

**COMMUNICATION FLOW IN A CORPORATE ORGANISATION
A CASE OF COCOA PROCESSING COMPANY LIMITED**

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Executive Masters of Business Administration and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my two wonderful gifts from God, Nhyiraba and Nyamekye Yirenkyi. To God be the glory, Great things He has done.

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This research work is written for academic purpose as my Thesis for the award of Commonwealth Executive Master in Business Administration. The research may not be conclusive but sheds some light on the current issues concerning Communication Flow in a Corporate Organisation. My initial thanks go to the almighty God, for His care and protection, guidance, wisdom and grace that enabled me to go through this course successfully. Special thanks go to my supervisor, Mr. Samuel Kwesi Enninful for his guidance and constructive comments for the success of this Thesis. I will also like to thank the management and staff of Cocoa Processing Company Limited for their support in responding to the questionnaires. Finally special thanks go to Mr. Samuel Kwadade Yirenkyi, my God sent husband for providing information and data for this research work, for proof reading the research work and also for his moral support and encouragement during my period of study. Mr. Daniel Sekyere Marfo my God father and mentor, your support and encouragement has been tremendous without which I could not have accomplished my goal. The good Lord richly bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to weigh up the practice of employee relations in a manufacturing company. Additionally the study was to investigate if there exists an effective communication system and what methods are used in achieving the desired results. In all, fifty members of staff of the Cocoa Processing Company (CPC) were chosen for the study, but forty four answered questionnaires were retrieved. Six Managers were also interviewed. Purposive Sampling was used to select staff and management for the study. By this the population was put into two groups: Staff and Management. Once the quotas have been determined, a sample size of 50 respondents was chosen from the first quota and six from the second quota. Self administered structured questionnaires were used to make sure that respondents answered the same questions. Furthermore, a question guide was used to conduct an in-depth interview with all six managers. The outcome of the study showed there exist a system for communication in CPC. Management has a communication system including durbars, notice boards, as well as departmental meetings. Members of staff also do have channels through which they reach management with regard to their concerns, complains as well as suggestions. Respondents established a good level of satisfaction with the emergency with which managements responds to their suggestions and grievances, with some suggesting a more frequent rate of addressing their concerns and communicating new company policies to them.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Communication is the activity of conveying information. Communication has been derived from the Latin word "communis", meaning to share. Communication requires a sender, a message, and an intended recipient, although the receiver need not be present or aware of the sender's intent to communicate at the time of communication; thus communication can occur across vast distances in time and space.

Communication is seen as the key factor in the success of any organization. When it comes to effective communication, there are certain barriers that every organization faces. People often feel that communication is as easy and simple as it sounds. No doubt, but what makes it complex, difficult and frustrating are the barriers that come in its way.
(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication)

Paying active attention and listening to customers can bring about improvements in business products and services, organizations that put into practice effective employee communications tools and strategies are also likely to recognize bottom line benefits. In many instances, contended employees translate into happy customers.

Traditionally, organizations have encouraged employee communications through printed surveys or one-on-one interviews. While these methodologies continue to be used and occasionally provide valuable information that helps shape a business, they often times do

not provide a true snapshot of the pulse of the organization or the feelings of the majority of their employees (Dunn, 1993).

According to Lattimore et al. (2004), when organizations achieve effective employee communication, the results include more satisfied and productive employees, improved achievement of organizational goals, and improved customer, community and investor relations. Employees work in organizations with specific cultures. Effective employee communication depends on the establishment of positive organizational culture, through clear communication policies, programs, and assistance with organizational change. Employee communication will help employees become well informed about their organization and encourage them express their views to management.

When organizations commit themselves to effective communication with their employees, a number of important benefits result. Quirk (1996) explained that, well-informed employees are usually satisfied employees. They are better, more productive workers who get more out of their work and do a better job for the organization. Employees will be first spokespersons for their organization outside of work. Well-informed employees interacting with an organization's stakeholders will have significant positive influence on relations with customers, the community, investors, and the media. When lines of communications are opened between employers and employees, organizational goals are likely to be achieved.

Achieving successful communication within an organization is no simple task. Amid the corporate changes of the last few years, including corporate takeovers and mergers, downsizing, scandal, cost cutting, and technological changes, organizations face challenges to keep good employees and to hire new ones (Gregory, 1996).

According to Miller (2006), internal communications does not refer only to those few “official” channels of communication within your organization, such as internal newsletters, notice boards or staff meetings. It is not a process that goes from the top, the chief, to the bottom, the intern. Rather, internal communications refers to the almost constant interactions within your organization that convey meaning. Therefore, internal communication encompasses both overt communication like meetings, memos etc, and more casual forms of communication such as gossip, pleasantries and body language.

Within communication strategies, internal communication is often overlooked, yet it is vitally important. It is the communication that relates directly to the foundation of the organization: the people – staff, management and volunteers- that give the organization its ability to function. Developing sound internal communication processes and evaluating these processes on a regular basis is the same as making sure your car runs smoothly when it is serviced regularly. If the many different pieces of your car do not fit smoothly together, you will not get where you are going very quickly, if you get there at all. Similarly, if the people that make up your organization do not work together effectively, your organization will not achieve its objectives as fast as if it were. An internal communication strategy is the key to ensuring a cohesive organization focused on achieving its goals and objectives.

Internal communication is significant in any organization because it is the building block of the organizational culture. The organizational culture is the atmosphere of the organization based on its values, mission and work processes. When every member of the organization holds the same values, understands the work policies and procedures in the same way, and focused on the same mission, the organizational culture promotes a much more effective use of resources than under a culture that is more diffuse in its interpretation.

Within the non-governmental community, internal communication and its effects on organizational culture is just as important as in the corporate sector.

The fact that your organization has what it believes to be a clear mission, based on basic values of human dignity and human rights, does not mean that all members of your organization can communicate that mission and those values in the same manner. When an organization is communicating effectively with its internal stakeholders, whether they are employees, management or volunteers, it develops a cohesive culture where everyone is focused on the same goals and has the same objectives. By working within a cohesive culture, your stakeholders can work more effectively together and collaborate more effectively (Miller 2006).

Unlike with external communication, organizations often fail to strategically plan their internal or employee communication. In other words, internal communication is usually either arbitrary or incomplete and if planned, tends to be planned only in reaction to specific events. However, effective internal communication is planned, not only to deal with specific issues, but for the long-term well-being of the organization.

Because of the volume of work needed in conducting such a study, most studies in communication flow in corporate services organizations have been conducted in the developed world. A clear need therefore exists to extend these studies into the developing world such as Ghana, where as far as academic records have shown, very little studies have been conducted.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Often there have been industrial disharmony in most Ghanaian companies or organizations, over communication gaps between the top and bottom, where mostly the below line team members feel left out or kept in the dark. The aftermath of the rifts has been poor performance of team members and its negative impact on general productivity.

The study therefore has been necessitated by the researcher's observation and reading of media publications of the various misunderstandings, strife and stand offs that occasionally arise between staff members and the management of which the Cocoa Processing Company (CPC) cannot be left out, over developing and challenging corporate policies. Another motivating factor for conducting this research is the challenge of increasing decentralization of the operations of organizations such as industries and its impact on productivity. It is also to assess the general practice of employer and employee relations in an organization such as the CPC, and provide solutions where necessary and add to the body of knowledge.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to assess the practice of employee relations in Cocoa Processing Company Limited. Thus, is there an effective communication system? Other objectives are,

1. To identify the kinds of communication channels that exist in Cocoa Processing Company (C.P.C.).
2. To determine the Communication tools used by C.P.C. to disseminate information.
3. To determine the efforts made by superiors to get to know subordinates and their work.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. What kinds of communication channels exist in Cocoa Processing Company (C.P.C.)?
2. What are the communication tools used by Cocoa Processing Company (C.P.C.) to disseminate information?
3. What are the efforts made by the superiors of Cocoa Processing Company to get to know subordinates and their work?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The rational of the research is to establish an important mirror through which the organizations can assess employee performance in relation to effective communication. It was the researcher's hope that findings of the study would put communication among employees in the right perspective, and to identify and remove communication barriers that may exist. The use of tools that provide a two-way communication process will be reinforced. This will ultimately add up to academic knowledge, thereby assisting communication scholars, students and the general public to carry out further studies on employee communication.

1.6 BRIEF METHODOLOGY

Both qualitative and quantitative research designs were used in this study. That is to say that a question guide was used to conduct in-depth interviews with six managers from Cocoa Processing Company. Additionally, a questionnaire was also administered to fifty staff members of the Cocoa Processing Company out of the general population of staff members. Data collected were analysed and discussed to draw implications.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study required that a fair representation of all staff of Cocoa Processing Company be considered for the study. This means that respondents were selected from the various offices of the company for the investigations.

The researcher foresaw the study being hampered by a number of issues, first was unavailability of enough funds to gather data for the study. Sometimes, the uncooperative nature or un-readiness of respondents to administer the questionnaires to gather the needed data affected the research. Furthermore, the period of time of four months for the study was inadequate to collect enough data required for the study.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study was grouped under five chapters, of which chapter one was the introduction to the study. The introduction gave an insight into the idea and motivation for the whole study, and included the problem being investigated as well as the study objectives. It also talked about how the study was conducted. The second chapter considered a review of various literature

and writings in this area of study and what needed to be added as well as the new approach and other areas to concentrate on in the current study. Various sources were explored. The chapter three was mainly the methodology, study area and sample size for the study, while the fourth chapter dealt with analyzing the collected data. Chapter five touched on drawing conclusions and making recommendations based on the collected data.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature review according to Darling (1986) is very important because ‘it provides information about the work of researchers and whether the idea has been investigated before or not’. Kumekpor (2002) gives additional importance to literature review as it can help the would-be investigator avoid some of the shortcomings, flaws and difficulties of her predecessors from whom she may have a lot to learn through reading their published work”.

In undertaking such a study, it was important to review relevant studies and to draw on other people’s work to learn how much of the issues relating to the topic understudy had already been done and various approaches available for use. This section therefore, looked into studies that have been done in the area of information flow and its impact in corporate organizations. And it is worth mentioning that, different researchers have made different observations about the contribution of effective information flow within an organization and the impact it has on the performance of such organizations.

2.1.1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To find out the extent to which communication flow within corporate organizations impact on the performance of employees, this study has developed two main pertinent communication theories that provide insight into the potential effects of effective internal communication policies on employees. The theories are the two step flow theory and diffusion of innovation theory.

2.1.1. (A) TWO STEP FLOW THEORY

The two step flow theory was first introduced by Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet (1944) in the people's choice. This study focused on the process of decision-making during a presidential election campaign. These researchers expected to find empirical support for the direct influence of the media messages on voting intentions. They were surprised to discover, however, that informal, personal contacts were mentioned far more frequently than exposure to radio or newspaper as sources of influence on voting behavior. Armed with this data, Katz and Lazarsfeld developed the two-step flow theory of mass communication. This theory asserts that information from the media moves in two distinct stages. First, individuals (opinion leaders) who pay close attention to the mass media and its messages receive the information.

Opinion leaders are quite influential in getting people to change their attitudes and behaviors and are quite similar to those they influence. The two-step flow theory has improved our understanding of how the mass media influence decision making. The theory refined the ability to predict the influence of media messages on audience behavior, and it helped explain why certain media campaigns may have failed to alter audience attitudes and

behavior. The two-step flow theory gave way to the multi-step flow theory of mass communication or diffusion of innovation theory. Therefore management and leaders of corporate organizations should be well informed on practices that improve employee performance so that they can pass it on to employees.

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2.1.1.(B) DIFFUSION OF INFORMATION

Diffusion of innovation goes one step further than two-step flow theory. The original diffusion research was done as early as 1903 by the French sociologist, Tarde, who plotted the original S-shaped diffusion curve. Tarde's (1903) S-shaped curve is of current importance because most innovations have an S-shaped rate of adoption (Rogers, 1995).

Diffusion of innovation theory centers on the conditions which increase or decrease the likelihood that a new idea, product, or practice will be adopted by members of a given culture.

Diffusion of innovation theory predicts that interpersonal contacts provide information and influence opinion and judgment. Studying how innovation occurs, Rogers (1995) argued that it consists of four stages: invention, diffusion (or communication) through the social system, time and consequences. The information flows through networks. The nature of networks and the roles opinion leaders play in them determine the likelihood that the innovation will be

adopted. Innovation diffusion research has attempted to explain the variables that influence how and why users adopt a new information medium, such as the internet.

2.1.2 THE EVOLUTION OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Berger (2008) in writing on employee/organizational communication dwelt on the evolution of internal communication, which to a very large extent formed some basis of this research. The following was teased out of the particular writing:- Social theorist Coleman (1974 & 1990) traced the rise of large organizations and claimed they have changed communications practices and personal relationships through two powerful interactions: big organizations communicating with other big organizations and with individuals. Large organizations were relatively new in the early 20th century, apart from government and the military, so theories developed to explain how organizations worked and tried to achieve their goals. This section outlines five theoretical approaches that evolved in the last century—the classical, human relations, human resources, systems and cultural approaches. Communication features or characteristics of each approach are briefly described.

CLASSICAL APPROACHES

Sometimes referred to as the machine metaphor because of how employees were viewed as interchangeable parts, this approach is grounded in scientific management theories of work and workers in the early 20th century. Taylor (1911) was the best known proponent of this approach. He studied factory production lines and concluded that work processes could be improved by applying scientific principles to jobs and workers. These included such things as designing each task to improve performance, hiring workers who possessed characteristics

that matched each job and training workers and rewarding them for productivity achievements.

Two key communication goals were to prevent misunderstandings, which might impair productivity or quality, and to convey decisions and directives of top management. The formal structure of organizations drove top-down communication, primarily through print channels. The content of most communications was task or rule oriented. The social side of communication was largely ignored, and employees relied heavily on the grapevine for such information.

HUMAN RELATIONS APPROACHES

In the 1930s, the focus shifted from work tasks to employees and their needs, and the Hawthorne Studies spurred this movement. Carried out at the Western Electric Company in Chicago, the studies revealed the importance of groups and human relationships in work. Mayo (1933) and his Harvard colleagues discovered that employees who worked in friendly teams, with supportive supervisors, tended to outperform employees who worked in less favourable conditions. This and related research became the basis for the “human relations” approach.

Barnard (1938), an AT&T executive, highlighted the functions of organizational executives and their role in communication. He emphasized the importance of formal and informal communications to the organization’s success and argued that cooperation among workers and supervisors was crucial to improving productivity. In his view, the key to cooperation

was communication: “The most universal form of human cooperation, and perhaps the most complex, is speech,” he wrote Modaff et al., (2008).

This approach included more F-T-F communication and acknowledged the importance of internal communications. Downward communication still dominated, but feedback was gathered to gauge employee satisfaction. Some social information was added to the task-oriented content of communication, and managerial communications were less formal.

HUMAN RESOURCES APPROACHES

The human resources approach (Miles, 1965) was widely adopted by organizations in the 1960s. This participative, team approach to management-employee relations recognized that employees can contribute both physical and mental labour.

Blake and Mouton (1964) developed a Managerial Grid to help train managers in leadership styles that would stimulate employees’ cognitive contributions, satisfy needs and help the organization succeed. The preferred team-management style—high on concern for both people and production—became the basis for management development practices in a number of companies. Quality control circles, decentralized organizations, total quality management and employee participation groups are manifestations of this approach.

Other theorists argued that the best leadership style would vary from one event to another, depending on contingencies in the environment. Fiedler (1967) said that leaders should first define a contingency and then determine the most appropriate leadership behaviours to deal with it. Contingency theory recognizes that organizations and environments are constantly

changing, and there is a need to monitor environments and carefully analyze information before making decisions.

Communication became multidirectional and more relational. Feedback was sought to enhance problem solving and stimulate idea sharing. Innovation content was added to social and task information in communications. Concepts of employee trust and commitment emerged as important issues, and organizations began to share communication decision-making among employees.

SYSTEMS APPROACHES

In the 1970s some theorists adopted a systems perspective, viewing organizations as complex organisms competing to survive and thrive in challenging environments. In general systems theory, any system is a group of parts that are arranged in complex ways and which interact with each other through processes to achieve goals (Bertalanffy, 1951, 1968). An auto supply company, for example, consists of a number of departments or units (production, marketing, finance, sales), each of which includes individuals and teams. The functioning of any of these units or subsystems relies on others in the organization; they are interdependent. The company is also part of a larger supra system—the automobile industry.

Systems and subsystems have boundaries that are selectively opened or closed to their environments, allowing the flow of information and other resources. Open systems use information exchange (input-throughput-output) to grow and thrive; closed systems don't allow much information to move in or out. To survive and adapt, all social systems require some degree of permeability (Stacks, Hickson & Hill, 1991).

As Almaney (1974) suggested, communication is a “system binder” that links the system to its environment and its various subsystems to each other. Individuals who exchange information with other systems or groups (customers, government personnel, suppliers) are boundary spanners. Media outlets provide other important links between organizations and the environment.

Communication is vital for exchanging information in and among subsystems through multidirectional channels which are used in internal communications. Feedback processes help systems adjust, change and maintain control. Collective decision-making processes and shared responsibilities for communication are more prevalent.

CULTURAL APPROACHES

Cultural approaches emerged in the 1970s in the context of increasing competition from Japan and other nations in the global marketplace. Culture refers to an organization’s distinct identity—the shared beliefs, values, behaviours and artefacts that an organization holds, which determine how it functions and adapts to its environment (Schein, 1985). As the performance of American corporations declined, management scholars looked for other explanations of the behaviours and practices in the troubled companies. The cultural approach was attractive because of its dynamic nature and the kind of depth insights it can provide (Schein, 1996).

Two popular books in the 1980s influenced organizational practices and structures and helped culture gain mainstream recognition. Deal and Kennedy’s (1982) book, *Corporate Culture: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*, claimed that companies could improve their performance by developing a “strong” culture based on shared values, celebration of heroes

and performance of rites and rituals, among others. The Peters and Waterman (1982) captured characteristics of “excellent” cultures at high-performing businesses. These included customer focus, employee empowerment, trust, shared values and lean organizational structures. A decade later, Larkin and Larkin’s (1994) highlighted the importance of F-T-F and supervisory communications during cultural changes or other major organizational initiatives. Miller (1995) distinguished between prescriptive and descriptive approaches to examining organizational cultures.

A prescriptive approach views culture as “something an organization has” (p. 108) and prescribes interventions to create or manage a “winning” or strong culture. However, scholars often adopt a descriptive approach, which considers culture “something an organization has” (Miller, 1995, p. 108). This approach rejects the notion of a one-size-fits-all cultural formula for success and focuses on how communications and interactions lead to shared meaning. Descriptive approaches also call attention to other important aspects of organizational culture, e.g., power relationships and gender and diversity issues.

The cultural approach valorises communication, seeing it as a culturally-based process of sharing information, creating relationships and shaping the organization (Brown & Starkey, 1994). Communication and culture share a reciprocal relationship (Modaff et al., 2008). Communications help create and influence culture through formal and informal channels, stories, shared experiences and social activities. Culture influences communications because employees interact through shared interpretive frameworks of culture, e.g., distinctive company vocabulary, valued media channels and established protocols and practices.

These five approaches demonstrate how internal communication changed as organizations grew and evolved. Today, elements of all five approaches live on in organizations—work rules, hierarchies, policies, training programs, work teams, job descriptions, socialization rituals, human resource departments, job descriptions, customer focus and so forth. Corresponding communication practices also are present today in formal, top-down communications, bottom-up suggestion programs, horizontal communications among team members, myriad print and electronic communications and new dialogue-creating social media that are changing communication structures and practices.

New perspectives continue to appear. Some use metaphors to depict organizations (Morgan, 1986) and internal communication (Putnam & Boys, 2006). Others focus on power, gender or hegemony issues in modern organizations (e.g., Mumby, 1993, 2001). Still others theorize companies as learning organizations, arguing that the only sustainable source of advantage for any organization is its ability to learn, acquire knowledge and change faster than others (e.g., Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 1994). Increasingly, researchers adopt cultural or co-creational views wherein employees and members share stories and construct interpretations and meanings through internal communications and conversations (Botan & Taylor, 2004).

“As their role has evolved from ‘conveyors of information’ to strategic business partners, communication professionals are being asked to better connect employees to the business, equip leaders with the skills and tools to effectively communicate, ensure that the right messages are ‘breaking through the clutter,’ and show measurable results—all daunting challenges.” Gay, Mahoney and Graves, 2005

2.2. INFORMATION FLOW WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION (EMPLOYEE/ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATION)

More often official lines of information that flow within organizations correspond closely with the lines of authority. The most formalized information flow is from management to employees- from a superior to a subordinate. In such circumstances, information flows downward from persons in positions of authority to others in the organization. Information transmitted through downward communication generally serves one or more of the following functions;

Specifies a task to be performed, provide instructions about how to perform a task or provide information about the reason for a particular task that needs to be performed, as well as provides information about the organization and its mission. It is gain noting in spreading information, management and employees do communicate among themselves all levels of their operational activities to achieve set targets.

Specifically, the flow includes the movement of information by reports, memorandums, records, and such, within the organization; of orders, instructions, and messages down the authority structure; and of internally directed letters, sales presentations, advertising and publicity. These main channels should not just happen, they ought to be carefully thought out and changed as the needs of the business change.

Parallel to the formal network according to Lesikar et al (1996) is the informal network, a secondary network consisting primarily of personal communication. Just as the formal network is like the arteries, the informal one is like the veins. It comprises the thousands upon thousands of personal communication that occurs in the organization. Such

communication does not follow a set pattern; they form an ever-changing and infinitely complex structure linking all the members of the organization. The complexity of this informal network, especially in larger organizations, cannot be overemphasized. Typically, it is really not a single network but a complex relationship of smaller networks consisting of groups of people. The relationship is made even more complex by the fact that these people may belong to more than one group and that group membership and the links between and among groups are continually changing.

William (1992) conducted a study in which he identified and categorized types of internal communication systems were developed and selected for their various missions and diverse approaches to managing international communication. Individual face-to-face or telephone interviews were conducted with their organization. Findings from the study indicated that there was a varying degree of leadership in the management of internal communication. Four types of internal communication systems were identified: impoverished, imaginary, disjunctive and adaptive. A model describing the diverse elements of internal communication was developed based on a compilation of the organizational analyses and research conducted as part of the study.

A research by Hammond (1986) on organizational communication found that junior staff members did not fill the impact of public relations work and they felt that public relation officers serve the interest of top management. According to her findings, employee communication proved to be fraught with problems. To rectify the situation at the situation, she suggested that management recognize their employee's right to information and communication. Since work participation is an essential tool to any successful organization or institution following this, Hammond (1986) proposed that suggestion boxes, attitude

surveys, durbars and in-house publications such as newsletters and house magazines should be introduced to bridge the communication gap.

Berger (2008) in writing on the topic employee/Organizational Communications explained it as referring to communications and interactions among employees or members of an organization. He even used the terms internal communications *and* organizational communications to mean the same thing. It must be noted that communication or information flow within an organization are sometimes channeled from subordinates to superiors, thus from individuals in organizational groups, departments, or divisions to persons occupying managerial roles represent what is called an upward information flow. Upward communication has several values including; provides input for decision making, advising about subordinate's information needs, as well as providing information regarding subordinates level of receptivity to information, satisfaction and morale. It can again providing a potentially constructive outlet for grievances and complaints and allow superiors to assess the effects of previous downward communication. Berger also cites other researchers observations on the subject and for instance refers to Harris & Nelson, 2008, who in a write up had noted that Communication is one of the most dominant and important activities in organizations.

Primarily, there seems to be a correlation between interactions and communication, and as Berger, (2008) puts it, there is a fundamental relationship and added that, relationships grow out of communication, and the functioning and survival of organizations is based on effective relationships among individuals and groups. Jones et al., 2004, mentions that organizational capabilities are developed and enacted through “intensely social and communicative processes”. So from the above it is clear that Communication helps individuals and groups

coordinate activities to achieve goals, and it's vital in decision-making and problem-solving among others to help organizations such as the Cocoa Processing Company (C.P.C) achieve desirable results. Hence the study to actually ascertain how they communicate and find out what channels do exist for such a purpose.

A cursory observation of what pertains at the CPC show that there are some defined information systems in place which basically ensures that information are relayed to subordinates within the organization. It focuses on getting the staff members to know the vision, mission and policies of the organization. However in a pre-study tour to the company, the system as it exists cannot be said to be thorough or very effective as some staff members believe, the whole information dissemination system is normally fraught with some challenges which needs improvement to ensure that all needed information is delivered through the appropriate channels to team members. So Hammond's (1986) assertion that sometimes in organizational communication, there exists a situation where some particularly low-ranking staff members did not fill the impact of information flow and public relations work and so the CPC staff are not any different because some thinks interest of top management is what is important because sometimes the information is sent to heads of departments. The researcher is not far from right to note that CPC's employee communication needs some attention as the existing system is burdened with some problems, hence this study to find out the real issues and suggest some remedies to improve the status-quo at CPC.

2.3 COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND TOOLS IN ORGANIZATIONS

A communication channel is a medium through which messages are transmitted and received. Berger (2008) categorized channels as print, electronic or F-T-F (interpersonal). Common print channels include memos, brochures, newsletters, reports, policy manuals, annual reports and posters. New technologies have spurred the use of electronic channels, e.g., email and voice mail, Intranets, blogs, podcasts, chat rooms, business TV, video conferencing, instant messaging systems, wikis and electronic town-hall meetings. Face-to-face channels include speeches, team meetings, focus groups, brown bag lunches, social events and gatherings and management by wandering around.

According to Harris and Nelson (2008), as cited by Berger (2008) the most used channel is listening, which consumes about half of our communication time (Johnson, 1996). Effective listening according to Berger (2008) is crucial to learning, understanding, conflict resolution and productive team work. He adds that, it helps leaders at all levels improve employee morale, retain employees and uncover and resolve problems. Yet, many studies suggest that most people are not good listeners, and few organizations devote resources to developing listening skills in managers and leaders (Alessandra & Hunsaker, 1993).

Organizations and their employees and members Berger 2008 writes have access to many communication channels and selecting the most appropriate medium or media is an important issue for professional communicators once they have determined objectives and strategies, assessed relevant audiences and constructed messages. Perhaps no one made this point more strongly than McLuhan (1964), who claimed that “the medium is the message.” He argued that each medium, independent of content, engages receivers in different ways and affects the scale and pace of communication. This is to say that in effect, the kind of communication

channels used in disseminating an information may positively or adversely affect the encoding of the message and therefore the outcome or the purpose for which the message was sent.

McLuhan (1964) distinguished between “hot” and “cool” media, each of which involves different degrees of receiver participation. Hot media (e.g., print channels, film, lecture, radio) require less active participation and involvement than cool media (e.g., TV, comic books, F-T-F channels). Hot media are more segmented and linear, while cool media may be more abstract and require more participation to understand.

Daft and Lengel (1984) developed a media richness model to explain media choices. They said that media choice should match the ambiguity of any communication task with the richness of particular media. Ambiguity refers to the difficulty of interpreting or understanding a message. Media richness refers to the capability of media to effectively convey information. Capability is differentiated by the availability and speed of feedback of the channel, the use of multiple cues and natural language to facilitate understanding and the personal focus of the message.

The researchers as noted by Berger (2008) in his writing on the subject of employee/Organizational Communications, proposed a continuum of media choices: At one end are channels that possess most or all of these capabilities (rich media); at the other end are channels with few of these characteristics (lean media). F-T-F communication as mentioned by the researchers is the richest medium and optimal channel for communicating complex information or resolving conflicts, for example. Lean and impersonal media include

simple announcements, data reports and posters. Electronic mail, phone calls, personal written communications and other channels fall in the middle of the continuum.

According to Newsom et al (1992) with the increasing decentralization of power in organizations, and a move towards more individual responsibility, top level management and public relations practitioners must make sure that organization's like the C.P.C get messages to the employees and are understood and accepted by them, and the message from employees to top management are heard and answered.

Newsom et al (1992) further argued that people expect that an organization's internal relations will be smoother than their relations with external publics, but this is not the case in most organizations in the United States of America (USA). The level of employee satisfaction in most organization in the USA has been low in recent years- perhaps due to a management attitude that the economy has created a "buyer market" and that management does not have to worry too much about employee relations.

At the CPC, dissemination of information applies the use of varied media or channels, which are not quite different from what experts have written about in various literatures on employee or organizational communication. Some major communication or information flow channels highlighted at the CPC during the pre-study tour included some age old channels such as notice boards, durbars and departmental meetings, as well as memos and suggestion boxes. Use of electronic means is not effective, almost negligible at the CPC in its information flow to members of staff, e-mails and others are used at the top levels. In effect the situation is in consonance with Hammond, (1986) when she suggested work participation is an essential tool to any successful organization or institution following this, and proposed

that suggestion boxes, attitude surveys, durbars and in-house publications such as newsletters and house magazines should be introduced to bridge the communication gap. Except that newsletters and in-house journals or publications are not effective at the CPC, the study therefore will find out reasons for the use of the existing channels and what can be done to improve on the channels in today's fast improving world of technology.

2.4 EFFORTS BY MANAGEMENT FAMILIARIZING THEMSELVES WITH SUBORDINATES AND THEIR WORK

This study among other objectives will find out what is level of familiarization and appreciation of the work lower level works force by their superiors. By so doing, the study will try to ascertain how the familiarization if any exists within the Cocoa Processing Company and its correspondent impact on the output of the subordinates. In this direction, it must be mentioned that a major factor in low employee morale is the failure on management to communicate with employees. The critical phrase here is “communicating with” as opposed to “talk to”. Sometimes top management has no idea what the people lower in the organization think, want or need; and some surveys show that a little more than 15% of a Chief Executive Officer' (CEO) time is spent communicating with other CEO's.

Unresponsiveness fosters dissatisfied employees and low productivity. It also hurts an organization's reputation, since employees are any organization's public relations frontline (Newsom et al 1992).

In a book, “corporate public relations”, Burton (1996) prescribed the employee relations functions of management and public relations practitioners; Develop in employees an attitude of loyalty and voluntary desire to bring about improvement, provide an opportunity for individual expression. The employee is made to feel that he has a part in contributing to the success of the organization, as well as give personal recognition for specific accomplishment. Furthermore, it helps develops a spirit of teamwork among all employees in a competitive atmosphere and reduce grievances by providing a channel for an individual to propose a corrective solution to his or her provide.

Periodically heads of departments do interact with their team members at the CPC and not between top management and staff members. The few occasions when staff meet with very top hierarchy is during general durbars. It is therefore not a common practice for the Managing Director of the CPC to come down to try and familiarize himself with staff of the various departments and what they do, everything thing is done at the departmental levels, so in effect it is the heads of the various departments who by the technical knowledge and their job description will often interact and familiarize with their team members which sometimes are done by supervisors-a situation which does not technically build the unity and sense of belonging and ownership that should be exhibited by the team members. Again the study will seek to ascertain exactly why the status-quo and what can be done to change it.

2.5 IMPACT OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Internal communication continues to evolve in a dynamic world characterized by an explosion of new technologies, intense global competition and rapid change, according to

Berger(2008) and states that today, many would agree with Harris and Nelson's (2008) assertion that internal communication is an essential aspect of organizational change—it is “the key variable in almost all change efforts, diversity initiatives and motivation” (p. 95). Some even argue that internal communication is the most “fundamental driver of business performance” (Gay, Mahoney & Graves, 2005, p. 11).

Berger 2008 in his writing further mentions that, there are enough evidence to show that effective internal communications help increase employee job satisfaction, morale, productivity, commitment, trust and learning; improve communication climate and relationships with publics; and enhance quality, revenues and earnings. It is important at this point to look at some examples of benefits of effective internal communication (information flow) in an organization, as this study hopes to find out whether they exists at the Cocoa Processing Company. Berger's (2008) examples include;

- Employees who are disloyal to their organizations, or lack commitment to helping organizations achieve their goals, may cost business 50 billion dollars per year in quality defects, rework and repair costs, absenteeism and reduced productivity, according to Alvie Smith, former director of corporate communications at General Motors (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 2006).
- Improving the quality, adequacy and timeliness of information that employees receive about customers, the organization or their own work can improve their individual performance by as much as 20-50 percent (Boyett & Boyett, 1998).

- More than 80 percent of employees polled in the US and UK said that employee communication influences their desire to stay with or leave an organization. Nearly a third said communication was a “big influence” on their decision (Burton, 2006).
- Organizations with engaged and committed employees were 50 percent more productive than those organizations where employees weren’t engaged. In addition, employee retention rates were 44 percent higher in organizations with engaged and committed employees (Izzo & Withers, 2000).
- Positive communication climate and effective employee communication strengthen employees’ identification with their organizations, which contributes to an organization’s financial performance and sustained success (Smidts, Pruyn & van Riel, 2001).

Lane (1987) argues that the success of any organization depends on the ability of its members to co-ordinate their efforts to achieve common goals. The members therefore must establish and maintain good work relationships based on the effective use of communication processes.

Additionally Lane (1987) in considering all of a business’s communication (internal, external and personal) we see an extremely complex network of information flow. We see an organization feeding on a continuous supply of information. More specifically, we see dozens, hundreds or even thousands of individuals engaging in untold numbers of communication events throughout each working day.

The CPC from the pre-study tour interviews and charts, it was evident that, the organization acknowledges the importance of effective organizational communication and information

flow and its impact on the general success of their organization hence, their implementation of a quite define information dissemination systems within the organization. The ineffectiveness and challenges however militates against the smooth flow of information and its reciprocal effect on achievement of the organizational goals, as depicted in what was described by the Board Chairman Cecilia Abena Dapaah in the 2004 annual report and accounts as poor results due to many factors including some apathetic behavior of some staff because of inadequate information flow on their organizational policy directions.

2.6 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded having gone through the observations by the many authorities particularly those cited by Berger (2008), that information flow (internal communication) in every organization is an intricate practice that is vital to the success of any organization in today's vibrant global marketplace, and the Cocoa Processing Company(C.P.C) is no exception. Effective communication facilitates engagement and builds trust, among the staff of CPC which is a critical ingredient in strong, viable organizations as stated by (Grates, 2008). Engaged employees enhance business performance because they influence customer behavior, which directly affects revenue growth and profitability (Towers Perrin, 2003). This review literature immensely informed this study as it gave a direction for the study of the Cocoa Processing Company in relation to their systems of information flow within the organization and its impact on the performance of their employees.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods and instruments, data handling analysis as well as pilot study.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The task facing the researcher was to ascertain the levels of information flow and its effect in the Cocoa Processing Company, and what can be done to improve the existing system(s). In this direction, the non-experimental designed was employed. By this the researcher had control over whom or what gets measured. The design was also due to the researcher's handling of the selection of the venue for the research, the respondents to be included and the type of questions asked to get the desired response.

3.2 POPULATION

The population of the study area (Cocoa Processing Company) is 283 comprising the entire workers and managers of the company.

3.3 SAMPLE SIZE

The nature of the study required that a fair representation of all staff of Cocoa Processing Company were considered for the study. This means that respondents were selected from the various offices of the company for the investigations. From the population of staff and managers of the Cocoa Processing Company, 50 staff members and six managers were chosen for the study.

3.4 SAMPLE TECHNIQUES

Purposive Sampling was used to select staff and management for the study. By this the population was put into two groups: Staff and Management. Once the quotas have been determined, a sample size of 50 respondents was chosen from the first quota and six from the second quota. This method was, among others, to allow the researcher to administer questionnaires on staff members who agree to answer questions on the topic under study and an in-depth interview with six managers using a question guide.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data in this study. That is to say that a question guide was used to conduct in-depth interviews with six managers from the Cocoa Processing Company. Additionally, a questionnaire was also administered to 50 staff members of the Cocoa Processing Company out of the population of staff thus a survey was employed to select the respondents. It was important for all respondents to answer same

questions to avoid differences in responses, which might give meaning other than the intent of the researcher. The questionnaire contained mostly close-ended questions, relevant to the purpose of the research which helped in the final analysis; the closed-ended questions were effective because pre-coded responses were provided for respondents to choose from. However, few questions were open-ended to elicit responses of opinion from the respondents.

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3.6 PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS WITH DATA COLLECTION

Inadequate funding was a militating factor in the data gathering as more respondents and the general study could have been done within the shortest possible time. The researcher thus selected a relatively small sample size of 56 for the study. Also the researcher had the unpleasant task of many follow-ups after working hours to administer and retrieve the data questionnaires.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

The data collected was analyzed by generating cross tabulation tables and graphs. Cross tabulation tables and graphs because they clearly indicated proportions and the numerical strengths of responses to various questions; some responses were better explained with tables while others will be easier with graphs and texts.

3.8 PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA: THE COCOA PROCESSING COMPANY (CPC)

This section looks in-depth at the background of the company being studied. It laid emphasis on the history of the company, organizational structure and the various departments in the company, vision and mission of the company, objectives of the company, products produced and achievements.

The Cocoa Processing Company factory in Tema was commenced in 1963 by the Drevici Group of companies. However, it was never fully completed until June 1972 when the factory was to hand over to the management of the Ghana Cocoa Board. It manufactures chocolate and processed raw cocoa beans into semi-finished products such as cocoa butter, cocoa cake and cocoa liquor. The cocoa processing factory remained a subsidiary of Ghana cocoa board until it was granted financial autonomy in 1993. Under the terms of the autonomy CPC was to source for funds for her operations. Production of chocolate and confectionery was listed on the Ghana stock exchange on 14th February 2003 following the successful floatation of its shares.

There are eleven (11) members on the CPC Board who formulate broad policies for the organization. The management team is headed by the managing director with two general managers as deputies, with twelve (12) heads of department, out of these, the human resource manager, company secretary, audit manager, public relations manager, chief accountant and marketing manager report directly to the managing director. The chief engineer, production manager (Cocoa), whilst the quality assurance manager, research and development manager and production manager (confectionery) reports to the general manager (confectionery).

The company's vision is to be a market leader in processing raw cocoa beans and their derivatives into high quality semi-finished products marketable at the local international and export markets. Its mission is to process cocoa beans into semi-finished cocoa products i.e. cocoa, butter, cocoa liquor, cocoa cake, natural and alkalized cocoa powder thus adding value and market for profit. Later it would diversify into downstream products like chocolate and confectioneries, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and soap production.

Among others the objectives of the company include: To continually aspire to be the best to ensure an adequate and reliable supply of products at acceptable quality levels, to develop and maintain local and international markets for its products as well as research, improve and develop new and diversified products to meet wider consumer acceptance and also ensure financial autonomy and manage its physical and physical and financial assets in a cost effective manner for immediate and long term financial.

Golden tree chocolates are internationally acclaimed for their purity and quality. In 1980, golden tree chocolates won four gold medals and one silver medal in the prestigious monde selection international competition. On the local front CPC won the product of the award in 1995, best branded marketable product 1996, achievement award for exporter of the year 1998, good corporate citizen award 1998 and exporter of the 2000 and 2001 and 2002 all from the export promotion council.

Source: Cocoa Processing Company Limited

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter gives an account of data collected from management and staff of the Cocoa Processing Company Limited (C.P.C). An interview was conducted with six managers of CPC and 50 questionnaires were administered to staff members on communication flow in C.P.C. The data collected has been sorted, entered and cleaned and the results is presented as follows;

4.2 GENDER DETAILS OF RESPONDENTS

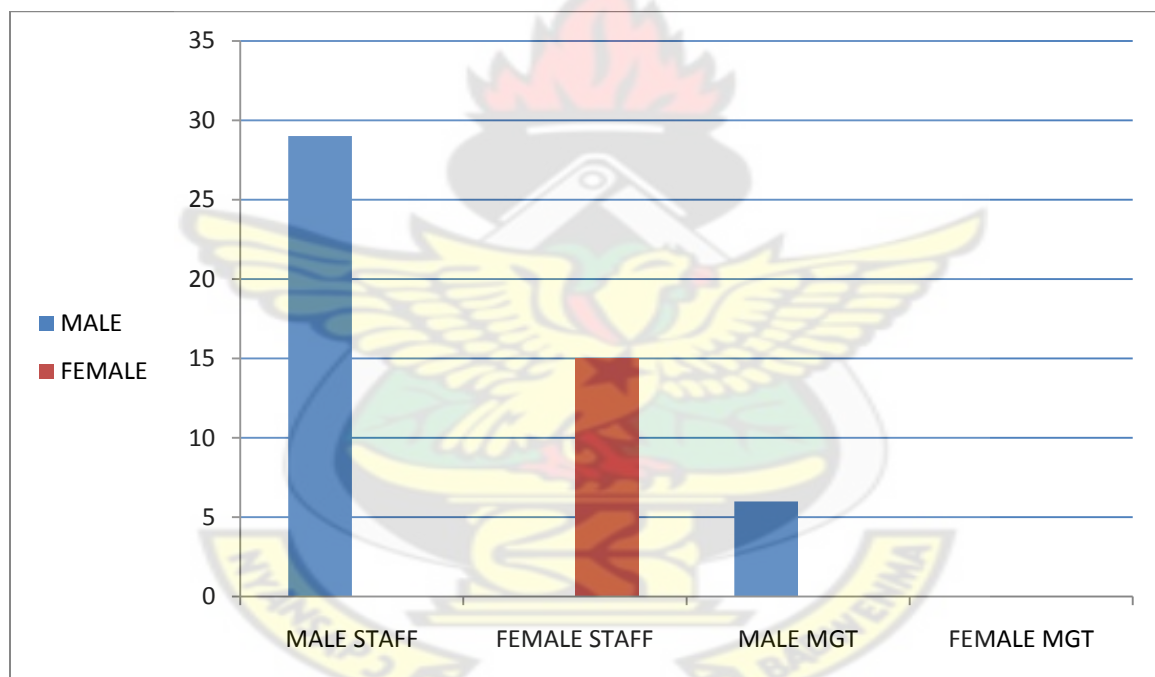
Out of a total of 50 questionnaires administered, 44 were retrieved from the respondents. The details of the respondents are illustrated in table 4.0 according to their gender. All the six managers interviewed are male. Twenty nine staff members are male while the remaining fifteen staff members are female. This illustrates that the gender of Cocoa Processing Company is not balanced as indicated in table 4.0 and graphically in figure 4.0. What may explain this may be the fact that the process of manufacturing at the company is technical, and involves lifting of heavy loads among others hence more males than female. As observed the few ladies or females work in their administrative units of the company.

Table 4.1 Gender details of respondents (Management & Staff)

GENDER	MANAGEMENT	STAFF
Male	6	29
Female	0	15
TOTAL	6	44

Source: Field data, 2012

Figure 4.1 Gender details of respondents



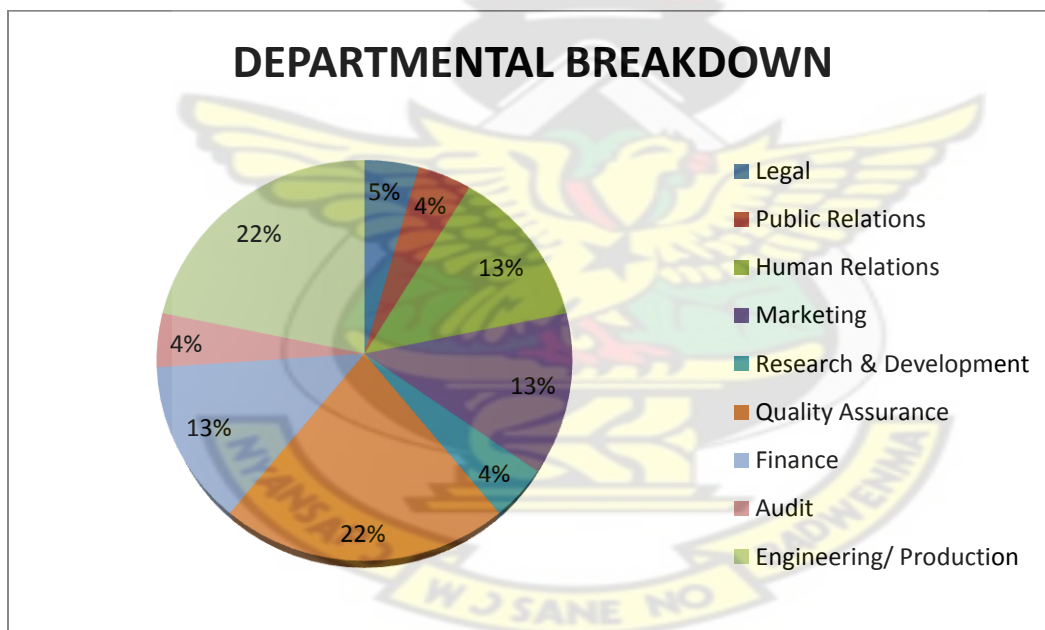
Source: Field data, 2012

4.3 DEPARTMENTAL BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS

The respondents were drawn from the various departments within the Cocoa Processing Company. As indicated in figure 4.1, 22% which constituted the majority, came from the Quality Assurance department and the Engineering and Production departments. 13% each

came from the Human Resource, Marketing and Finance departments. The legal department had 5%, while Research and Development, Public Relations departments and Audit department each had 4% respondents. In effect though some departments contributes some more numbers than others, the general output are inter-related and all geared toward the achievement of the general goals of the organization. The implications of the various department was seen in the 2010 annual report of the company, when their operations yielded results which was an improvement over 2009, all departments played their parts to contribute their quotas.

Figure 4.2 Departmental Breakdown of Respondents



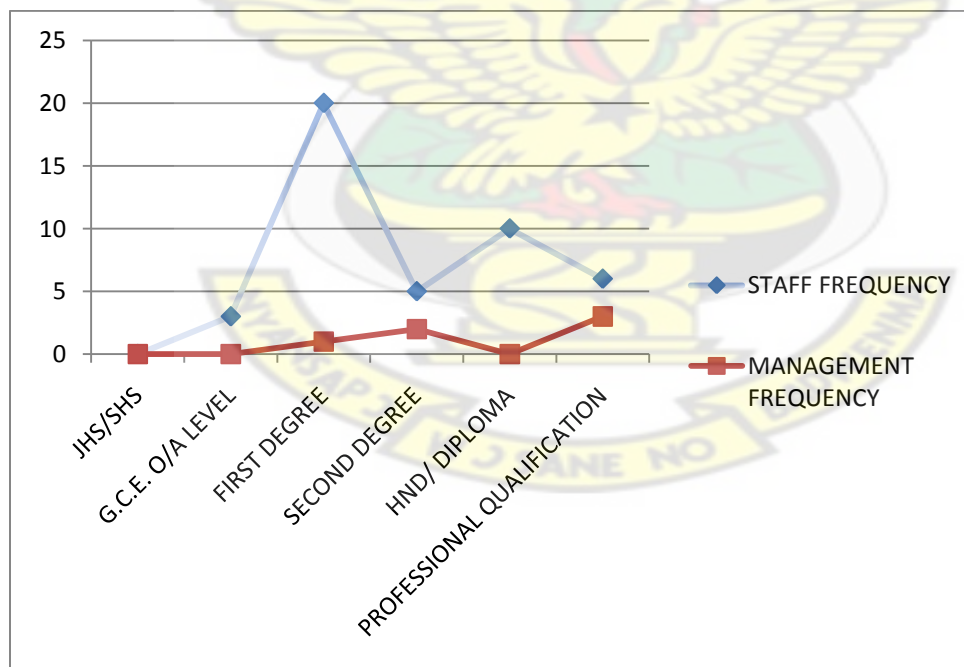
Source: Field data, 2012

4.4 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

On the educational background of respondents, two have general certification examination (ordinary and advanced levels), five have their second degrees, six of them have professional

qualification whiles nine respondents have either a diploma or a higher national diploma with the remaining 16 of them having a first degree, an indication that, staff members are able to appreciate the operations of the company and carry out their diversified activities to achieve set targets. The management staff consisting of six respondents had one member with a First Degree, two have Second Degree and the remaining three members have Professional qualifications. What this implies is that issues are talked about, addressed and understood through the various means of communication within the organization (researcher can say because of their educational backgrounds), the 2010 report hence touted that, industrial peace and harmony is promoted through positive engagement between management and staff leading to consensus building on matters of importance. This is illustrated in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.3 Educational Background of Respondents



Source: Field data, 2012

4.5 LENGTH OF SERVICE OF RESPONDENTS

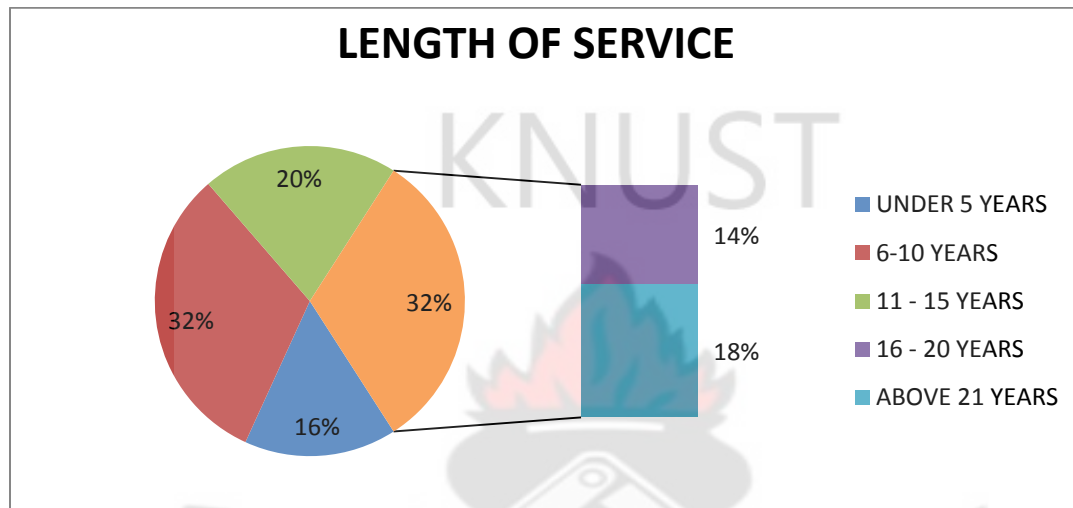
The data collected indicated that, a considerable number of the staff members have been working in the organization for enough period of time to give a credible response for the study. 16% of the staff has worked for less than five years, 32% of the staff has worked with the company between six to ten years. Another 20% has worked between eleven and fifteen years. 14% has worked for sixteen to twenty years while the remaining 18% has worked for 21 years and above respectively. This implies that the relatively long working periods show that, the staff turnover of CPC is not high and therefore experience hands are kept to keep standards at the organization. This also puts them in the right stead to responsive and credible for the study, particularly in ascertaining whether information flow in the organization played any in their long stay in the organization and what has been the impact. It was therefore not surprising the level of understanding of the visions and missions as well as policies of the organization, which to a very large extent helps to boost the commitment of the staff to give their best.

Table 4.2 Length of service of respondents

Length in years	Staff frequency	Management frequency	Percentage staff frequency
Under 5 years	7	0	16%
6-10 years	14	1	32%
11-15 years	9	0	20%
16-20 years	6	1	14%
Above 21 years	8	4	18%
Total	44	6	100%

Source: Field data, 2012

Figure 4.4 Length of Service of Respondents



Source: Field data, 2012

4.6 AWARENESS OF VISIONS, MISSIONS AND VALUES OF C.P.C

On the question of the awareness and understanding of vision, 86.64% of staff and all the six managers are well aware of the visions, missions and values of the company. The respondents further indicated that, they fully comprehend and appreciate the policies of their organization. Respondent also acknowledged that there exists a steady flow of information from their management to them as staff. All the six managers are fully aware of the visions, missions and values of C.P.C. as they form part of the decision making process. Only 11.36% of the respondents are not aware of the company's policies, this obviously builds confidence and the sense of responsibilities and commitment to work well because of the appreciating of the policy directions and what the vision and processes are. This agrees with Hammond

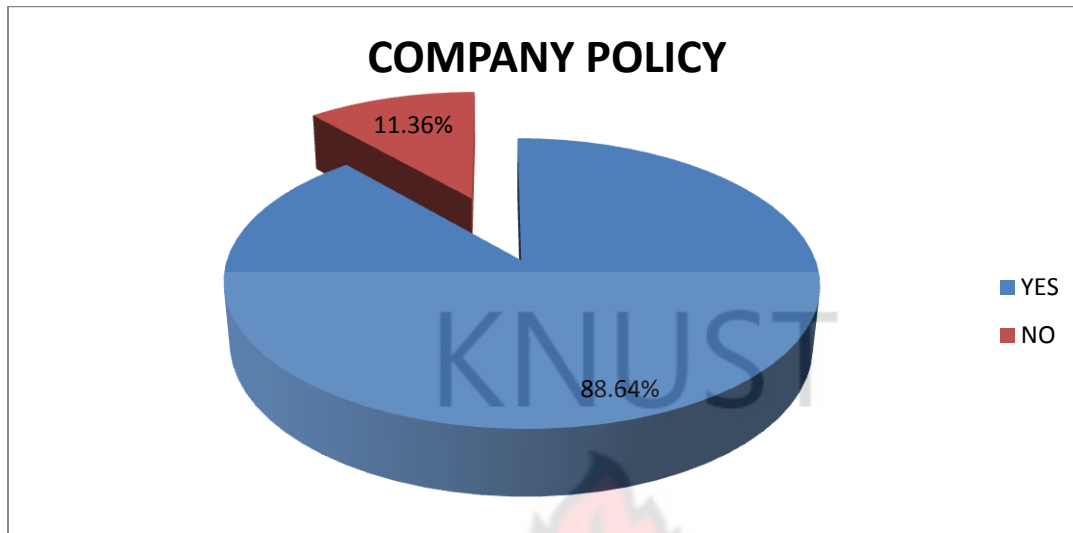
(1986) who must a strong case for employees' right to information and suggested a gamut of measures which can be applied. The implication among others is that the general work output improves when the team, both management or staff members have the full appreciation of what company stands for and what it wants to achieve.

Table 4.3 Awareness of Company Policies

Responses	Staff frequency	Management Frequency	Staff Frequency Percentage
Yes	39	6	88.64%
No	5	0	11.36%
Total	44	6	100%

Source: Field data, 2012

Figure 4.5 Awareness of Company Policy



Source: Field data, 2012

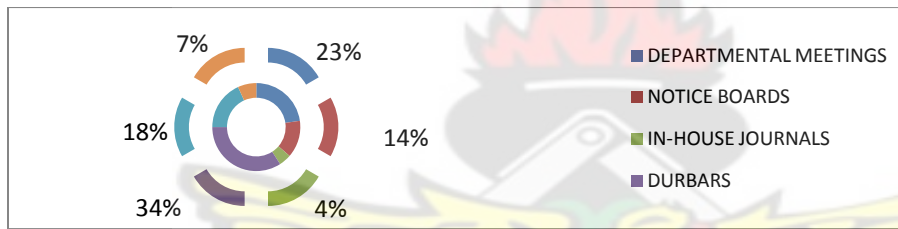
4.7 MEANS / TOOLS OF COMMUNICATING POLICIES

From the illustration, the most frequently used means of communication of policies by management of the CPC is at durbars and on the notice boards. A small amount of intranet system set up is also used to disseminate some corporate information periodically via e-mails. Other means are through departmental meetings and through the use of rarely published in-house journal.

Circulars and memos are also used sometimes according to the respondents, signifying the diverse means of communicating the company policies to the staff members as and when necessary-conforming to Berger (2008) who suggested in a study the use of memos, annual reports, durbars among others to communicate internally in organizations for specific purposes. This means, the channels through which CPCs policies be it new operational

directives or major policy directions and ideas are not very varied but limited. Again the tools are not modern and effective use of modern technology is not applied or used by the management hence there are limitations on the volume of information or policies that which can be communicated and well explained by authority to elicit the desired response or action from the team members to achieve set targets and goals. The company therefore as a matter of urgency must make use of new forms of technology to disseminate all information and appropriate policy directives.

Figure 4.6 Means/Tools of Communication of Policies by Management



Source: Field data, 2012

Table 4.4 How often does management communicates policies to staff

Period	Staff frequency	Management frequency	Staff Frequency percentage
Daily	5	1	11%
Weekly	4	1	9%
Monthly	5	1	11%
Annually	13	1	30%
Others(occasionally)	17	1	39%

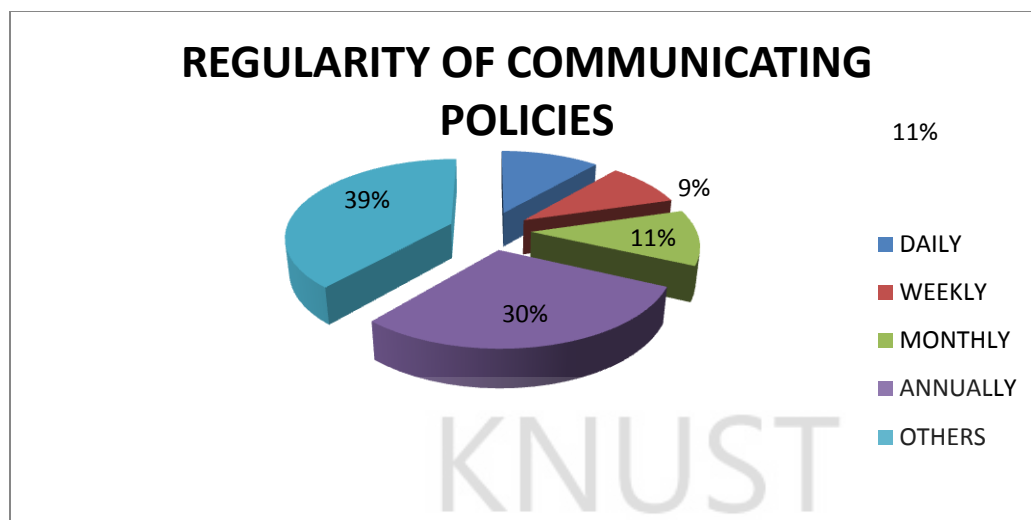
Total	44	6	100%
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Source: Field data, 2012

On the regularity of management communication of policies to staff, 39 % said the communication is done occasionally as and when there is a new policy direction to be given. 30 % indicated that the communication happens annually at the beginning of the year, when new targets are set and through that, some policies are explained to staff members. The remaining 31% noted that, it is done daily, weekly and monthly respectively (they from their responses, believe notices on their boards are all ways management communicate policies to them.

What this means is that, communication of a well thought through, explained and well defined company policies are not managed well, to the clear understanding of all, hence the varied responses. For all intents and purposes, company policies as explained by the managers, are normally well documented and given to all departments. Seminars and other fora are periodically held to take the team through the policies. Whatever the situation, there should be a regular platforms to communicate policies to the team members to achieve results, since it is a panacea to increase productivity.

Figure 4.7 How often does management communicates policies to staff



Source: Field data, 2012

4.8 MEDIUM FOR EXPRESSING STAFF SUGGESTIONS AND GRIEVANCES

On the question of how staff are able to express their grievances and make suggestions to management. The data divulged that the widely used channel by staff members to reach management was through durbars which according to them, are held in a very congenial atmosphere. Some do use the suggestion box.

On the part of the six managers interviewed, they indicated that the laid down channels effectively enable free flow of communication between management and staff members on their grievances. 57% of the respondents found durbars to be the most appropriate channel to express their grievances to management and to put across suggestions. 32% of the respondents indicated that they channel theirs through their heads of department while the remaining 11% use the suggestion boxes for fear of victimization.

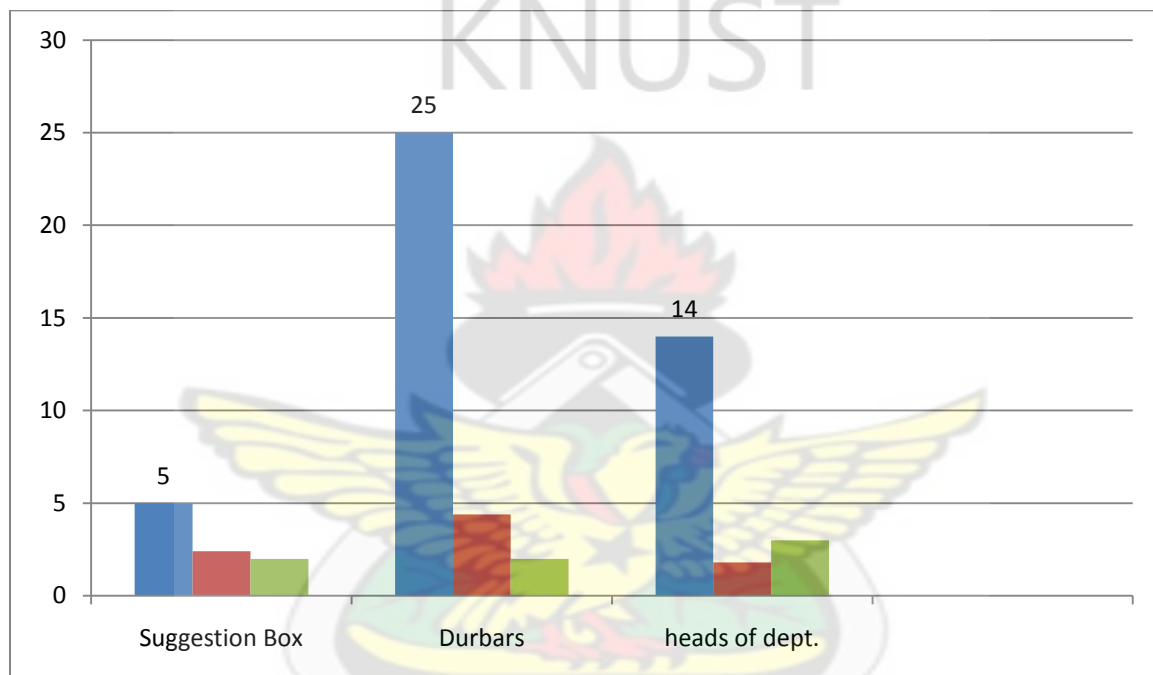
The environment created for expressing staff grievances and addressing them is in line with what Newsom et al (1992) noted in one of their writings. According to them, with the increasing decentralization of power in organizations, and a move towards more individual responsibility, top level management and public relations practitioners must make sure that organization's like the C.P.C get messages to the employees and are understood and accepted by them, and the message from employees to top management are heard and answered.

This situation at least brings some level of hope among the team members and have the assurance that their concerns are listened to and make them feel part of the decision making process-a situation that generate a high sense of commitment from the staff members to work and achieve desirable results. This situation implies that, not many staff members prefer the suggestion box because according to the respondents, they don't trust this system and therefore do not find it appropriate to use-a situation that affect confidence and level of commitment and general work output because feedback will not be prompt for management to take decisions and even adjust to make the staff members feel part of decision making which will build the responsibility levels of team members and ownership. This situation does not augur well for the organization because until durbars are held, not many team members will reach top management with their suggestions, issues and concerns.

The intermediary means will be to send grievances through heads of departments at their meetings and should the heads fail to document well, feedback and concerns are distorted. The CPC Management should try and win the trust of team members to use the suggestion

boxes more often and even put in-place a team news mail system where members on very regular basis can send their issues to a central point where the I.T unit of the Human Resource Department will act on them for the necessary reaction or response, to get the best of the staff members.

Figure: 4.8 Mediums used by staff to express staff suggestions and grievances



Source: Field data, 2012

4.9 RATE OF STAFF INTERACTION WITH MANAGEMENT

On the issue of interaction with management, data indicated that, this is not done on very regular basis, but the interaction is more done with the heads of departments. 28 responded that they do it rarely, 10 said they do it often while 6 responded that it is done very often. The interaction does happen when there are durbars or emergency general meetings. The implication though is that, when it does not become regular, issues are sometime bottled up

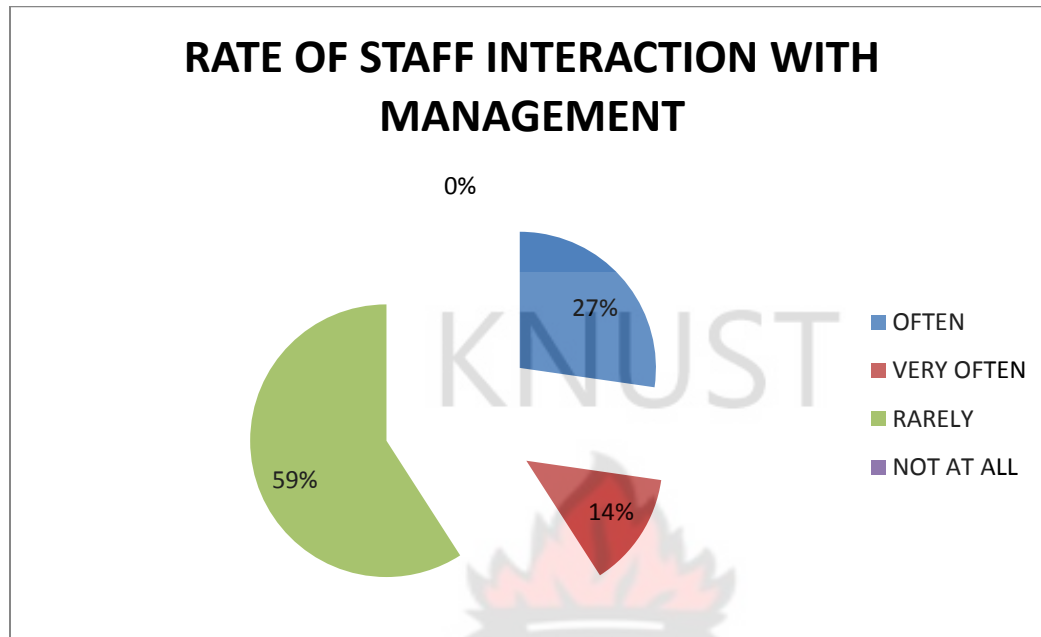
and may explode into crisis before the scheduled date for a durbar. It is always good even under emergency situations to call durbars and meetings of the cuff to find out whether there are any issues to be discussed and addressed, for this will always nib potential crisis in the bud.

Table 4.5 Rate of Staff Interaction with Management

	Staff frequency	Management frequency	Staff frequency percentages
Often	12	3	27%
Very often	6	1	14%
rarely	26	2	59%
Not at all	0	0	0
Total	44	6	100%

Source: Field data, 2012

Figure 4.9 Rate of Staff Interaction with Management



Source: Field data, 2012

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

From the questionnaires administered to the staff members and interviews of the six managers, it can be said of management that there are laid down procedures and means of information flow and communicating with the members of staff on company directions and general company policies. The respondents have all been in the company for an appreciable

period of time, which made their contribution to the study very credible and indicate low staff turnover in the Cocoa Processing Company (C.P.C.)

Through channels such as durbars, departmental meetings, monthly and annual reports, notice boards and periodic in-house journal which has become more defunct, the vision, mission and policies of the operations of the C.P.C are made known and explained to the team of staff, the regularity however is an issue that needs attention.

The respondents therefore noted that they are aware and indeed do understand what the company stood for and seek to achieve by way of productivity, with some exceptions though. They also established the existence of means of sending the concerns, suggestions and grievances to management with some promptness in the rate of receiving attention-a situation they noted will boost moral when done well, (a need for improvement and consistency). It also noted that, the use of internet to communicate with staff is very minimal if not negligible and must be improved to go with modern trends to achieve desirable targets.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The Key objective of this study was to evaluate and ascertain communication flow within the Cocoa Processing Company (a downward flow of information from management to staff and upward flow, from the other staff members to management) how the information flow is achieved, and its impact on productivity.

From the data gathered, the management of the cocoa processing company has quite effective channels of sharing information or relaying information; from communicating new policy

directions and ideas to everyday acceptable standard practices to improve productivity and to maximize profit as well as take feedback and grievances and address them. This is evident in the fact that almost staff members in their response were aware of the vision, mission and values of CPC and understood the policies of the company, with some though responding in the negative.

From the data gathered, though it was clear that information technology is not playing an important role in the means of flowing information, or in the internal communication, at least not as a major means of reaching team members at C.P.C. Staff members still prefers some traditional means of hearing from management as well as sending their suggestions or grievances to management-through durbars, departmental meetings and use of notice boards among others, making the use of the suggestion box almost irrelevant. This obviously must be looked at again to link to the new technological world in terms of effective use of electronic channels e-mails, voice mails, intranet among others as suggested by Berger (2008).

The data also showed that management do interact with the team members howbeit except through durbars and sometimes through meetings of the heads of departments with the staff members. It was shown that during this session, all forms of communication that need to be sent to the team are channeled to them and feedback or reactions are sent back to management. Again as and when necessary, the notice boards are used- the challenge though, it must be pointed out is that not every staff member reads the notice board and information on them, hence not all will be informed on such information or communications put on them.

The data further indicated that, many of the staff members do not use the suggestion box as expected to channel suggestions and grievances, rather they prefer durbars and departmental meetings where it was noted that, one is able to freely express him or herself on any issue of concern or relevance. The interview with the managers revealed that sometimes some unscrupulous staff members do writing unpalatable things and anonymous letters about operations and people, this they noted cannot be accepted.

From the above it is clear that, though there are systems and some structures for information flow and internal communication, there are some gaps which do not make the whole process complete within the Cocoa Processing Company, hence the need for some actions to be taken to close the communication gaps either downward or upward.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis on the data gathered, it was evident; the key channels used for internal communication at C.P. C are durbars, suggestion boxes, memos, reports, notices boards among other traditional means. This for all intents and purposes cannot effectively raise C.P. Cs internal communication and information flow to the expected levels. And to agree with Berger (2008) and others, the researcher recommends the use of new information technology channels more in the dissemination of information from management and staff members.

In this direction, there is the urgent need for a drive to among others establish an electronic mail team news communication or information system, blocks, video conferencing

mechanisms among other effective modern technologies through which, management will always fill staff in on new and evolving policies and ideas of operations and company practices. This to a very large extent will help strengthen the company's internal communication and information flow, as well as generally aid management improve the general work output and productivity of the Cocoa Processing Company.

Furthermore, the need for a new system for effective and efficient communication between management and employees becomes crucial due to the inability or non-usage of the suggestion box to channel grievances and get them addressed as the observation from the data showed and represented in the analysis. Management must therefore institute a more effective and continuum of approaches to promptly address staff concerns and grievances, which when not done breeds apathetic attitudes which affect productivity, as well as prevent dysfunctions in any of the departments that will take more efforts to addressed at the costly expense of the organization.

The analysis further indicated that, management interaction with the staff though takes place, needs much to be desired, hence the need for CPC to be holding a more regular and not too monotonous fora for interactions between management and staff members in addition to the durbars and the periodic departmental meetings, a meeting every quarter, could be instituted interspersed with electronic team news mechanism communication. This will aid the interaction between management and staff.

Coupled with the above, the researcher recommends that C.P. C. often carry out scientific studies on information flow to aid their general internal communication, in the face of the

changing and improving trends in business models, quest to achieve high level staff appreciation of management's efforts at addressing operational issues will massively be improved, through a continuum of media or communication channels for their efficient information flow within the Cocoa Processing Company.

The researcher believes that the use of new trends of technology for internal communication will be a panacea to achieving effective communication and information flow within the Cocoa Processing Company to achieve set targets and desirable results.



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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES

QUESTION GUIDE FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH SIX MANAGERS OF COCOA PROCESSING COMPANY LIMITED.

This is a research work being undertaken by a final year Commonwealth Executive Masters in Business Administration student of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Institute Of Distance Learning) Kumasi. The aim is to investigate **COMMUNICATION FLOW IN COCOA PROCESSING COMPANY LIMITED.**

In answering the questionnaire, please tick the answers in the blank spaces where appropriate. Information provided by respondents in this questionnaire will be kept confidential

PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Age

- a. 21 – 30
- b. 31 – 40
- c. 41 - 50
- d. 51 – 60

3. Marital Status

- a. Single
- b. Married
- c. Separated
- d. Divorced

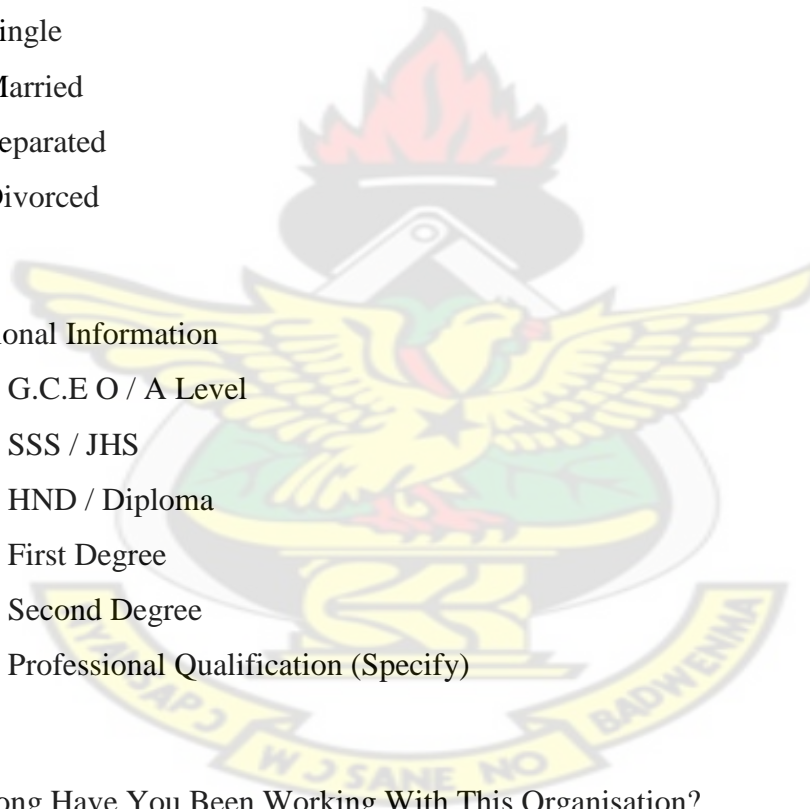
4. Educational Information

- a. G.C.E O / A Level
- b. SSS / JHS
- c. HND / Diploma
- d. First Degree
- e. Second Degree
- f. Professional Qualification (Specify)

5. How Long Have You Been Working With This Organisation?

- a. Under 5 Years
- b. Six – Ten Years
- c. Eleven – Fifteen Years
- d. Sixteen – Twenty Years
- e. Above 21 Years

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6. Have you ever worked in a different organisation?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
7. How would you rate communication between management and staff of this organization?
- A. Adequate
 - B. Inadequate
8. In your organizational structure, who is responsible for communicating management's policies to staff?
- A. Personnel Manager
 - B. PRO
 - C. CEO
 - D. Others
9. How do staff members receive information from management?
- A. Notice boards
 - B. In- house Journal
 - C. Durbars
 - D. Departmental Meetings
 - E. Others
10. What mechanism have you put in place to receive feedback from staff?
11. How readily does management respond to grievances and or suggestions from staff?
12. How often does management interact with members of staff?
13. Where do these interactions take place?

- A. Canteen
- B. Office
- C. Out of office locations
- D. Others

14. Do you have an In – House Journal? If yes how is it published?
15. Are there any barriers to communication in this organization? What are they?
16. How do you hope to overcome these barriers?
17. Do you approve of a suggestion box?
18. If yes, how often do you make use of it?
19. If no, which other alternative would you suggest?
20. Would you like to make other suggestions to improve communication to employees in your organization?

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF MEMBERS OF COCOA PROCESSING COMPANY LIMITED.

This is a research work being undertaken by a final year Commonwealth Executive Masters in Business Administration student of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Institute Of Distance Learning) Kumasi. The aim is to investigate **COMMUNICATION FLOW IN COCOA PROCESSING COMPANY LIMITED.**

In answering the questionnaire, please tick the answers in the blank spaces where appropriate. Information provided by respondents in this questionnaire will be kept confidential.

Thank you for your co-operation.

PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender

- c. Male
- d. Female

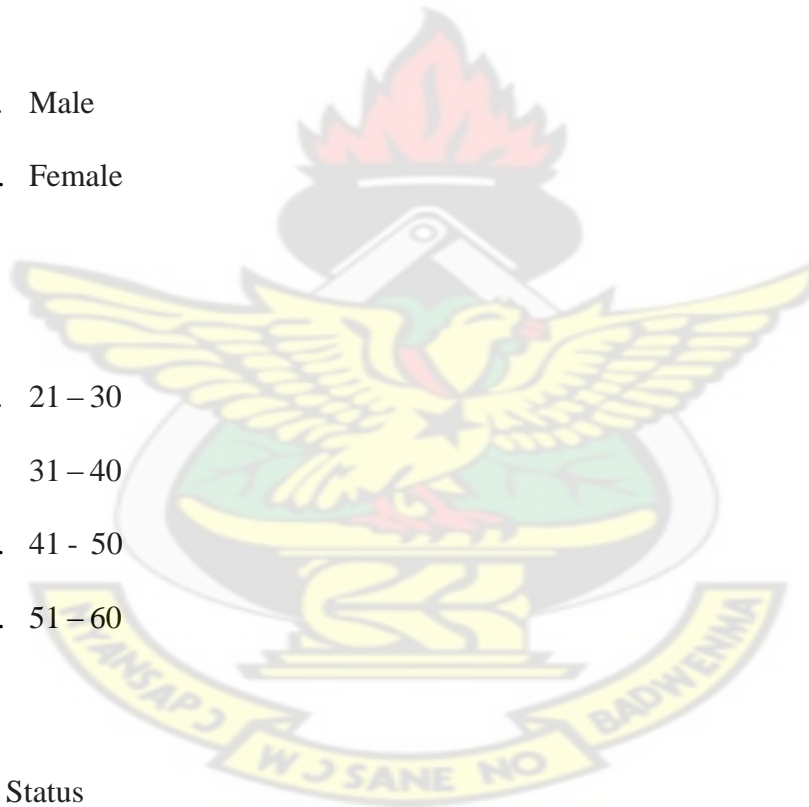
2. Age

- e. 21 – 30
- f. 31 – 40
- g. 41 - 50
- h. 51 – 60

3. Marital Status

- e. Single
- f. Married
- g. Separated
- h. Divorced

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4. Educational information

- g. G.C.E O / A Level
- h. SSS / JHS
- i. HND / Diploma
- j. First Degree
- k. Second Degree
- l. Professional Qualification (Specify)

5. How long have you been working with this organisation?

- f. Under 5 Years
- g. Six – Ten Years
- h. Eleven – Fifteen Years
- i. Sixteen – Twenty Years
- j. Above 21 Years

6. Have you ever worked in a different organisation?

- c. Yes
- d. No

7. Are you aware of the vision, mission and values of your organisation?

- a. Yes
- b. No

8. Do you know about the policies of your organisation?

- a. Yes
- b. No

9. Are these policies communicated to you by management?

- a. Yes
- b. No

10. If yes, how often is this done?

- a. Daily
- b. Weekly
- c. Monthly
- d. Annually
- e. Others (Specify)

11. How is this communication done?

- a. At departmental meetings
- b. On the notice board

- c. In the in-house Journal
- d. At durbars
- e. Emails
- f. Others (Specify)

12. Do you have a staff Email address?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13. If yes, do you receive Emails from your management?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. If yes, how often do you receive such Emails from management?

- a. Daily
- b. Weekly
- c. Monthly
- d. Rarely
- e. Others (Specify)

15. If you do not have a staff Email address, would you like to have one?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. Does your organisation have an in-house journal?

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. If yes, how often is it published?

- a. Monthly
- b. Quarterly
- c. Annually
- d. Others(Specify)

18. Do you write to the editor of this publication?

- a. Yes
- b. No

19. Give reasons for your answer in question 12 above.

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20. Do you often read notices on the notice board?

- a. Yes
- b. No

21. Give reasons for your answer in question 14 above.

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22. Which of the following departments do you belong to?

- a. Legal
- b. Public Relations
- c. Human Resource
- d. Marketing
- e. Research and Development
- f. Quality Assurance

g. Others (Specify)

23. How often do members of your department interact with top managers in this organisation?

- a. Very often
- b. Often
- c. Rarely
- d. Not at all

24. How do you put across to management your suggestions and grievances?

- a. In the in-house journal
- b. Anonymous letters
- c. By telephone
- d. At durbars or General meetings
- e. Through heads of department
- f. Others (Specify)

25. Does your organisation have a suggestion box?

- a. Yes

b. No

26. Do you make use of it?

a. Yes

b. No

27. If there is no suggestion box, would you approve of one?

a. Yes

b. No

28. Give reasons for your answer in question 21 above.

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