5.6%) respondents did that through memo, 1(5.6%) respondent via colleague teachers and 1(5.6%) respondent through notice board.

The results imply that Staff Meeting (83.3%) again served as the main mode through which teachers in Nkroful Senior High School conveyed their ideas, suggestions and grievances to the headmistress. Other means like notice board, memo, and colleague teachers were rarely utilized by the teachers in conveying their ideas, suggestions and grievances to the headmistress.

According to Archer et al. (2008, p. 143), "most of the messages transmitted in schools, take verbal form because it is the most natural and automatic means of passing on messages across people. Compared with other

modes of communication, it tends to be both accurate and timely and also offers opportunity for immediate feedback."
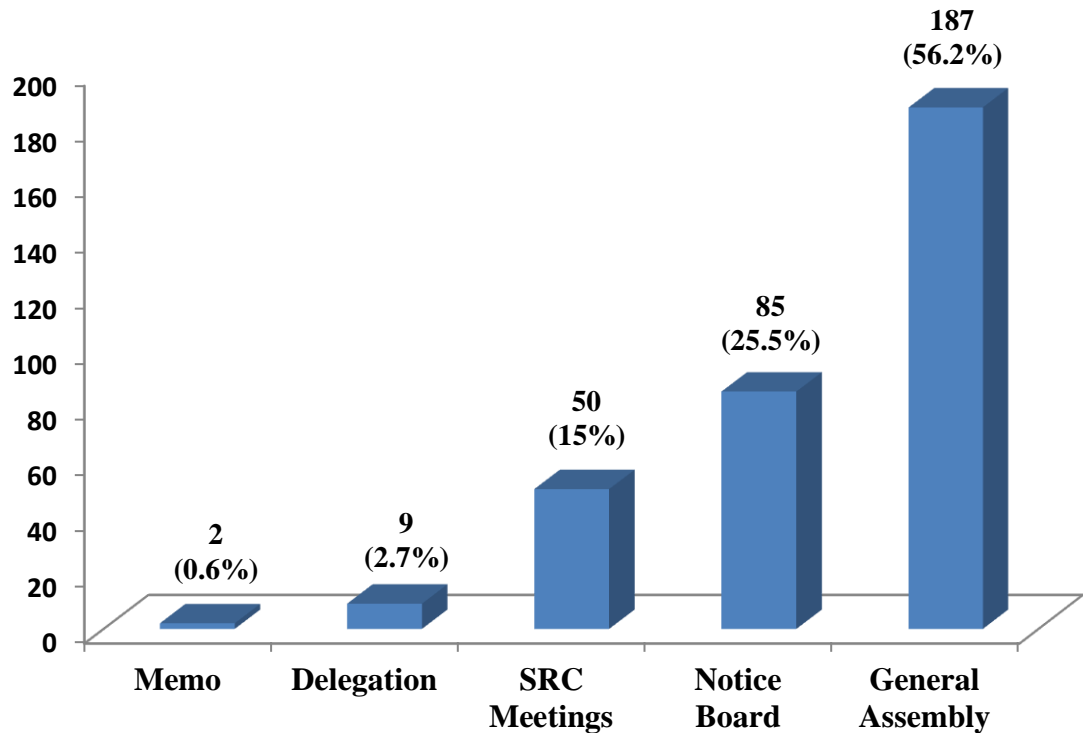
Figure 13: Students' Means of Receiving Information from the Headmistress

According to the responses in Figure 13, 56.2% of the student respondents indicated that the means by which they received information from the headmistress was through general assemblies, 25.5% through notice board, 15% via SRC, 2.7% through delegation and 0.6% through memoranda.

The responses from figure 13 above clearly depict that General Assembly served as the principal means through which students of Nkroful Senior High School received information from the headmistress while memo was the least means. At assembly the verbal means of communication is mostly used. So, in using General Assembly as the main platform for sending information to the students underpins the importance of oral (verbal) communication. According to Archer et al. (2008), most of the messages

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transmitted in schools, take verbal form because as compared with other modes of communication, the receiver can also have a feel as to whether his informer is sincere or not. Again, oral communication has also been observed to have more persuasive power over the recipient than the written mode.
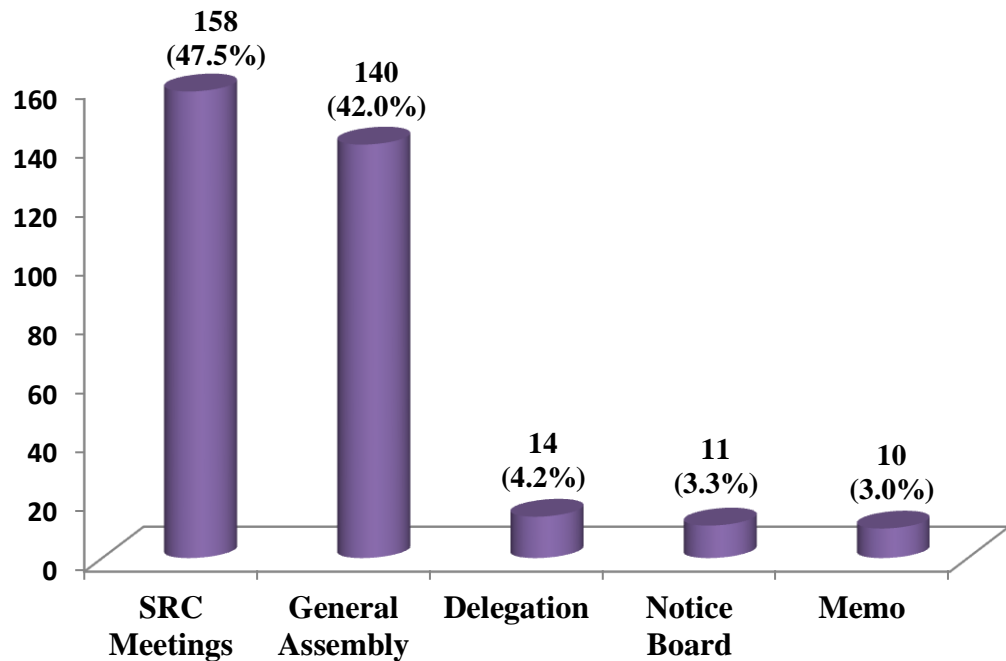
Figure 14: Means of Reaching the Headmistress with Suggestions, Ideas and

Grievances by Students

According to the responses in figure 14 above, 47.5% of the student respondents specified that the means of reaching the headmistress with suggestions, ideas and grievances was through SRC meetings, 42.0% through general assemblies, 4.2% respondents by means of delegation, 3.3% did so through notice board, and 3.0% via memoranda.

The results above suggest that SRC Meetings and General Assembly were the main platforms that students of Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School used in getting their suggestions, ideas, and grievances to the headmistress. Although delegation, notice board, and memo were also utilized by the students, these means were rarely used by the students.

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General Assembly and SRC serving as the main platforms that students used to meet their head face to face and to communicate their ideas, suggestions and grievances aptly mirrored the views of Archer et al. (2008) who purport that most of the messages transmitted in schools, take verbal form because it is the most natural and automatic means of passing on messages across people. Compared with other modes of communication, it tends to be both accurate and timely. It also offers opportunity for immediate feedback in that questions can be asked on issues that are not clear, and again, feedback is immediate and direct. The receiver can also have a feel as to whether his informer is sincere or not. Oral communication has also been observed to have more persuasive power over the recipient than the written mode. In addition to being less expensive than other modes of transmission, it is also noted for its effectiveness in giving a feeling of importance to subordinates at a meeting and securing their enthusiastic support for decisions making.

However, the same authors posit that oral communication has a major limitation of being susceptible to misinterpretations and distortions as no recordings are made of the discussion that takes place. Again, it often leads to ill-considered statements and regret. Furthermore, using oral communication at meetings has been found to be fraught with a lot of problems. In the first place, so much time may be wasted at meetings in which no results or agreements are achieved. Secondly, some people who lack the democratic temper or tolerating other people's views have been known to dominate discussions at meetings; and finally where there is lack of direction, people may deviate from the issues of importance at an oral meeting. Conversely, written communication should also be encouraged as it can be kept and used

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for reference purposes and may provide a means of legal defence. Also, the message can be polished up by being revised several times. Moreover, the message may not be distorted even when it relayed through many people up and down the organizational ladder. Further, the receiver can study, analyse and consider its content before responding to it.

RQ3: Hindrances to Effective Formal Communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

The third research question sought to identify the various hindrances to effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. The results are presented in Table 4 and Table 5 for the teachers and students respectively.

Table 4: *Teachers' View on Hindrances to Effective Formal Communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School*

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The language used in communication is sometimes ambiguous.	0		1	5.6	11	61.1	6	33.3
Information on notice board is not properly read and understood by teachers.	1	5.6	4	22.2	9	50.0	4	22.2
Teachers sometimes do not understand information from the headmistress.	3	16.7	5	27.8	3	16.7	7	38.9
Committees do not send their reports regularly.	5	27.8	9	50.0	3	16.7	1	5.6

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Table 4 con'd

Teachers are often indifferent to pieces of information given by the head of the school.	7	38.9	5	27.8	4	22.2	2	11.1
Administrators of the school are trusted by teachers for any information given.	1	5.6	7	38.9	5	27.8	5	27.8
There is optimum flow of information between administration and teachers.	5	27.8	6	33.3	6	33.3	1	5.6
Information from the head gets to the teachers on time.	4	22.2	10	55.6	2	11.1	2	11.1
It is easy sending information to the head.	4	22.2	9	50.0	4	22.2	1	5.6
Teachers often secure positive responses (feedback) from the head.	3	16.7	5	27.8	8	44.4	2	11.1
The head is always specific when giving out information.	4	22.2	12	66.7	2	5.6	1	5.6
Teachers cannot approach the head because of her position.	2	11.1	2	11.1	8	44.4	6	33.3
The headmistress sometimes frowns when communicating with teachers.	2	11.1	1	5.6	5	27.8	10	55.6
Complaints from teachers are often distorted before they get to the head.	1	5.6	2	11.1	9	50.0	6	33.3
The head does not provide the teachers with adequate information they need to carry out their duties.	2	11.1	1	5.6	7	38.9	8	44.4

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Table 4 con'd

The head is always busy and therefore does not listen to her teachers' complaints.	1	5.6	2 11.1	4	22.2	11	61.1

Source: field survey, Barns (2016)

Results from Table 4 reveal the following as the main hindrances to effective formal communication in Nkroful Senior High School from the teachers' point of view: committees do not send their reports regularly (77.8%); teachers are often indifferent to pieces of information given by the head of the school (66.7%); distrust for the administrators of the school by teachers for any information given (55.6%); and teachers' inability to secure positive responses (feedback) for the headmistress (55.5%).

According to Ashford (1986), if a dialogue is to continue for any length of time and still have meaning, feedback is important. According to the author, feedback provides at least two benefits. First, it supplies clues about the success of the communication and improves the accuracy and clarity of a message. Second, the knowledge of results forms a basis for correcting or modifying future communication.

Interpersonal factors such as trustworthiness, level of rapport, organizational tone or climate and sensitivity to the emotional content of transmitted messages all affect the effectiveness of communication (Archer et al., 2008). According to Adler and Rodman (1991), the credibility (trust and confidence that the receiver has in the words and actions) of the sender influences the effectiveness of a message. The level of credibility in turn influences the reactions of the receiver to the words and actions of the communicator (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 2000). Where administrators

always give feedback, teachers and students are bound to take what they say seriously; otherwise, where administrators are noted for their failure to give feedbacks, teachers and students will mistrust them and will not take their words seriously

Table 5: *Students' View on Hindrances to Effective Formal Communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School*

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	No	%
The language used in communication is sometimes ambiguous.	37	11.1	78	23.4	151	45.3	67	20.1
Information on students' notice board is not properly read and understood by students.	25	7.5	91	27 3	186	55.9	31	9.3
Students sometimes do not listen in order to understand information given by the headmistress.	123	36.9	66	19.8	75	22.5	69	20.7
Committees do not send their reports regularly.	81	24.3	128	38.4	70	21.0	54	16.2
Students are often indifferent to pieces of information given by administrators of the school.	92	27.6	96	28.8	87	26.1	58	17.4
Administrators of the school are trusted by students for any information given.	30	9.0	100	30.0	65	19.5	138	41.4
There is optimum flow of information between administration and students.	54	16.2	89	26.7	110	33.0	80	24.0

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Table 6 con'd

Information from the head gets to the students on time.	50	15.0	133	39.9	36	10.8	114	34.2
It is easy sending information to the head.	19	5.7	44	13.2	88	26.4	182	54.7
Students often receive positive responses (feedback) from the head.	42	12.6	76	22.8	55	16.5	160	48.1
The head is always specific when giving out information.	100	30.0	87	26.1	106	31.8	40	12.0
Students cannot approach the head because of her position.	43	12.9	180	54.1	68	20.4	42	12.6
The headmistress sometimes frowns when communicating with students.	38	11.4	59	17.7	146	43.8	90	27.0
Complaints from students are often distorted before they get to the head.	60	18.0	95	28.5	118	35.4	60	18.0
The head does not provide the students with adequate information they need to carry out their duties.	75	22.5	98	29.4	100	30.0	60	18.0
The head is always busy and therefore does not listen to her students' complaints.	27	8.1	100	30.0	140	42.0	66	19.8

Source: field survey, Barns (2016)

Results from Table 5 suggest the following as the main hindrances to effective formal communication in Nkroful Senior High School from the students' point of view: students sometimes do not listen in order to understand information given by the headmistress (56.7%); committees do not send their report regularly (62.7%); students are often indifferent to pieces of

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information given by the administrators of the school (56.4%); distrust for administrators of the school by the students for any information given (60.9%); poor flow of information between the school administration and students (57%); difficulty in sending information to the head (81%); students' inability to receive positive responses (feedback) from the head (64.6%); difficulty in approaching the headmistress because of her position (67%); and failure on the part of the headmistress to provide students with adequate information they need to carry out their duties (51.9%).

On submission of report by committees, 62.7% student respondents said committees did not send their reports regularly to the administration. Archer et al. (2008) posit that subordinates (students) may be required to submit reports on aspects of their job to their superiors (headmistress) on regular basis. Such reports serve as one major means of feedback on how well they are performing on their jobs and provide the basis for the evaluation of their work as well as remedial action where they are found wanting in some respects.

On whether students sometimes do not listen in order to understand information given by the headmistress, 56.7% agreed. Listening is a form of behaviour in which individuals attempt to comprehend what others are communicating to them through the use of words, actions and things (DeFleur, Kearney & Plax, 1993). It is a key factor of communicating competently. Listening to a person shows respect, interest and concern for one's fellow communicator. Archer et al. (2008) stress that sometimes communication fails, because some people have not trained themselves to listen carefully. Such behaviour results in inattention which leads to so much information loss.

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Listening skills are required for relatively accurate two-way exchanges (Burbules, 1993).

Concerning difficulty in sending information to the headmistress, upward communication is one means by which subordinates are made accountable to superiors. On the other hand, effective upward communication is difficult to achieve in large organizations with many hierarchical levels (Archer et al., 2008). That is where there are so many hierarchical levels in a school, unnecessary delays result in the process of transmitting information from the subordinates (students). Such delays may sometimes lead to costly errors in the school. Another common problem associated with a school having a tall hierarchical structure is distortion. The message can be distorted if it travels a great distance from its sender to the receiver through the hierarchy (Tourish, 2010).

As to whether the head gives adequate information to students, administrators need to identify their most important goal and then adapt their language, tone, and total approach to serve that specific objective. Administrators should not try to accomplish too much with each communication. The sharper the focus of their message, the greater the chances of success (Cheney, 2011; Keyton, 2011; Tourish, 2010). Fiske (2010) asserts that administrators (speakers) avoid hesitant and uncertain speech; it communicates doubt. Blankenship and Holtgraves (2005) also said that speakers must be direct: get to the point without excuses. Excessive prefacing distracts and undermines the message.

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RQ4: Effect of the Hindrances on Formal Communication in Nkroful Senior

High School

The last research question sought to find out the effect of the hindrances that were identified under research question three on formal communication in the school. The results are presented in Table 6 and Table 7 for the students and teachers respectively.

Table 6: *Teachers' View on Effect of the Hindrances on Formal Communication in the School*

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Committees do not send their reports regularly.	11	61.1	2	11.1	3	16.7	2	11.1
Teachers feel reluctant reporting or sending their complaints or grievances to the head.	5	27.8	8	44.4	4	22.2	1	5.6
Teachers are often reluctant in reading pieces of information that are pasted on the notice boards.	4	22.2	8	44.4	3	16.7	3	16.7
Teachers are discouraged to put contributions they make into writing.	2	11.1	7	38.9	4	22.2	5	27.8
Teachers are discouraged from discussing disturbing issues with administrators.	3	16.7	7	38.9	4	22.2	4	22.2
Suggestion boxes have been put in place yet teachers do not put in anything.	9	50.0	7	38.9	1	5..6	1	5.6
Teachers feel insecure to give information to administrators.	3	16.7	10	55.6	3	16.7	2	11.1

Source: field survey, Barns (2016)

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Results from Table 6 indicate that the challenges associated with formal communication in Nkroful Senior High School had led to the following: committees failed to submit their report regularly (72.2%); teachers were often reluctant in reading pieces of information that were pasted on the notice boards (72.2%); teachers were discouraged from discussing disturbing issues with administrators (55.6%); teachers did not see the essence of using the suggestion boxes (88.9%); and teachers felt insecure in giving information to the school administrators(72.3%).

The above findings do not speak well of the formal communication practices in the school. Every person's communication skills affect both personal and organizational effectiveness (Brun, 2010; Summers, 2010). Communication contributes to the creation of an environment of trust around school heads that enables them to lead effectively and ultimately deliver results. Heads and school administrators must create a culture of trust by sharing information quickly and freely, and building relationships with teachers, students and other stakeholders that will enable their schools to thrive (Summers, 2010).

Table 7: *Students' View on Effect of the Hindrances on Formal Communication in the School*

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	No	%	No	%
Committees do not send their reports regularly.	115	34.5	80	24.0	91	27.3	47	14.1
Students feel reluctant reporting or sending their complaints or grievances to the head.	80	24.0	110	33.0	79	23.7	64	19.2
Students are often reluctant in reading pieces of information that are pasted on the notice boards.	64	19.2	99	29.7	120	36.0	50	15.0
Students are discouraged to put contributions they make into writing.	56	16.8	150	45.0	97	29.1	30	9.0
Students are discouraged from discussing disturbing issues with administrators.	57	17.1	128	38.4	101	30.3	50	15. 0
Suggestion boxes have been put in place yet students do not put in anything.	61	18.3	98	29.4	124	37.2	50	15.0
Students feel insecure to give information to administrators.	80	24.0	110	33.0	99	29.7	44	13.2

Source: field survey, Barns (2016)

Results from Table 7 indicate that the following were the effects of the hindrances on formal Communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School: committees failed to submit their report regularly (58.5%); students felt reluctant reporting or sending their complaints or grievances to the head

(57%); students were discouraged from putting contributions they make into writing (61.8%); students were discouraged from discussing disturbing issues with administrators (55.5%); and feeling of insecurity on the part of students in giving out information to the school administrators (57%).

The above findings suggest that the hindrances associated with formal communication in the school had consequently caused the students to lose interest in upward formal communication in the school. Archer et al. (2008), assert that committee reports and suggestion boxes provide avenue for upward communication. The main purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback to the administration to enable it effectively monitor what is happening at the lower levels of the school for proper direction and motivation. It is also a means for students to vent their grievances and express their sentiments about certain happenings in the school for redress. On the other hand, where upward communication is not properly responded to, further upward communication is suppressed. It is also a dent on the democratic governance and structure of the school.

Findings from the Interview

This part of the study report presents the results of the face to face interview that was conducted with the Assistant Headmaster (Administration) who served as a key informant on matters relating to the formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. The interview was used to collect data on all the four research questions. The results have been presented in themes in relation to the various research questions.

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Formal Channels of Communication available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

RQ1 sought to seek for the formal channels of communication that existed in the school. The Assistant Headmaster in his remarks said that,

"There exist a number of formal channels of communication in the school. During staff meetings and general assemblies, a lot of information is channelled to teachers and students respectively. During open fora, both students and teachers receive a lot of information from the school's administration. Notice boards are also used in disseminating information to both students and teachers. Sometimes the school's administration get in touch with the Heads of Department and other committees and ensure that meetings are held, where appropriate, to relay information to all those who need such information".

In relation to the flow of information among administrators and teachers in the school, the Assistant Headmaster revealed that,

"Though the school has in place communication facilities, not all the offices in the school have communication facilities. Only the office of the Headmistress and that of the Assistant Headmasters do have communication facilities. However, the existing communication facilities at times do not work effectively. As a result, we support it with their cell phones".

It must, however, be noted that lack of communication facilities in some offices coupled with the poor functioning of the existing ones is likely to impede effective formal communication among the various sections of the school's administration, particularly when it comes to written communication.

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Concerning whether or not other administrators and teachers call the Assistant Headmaster on phone to discuss issues with him, he revealed that,

"Teachers and other administrators do call me sometimes on phone to discuss issues with me. Most of these calls come in when there is an emergency such as when there is a problem in the dining hall or when the security officers in the school get some information that they cannot handle it at their level, particularly after working hours".

Inference from this statement suggests that upward communication did not mostly occur in the school.

The researcher also sought to find out whether or not the Assistant Headmaster received complaints or views from the students and teachers. In response to this, the Assistant Headmaster indicated that,

"Sometimes I do receive complaints and suggestions from students and teachers. Students usually communicate their grievances to me through the prefects, senior housemaster/mistress and Heads of Department while the teachers usually do that directly. The academic committee, welfare committee, sports committee, and disciplinary committee report to me on regular basis".

With regard to whether or not the head sometimes delivered pieces of information through other staff members to students, the Assistant Headmaster indicated that,

"Yes sometimes, especially when the information is so urgent, I pass it through seniors and masters on duty. With regard to whether or not the information delivered gets to the students on time and accurately, he indicated that "I think so".

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Thus he was not very certain about that. In relation to whether the head did assign tasks to school or class prefects directly and request reports from them, he said, *"Yes, sometimes I assign tasks to the seniors on duty or class prefects directly and requests report from them. Normally, I ask the class prefects to monitor teachers' attendance to class as well as the attendance of students who are usually found to be truant and then report to me".*

Inferring from the above, it is evident that vertical (downward) channel of communication is the most prominent channel of communication in the school. Other formal channels of communication such as the horizontal, diagonal and vertical (upward) channels of formal communication are not used much in the school. In other words, information mostly flows from the school administration to the teachers and students and not the other way round easily.

Modes of Formal Communication Employed in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

RQ2 sought to find out the modes or methods of formal communication employed in the school. The Assistant Headmaster indicated that,

"We mostly use general assembly and staff meetings to convey information regarding the school's policies and other issues to the students and teachers respectively. The school from time to time organizes school durbars, fora and orientation for students and prefects. The notice board is also sometimes used in conveying information to both teachers and students."

In relation to which of the aforementioned means has so proved very effective, the Assistant Headmaster said,

"Almost all the means have so far proven to be effective. However, the notice board and General Assembly seem to stand tall".

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With regard to how he interacts with students, he indicated that,

"I interacts with students verbally and make sure that I choose words that the students could easily understand"

The responses from the Assistant Headmaster suggest that staff meetings and general assemblies are the principal platforms through which the school's administration formally communicates with the teachers and students of the school respectively and most of these communications are done orally. This is in tune with the earlier findings of the study where the teachers and students revealed that staff meeting and general assembly serve as the main platforms through which they communicate with the school's administration respectively. Again, both the teachers and students revealed that most of the interactions that took place between them and the school's administration were done verbally.

Hindrances to Formal Communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

RQ3 sought after hindrances to formal communication in NASHS. On the issue of whether pieces of information from teachers and students get to the administration on time and easily, the Assistant Headmaster responded that,

"Not as much as is expected, but sometimes on time but sometimes they get to us when time is almost elapse but when we get the information we just act accordingly. Sometimes let's look at this where somebody elsewhere bolted into the students' dormitory, the students had to report to the housemistress, housemistress had to report to the senior housemistress before we got the information".

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This means that the delay may be due to the numerous levels that a piece of information has to pass through before it finally gets to the administration.

In relation to whether when administrators interact verbally with the teachers and students, they easily understand them, he said,

"Yes, I interact with teachers and students verbally and make sure that I choose words that they could easily understand".

With regards to the head's rapprochement with teachers and students, the Assistant Headmaster answered in the affirmative saying that, *"Because I shouldn't create a scenario whereby when students see me they panic. Sometimes I will be very stern on disciplinary issues at the same time I open my doors so that information will not be hindered so when they get information they act accordingly. So, for 24 hours the office doors are open to everybody".*

In contrast, results revealed by the study earlier on showed that majority of students were of the view that there was poor flow of information between the school administration and students; students found it difficult in sending information to the headmistress; and students find it difficult approaching the headmistress because of her position. Majority of the students again revealed that the headmistress usually failed to provide students with needed information to carry out their duties.

On the question of whether the administration put up notices or activities of events well ahead of time, the Assistant headmaster revealed that, *"It depended upon the situation. When we get to the email and get the information, sometimes the information is delivered weeks earlier, for example issues of teachers' promotion were put ahead of time. Sometimes just as you*

get the email, that day they are requesting for the information. Sometimes the regional office gets the information late, so they also send it through the mail very late".

Inferring from the above statement by the Assistant Headmaster, the delay might be due to the late receipt of electronic mails from the regional office of the Ghana Education Service and that he did not access his electronic mail account on daily basis which could be due to the poor functioning of the school's communication facilities as revealed earlier by him.

As to whether the school administration sometimes holds pieces of information from teachers and students, the Assistant Headmaster responded that,

"Yes, sometimes especially when the information is very delicate. That is sensitive information that can lead to stigmatization or tarnish the image of certain individuals in the school when relayed to the public. Apart from this, all other pieces of information are always relayed to both teachers and students".

With regards to whether teachers and students were aware of who and where to go for information at a particular time, the Assistant Headmaster said, *"They do. All students know that the first point of call is the notice board. In the dining hall, they receive information from the dining hall master/mistress, teachers and students on duty. If they need information from the classroom, the form masters/mistresses are there. If it concerns the dormitories, house masters/mistresses and house prefects are there".*

On the question of whether the school has staff and students' notice boards and if they patronise them, the Assistant Headmaster responded that,

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"Yes, *we have educated them on the use. They know that it is the major source of information. So sometimes when they see that the glass is opened, they know that new information is coming so they rash to take the information".*

This implies that both teachers and students had been educated on the need to visit the notice board for information. As a result, they did patronise the notice board.

When it comes to do with giving feedback to teachers and students, the Assistant Headmaster revealed that the school's administration did give the teachers and students feedback. However, the feedback was mostly not immediate. This is contained in the statement he made, *"We do give, but most at times not immediately; because we all have to meet before taking decision".*

This confirms an earlier assertion by the teachers and students that administration delayed in giving them immediate feedback. This might have also contributed to some of the findings that were earlier on revealed by the study: teachers and students being discouraged from discussing disturbing issues with administrators; teachers not seeing the essence of using the suggestion boxes; students feeling reluctant reporting or sending their complaints or grievances to the head of the school and teachers and students not securing positive responses (feedback) from the headmistress.

Ways Hindrances in RQ3 Affected Formal Communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

RQ4 Sought to seek for the ways in which the hindrances in RQ3 affect formal communication in NASHS. On the question as to whether teachers and students feel reluctant reporting or sending grievances to the administration, the Assistant Headmaster responded,

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"*Not much,* sometimes *they may decide to give the information to may be form masters/mistresses, then to the house masters/mistresses and probably through the senior house master/mistress, before the information gets to me. Unless it is very urgent that they may come to me. They don't feel reluctant but they have to pass through the right channel*".

In relation to whether the school has suggestion boxes, the Assistant Headmaster responded that, "*Yes, the school has suggestion boxes in place*". With regards to their patronage, he stated that, "*Not much unless there is a serious issue. If things are going on very well, there is no need to provide suggestions but you could observe that recently when teachers wanted to organise vacation classes, having been petitioned by the SRC, some students were not interested in it. So when we opened the suggestion box it was full of information. We read the information, assessed it and we presented it to the committee and the P.T.A. They discussed it and eventually gave their mandate*".

Inferring from these statements, it could be said that teachers and students usually used the suggestion boxes when there was a serious issue in the school that they would want to put forward their suggestions. The suggestion boxes are also opened when serious issues/problems arise

With regard to how often the administration holds meetings with the teachers and students in a term, the Assistant Headmaster said,

"*Formally we have the staff meetings at the beginning and end of the term. If there happens to be a disciplinary issue or any emergency, we hold emergency meetings and then we discuss it. We meet students at morning assemblies to relay pieces of information to them*".

Inferring from the above statement, it is clear that officially, the school held two staff meetings in a term, thus at the beginning and end of the term. Nonetheless, when there is an emergency, they do hold a staff meeting. With regard to the follow up question, "Do teachers and students freely make contributions during meetings"? The Assistant Headmaster revealed that teachers freely made contributions during such meetings. This was contained in the response he gave as an answer to the question above when he said,

"Very much. That is why I like the teachers. Everything is aired, whatever is worrying them they bring it out".

This implies that students do not contribute freely as teachers during such meetings.

Concerning whether the Assistant Head has any additional information that may be relevant to this topic, he said, *"Formal communication is very important. If there is communication flow you will observe that the issue of strikes that happen in schools and then all those rebellious activities are put to a halt. So, as far as administration is concerned it is always better to allow communication flow. If there is communication blockage so many things happen and the cost involved in repairing the damaged items is so high. So in administration there is the need for us to allow communication flow whether vertically or horizontally so that by the end of the day the institution grows from strength to strength".*

Merging the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

On the channels of communication available in NASHS, 14(77.8%) teachers agreed that the head of the school encouraged upward communication procedures; but, 254(76.3%) students disagreed. The interviewee's response

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was that, *"there exist a number of formal channels of communication in the school. During staff meetings and general assemblies, a lot of information is channelled to teachers and students respectively. During open fora, both students and teachers receive a lot of information from the school's administration. Notice boards are also used in disseminating information to both students and teachers. Sometimes the school's administration get in touch with the Heads of Department and other committees and ensure that meetings are held, where appropriate, to relay information to all those who need such information. Sometimes I do receive complaints and suggestions from students and teachers. Students usually communicate their grievances to me through the prefects, senior housemaster/mistress and Heads of Department while the teachers usually do that directly"*.

On modes or methods of communication, Staff Meetings served as the main platform through which teachers (61.1%) received information from the administration and was also the major means (83.3%) by which they communicated ideas, suggestions and grievances to the headmistress. On the students' front, 56.2% of them said, General Assembly served as the main means through which they received information from the headmistress whilst in terms of sending information, 47.5% of students indicated it was through SRC. With regards to sending suggestions, ideas and grievances, general assembly (42.0%) was second. This confirmed what the Assistant Head said, *"We mostly use general assembly and staff meetings to convey information regarding the school's policies and other issues to the students and teachers respectively"*.

Concerning the main hindrances to formal communication in NASHS, 77.8% teacher respondents and 62.7% student respondents said committees did not send their reports regularly. However, according to the Assistant Headmaster, *"The academic committee, welfare committee, sports committee, and disciplinary committee report to me on regular basis"*. When it comes to giving feedback to teachers and students, 55% teacher respondents and 64.6% student respondents said they did not secure positive responses (feedback) from the headmistress. This confirms what the Assistant Headmaster revealed that, *"We do give, but most at times not immediately; because we all have to meet before taking decision"*.

Concerning whether it is easy sending information to the head, (72.2%) teacher respondents agreed that it was easy whilst (81.1%) student respondents disagreed. The Assistant Headmaster's response was that, *"Sometimes issues get to us when time is almost elapsing but when we get the information we just act accordingly. Sometimes let's look at this where somebody elsewhere bolted into the students' dormitory, the students had to report to the housemistress, housemistress had to report to the senior housemistress before we got the information. Sometimes, they may decide to give the information to may be form masters/mistresses, then to the house masters/mistresses and probably through the senior house master/mistress, the information gets to me. Unless it is very urgent that they may come to me."* This means that the delay may be due to the numerous levels that a piece of information has to pass through before it finally gets to the administration.

About whether students and teachers cannot approach the head because of her position, (77.7%) teacher respondents disagreed, while (67%) of student respondents agreed. The Assistant Headmaster answered in the affirmative saying that, *"Because I shouldn't create a scenario whereby when students see me they panic. Sometimes I will be very stern on disciplinary issues at the same time I open my doors so that information will not be hindered so when they get information they act accordingly. So, for 24 hours the office doors are open to everybody"*. This contradicts with the response of the students which revealed that students find it difficult in approaching and sending information to the headmistress.

The hindrances associated with formal communication in Nkroful Senior High School have led to the following: 72.2% teacher respondents and 58.6% student respondents said that committees did not send their report regularly; 72.2% teachers and 57.1% students said that they were often reluctant in reporting or sending their complaints or grievances to the head. In response to this, the Assistant Headmaster indicated that, *"Sometimes I do receive complaints and suggestions from students and teachers. Students usually communicate their grievances to me through the prefects, senior housemaster/mistress and Heads of Department while the teachers usually do that directly. The academic committee, welfare committee, sports committee, and disciplinary committee report to me on regular basis"*.

With regard to the patronage of suggestion boxes, 88.9% teachers and 52.2% students said they do not see the essence of using the suggestion boxes; the Assistant Headmaster revealed that, *"Not much unless there is a serious*

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issue. If things are going on very well, there is no need to provide suggestions"

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary of the research process, key findings, conclusions, recommendations as well as suggestions for further studies.

Summary of the Research Process

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. In order to achieve the aim of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What formal channels of communication are available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

2. What modes of formal communication are employed in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

3. What are the hindrances to formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

4. In what ways do the hindrances in RQ3 affect formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School?

The study used the mixed methods approach with particular focus on convergent parallel mixed methods design. The convergent parallel mixed methods design was considered most appropriate for the study because it has usefulness for both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Besides, the application of the convergent parallel design enabled the researcher to carefully combine the quantitative and qualitative data forms to develop

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results and conclusions about the topic that were more complete and/or more valid. In all, 352 respondents participated in the study. Three hundred and fifty-one (351) students and teachers were stratified and then randomly selected. The head of the school was purposively selected. Questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect the data and were administered personally by the researcher. The quantitative data that was collected through the questionnaire were analysed descriptively using frequency count and percentage. In terms of the result of interviews or qualitative data, the audio recording was transcribed and analysed thematically.

Key Findings

The study, first of all, found out that the head of the school often discussed the policies of the school with the teachers; there was optimum flow of information between the school administration and teachers; teachers in the school found it easy sending information to the administration; information from administration reached teachers at the right time; the head of the school sometimes delivered pieces of information through other teaching staff members and the headmistress was always available and her doors were open for views and complaints from teachers. Apart from these, the study also found out that the head of the school sometimes delivered pieces of information to students through teachers and SRC members; and suggestion boxes were available in the school and students were encouraged to send their suggestions through these suggestion boxes.

Additionally, the study found out that staff meetings served as the main platform that helped teachers to receive information from the headmistress in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. Staff meetings again served as the

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main means through which teachers made known their ideas, suggestions and grievances to the head of the school. Staff meetings again served as the main platform that the head of the school used in discussing with the teachers issues or policies of the school. The teachers mostly communicated with the head of the school verbally.

With regard to the students, the study found out that General Assembly served as the main means through which they received information from the administrators. It was also found out that SRC Meetings and General Assembly were the main platforms that students of Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School used in getting their suggestions, ideas, and grievances to the headmistress. The study further revealed that most of the students got the opportunity to communicate directly with the headmistress only during General Assembly and most of these interactions were done verbally.

Moreover, the study found out that failure on the part of committees to send their reports regularly, indifferent attitude on the part of teachers to pieces of information given by the head of the school, teacher's distrust for the school administrators for any information given, and teachers' inability to secure positive responses (feedback) for the headmistress were the main hindrances to effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. On the part of students, the study found out that students' failure to listen in order to understand information given by the headmistress, failure on the part of committees to send their report on time; students' indifferent attitude toward pieces of information given by administrators of the school; distrust for administrators of the school by the students for any information given; poor flow of information between the school administration and

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students; difficulty in sending information to the head by students; students' inability to receive positive responses (feedback) from the head; difficulty in approaching the headmistress because of her position; and failure on the part of the headmistress to provide students with adequate information they needed to carry out their duties were the main hindrances to effective formal communication in the school.

Last but not least, the study found out that the hindrances associated with formal communication in Nkroful Senior High School had consequently led to the following negative effects: committees did not send their reports regularly; teachers were often reluctant in reading pieces of information that were pasted on the notice boards; teachers were discouraged from discussing disturbing issues with administrators; teachers did not see the essence of using the suggestion boxes; and teachers felt insecure in giving information to the school administrators. On the part of students, the challenges had led to the following effects: students felt reluctant reporting or sending their complaints or grievances to the head; students were discouraged to put contributions they make into writing; students wee discouraged from discussing disturbing issues with administrators; and students felt insecure in giving out information to the school administrators.

Conclusions

Conclusions based on the findings above are as follows:

1. The vertical, diagonal and horizontal channels of communication are the formal channels of communication available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. However, there are challenges existing with their effective

use, especially of upward and horizontal flow of information whilst diagonal channel of communication suffers a major neglect.

2. Staff Meeting (teachers) and General Assembly and SRC (students) served as the modes for information exchange. Basically, oral communication was predominant at the expense of written communication such as memos, notice boards, reports and letters. This is because of the predominant means of communication used in the School which involved Staff Meetings, SRC Meetings and General Assembly.

3. Teachers and students were unanimous about not receiving prompt feedback from the administration. This has impeded the success of communication and its accuracy in the school because it has become a one-way process instead of a two-way communication process. Teachers and students have developed mistrust for the school administration and have become indifferent to pieces of information given by the school administration.

4. Failure on the part of committees to submit reports regularly had led to the assumption by some students and teachers that committees do not even exist in the school. This has impeded the horizontal flow of communication. By this situation, the impression is also created to the administration that there are no problems at the lower levels.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. The diagonal channels of formal communication should be encouraged in the school so that students in particular can easily have access to the administrators directly and discuss with them certain pertinent issues that

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affect them. Also, the headmistress or administrators should operate the open door administration so that students can feel free to come to her.

2. Other means of communication such as letters, memos, and the use of notice boards should be encouraged in the school by the administrators of the School. The reason is that in the Senior High School, staff meeting and general assembly are not held on daily basis. This can consequently affect the relevance and timeliness of pieces of information. Also, it is not everyone who can engage in an effective oral communication in public, hence encouraging the aforementioned means of formal communication can help those who lack oral and public speaking skills to also communicate effectively, for instance, in writing. Furthermore, most Senior High Schools in Ghana have the centralised notice boards and suggestion boxes. Notice Boards and suggestion boxes should be made available (decentralized) in the various dormitories, dining halls and if possible classrooms to cater for day students.

3. The administrators of the school should prompt committee members to meet regularly and submit their report on time. The head of the School should give feedback to the teachers and students Any feud between the school administration, teachers and students should also be settled in order to renew the teachers' and students' trust in the administration. This will make both teachers and students to develop the interest in the pieces of information that will be given to them by the administration. When all these are achieved, it will improve the state of formal communication in the school tremendously.

Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that a similar study should be conducted in other Senior High Schools to see how the situation is portrayed. This will help in generating enough findings that will help in coming out with sound strategies and policies that can help improve formal communication in Senior High Schools in Ghana.

Further study could be done to assess informal communication and how it supports the formal communication for the smooth running of Senior High Schools in Ghana.

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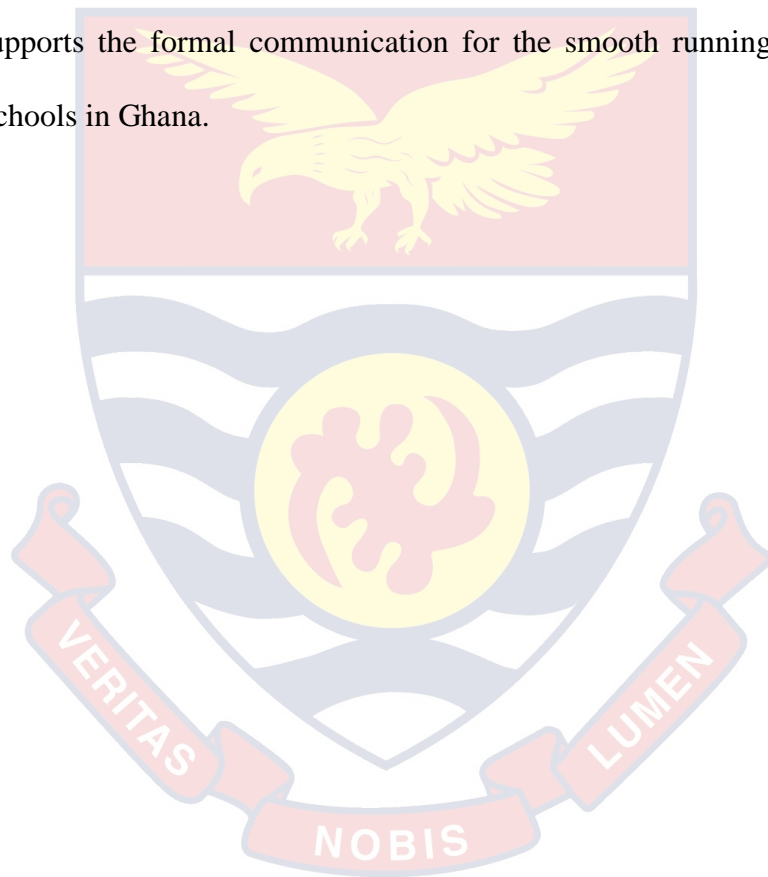
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS IN NKROFUL

AGRICULTURAL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Introduction

A study is being conducted by a student from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast. The purpose of the study is to investigate the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. It would be much appreciated if you can help by responding to this questionnaire. Whatever information that you give in this exercise will be treated as confidential and be used only for the study.

SECTION A - BIO DATA

1. Gender

   Female   (   )

   Male   (   )

2. Please indicate your professional status.

   Graduate professional   (   )

   Graduate non-professional   (   )

3. Position held in the school.

   Assistant head master/mistress   (   )

   Head of Department   (   )

   Senior house master/mistress   (   )

   House master/mistress   (   )

   Form master/mistress   (   )

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Any other (Please specify)…………………………………………

4. How long have you been teaching in the present school?

Under 5 years   (   )

5 – 10 years   (   )

10 – 15 years   (   )

Over 15 years   (   )

5. What is your present rank in the Ghana Education Service?

Principal Superintendent   (   )

Assistant Director II   (   )

Assistant Director I   (   )

Deputy Director   (   )

Any other (Please specify) ……………………………………….

SECTION B

Formal communication channels available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior

High School

This section is to help in answering questions concerning formal communication channels in the school. Please tick the response or the number on the scale given that best describes your answer

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
6. The headmistress encourages upward communication.				
7. The headmistress responds promptly to teachers needs or reports.				
8. The headmistress often discusses the policies of.				

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ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
9. There is optimum flow of information between administration and teachers.				
10. Information reaches teachers from administration at the right time.				
11. Teachers find it easy sending information to the administration.				
12. The headmistress sometimes delivers pieces of information through other teaching staff members.				
13. The pieces of information given by the headmistress to these other teaching staff members are delivered accurately.				
14. There are committees in the school and these committees meet regularly to deliberate on issues on behalf of administration.				
15. Teachers most at times call one another on mobile phones to discuss issues that relate to them and the school.				
16. The headmistress is always available and her doors are open for views and complaints from the school with the teachers				

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SECTION C

The modes or methods of formal communication employed in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School.

Please tick (√) the responses you consider appropriate to the question.

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

a. notice board   (   )   b. memo   (   )

c. staff meeting   (   )   d. general assembly   (   )

e. colleague teachers   (   )   f. other(s)(specify)……

18. Teaching staff's suggestions, grievances and ideas get to the headmistress most through

a. notice boards   (   )   b. staff meeting   (   )

c. general assembly   (   )   d. colleague teachers   (   )

e. memo   (   )   f. other(s)(specify)   (   )

19. By which means do you (as a teacher) communicate with the headmistress most of the time?

a. staff meeting   (   )   b. individually   (   )

c. letters   (   )   d. delegation   (   )

e. memo   (   )   f. other(s)(specify)……………

Please tick the number on the scale that best describes your response to each of the following items.

4.-Stronly Agree   3.-Agree   2.-Disagree   1. Strongly Disagree

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
20. Teachers often communicate with the head by expressing their opinions verbally.				
21. The head discusses issues or policies of the school with the teachers during staff meetings.				

SECTION D

Hindrances to effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

This section seeks to solicit answers to questions on the hindrances to formal communication. Please tick the number on the scale that best describes your response to each of the following items.

4.-Stronly Agree   3.-Agree   2.-Disagree   1. Strongly Disagree

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
22. The language used in communication is sometimes ambiguous.				
23. Information on notice board is not properly read and understood by teachers.				
24. Teachers sometimes do not understand information from the headmistress.				
25. Committees do not send their reports regularly.				
26. Teachers are often indifferent to pieces of information given by head of the school.				

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ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
27. Administrators of the school are trusted by teachers for any information given.				
28. There is optimum flow of information between administration and teachers.				
29. Information from the head gets to the teachers on time.				
30. It is easy sending information to the head.				
31. Teachers often secure positive responses (feedbacks) from the head.				
32. The head is always specific in giving out information.				
33. Teachers cannot approach the head because of her position.				
34. The headmistress sometimes frowns when communicating with teachers.				
35. Complaints from teachers are often distorted before they get to the head.				
36. The head does not provide the teachers with adequate information they need to carry out their duties.				
37. The head is always busy and therefore does not listen to her teachers' complaints.				

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SECTION E

Ways in which the hindrances in RQ3 affect effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School.

Please, tick the number on the scale that best describes your response to each of the following statements.

4.-Strongly agree   3.-Agree   2.-Disagree   1. Strongly Disagree

Due to the parties' inability to engage in effective formal communication:

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
38. Committees do not send their reports regularly.				
39. Teachers feel reluctant reporting or sending their complaints or grievances to the head.				
40. Teachers are often reluctant in reading pieces of information that are put on the notice boards.				
41. Teachers are discouraged to put contributions they make into writing.				
42. Teachers are discouraged to discuss disturbing issues with administrators.				
43. Suggestion boxes have been put in place yet teachers do not put in anything.				
44. Teachers feel insecure to give information to administrators.				

THANK YOU.

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APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS IN NKROFUL AGRICULTURAL

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Introduction

A study is being conducted by a student from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast. The purpose of the study is to investigate the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. It would be much appreciated if you can help by responding to this questionnaire. Whatever information that you give in this exercise will be treated as confidential and be used only for the study,

SECTION A

BIO DATA

1. Gender

(i) Female   (   )

(ii) Male   (   )

2. Please indicate your class in your school.

SHS 1   (   )

SHS 2   (   )

SHS 3   (   )

3. How are you involved in school administration?

Prefect   (   )

Member of SRC   (   )

Member of a school committee   (   )

Ordinary student   (   )

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SECTION   B

Formal communication channels available in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

This section is to help in answering questions concerning formal communication channels in the school. Please tick the response or the number on the scale given that best describes your answer.

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
4. The headmistress encourages upward communication.				
5. The headmistress responds promptly to students' needs or reports.				
6. The headmistress discusses the policies of the school with the students.				
7. Suggestions from students are well taken by the administration.				
8. There is optimum flow of information between administration and students.				
9. Information reaches students from administration at the right time.				
10. Students find it easy sending information to the administration.				
11. The headmistress sometimes delivers pieces of information through teachers and SRC members.				
12. The pieces of information given by the headmistress to these teachers and SRC members are delivered accurately.				

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ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
13. There are committees of teachers in the school on which students are represented and these committees meet regularly to deliberate on issues on behalf of administration.				
14. Suggestion boxes are available in the school and students are encouraged to send their suggestions through these suggestion boxes.				
15. Class prefects communicate class members' grievances to SRC for onwards discussion with administration.				
16. The headmistress often assigns tasks to class prefects and other prefects.				
17. The school prefects often meet regularly to deliberate on issues affecting them in the school.				
18. Form meetings are regularly held.				

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SECTION C

The modes or methods of formal communication employed in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School.

Please tick (√) the responses you consider appropriate to the question.

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

a. notice board   ( )   b. memo   ( )

c. SRC meeting   ( )   d. general assembly   ( )

e. delegation   ( )   f. other(s)(specify)……

20. How do students' suggestions, grievances and ideas get to the headmistress?

a. through notice boards   ( )   b. through SRC meetings   ( )

c. through general assembly ( )   d. through delegation   ( )

e. through memo   ( )   f. other(s)(specify)   ( )

21. By which means do you (as a student) communicate with the headmistress most of the time?

a. general assembly ( )   b. individually   ( )

c. SRC meeting   ( )   d. delegation   ( )

e. memo   ( )   f. other(s)(specify)……

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Please tick the number on the scale that best describes your response to each of the following items.

4.-Stronly Agree   3.-Agree   2.-Disagree   1. Strongly Disagree

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
22. Students often communicate with the head by expressing their opinion verbally.				
23. The head discusses issues or policies of the school with the students during SRC meeting.				
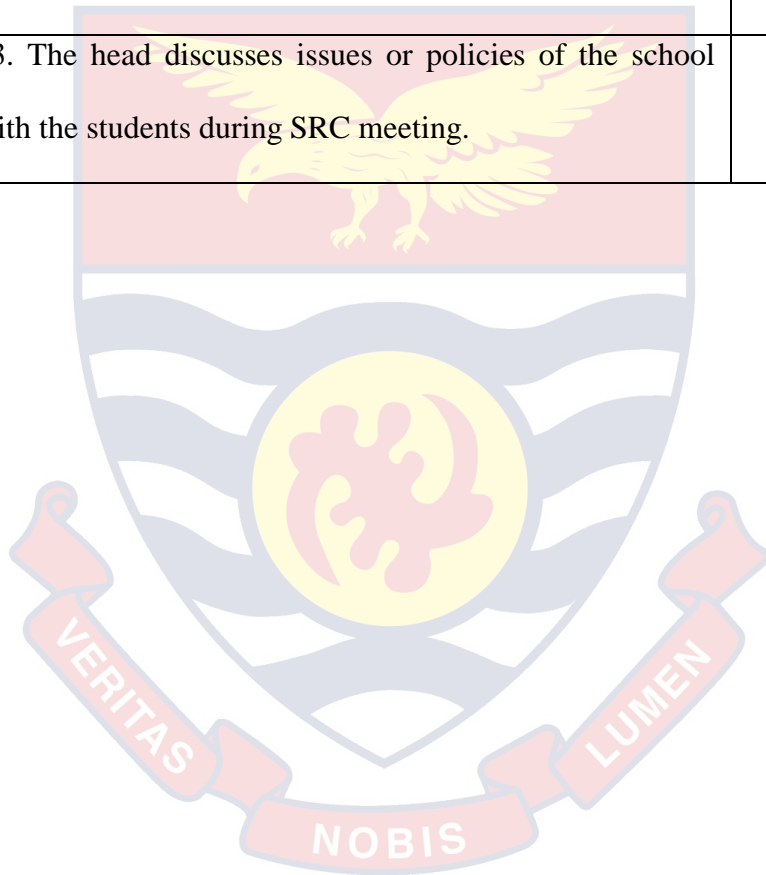
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SECTION D

Hindrances to effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

This section seeks to solicit answers to questions on the hindrances to formal communication. Please tick the number on the scale that best describes your response to each of the following items.

4.-Stronly Agree   3.-Agree   2.-Disagree   1. Strongly Disagree

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
24. The language used in communication is sometimes ambiguous.				
25. Information on students' notice board is not properly read and understood by students.				
26. Students sometimes do not listen in order to understand information given by the headmistress.				
27. Committees do not send their reports regularly.				
28. Students are often indifferent to information given by administrators of the school.				
29. Administrators of the school are trusted by students for any information given.				
30. There is optimum flow of information between administration and students.				

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31. Information from the head gets to the students on time.				
32. It is easy sending information to the head.				
33. Students often receive positive responses (feedbacks) from the head.				
34. The head is always specific in giving out information.				
35. Students cannot approach the head because of her position.				
36. The headmistress sometimes frowns when communicating with students.				
37. Complaints from students to the head are distorted before they get to the head.				
38. The head does not provide the students with adequate information they need to carry out their duties.				
39. The head is always busy and therefore not regularly found in the office to listen to students' complaints.				

SECTION E

Ways in which the hindrances in RQ3 affect effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School.

Please, tick the number on the scale that best describes your response to each of the following statements.

4.-Strongly agree   3.-Agree   2.-Disagree   1. Strongly Disagree

Due to the parties' inability to engage in effective formal communication:

ITEM STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
40. Committees do not send their reports regularly.				
41. Students feel reluctant reporting or sending their complaints or grievances.				
42. Students are reluctant in reading pieces of information that are put on the notice boards.				
43. Students are discouraged to put contributions they make into writing.				
44. Students are discouraged to discuss disturbing issues with administrators.				
45. Suggestion boxes have been put in place yet students do not put suggestions into them.				
46. Students feel insecure to give information to administrators.				

THANK YOU

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE HEADMISTRESS ON FORMAL COMMUNICATION IN NKROFUL AGRICULTURAL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Introduction

I am a student from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast undertaking a study in formal communication practices. As indicated to you earlier, this study seeks to investigate the state of formal communication practices in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School. Whatever information you give in this exercise will be treated confidentially and be used only for the study. So please feel free to share your views and experiences with me. Thank you very much for being able and willing to take part in this short interview.

Interview items

SECTION A - BIO DATA

1. For how long have you been in this school?

2. What are your responsibilities as far as your position is concerned?

SECTION B

Formal communication channels available in the School

3. Do you communicate regularly with your students and teachers?

4. What is formal communication in relation to a school?

5. What forms of formal communication channels exist in your school?

6. (a). Do you have telephone facility at the various offices in the school?

(i). (If yes), do they work effectively?

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(ii). Do other administrators and teachers call sometimes to discuss issues with you on the telephone?

(iii). If yes, what kind of issues do they discuss with you? (e.g. personal, administrative etc.).

(iv) If your answer to 5a above is no, are you comfortable with its absence?

7. (a) Do you receive complaints or views from students and teachers?

(b) If yes, through which means do they express these views or complaints?

(c) If no, why?

(d) If no, what measures have you put in place to encourage that?

8. (a) Do you have committees in your school?

(b). If yes, please mention some of them and do they regularly report to you?

(c). If no why?

9. (a) Do you sometimes deliver pieces of information through other staff members to students?

(b) If yes, do the information get to the students on time and accurately?

(c) If no, why?

10. (a) Do you assign tasks to school or class prefects directly and request reports from them?

(b) If yes, how often do you do that?

(c) If yes, give two examples of such tasks.

(d) If no, why?

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SECTION C

The modes or methods of formal communication employed in the school.

11. Which formal means do you use to communicate the school's policies to the teachers?

12. Which formal means do you use to communicate the school's policies to the students?

13. In your experience as the head of this institution, which of the means in your view has been most effective?

SECTION D

Hindrances to effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School

14. (a) Do pieces of information from teachers and students get to you on time and easily?

(b) If yes, why?

(c) If no, what is the cause?

15. (a) When you interact verbally with the teachers and students, do they easily understand you?

(b) If yes, why?

(c) If no, why?

16. (a) Considering your position as a head, do teachers and students feel comfortable approaching you? (open door policy)

(b) If yes, why?

(c) If no, why?

17. (a) Do you put up notices or activities of events well ahead of time?

(b) If yes, how early? And in what way has it assisted in the running of the school.

18. (a) As an administrator, do you sometimes hold pieces of information from teachers and students?

(b) If yes, why?

19. Are teachers and students aware of who and where to go for information at a particular time?

20. (a) Do you have students and staff notice boards in the school?

(b) i. If yes, do the students and teachers patronise the notice boards?

   ii. If students and teachers do not patronise the notice board, why?

(c) If the answer in 13a above is no, why?

21. (a) Do you give feedback for any information you receive from teachers and students?

(b) If yes, how fast is it?

(c) If no, why

SECTION E

Ways in which the hindrances in RQ3 affect effective formal communication in Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School.

22. (a) Do the teachers and students feel reluctant reporting or sending grievances to you?

(b) If yes, why?

(c) If no, why?

23. (a) Do you have suggestion boxes?

(b) If yes, are they well patronised?

(c) If there are no suggestion boxes, why?

24. (a). How often do you hold meetings with the teachers and students in a term?

 (b) Do teachers and students freely make contributions during meetings?

i. If yes, are their contributions well taken?

ii. If no, why?

25. Please do have any additional information that may be relevant to this topic?

I thank you once again for your time and valuable insights. I will get back to you should there be any further information regarding this topic. Thanks and bye for now.

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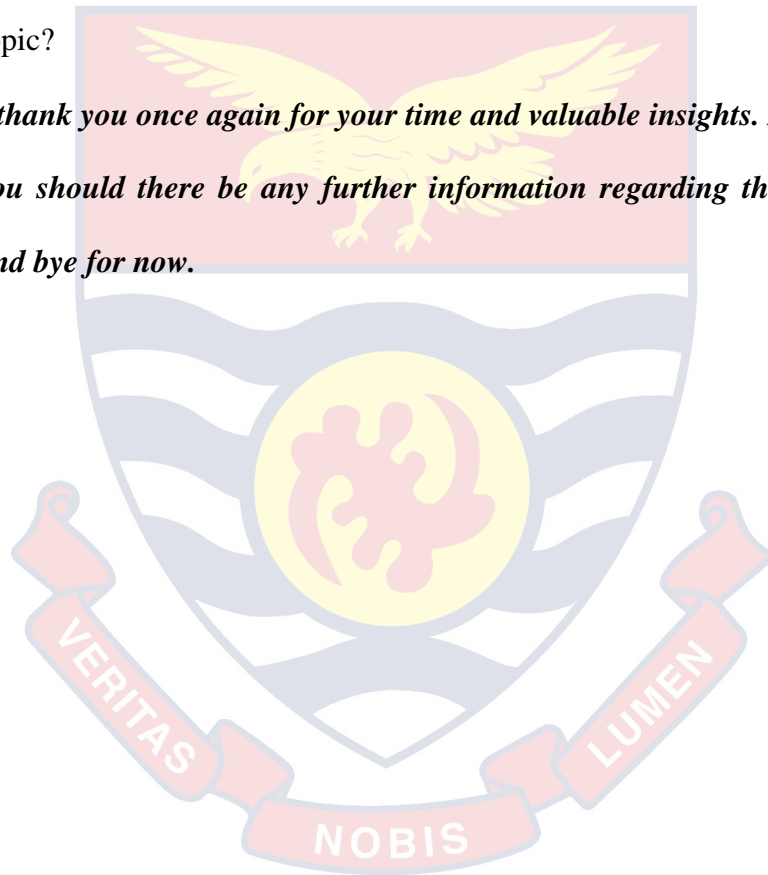
APPENDIX E

THE RESULT OF THE RELIABILITY TEST

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```
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.

SAVE OUTFILE='C:\Users\mmmm\Desktop\SIR BARNS_6.10.16\STUDENTS_PILOT STUDY
.sav'
  /COMPRESSED.
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet5.
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=q6 q7 q8 q9 q10 q11 q12 q13 q14 q15 q16
  /SCALE('FIRST SCALE Q6-Q16 (TEACHERS)') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA
  /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE SCALE CORR
  /SUMMARY=TOTAL CORR.
```

Reliability

[DataSet5] C:\Users\mmmm\Desktop\SIR BARNS_6.10.16\TEACHERS_PILOT STUDY.sav

Warnings

Each of the following component variables has zero variance and is removed from the scale: q13, q14
The determinant of the covariance matrix is zero or approximately zero. Statistics based on its inverse matrix cannot be computed and they are displayed as system missing values.

Scale: FIRST SCALE Q6-Q16 (TEACHERS)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	4	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	4	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.819	.890	9

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
q6	3.00	1.414	4
q7	3.25	.500	4
q8	2.50	1.000	4
q9	3.25	.500	4
q10	3.25	.500	4
q11	3.25	.500	4
q12	2.50	1.291	4
q15	2.25	.957	4
q16	3.00	1.414	4

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q6	q7	q8	q9	q10	q11	q12	q15
q6	1.000	.471	.943	.471	.471	.471	.548	.739
q7	.471	1.000	.333	1.000	1.000	1.000	-.258	.522
q8	.943	.333	1.000	.333	.333	.333	.775	.870
q9	.471	1.000	.333	1.000	1.000	1.000	-.258	.522
q10	.471	1.000	.333	1.000	1.000	1.000	-.258	.522
q11	.471	1.000	.333	1.000	1.000	1.000	-.258	.522
q12	.548	-.258	.775	-.258	-.258	-.258	1.000	.674
q15	.739	.522	.870	.522	.522	.522	.674	1.000
q16	-.167	.471	.000	.471	.471	.471	.000	.492

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q16
q6	-.167
q7	.471
q8	.000
q9	.471
q10	.471
q11	.471
q12	.000
q15	.492
q16	1.000

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance
Inter-Item Correlations	.473	-.258	1.000	1.258	-3.873	.150

Summary Item Statistics

	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	9

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
q6	23.25	20.917	.670	.	.783
q7	23.00	28.000	.630	.	.803
q8	23.75	22.917	.801	.	.765
q9	23.00	28.000	.630	.	.803
q10	23.00	28.000	.630	.	.803
q11	23.00	28.000	.630	.	.803
q12	23.75	25.583	.332	.	.834
q15	24.00	22.000	.965	.	.745
q16	23.25	26.250	.230	.	.856

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
26.25	31.583	5.620	9

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=q22 q23 q24 q25 q26 q27 q28 q29 q30 q31 q32 q33 q35 q36 q37 q
38
  /SCALE('SECOND SCALE Q22-Q38 (TEACHERS)') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA
  /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE SCALE CORR
  /SUMMARY=TOTAL CORR.
```

Reliability

[DataSet5] C:\Users\mmmm\Desktop\SIR BARNS_6.10.16\TEACHERS_PILOT STUDY.sav

Warnings

Each of the following component variables has zero variance and is removed from the scale: q31_recoded, q33

The determinant of the covariance matrix is zero or approximately zero. Statistics based on its inverse matrix cannot be computed and they are displayed as system missing values.

Scale: SECOND SCALE Q22-Q38 (TEACHERS)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	4	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	4	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.815	.754	14

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
q22	1.25	.500	4
q23	2.50	1.291	4
q24	2.50	1.291	4
q25	2.25	.957	4
q26	2.25	.500	4
q27_recoded	2.75	.500	4
q28_recoded	2.75	.500	4
q29_recoded	2.75	.500	4
q30_recoded	3.75	.500	4
q32-recoded	3.25	.500	4
q35	2.00	1.414	4
q36	1.25	.500	4
q37	2.00	.816	4
q38	1.25	.500	4

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q22	q23	q24	q25	q26	q27_recoded
q22	1.000	.258	.258	.522	-.333	.333
q23	.258	1.000	1.000	.944	.775	.258
q24	.258	1.000	1.000	.944	.775	.258
q25	.522	.944	.944	1.000	.522	.174
q26	-.333	.775	.775	.522	1.000	.333
q27_recoded	.333	.258	.258	.174	.333	1.000
q28_recoded	.333	-.775	-.775	-.522	-1.000	-.333
q29_recoded	.333	-.775	-.775	-.522	-1.000	-.333
q30_recoded	.333	.775	.775	.870	.333	-.333
q32-recoded	-.333	.775	.775	.522	1.000	.333
q35	.000	.913	.913	.739	.943	.471
q36	1.000	.258	.258	.522	-.333	.333
q37	.000	.316	.316	.426	.000	-.816
q38	1.000	.258	.258	.522	-.333	.333

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q28_recoded	q29_recoded	q30_recoded	q32-recoded	q35	q36
q22	.333	.333	.333	-.333	.000	1.000
q23	-.775	-.775	.775	.775	.913	.258
q24	-.775	-.775	.775	.775	.913	.258
q25	-.522	-.522	.870	.522	.739	.522
q26	-1.000	-1.000	.333	1.000	.943	-.333
q27_recoded	-.333	-.333	-.333	.333	.471	.333
q28_recoded	1.000	1.000	-.333	-1.000	-.943	.333
q29_recoded	1.000	1.000	-.333	-1.000	-.943	.333
q30_recoded	-.333	-.333	1.000	.333	.471	.333
q32-recoded	-1.000	-1.000	.333	1.000	.943	-.333
q35	-.943	-.943	.471	.943	1.000	.000
q36	.333	.333	.333	-.333	.000	1.000
q37	.000	.000	.816	.000	.000	.000
q38	.333	.333	.333	-.333	.000	1.000

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q37	q38
q22	.000	1.000
q23	.316	.258
q24	.316	.258
q25	.426	.522
q26	.000	-.333
q27_recoded	-.816	.333
q28_recoded	.000	.333
q29_recoded	.000	.333
q30_recoded	.816	.333
q32-recoded	.000	-.333
q35	.000	.000
q36	.000	1.000
q37	1.000	.000
q38	.000	1.000

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance
Inter-Item Correlations	.180	-1.000	1.000	2.000	-1.000	.320

Summary Item Statistics

	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	14

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Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
q22	31.25	34.917	.423	.	.807
q23	30.00	24.000	.949	.	.745
q24	30.00	24.000	.949	.	.745
q25	30.25	26.917	.990	.	.751
q26	30.25	34.250	.541	.	.801
q27_recoded	29.75	36.250	.194	.	.817
q28_recoded	29.75	41.583	-.646	.	.851
q29_recoded	29.75	41.583	-.646	.	.851
q30_recoded	28.75	32.917	.784	.	.790
q32-recoded	29.25	34.250	.541	.	.801
q35	30.50	25.667	.698	.	.781
q36	31.25	34.917	.423	.	.807
q37	30.50	35.000	.207	.	.820
q38	31.25	34.917	.423	.	.807

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
32.50	37.667	6.137	14

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=q39 q40 q41 q42 q43 q44 q45
  /SCALE('THIRD SCALE Q39-Q45 (TEACHERS)') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA
  /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE SCALE CORR
  /SUMMARY=TOTAL CORR.
```

Reliability

[DataSet5] C:\Users\mmmm\Desktop\SIR BARNS_6.10.16\TEACHERS_PILOT STUDY.sav

Warnings

The determinant of the covariance matrix is zero or approximately zero. Statistics based on its inverse matrix cannot be computed and they are displayed as system missing values.

Scale: THIRD SCALE Q39-Q45 (TEACHERS)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	4	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	4	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.797	.827	7

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
q39	2.00	.816	4
q40	1.75	.500	4
q41	2.00	.816	4
q42	1.75	.500	4
q43	1.75	.500	4
q44	2.75	.957	4
q45	1.75	.500	4

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q39	q40	q41	q42	q43	q44	q45
q39	1.000	.816	.500	.816	.816	.426	.000
q40	.816	1.000	.816	1.000	1.000	.522	-.333
q41	.500	.816	1.000	.816	.816	.000	.000
q42	.816	1.000	.816	1.000	1.000	.522	-.333
q43	.816	1.000	.816	1.000	1.000	.522	-.333
q44	.426	.522	.000	.522	.522	1.000	-.870
q45	.000	-.333	.000	-.333	-.333	-.870	1.000

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance
Inter-Item Correlations	.406	-.870	1.000	1.870	-1.149	.287

Summary Item Statistics

	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	7

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
q39	11.75	6.250	.816	.	.704
q40	12.00	7.333	.985	.	.709
q41	11.75	6.917	.621	.	.752
q42	12.00	7.333	.985	.	.709
q43	12.00	7.333	.985	.	.709
q44	11.00	8.000	.246	.	.850
q45	12.00	11.333	-.396	.	.882

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
13.75	10.250	3.202	7

```
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=q4 q5 q6 q7 q8 q9 q10 q11 q12 q13 q14 q15 q16 q17 q18
  /SCALE('FIRST SCALE Q4-Q18 (STUDENTS)') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA
  /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE SCALE CORR
  /SUMMARY=TOTAL CORR.
```

Reliability

[DataSet1] C:\Users\mmmm\Desktop\SIR BARNS_6.10.16\STUDENTS_PILOT STUDY.sav

Warnings

Each of the following component variables has zero variance and is removed from the scale: q4, q18
The determinant of the covariance matrix is zero or approximately zero. Statistics based on its inverse matrix cannot be computed and they are displayed as system missing values.

Scale: FIRST SCALE Q4-Q18 (STUDENTS)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	12	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	12	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.884	.876	13

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
q5	2.75	.452	12
q6	2.25	.452	12
q7	2.50	.522	12
q8	2.50	.905	12
q9	2.00	.739	12
q10	2.50	.522	12
q11	2.25	.866	12
q12	2.25	.866	12
q13	2.25	.452	12
q14	2.25	.452	12
q15	2.50	.522	12
q16	2.25	.452	12
q17	1.75	.452	12

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q5	q6	q7	q8	q9	q10	q11	q12
q5	1.000	.333	.577	1.000	.816	.577	.174	.870
q6	.333	1.000	.577	.333	.000	-.577	-.870	-.174
q7	.577	.577	1.000	.577	.000	.000	-.302	.302
q8	1.000	.333	.577	1.000	.816	.577	.174	.870
q9	.816	.000	.000	.816	1.000	.707	.426	.853
q10	.577	-.577	.000	.577	.707	1.000	.905	.905
q11	.174	-.870	-.302	.174	.426	.905	1.000	.636
q12	.870	-.174	.302	.870	.853	.905	.636	1.000
q13	.333	-.333	-.577	.333	.816	.577	.522	.522
q14	.333	-.333	-.577	.333	.816	.577	.522	.522
q15	.577	-.577	.000	.577	.707	1.000	.905	.905
q16	.333	-.333	-.577	.333	.816	.577	.522	.522
q17	-.333	-1.000	-.577	-.333	.000	.577	.870	.174

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q13	q14	q15	q16	q17
q5	.333	.333	.577	.333	-.333
q6	-.333	-.333	-.577	-.333	-1.000
q7	-.577	-.577	.000	-.577	-.577
q8	.333	.333	.577	.333	-.333
q9	.816	.816	.707	.816	.000
q10	.577	.577	1.000	.577	.577
q11	.522	.522	.905	.522	.870
q12	.522	.522	.905	.522	.174
q13	1.000	1.000	.577	1.000	.333
q14	1.000	1.000	.577	1.000	.333
q15	.577	.577	1.000	.577	.577
q16	1.000	1.000	.577	1.000	.333
q17	.333	.333	.577	.333	1.000

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance
Inter-Item Correlations	.352	-1.000	1.000	2.000	-1.000	.245

Summary Item Statistics

	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	13

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
q5	27.25	23.114	.784	.	.869
q6	27.75	28.023	-.313	.	.908
q7	27.50	26.455	.000	.	.900
q8	27.50	19.909	.743	.	.867
q9	28.00	20.182	.904	.	.855
q10	27.50	22.091	.889	.	.862
q11	27.75	21.477	.561	.	.880
q12	27.75	18.750	.964	.	.849
q13	27.75	23.659	.651	.	.874
q14	27.75	23.659	.651	.	.874
q15	27.50	22.091	.889	.	.862
q16	27.75	23.659	.651	.	.874
q17	28.25	25.841	.148	.	.892

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
30.00	26.727	5.170	13

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=q24 q25 q26 q27 q28 q29 q30 q31 q32 q33 q34 q35 q36 q37 q38 q
39
  /SCALE('SECOND SCALE Q24-Q39 (STUDENTS)') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA
  /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE SCALE CORR
  /SUMMARY=TOTAL CORR.
```

Reliability

[DataSet1] C:\Users\mmmm\Desktop\SIR BARNS_6.10.16\STUDENTS_PILOT STUDY.sav

Warnings

Each of the following component variables has zero variance and is removed from the scale: q32_recoded, q34_recoded, q39

The determinant of the covariance matrix is zero or approximately zero. Statistics based on its inverse matrix cannot be computed and they are displayed as system missing values.

Scale: SECOND SCALE Q24-Q39 (STUDENTS)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	12	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	12	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.762	.723	13

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
q24	2.50	1.168	12
q25	2.50	1.168	12
q26	2.25	.866	12
q27	2.75	.866	12
q28	3.25	.452	12
q29_recoded	3.00	.739	12
q30_recoded	2.75	.452	12
q31_recoded	3.75	.452	12
q33_recoded	3.25	.452	12
q35	2.00	1.279	12
q36	1.25	.452	12
q37	2.00	.739	12
q38	1.25	.452	12
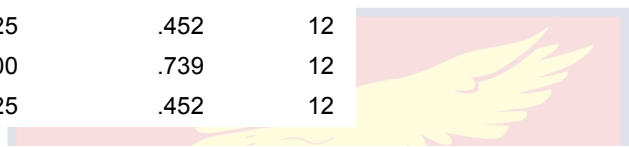
Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q24	q25	q26	q27	q28	q29_recoded
q24	1.000	1.000	.944	.135	-.258	-.632
q25	1.000	1.000	.944	.135	-.258	-.632
q26	.944	.944	1.000	.091	-.174	-.426
q27	.135	.135	.091	1.000	.870	.426
q28	-.258	-.258	-.174	.870	1.000	.816
q29_recoded	-.632	-.632	-.426	.426	.816	1.000
q30_recoded	-.775	-.775	-.522	-.174	.333	.816
q31_recoded	.775	.775	.870	.522	.333	.000
q33_recoded	.775	.775	.522	.174	-.333	-.816
q35	.913	.913	.739	.000	-.471	-.866
q36	.258	.258	.522	-.522	-.333	.000
q37	.316	.316	.426	.853	.816	.500
q38	.258	.258	.522	-.522	-.333	.000

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Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q30_recoded	q31_recoded	q33_recoded	q35	q36	q37
q24	-.775	.775	.775	.913	.258	.316
q25	-.775	.775	.775	.913	.258	.316
q26	-.522	.870	.522	.739	.522	.426
q27	-.174	.522	.174	.000	-.522	.853
q28	.333	.333	-.333	-.471	-.333	.816
q29_recoded	.816	.000	-.816	-.866	.000	.500
q30_recoded	1.000	-.333	-1.000	-.943	.333	.000
q31_recoded	-.333	1.000	.333	.471	.333	.816
q33_recoded	-1.000	.333	1.000	.943	-.333	.000
q35	-.943	.471	.943	1.000	.000	.000
q36	.333	.333	-.333	.000	1.000	.000
q37	.000	.816	.000	.000	.000	1.000
q38	.333	.333	-.333	.000	1.000	.000

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q38
q24	.258
q25	.258
q26	.522
q27	-.522
q28	-.333
q29_recoded	.000
q30_recoded	.333
q31_recoded	.333
q33_recoded	-.333
q35	.000
q36	1.000
q37	.000
q38	1.000

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance
Inter-Item Correlations	.167	-1.000	1.000	2.000	-1.000	.292

Summary Item Statistics

	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	13

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
q24	30.00	18.000	.826	.	.678
q25	30.00	18.000	.826	.	.678
q26	30.25	19.841	.901	.	.682
q27	29.75	24.205	.304	.	.756
q28	29.25	26.932	.087	.	.768
q29_recoded	29.50	29.727	-.339	.	.811
q30_recoded	29.75	30.205	-.576	.	.803
q31_recoded	28.75	23.114	.972	.	.714
q33_recoded	29.25	25.295	.450	.	.747
q35	30.50	20.455	.471	.	.742
q36	31.25	26.386	.205	.	.761
q37	30.50	22.636	.621	.	.723
q38	31.25	26.386	.205	.	.761

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
32.50	27.545	5.248	13

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=q40 q41 q42 q43 q44 q45 q46
  /SCALE('THIRD SCALE Q40-Q46 (STUDENTS)') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA
  /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE SCALE CORR
  /SUMMARY=TOTAL CORR.
```

Reliability

[DataSet1] C:\Users\mmmm\Desktop\SIR BARNS_6.10.16\STUDENTS_PILOT STUDY.sav

Warnings

Each of the following component variables has zero variance and is removed from the scale: q42
The determinant of the covariance matrix is zero or approximately zero. Statistics based on its inverse matrix cannot be computed and they are displayed as system missing values.

Scale: THIRD SCALE Q40-Q46 (STUDENTS)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	12	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	12	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.875	.885	6

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
q40	1.75	.866	12
q41	2.50	.522	12
q43	2.50	.522	12
q44	2.50	.905	12
q45	2.50	1.168	12
q46	2.50	.522	12

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	q40	q41	q43	q44	q45	q46
q40	1.000	.302	.905	.522	.674	.302
q41	.302	1.000	.000	.577	.894	1.000
q43	.905	.000	1.000	.577	.447	.000
q44	.522	.577	.577	1.000	.775	.577
q45	.674	.894	.447	.775	1.000	.894
q46	.302	1.000	.000	.577	.894	1.000

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance
Inter-Item Correlations	.563	.000	1.000	1.000	1.000E+20	.095

Summary Item Statistics

	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	6

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
q40	12.50	9.545	.663	.	.857
q41	11.75	11.114	.705	.	.859
q43	11.75	11.659	.535	.	.877
q44	11.75	8.932	.757	.	.840
q45	11.75	6.750	.944	.	.808
q46	11.75	11.114	.705	.	.859

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
14.25	13.841	3.720	6