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**COMMUNICATION IN A CHURCH AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR CHURCH
GROWTH: A STUDY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH GHANA, TEMA DIOCESE**

BY:

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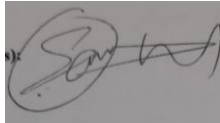
**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS,
ADVERTISING AND MARKETING IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work toward the Master of Arts in Public Relations degree, and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by any other person nor material that 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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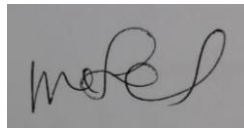
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Certified by
Dr. Modestus Fosu
(Supervisor)



13/12/2021

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late mother, madam Georgina Ama Brakowaah Gyasie. God gave me to her to make sure I become a Minister of the Gospel. She is my soul winner, because she brought me to the saving knowledge of Christ. As a first-born son, she did all in her power to give me better education though she was a poor single parent taking care of six children. She was my bible teacher, hymn teacher, life coach, mentor and my liberator. I owe everything I have become to her; I wish she was alive to see what her son has become. She died a month after I was commissioned as a minister, this made me understand that her mission on earth had been fulfilled. Everywhere she may be in eternity, I thank God for her life.

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ABSTRACT

Communication in the workplace is a vital management component to any organization. This applies in no small way to the Church as an organisation, although few academic studies have focused on communication and its relationship to church activities and development. The aim of this study was to examine the internal communication activities of the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana and their implications for the growth of the Church within the Diocese. The study is guided by the media richness theory and the organizational information theory with a qualitative research design that used interview data from 8 officers of the Methodist Church Ghana in the Tema Diocese. The respondents included a bishop, lay chairman, pastors, stewards, and lay members to generate knowledge through their opinions on the communication structure, internal communication activities and their impact on the Methodist Church Ghana of the Tema Diocese. The study discovered that the Methodist Church Ghana's communication structure connects lay members in the church's societies to the presiding bishop at the national level. This communication structure is modelled after the church's organogram and reporting structure, which prescribe the path for administrative correspondence and planning at the society, circuit, diocese and connexional levels. It was also found that the church's communication activities are designed to flow through two main paths from the society level to the connexional or national level. With the church membership divided into classes and organizations in each society, communication can flow from each class or organization through leaders to the circuit, diocese and connexional levels. The informal approach has to do with members informally routinely approaching any church staff such as steward or minister in charge with a grievance or issue. Lastly, it was seen that effective communication has contributed to church growth on an individual society level. In spite of the positive observations made, it was also found that some pastors at the society level occasionally breach the laid down communication process when dealing with some matters. Also, it was noted that even though the church has a structured communication process, it is unable to control how information flowing from one party will affect the receiving party. It is recommended that pastors in each society make efforts to deliberately teach lay members the church's communication structure and process so members will know who to approach on any matter. In addition, this study provides a Pioneering perspective on the subject and can be referenced in future studies.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background:

This work investigated the communication structure and methods of the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church, Ghana, intending to discover their implications for the growth of the church. The study proceeds from the view that the church is an organisation like any business organisation, and as such it requires effective communication to succeed. However, it appears that the orientation of the church in terms of its goals make its handlers not to pay particular attention to how communication works within and between the church and other external stakeholders. Zalawma & Vanlalruata (2004) have noted that a significant part of any Church's problem is the lack of growth or stunted growth, which often stem from ineffective communication and a lack of teamwork. Church growth here means the church's ability to develop its members spiritually through effective teaching and preaching of the gospel so they become mature disciples who can individually or in groups advance the spiritual, physical and social goals and objectives of the church and in extension the larger Christian fraternity. Thus, issues relating to organisational communication in the church demands academic investigation.

This study will focus on the internal communication practices of the Methodist church Ghana, Tema diocese (MCG). The overarching goal is to discover how the MCG interacts with its internal stakeholders, and the extent to which the Church deploys effective communication strategies in that regard. Internal communication is the transmittal of information between and among persons within a business or organization. Within the church setting, internal communication involves the transmittal of information between members of the church comprising the church leadership, church workers and the entire church members. Within an organization and in extension a church, internal communication is used to accomplish company goals and objectives. (Camp and

Satterwhite, 1998). Studies have shown that internal communication is necessary for organization's success. Markovic and Salamzadeh (2018) believes that good communication is necessary for businesses to run successfully and smoothly. An organization needs to be kept well informed of all information necessary for the growth of the business, and this is possible through effective communication. Within the church setting, the internal stakeholders comprise the pastor, church board and the congregation.

According to King (2003), from the inception, the Christian church relied upon a strong foundation of communication. Oral, written, and visual communication launched the Christian church and continues to help maintain its effective purpose. This day launched the Christian church. The Book of Acts recounts the power of this one-day event. Luke tells how hundreds and thousands came to faith, sometimes in one day, through the spoken word, miraculous healings, and the sharing of material blessings in a communal setting. The Christian community became a unique societal group in the way it communicated its message about Jesus Christ, and also in the way it lived and worked together. Through communication, the message was shared and the organization grew and flourished. In its infant stage the Christian community began to develop an oral set of standards and beliefs. It would eventually formulate specific statements of belief that would provide the impetus for an organized religion.

1.0.1 Organizational Communication and the church.

This study occurs within the framework of organisational communication since the church may be seen as an organisation. Jouany and Martic (2020) stated that organizational communication is one of the essential prerequisites for building a successful business. Its impact on employee engagement, collaboration, workplace trust and employee experience make it an important part of every workplace strategy. This applies to the church setting where church workers and

members in general rely on communication to collectively work towards church goals and vision.

No matter what type of communication we are talking about, communication in the workplace is a vital management component to any organization. Some of the main purposes of organizational communication is to update employees on new policies, crisis communication, ensuring safety throughout the organization, managing change management, digital transformation, mergers and acquisitions as well as giving and receiving feedback from employees. In the book *Organizational Communication: Challenges of Change, Diversity, and Continuity*, Neher (1997) identifies the five primary functions of business communication as leading, rationalizing, problem-solving, conflict management and compliance gaining. The function of leading is important to enable management to issue instructions in a clear, specific manner so that workers are able to follow them without difficulty.

Every organization has a formal communication system in which the flow of information is dictated by the official organizational structure. Formal channels follow the organization's arrangement of the various levels, divisions, departments and job responsibilities. In an organization chart, the line of authority that links the chain of command are the formal channels managers and employees use to transmit official information. Formal communications can take many forms including phone calls, memos, report, staff meeting, department meetings, seminars, company's newsletter and official notices. Informal communication on the other hand takes the form of sending a birthday card, chatting on social media, text messages, and phone conversations.

In their work, organizational structure and an effective communication: The moderating effect of transformational leadership, Yahaya et al. (2018), argued that effective communication flow is crucial for managerial effectiveness in any organization. Effective communication flow in

organizational structure with the appropriate channels can bring growth and profit to the organization.

Much like any organization, churches need to develop a strategic communication plan. While many sources exist to help churches craft these documents and establish an identity, Gift (2007) found that some churches stay purposefully ambiguous in their communication of their identity in an effort to reach the most people. Studying churches as an organization is further complicated by the fact that it is not a one-size-fits all study. The size, location, and demographics of a church play a large role in the way the church chooses to communicate. Furthermore, the denomination of the church is influential in the way a church function (Kaylor, 2008). Churches also need to market themselves effectively in order to grow, but understanding how to do so has proven to be difficult for many churches (Considine, 1995, 2000, 2002). Church marketing and organizational communication studies have become increasingly important as churches have had to move and find new channels to communicate with their audience.

1.0.2 Internal communication and the church

In every organization, there are internal publics and stakeholders. According to Camp and Satterwhite, (1998), internal communication is the transmittal of information between and among persons within a business or organization. Within a company, internal communication is used to accomplish company goals and objectives. Communication inside an organization is arguably more important, because the organization has to function effectively in attaining its goals in order to survive. Timely, complete, and accurate corporate communication and face-to-face managerial communication can help to secure employee action in favor of company goals. (Seitel, 2017). Internal publics are an organization's most important public, therefore internal communication must deal with building and maintaining relationships with all the publics inside an organization. Broom & Sha, (2012), posit that, employees are not just another

audience, they are the company. In the view of Wilcox et al, (2014) a company's reputation may be enhanced or damaged by how rank-and-file employees feel about their employer. Every internal communication function must bring out the value of understanding, teamwork, and commitment by employees in achieving bottom-line results.

There is the need to build a strong manager communication network, one that makes every supervisor at every level accountable for communicating effectively with his or her employees. According to Seitel (2017), effective employee communication requires organisations to ask three key questions about the way they convey knowledge to the staff:

Is management able to communicate effectively with employees? Is communication trusted, and does it relay appropriate information to employees? Has management communicated its commitment to its employees and to fostering a rewarding work environment. Answers to these questions are very critical for the survival of every organization. Within the church setting, church board/management should be able to communicate effectively with church members, Also, church board should ensure its communication is trusted and able to relay information to church members and finally, should communicate its commitment to church members and foster a conducive environment for fellowship. If the people inside who work for you don't believe your story, then the people outside will never buy in. Therefore, organizing effective, believable and persuasive internal communications is a critical in the 21st century. The goal of internal communication is to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the employees on whom its success or failure depends. We must also mention that understanding the internal communication of any organization requires analysis of the culture of that organization.

Organizational culture refers to the sum total of shared values, symbols, meanings, beliefs, assumptions, and expectations that organize and integrate a group of people who work together.

Organizational culture affects internal communication, and it is often created by the executive.

The church as an organization also has its publics and stakeholders according to the definitions and variations the scholars have argued above. The church then has its internal and external publics and stakeholders. The internal publics are the believers who have accepted Jesus Christ and have joined the church and have common interests and values for the church. The external publics are those who have not yet decided to join the church but the church has them as a target for which evangelism is organized to win them to the fold (Germonprez, 2001). In the church, all internal publics can be referred to as stakeholders because every member has a stake or vested interest as a disciple of Jesus Christ to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, defend and protect the church. The investments, contributions, resources and payments members make to the church, are not to receive any financial or material dividends from the church in return as it happens with profit making organizations. Internal communication is any and all communication that takes place within the church between church management and members (Germonprez, 2001).

Internal communication does not have to occur within the four walls of the church, but rather it occurs between church stakeholders. Understanding which channel to use for delivering a message is essential to the effectiveness of that message (Carlson, 1995). In order for churches to have strong internal communication, church leaders need to choose a channel that they both have experience with and have proven to be an effective channel for their desired audience (Murphy et al., 2017). This is especially true for churches trying to navigate the “new normal” of online communication channels.

1.0.3 Brief history of the Methodist church Ghana

The Methodist Church Ghana came into existence as a result of missionary activities of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, which was inaugurated with the arrival of Rev. Joseph Rhodes Dunwell in January 1835, in the Gold Coast now Ghana. Missionaries, notably Roman Catholics and Anglicans had come to the Gold Coast from the 15th Century, but their activities did not see much success. What was left was a school established in Cape Coast by the Anglicans during the time of Rev. Philip Quaque, a Ghanaian priest. Those who came out of this School had scriptural materials which were supplied by the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. It was a member of one such Bible study group, William De- Graft, who requested for Bible through one Captain potter of the ship called Cargo. Through Captain Potter's instrumentality, not only were Bible sent, but also a Methodist missionary. In the first eight years of the Church's life 11 out of 21 missionaries who worked in the Gold Coast died. Thomas Birch freeman, who arrived in the Gold Coast in 1838, was a great pioneer of missionary expansion.

Between 1838 and 1857, he carried Methodism from Coastal areas to Kumasi and other parts of Ashanti Region. He also established Methodist Societies in Badagry and Abeokuta in Nigeria with the assistance of William De-Graft. By 1854, the Church had been organized into Circuits constituting a District with the Rev. T.B. Freeman as Chairman who was replaced in 1856 by Rev. Willian West. On February 6, 1856, synod took steps that were confirmed at the British Conference in July, 1878, that the district should be divided into two for effective ministry. The two District were Gold Coast (Ghana) District, with Rev. T. R. Picot as Chairman and Yoruba and Popo, District with the Rev. John Milum as Chairman. In July 1961, the church became autonomous and was called The Methodist church Ghana with the deed of foundation enshrined in the Constitution and standing Orders of the Church. The Methodist Church, Ghana is organized on the Connexional rather than on the congregational system. This means that, in

the Methodist Church, Ghana, no local congregation (called the society) is autonomous or independent. Rather, the society is linked or connected to the Annual Conference or the Connexional Office through the Circuit and Diocese.

Jesus used a farming analogy to explain how the kingdom of God grows. Once the farmer plants the seed, it grows by itself. The farmer is not in control of that process, and doesn't even fully understand it. The farmer is involved, but the farmer is not in control. Growth happens naturally, but only after the farmer did the hard work of preparing the soil. And that's how church growth works. It is a combination of the blessings of God and the stewardship of man. It is appropriate to view earthly leadership as a stewardship opportunity. Worancha, (2012), argued that, there are some variables common to growing churches which is the leadership factor. All growing churches have leaders with the 'gift of faith'. Their main function is equipping others for the ministry.

According to Holland (2002), Krejcir (2006) and Worancha (2009), the following abridgments are church growth affecting factors: Ignorance, carnal mindedness, prayerlessness, lack of Bible study, lack of unity, lack of finance, leadership problems, lack of strategy for evangelism, lack of the power of the Holy Spirit, lack of commitment, lack of good management & transparency, sin in the church, people-blindness, theological deviation, arrested spiritual development (materialism, nominalism, tribalism, self-centeredness), and the biggest of all, in Africa particular, lack of nurturing to the newly baptized (Worancha, 2009).

1.0.4 Tema Diocese of the Methodist church Ghana

An ADHOC COMMMITTEE was formed and held its first meeting in October, 1992 to work out the modalities of carving a new district out of the Accra District of the Methodist Church Ghana. The Creation of the Tema District remained on the Agenda of the Accra District standing Committee as the process passed through different stages and in 1996, the Accra synod forwarded a memorandum to the 1996 Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana held

at the Ebenezer Chapel winneba where it was agreed and accepted that the new District comprising Tema, Tema North, kpone. Awdome, Ada, Ho, Peki and Somanya be carved out of the Accra District and that a provisional synod be help in section to be known and called TEMA DISTRICT when all conditions are fulfilled. As a result of provisional synod votes, the Reverend Dr. Seth Aryee was elected as the first Chairman and General Superintendent for Tema District. The Annual Conference of 1997 approved the result and the new District was inaugurated on 22nd February 1998.

1.1 Problem Statement

According to Franz- Josef (2003), there is the need to understand properly how communication can be helpful for doing Christian Ministry in order to communicate with different people having different cultures, religious beliefs and faith. Communication empowers, informs supports, provides publicity, sensitizes people, provides a forum for expression and concern about issues, and builds a sense of community. However, communication is considered less effective if it not attractive enough to gain acceptance, clear enough to be understood, and meaningful enough to initiate action (Raja and Prabhakar, 2006).

According to Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, 2015a), Americans are leaving churches at record rates. These individuals tend to be younger, with one-third of millennials claiming no religion at all. As churches continue to decline in numbers, it has been made clear that it is essential that churches develop new ways to communicate with their members as well as those outside of the church (McCully, 2014).

Church growth is of the indispensable results of the purpose that Christ, the Head, had set for the Church. “Make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19a ASV) begins nowadays from the local church with the Pastor as leader, his co-workers and the members of his spiritual family who need to grow before unbelievers be reached. How the church leader can attain this

goal of growth in this modern and more and more complex world? He needs prayers of course, divine direction and the capabilities to make the growth a reality. This competence can be acquired through leadership.

Schwarz (1996), the author of *Natural Church Development*, and his team also believe that there are certain key aspects that contribute to church health. They conducted a research study involving a survey of 1000 different churches in thirty-two countries around the world in order to provide "the first worldwide scientifically verifiable answer to the question, 'What church growth principles are true, regardless of culture and theological persuasion'".

Furthermore, Yahaya et al (2016) also studied on organizational structure and an effective communication: the moderating effect of transformational leadership and the study findings suggested that the informal structure did not facilitate the flow of communication or complement formal communication channels at the organization. This could be attributed to the low usage of informal channels, or its low reliability as a major source of information.

Communication research has studied various aspects of religion, as evidenced by the *Journal of Communication and Religion*. Religious communication research has looked at a wide array of religious topics, including membership (Garner, 2016; Lazerwitz & Harrison, 1980; Taylor, 1997), leadership (Björnsdóttir, 2016; Burton, 2010), and religious messages (Endacott et al., 2017; Garner, 2012). Research on church communication is generally scant on some subjects. One of such subjects that is ripe for communication research is an examination of the implication of church communication on church growth (see McCully, 2014; Ward, 2015; Waters, Friedman, Mills, & Zeng, 2011 for exceptions). Ward (2015) claims that, religious communication is least often studied through organizational frames. There is scant academic research on church communication from a strategic communication perspective. Additionally, limited studies have been conducted on the communication structure of the Methodist Church

Ghana (Tema Diocese) and its implication for growth of the church. Against these backdrops, this study is being conducted to examine communication structure of the Tema Branch of the Methodist church, Ghana and its implication for church growth.

1.2 Research Objectives:

The specific objectives of this thesis are to

1. Determine the communication structure in the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana.
2. Examine the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese.
3. Examine the implications of the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese.

1.3 Research Questions:

This study seeks to address three questions:

1. What is the communication structure in the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana?
2. What are the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese?
3. What are the implications of the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Communication empowers people for ministry and church growth, making the communication within the church keep the members informed and supports the programs of the church. Communication also provides publicity, sensitizes people, provides a forum for expression and concern about issues, and builds a sense of community with the church. Significance of the study:

On a national level, this research will be a source of information on communication for Christian, church-based organisations in Ghana. In addition, other non-governmental organisations will also benefit from this as well as corporate bodies.

To the Methodist Church of Ghana, the communication structure of the church will improve significantly to that of profit-oriented organisations. In addition, it will improve the delivery of preaching and teaching in the Methodist Church as an organisation, as leaders will increase their knowledge and awareness on how to communicate to audience during preaching and teaching sessions. Also, it will improve dissemination of information in the church as a whole and help to effectively communicate themes, policies and decisions within the Methodist Church of Ghana.

Lastly to academics, this will serve as a scholarly work that can be cited in future studies to help increase knowledge on the subject of communication in organisation.

1.5 Delimitation

This research will be restricted to two Metropolitan Circuits of the Tema Diocese of the MCG and as such cannot be interpreted as wholly representing the communication system and activities of all churches in Ghana because of the different establishment and doctrinal positions. Thus, the results and conclusions of the study should be understood as such.

1.6 Organization of the study

This study proceeds as follows: chapter one covers the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and delimitation. Chapter two will delve into literature related to the topic and gather information based on the study objectives. Chapter three will focus on the methodology, research design, sampling and data collection procedure. In chapter four, analysis of data and research findings

will be discussed. Finally, chapter five will provide a summary, conclusion, implications and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction:

This section of the work discusses the related literature and the theories to guide the study. It finally draws on the gap established in literature on the association between communication and the development of the Church.

2.1 Literature review

While many studies have been conducted on the communication in general (Keyton & Shockley, 2009; Markovich & Salamzadeh, 2018; Garner, 2012; Gift, 2007; Camp & Setterwhite, 1998), only a few have focused on the communication of the church. Thus, this review of literature would concentrate on works that have focused on the communication of churches.

Muasaya (2020) conducted research on effective internal communication and employee performance, and he focused the study on the Makueni Diocese of the Anglican Church of Kenya. The study originally sought to determine the effectiveness of internal communication channels in relation to employee performance and to also determine if employees in the Diocese were fully informed of the activities relevant to their functions. The organisational information theory approach was adopted for the study. The study revealed that internal communication was somehow linked to employee performance. With internal communication considered to be ineffective within the church. The employee performance level was nearly as low as the level of ineffectiveness of internal communication.

In the same vein, Penna (2020) conducted a study assessing the influence of communication channels on effective communication between church leadership and their members during the coronavirus shutdown. To examine patterns among interviewees, data was analysed through

thematic analysis derived from the channel expansion theory. The results of this research indicate that using the four principles of Channel Expansion, churches can successfully communicate via internet channels (Carlson & Zmud, 1999). While church leaders rated channels as successful or ineffective depending on their own personal experiences with the channel, it did not seem to have a substantial impact on member attendance when churches interacted online.

Adubah (2012) also conducted a study investigating efficient utilization of human resources within the Methodist Church Ghana. Using both quantitative and qualitative approach to collect and analyse data from 500 church officers, it was revealed that the church lacked a working posting system. The majority of ministers reported a two-month gap between information on transfer and actual transfer, indicating the necessity for personnel data to be used especially for minister redistribution planning.

In addition, Gara and La Porte (2020) investigated the processes of establishing trust in organizations, and this was focused on internal communication, management, and recruitment. The research looks at how to increase trust in a particular area of internal and external communication, particularly recruiting. Using the literature review approach, data was analysed and it was found that employees were the most important resource for corporate marketing, as they form an integral part of the organization's social network, promote the company's value and messaging.

Hanshaw also explored the strategic potential of internal communications in member-serving community nonprofit organization. Using an exploratory research design and a qualitative approach with a constructivist perspective, the study investigated how members perceive, experience, and interact with different levels of leadership in their organization through internal communications practices, as well as to what extent communications practices are intentionally

designed to align internal stakeholders' efforts to achieve or maintain organizational goals. The study revealed that organizations may benefit from private sector best practices in internal communications and having a better knowledge of their internal stakeholders, information requirements, and possible effect on the organization's sustainability.

Mishra (2007) conducted a study establishing trust, commitment, and a good reputation through relationship management with employees. Using the mixed method approach of data collection, data was collected from 300 workers through survey and interviews. The study revealed that both workers and executives feel that good communication is critical to performing their jobs and enjoying their employment.

The observation made from all these studies on internal communication is that whilst the studies have looked at internal communication from a broader perspective mostly on corporate organizations with profit-inclination, less focus has been placed on its implication on church growth. This makes this study an important one since it has the ultimate goal of looking at how internal communication contributes to church growth. The study is also significant in the sense that not much of the reviewed studies on internal communication has discussed the topic within the context of church growth.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is based on the media richness theory propounded by Daft and Lengel (1984) and the organizational information theory propounded Earl Edward Weick (2000). The theory is discussed in detail and its relevance outlined below.

2.2.1 Media Richness Theory

Daft and Lengel proposed the Media Richness Theory (1984). Media richness, according to Daft and Lengel (1984), is the ability of information to convey knowledge within a time period.

It has been indicated in the report of Suh (1999) that the Media Richness theory is based on two basic assumptions. These are:

- a. people want to overcome equivocality and uncertainty in organisations and
- b. a variety of media commonly used in organisations work better for certain tasks than others.

The theory thus comes from the idea that all types of communication should be compared to each other in their ability to convey clear understanding to the other person. This is what reflects how rich a mode or means of communication is. Daft and Lengel (1984) stated that the more learning that can be achieved through the medium, the richer the medium. Media richness therefore has four characteristics. These, according to Daft and Lengel (1984), are:

- a. Ability to handle multiple information cues simultaneously
- b. Ability to facilitate rapid feedback
- c. Ability to establish a personal focus
- d. Ability to utilize natural language

The media richness theory establishes a framework for defining the ability of a communication medium to replicate information delivered through it without loss or distortion. For instance, a phone call or an e-mail will not be able to reproduce non-verbal signals and gestures. The communication channel which addresses ambiguity, negotiate varying interpretations, and essentially facilitate understanding are mostly preferred or viewed as rich (Owusua, 2012). Specifically, Suh (1999) has opined that face-to-face communication is the richest communication medium in the hierarchy followed by telephone, electronic mail, letter, note, memo, special report, and finally, flier and bulletin.

In relation to this study, it can be argued certain media channels can enhance communication amongst members within the Tema Diocese. As a result, the onus lies on management of the

Methodist Church to identify the best channels of communication to help make leaders communicate comfortably and clearly. Thus, the media richness theory is relevant in this study because it helps to determine which media channels have the ability to convey messages clear without ambiguity and distortions so as to help the Church grow.

2.2.2 Organizational Information Theory

Earl Edward Weick (2000), an American organizational theorist, invented organizational information theory. For enhancing productivity in a company, the theory provides guidance on how companies gather and manage information, how important information is disseminated, and how organizations take action on the information (West & Turner, 2000). Before information can be conveyed, every company should resolve any information ambiguity that may exist in the process. Repetitive and common actions should be encouraged in order for any company to deal with ambiguity, according to Weick (Weick, 2000). As a result, it is important to identify and exploit organizational dependency-maintained behaviors as platforms for resolving information ambiguity. Confusion in a company is caused by the fact that every internal stakeholder interprets the message in their own way (Miller, 2004; Weick, 1985). Weick's sense-making model identifies the following steps as necessary for information to make sense. An organization's first step should be to recognize that it is operating in a constantly evolving information environment. Secondly, each member processes the initial information in a unique way, generating their own unique information environment. Thirdly, because of the varied interpretations of information, there is an inherent level of uncertainty in any organization. Fourth, members should use the rules and communication cycles that have been put together to make sense of the information (Weick, 1995; Weick, 2000).

Only when all intended receivers comprehend the material in the same way can an organization achieve a shared understanding. According to organizations information theory, understanding organizational communication requires familiarity with the information environment,

information equivocality, the selection and assembly of rules, and the communication cycles and their rules (Miller, 2004).

An organization's information environment is the sum total of all the information it gets. This covers both positive and negative feedback from internal and external stakeholders. Prior to interacting with members, the organization must understand and arrange the information in the information environment so that it is meaningful (Nonaka, 1994).

Multiple interpretations of an event are known as information equivocality (Miller, 2004). People's interpretations of one message might vary widely, as was previously established. In order to properly transmit and interpret the information to members, the material must be organized. Thus, by structuring departments, groups, and personnel to handle specialized information, businesses are able to eliminate information ambiguity. To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, only the correct individuals should be authorized to send the right information to the right people at the right time.

The following actions were proposed by this theory to reduce ambiguity:

Enactment is the first step. Implementation is the process of splitting the organization into distinct departments in order to sort the data that is being generated (Weick, 1995).

The selection is the next step. Methods for reducing ambiguity and refining data are chosen at this stage. If individuals are going to put in place protocols for managing information, they need a common basis on which they can be confident of the meaning (Cragan & Shields, 1998; Weick, 1995).

In the last phase, the organization analyzes the information and either adapts the concept or rejects it, depending on whether or not the idea is beneficial to the organization (Keyton & Shockley-Zalabak, 2009).

The term "required selection" refers to the fact that an organization's criteria must be followed in order for the data to make sense before it can be shared (West & Turner, 2013). An organization's information eyes may be blinded or opened by its openness to information, according to the notion of organizational information. The organization will pick an interpretation that best serves its interests if it has open information eyes, but if the organization has blind information eyes, each individual will be free to establish and retain their own interpretations.

When it comes to enhancing an organization's production, this approach has been frequently implemented. Information is processed, transmitted, and comprehended differently depending on a variety of factors, including managers' personalities, workers' personalities, cultural backgrounds, both managers and employees' exposure, and more. This has a direct impact on the organization's ability to communicate information. Furthermore, it can have negative effect on relationships between coworkers and between managers and employees, which can lead to poor performance on the part of the latter.

According to this idea, the organization should answer the following questions concerning information in order to comprehend and fulfill its aims and objectives: It's important to know how much knowledge we have. Who will be in charge of coordinating the collection, analysis, and dissemination of the data? Are they competent enough to carry out the task? Why should I care about this? How does the organization's productivity change as a result of the information? Is it necessary to provide this information? Then there's the question of how this information will be spread. Internal workers' conduct and engagement might be favourably or adversely influenced by responses to these questions and the subsequent activities.

Weick's fourth phase in this idea was the creation of rules and communication cycles that involve an organization's communication department, communication routes, and the

packaging of the message. The company should discover the most efficient routes of communication and the best ways to package various messages in order to maximize their impact (Weick, 1995; Weick, 2000). Some communication channels and techniques may be applicable to a wide range of businesses, but each company is unique, and the channels and methods that work best for one may not work for another. Because of the uniqueness of each organization's culture, structure, and personnel, this unsuitability arises. Because of this, it is imperative that any company conduct thorough internal research and find the optimal communication departments, channels, and staff in order to maximize employee engagement.

2.2.3 Conclusion

The chapter reviewed extant literature that were focused on communication within a church setting. The limited studies on the subject resulted in the scarce amount of literature available for use in the review. The studies considered in the review provided an overview of communication and its implication on the church in various ways.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The methods used to collect and analyse data for the study is discussed in this portion of the study. It deals with the study's research design, the study's target demographic, the sample size utilized, the manner of data collecting, and how the data obtained is analyzed, as well as ethical issues. The methodology for a dissertation or thesis, according to Creswell (2012), is the means for completing a given stage in the research process, which comprises definition of techniques, sampling, data collecting and analysis, and measurements.

3.1 Research Design

This study aims to evaluate how internal communication contributes to growth within a church setting. The primary research method used was that of case study within a qualitative research design where data was collected through interviews. Qualitative data is data that can be arranged into categories based on physical traits, gender, colours or anything that is not necessarily quantifiable (Taylor, 2019). Research methodology, as Gounder (2012) puts it, is a collective term for the structured process of conducting research. A descriptive research design was as a support in the case study. For a research topic, descriptive research design is carried out where the researcher is solely interested in describing the situation or case under their research study. This allowed the researcher to provide insights into why and how of the research (Bhat, 2020).

3.2 Population

A population is a whole category that needs certain knowledge to be assessed (Chaudry & Banerjee, 2010). The population from which a sample was drawn for this study includes all 18 Circuits (consisting of 117 Societies) of the Methodist Church, Ghana within the Tema

Diocese. The researcher's focus was primarily on two top hierarchy officers, pastors, stewards and lay workers representing the sampling frame for the study. Information was sourced from the aforementioned officers who are stationed within the Tema Diocese.

3.3 Sampling and Sample Size

A population is a complete collection of individuals with a specialized collection of attributes, and a sample is a subset of the population (Chaudry & Banerjee, 2010). Out of about 18 Circuits within the Tema Dioceses, the researcher used purposive sampling approach to select 2 Circuits to represent the sample from whom data was collected for the study. The researcher again, through purposive sampling, selected 1 Bishop, 1 Diocesan Lay Chairman, 2 Pastors, 2 Stewards and 2 Lay Members who will be interviewed for the study. Purposive sampling according to Business Research Methodology (2020), is a sampling technique that involves the researcher relying on his or her own judgment in the process of selecting members to participate in a study. The researcher adopted a purposive sampling approach because the type of information needed for the study can better be provided by the officers to be selected for the study.

3.4 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were used to analyse and answer the main questions in this study. Primary data is data that are collected by the researcher on the field of research using methods like surveys, interviews or experiments with a specific research project in mind (Glen, 2020). Secondary data on the other hand is data that have already been collected to serve another purpose (Sage Publications, 2017). The researcher collected primary data from respondents through fieldwork. Qualitative data was collected from the various respondents in the Circuits sampled for this study. Qualitative data is data that can be arranged into categories

based on physical traits, gender, colours or anything that does not have a number associated with it (Taylor, 2019).

Primary data will be collected through interviews. The researcher interviewed selected pastors, stewards and lay workers through the use of an interview guide. The researcher developed an interview guide that was categorised into two sections – demographic section and interview questions. This ensured that demographic information on interviewees was captured to determine whether or not they may have any influence on the responses provided to interview questions. Some of the research questions include:

- Please describe in detail how communication flows among officers and between officers and lay members at the Society, Circuit and Diocesan levels of the Methodist Church, Ghana within Tema.
- What procedure is in place for lay members to communicate their problems to the Steward, Pastors, Lay Chairman and Bishop?
- Has effective internal communication played a key role in maintaining peace among church officers within the various societies in the Tema Diocese? If so, how has it?

The interview guide, which contains all research questions is attached as appendix.

3.5 Data Analysis

First of all, demographic information collected from interviewees were collectively presented using a table. Data collected through interviews was reviewed one after the other along the study's objectives. After the review, the data was analysed on a thematic basis and discussed so as to help arrive at the study's objectives.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

In a research study, researchers are required to protect their respondents, develop trust with them, guard against misconducts and impropriety, protect the integrity of the research and any other thing that might reflect on the organisation or institution and cope with challenges (Creswell, 2013). Ethical practice that regulates research of this nature was appropriately observed. The identity of respondents is held in confidence. The researcher has acknowledged all scholarly data and make appropriate citations in the reference section of the document.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology, which included the approach for data collection and analysis as well as the research design. Also included is the sample size of the study as well as the researcher's intent to observe the ethics of research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter involves a presentation of data collected from field work as well as the results of analysis of these data. Demographic information of interviewees was presented first and this was followed by the information received from interviewing the sample purposively selected for this study. After this, an analysis of the information is presented and the findings made are discussed in line with the objectives of the study.

The purpose of the study is to examine the communication structure of the Tema Branch of the Methodist church, Ghana and its implication for church growth. The researcher adopted a descriptive research design and the main medium of collecting data was interview. Using the interview approach, data gathered were qualitative in nature and analysis of data was done qualitatively.

Primary data was collected from 1 Bishop, 1 Diocesan Lay Chairman, 2 Pastors, 2 Stewards and 2 Lay Members. These selected members and staff were made to respond to a number of open-ended questions geared towards understanding how they evaluated and managed the impact of change within the residential and commercial construction process so as to maximize value creation for clients.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees

The researcher collected demographic information of the respondents because it provided a brief background of the interviewees purposively sampled for the study. The demographic characteristics of interviewees who were eight (8) in number comprised information regarding their gender, level of education, position, number of years in service and languages spoken.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees

Participant	Gender	Level of education	Position	Number of years in service	Languages spoken
Participant A	Male	Bachelor's degree	Bishop	35 years in ministry, 2 years as bishop	Guan, Twi, English
Participant B	Male	Master's degree	Lay Chairman	2-3 years	English, Akuapem Twi, Fante, Asante Twi, Ga, Ewe, French
Participant C	Male	PhD	Superintendent Minister (pastor)	39 years	English, Twi
Participant D	Male	Master's degree	Pastor	2 years	English, Fante, Ga
Participant E	Male	GCE O-Level	Steward	4 years	English, Twi, Fante, Ga,
Participant F	Male	Master's degree	Steward	1 year	English, Twi, Ga
Participant G	Male	Bachelor's degree	Lay Preachers Coordinator	12 years	English, Twi, Ga
Participant H	Female	Bachelor's degree	Bible Class leader	10 years	English, Ga, Twi

As part of demographic data collection process, the researcher considered the gender distribution of respondents. With all the 8 respondents selected for the study, 7 of them were males and only 1 was a female. Whilst the selection of interviewees was done through purposive sampling, there was little control over the gender selection as the interviewees occupied fixed positions according to the church's structure. The researcher did not observe any implication of the seeming gender imbalance in the numerical representation of interviewees in the studies.

The researcher collected data on the level of education of interviewees in order to determine to some extent their ability to comprehend some technicalities in the subject matter of the study. Of all the 8 persons interviewed, 1 person had a doctorate degree, 2 persons had a master's

degree, 4 persons had a bachelor's degree and 1 person had a GCE O-level qualification. The various levels of education of the interviewees indicated that they generally had the ability to comprehend questions and provide appropriate responses needed to make sound conclusions in this study.

Even though the positions of the respondents were predetermined, some mentioned some additional roles they played in the church that are worth highlighting in the study. One of the stewards indicated that he was in charge of finance. Another pastor indicated that he was a superintendent of one of the sampled circuits. The two lay members selected each played various role in the church. The male lay member indicated that he was a quarterly meeting secretary, lay preachers coordinator and the evangelism, missions and renewal chairman. The second lay member who was a female indicated that she is an administrator, Bible class leader and the treasurer of her society.

The researcher also collected data on the number of years the respondents have served in their current capacity within the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana. With the positions of the interviewees already determined before the interview, they will be referenced with the various designations of the position. The bishop interviewed indicated that he has served in the capacity of a Bishop for the Tema Diocese for 2 years but had been in service in various capacities for the church for about 35 years. The Tema Diocesan Lay Chairman indicated that he has served in his current position a little over 2 years but has served in other positions for a number of years. The first pastor interviewed indicated that he has served in his current capacity as a pastor for 2 years, but has been in active service in various capacities for about 13 years. The second pastor interviewed, who is a superintendent has served in ministry for 39 years. The first steward interviewed, who was in charge of finance, indicated that he has served in his current capacity for 4 years, whereas the second steward indicated that he has served in his current capacity for only 1 year. Two lay members were also interviewed for the study. The

first lay member who holds the position of a quarterly meeting secretary has been in the ministry for 12 years. The second lay member has who is an Administrator in her society indicated that she has served in the church for a number of years.

The researcher collected data on the languages spoken by respondents. This was necessary as the study focuses on communication and language happens to be the most important element in any communication engagement. The Diocesan Bishop indicated that he speaks three languages namely Guan, some common Akan languages and English. The Diocesan Lay Chairman indicated that he speaks seven languages namely English, Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi, Fante, Ga, Ewe and a bit of French. The first Pastor interviewed indicated that he speaks three languages namely English, Fante and a bit of Ga. The second pastor also indicated that he speaks two languages namely English and Twi. The first Steward interviewed indicated that he speaks four languages namely English, Twi, Fante and Ga. The second Steward also indicated that he speaks three languages namely English, Twi and Ga. The first Lay Member interviewed indicated that he speaks three languages namely English, Twi and Ga, whereas the second Lay Member indicated that she speaks three languages namely English, Ga and Twi.

The interviews occurred between 20th and 29th October, 2021. With the aid of an interview guide, participants were asked questions concerning the communication structure of the Methodist Church Ghana in the Tema Diocese, the internal communication activities within the Tema Diocese and the implications of internal communication activities on the growth of the Methodist Church Ghana in the Tema Diocese. The Interview Guide is attached as an appendix.

Thematic analysis, “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used. The two sets of data were mixed in the analysis and reporting.

4.2 Results and Discussions

The analysis and discussion are done along the study's research questions. First, the communication structure in the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana would be discussed followed by the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese. The implications of the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese would occur throughout the discussion.

4.2.1 Communication Structure of the Methodist Church Ghana

To understand the communication structure of the Methodist Church of Ghana, the researcher sought the opinion of Participant A. According to Participant A:

...we started this (communication structure) back in 2007 with a new strategic plan, which brought in the aspect of communication in the church.

Participant A went further to state that *...the structure started from the conference office where we had somebody in charge of communication.*

This statement highlights the existence of a communication structure that started at the highest office within the Methodist Church Ghana. Providing further emphasis on how the communication structure has evolved from 2007 till date, Participant A stated:

The communication structure has been at the connexional level for some time now but we decided to decentralize it so that it will come to the diocese, the circuit and then the societies.

The data showed that the Methodist Church Ghana has a communication structure that links the highest officer of the organization to the lay member of the organization.

Following Participant A's reference to a strategic plan that led to the advent of the communication structure in the church, the constitution of the Methodist church, which captures the church's communication structure was consulted.

The communication structure, which also represents the reporting structure of the church is illustrated diagrammatically in the church's "Connexional Structure" in its constitution. The flow of communication follows the path of the Connexional Structure, which has the Conference at the top and various departments categorised under four directorates. The Connexional Structure has the Conference at the top and is comprised of the General Purposes Council and Registered Trustees. The Presiding Bishop reports to the Conference. The Presiding Bishop is the Chair of the Council of Bishops and also the Advisory Council. He also oversees internal audit affairs, legal affairs, public relations, ecumenical, international and socio-economic affairs. Reporting to the Presiding Bishop are the Lay President and Administrative Bishop. The Administrative Bishop oversees activities such as planning, research and growth; human resource and administration; history, archives and library; communications and publications; internal affairs; legal affairs; public relations; ecumenical, international and socio-economic affairs; and the Methodist Development and Relief Services (MDRS).

Reporting to the Administrative Bishop are four directorates and accompanying advisory teams. The four directorates include General Directorate for Ministry, General Directorate for Finance and Development, General Directorate for Social Services, and General Directorate for Education and Youth Development. Each of these four Directorates have various departments of focus that they oversee.

- The General Directorate for Ministry oversees the Ordained Ministry, Lay Ministries, Children's Ministry, and Evangelism, Mission and Renewal Ministry.
- The General Directorate for Finance and Development oversees Finance, Resource Mobilization, and Property, Procurement and Development.
- The General Directorate for Social Services oversees Health and Sanitation, Gender and family Issues, and Agriculture and Environment.

- The General Directorate for Education and Youth Development oversees Pre-Tertiary Education, Tertiary Education, Youth Ministry and Development, and Non-Formal Education.

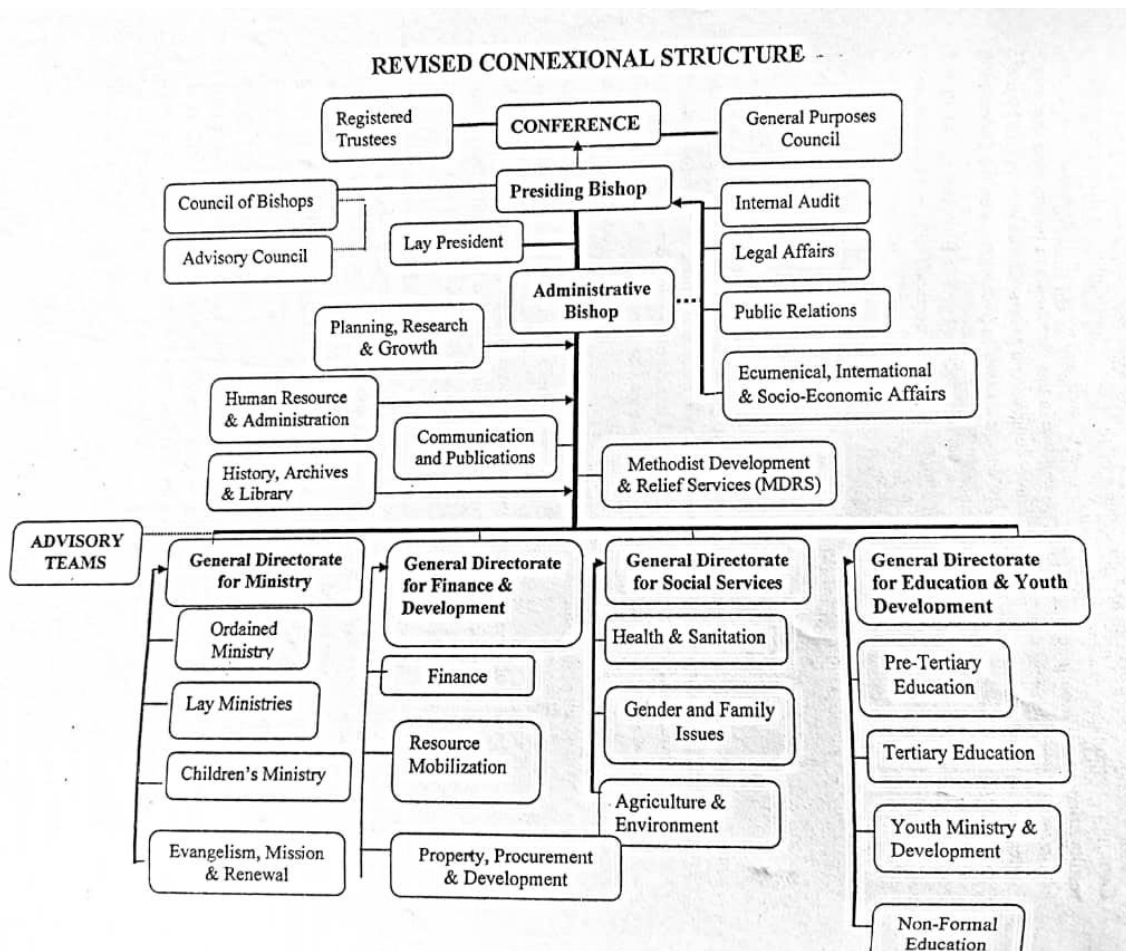
The Connexional Structure links all aspects of the church's hierarchy together. Thus, from the Conference, which is at the national level, the Diocese which is at the regional level, the Circuit which is at the district level and the Society which represent the local churches. As Participant A describes:

Internally, the communication flows from the Presiding Bishop's office down to the Diocesan Bishop's office and then to the Circuit and to the Societies. There are also the Coordinating offices and Directorates.

According to the Participant A, the communication aspect of the Connexional Structure is under the Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop serves as the mouthpiece of the organization and speaks on behalf of the church whenever there is a matter that demands an opinion from the Methodist Church Ghana.

The communication structure in a way defines the caliber of information discussed. Information that has a high gravity of impact on the church's operation will move up higher the communication structure to get the needed discussion. It is in line with West and Turner (2013), who indicated that when it comes to enhancing an organization's production, information is processed, transmitted, and comprehended differently depending on a variety of factors, including managers' personalities, workers' personalities, cultural backgrounds, both managers and employees' exposure, and more. Participant A, showed as the revised connexional structure and referred us to the church's constitution, we have captured this in figure 4.1 below.

Fig. 4.1 Revised Connexional Structure



4.2.2 Internal Communication Activities in the Tema Diocese

The Church has two communication structures that run concurrently. This is supported by the organizational information theory which advocates for the splitting of an organization into distinct departments in order to sort the data that is being generated (Weick, 1995). According to Participant B:

...the first one is the Class System and the second one is the Organizational System.

Participant B, further explained that, *with the Class System, each member in each society belongs to a class with a class leader. The class leader is a member of the Leaders' Meeting. With the Class System in place at the society level, members of each class can share any*

information they wish to send to officers in higher hierarchy through the class leader during Bible Class Meetings. The class leader will also table the information at the Leaders' Meeting. At the circuit level, there is the Circuit Quarterly Meeting where every discussion had at the Society Leaders' Meeting is further discussed. Members of the Leaders' Meeting are also members of the circuit quarterly meeting. If the discussion needs to move up the leadership hierarchy, it is then taken to the diocese. At the diocese is the Diocesan Synod where matters from circuit quarterly meeting are further discussed for decisions to be made. Some members of the circuit quarterly meeting are also elected as delegate members of the diocesan synod. From the Diocesan Synod, any information that needs to be discussed at the top hierarchy is taken to the Conference. Some Members of the synod are also elected as delegate members of the Conference at the Connexional level.

According to Participant D:

....the organizational system is voluntary. It includes the Youth Fellowship, Women's Fellowship, Men's Fellowship, and Brigade.

Participant D, continued to explained that, *these organizations have leaders who are members of the leaders' meeting at the society level. Members of these organizations can channel information to their leaders who can also table the information at the leaders' meeting and then to the circuit quarterly meeting, to the diocesan synod and then to the conference.*

The organizational system, according to Participant D, *also creates another communication channel that is limited to organizational related matters. Thus, the organizations at the society levels are able to channel information to the circuit organizations, the diocesan organizations and to the organizations at the conference level.*

For participant D, *Societies within the Tema Diocese have an informal communication channel where lay members can share their grievances directly to the society stewards and seek redress.*

The steward then carries the grievance to staff meeting, where it is channeled to the leaders' meeting and up to the circuit quarterly meeting, the diocesan synod and the conference at the connexional level.

Participant A share his knowledge on the flow of information within the Tema Diocese: *Information flows from the top. Firstly, it comes to the bishop, who will also communicate to the Diocese, Circuits and Societies. The main channels used in communication includes letter writing, electronic mails and other online platforms. When information is passed from the Presiding Bishop to the Diocese, the information is channeled to the appropriate Diocesan office that is concerned with the matter.*

We observed that from participant A, That, when an issue relating to internal audit is being sent by the Presiding Bishop to the Society, it will be channeled through the Diocesan Executive on Internal Audit to the Circuit Executive on Internal audit and then to the Society Executive on Internal Executive. *The process is reversed from the Society Executive through to the Circuit Executive, the Diocesan Executive and then to the Presiding Bishop, according to Participant D.*

Participant D highlighted the communication channel from the lay member to the minister-in-charge of the society in which he or she belongs:

When a lay person wants to send an information to the pastor, he or she must first see his or her Class Leader (discuss the issue) and then the Class Leader will, on behalf of the lay member, relay the information to the pastor.

It was found that the membership of each society is divided into classes with a maximum membership strength of 25 per class. Participant D further stated that:

Each class has a leader who serves as an interface between the pastor of that society and the class members or the leadership meeting and the class members. On the other hand, when

information has to flow from the superintendent minister from the circuit to lay members in a society, it is first channeled through Quarterly Meeting or Leaders Meeting, where matters concerning the Circuit and various societies are discussed, and then through the Leaders Meeting the Pastors in charge of the societies then relay the information to the various Class Leaders in the Societies, who also relay them to the various members in their respective classes.

According to Participant D:

...in between the quarterly meetings and leaders meeting is the Standing Committee where certain decisions are taken and considered standing or binding for the Circuit. At the circuit level there is the Standing Committee for the Diocesan level which constitutes key persons superintendent minister and circuit stewards and then the synod. The synod has the representative session and the ministerial session, which also has some of the lay members elected to the representative session and ministerial session. From the Diocesan level to the Connexional level there is the General Purposes Council, Expanded General Purposes Council or Conference depending on the issue at hand.

At the Diocese, the ministerial session comprises of only ministers in charge of societies within the Diocese as well as all superintendents. The representative session is composed of all ministers (ordained and non-ordained) in charge of societies in the diocese, as well as the lay representatives of ordained ministers and the superintendent ministers in the diocese. At the conference level, the representative session comprises both lay members and ministers of societies together with the diocesan bishop, diocesan lay chairman, synod secretary and treasurer, who represent the diocese as delegates. The ministerial session at the conference level comprise all ministers together with diocesan bishops and superintendents who form part of the delegates from all dioceses under the Methodist Church Ghana, present at the biannual conference.

According to participant A, *at these various stages of communication, there are online platforms created to facilitate communication among members. For instance, the pastors in charge of societies have social media platforms like WhatsApp groups where communication flows aside the Leaders Meeting or Quarterly Meetings where pastors are required to attend in-person.*

4.2.3 Implication of Internal Communication Activities in the Tema Diocese

The Methodist Church Ghana takes information seriously and members are proactive in working with information. Participant C gave an example of how total offerings accumulated for every week is communicated to church members to keep them abreast with the church's financial strength:

In the Methodist church, every week we need to announce it (offering) to the members of the church so that they know what their money is being used for. In addition, the church at the circuit level meets on a quarterly basis known as "Quarterly Meetings" where matters discussed are channeled to church members through appropriate channels.

The existence of a communication channel through which information is channeled is emphasised by Neher (1997), who indicated that every organization has a formal communication system in which the flow of information is dictated by the official organizational structure. Formal channels follow the organization's arrangement of the various levels, divisions, departments and job responsibilities.

At the Diocese, *there is the Standing Committee that meets every quarter where matters discussed are channeled through the right channels to the church members, according to Participant E. He further reiterated that, at the society level, there is the Society Meetings where matters discussed are relayed to members through laid down channels. With the regular flow of information through various channels, members are able to be at pace with the church on*

its developmental goals and as such are able to lend their full support when needed. This situation at the Methodist Church in the Tema Diocese is supported by Yahaya et al. (2018), who argued that effective communication flow is crucial for managerial effectiveness in any organization.

Participant A discussed how he is able to leverage the internal communication flow to influence growth within the Tema Diocese:

There is a staff meeting every month and information discussed at the Diocese level shares the information to the ministers-in-charge at the society levels through the Circuits. The regular flow of information through electronic mail and by phone call help keep me informed on matters at every part of the Tema Diocese, which stretches as far as Dambai in the Oti Region of Ghana.

Like the organization information theory, an organization analyzes information and either adapts it or rejects it, depending on whether or not the idea is beneficial to the organization (Keyton & Shockley-Zalabak, 2009). Effectiveness in communication helps an organization to have a better understanding of information it receives and makes a decision on how to use that information in a manner that will protect the church against reputational harm.

4.2.4 Gaps in the Communication Structure of the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana

With the recent reliance on communication technology like mobile phone which depends on quality of network, some challenges have to do with poor network. Participant A stated:

Another key matter of interest in discussing the gap in the communication structure is the kind of information relayed to various individuals within the communication structure.” “How good or damaging will the information be to the recipient?

It was found that whilst the Diocese relies on the robust communication structure of the Methodist Church Ghana, how information is relayed by those handling it at any given time is sometimes a source of challenge as it sometimes gets fraught with distortions. In addition, as Participant A states:

Sometimes, some people take information less seriously than it should be taken.

The weight members place on an information is in a way influenced by where the information is descending from. Sometimes, having face-to-face conversation with members gives them a different orientation to the information received. Suh (1999), in his opinion on the media richness theory opined that face-to-face communication is the richest communication medium in the hierarchy followed by telephone, electronic mail, letter, note, memo, special report, and finally, flier and bulletin. In the case of the Methodist Church Ghana in the Tema Diocese, where *both face-to-face and online mediums are used to share information*, according to Participant A, members will have varied level of seriousness to information received.

4.2.5 Systems in Place to Check Communication Problems

To check the flow of information from among members in society to the circuit and diocesan levels, such information must first pass through the superintendent minister for the respective circuit who will vet the information and judge whether it is fit to be forwarded to the diocesan level. This is a way to check any form of ethical problems related to a particular information to be shared. Participant D further indicated that:

In the event where there is a matter that has gained external attention within a Diocese and a society minister has been called to provide opinion on behalf of the society, the society pastor must obtain approval from the superintendent minister or the diocesan bishop before he can share that opinion on behalf of the society. Either than that, the issue must be referred to the Diocesan office for comment.

This is to ensure that there would not be conflicting opinion on the matter at the society, circuit and diocesan levels. In this vein, there will be consistency in the opinion of the church on any matter discussed. This seems to resonate with the view of Weick (2000) on the organizational information theory, which indicated that member within an organization should use the rules and communication cycles that have been put together to make sense of the information (Weick, 1995; Weick, 2000).

According to Participant F:

The Tema Diocese believes power belongs to the people. Thus, there is a monthly staff meeting and occasionally a standing committee meeting. At Diocesan level is standing committee, staff meeting and executive (Bishop, synod secretary, treasurer and lay chairman).

The researcher found that this same communication system is used to identify problems in communication. At any point when a problem is identified, the problem is traced down to the society level where there are members and then discussed so as to find a solution to the problem.

Participant D admitted that this convention of checking information that reaches the public is something that he barely sees functioning within the Tema Diocese:

.....even though pastors of societies are to seek approval from superintendent ministers or diocesan bishops before addressing the public on a matter in the diocese, I barely see this practice functioning in the Tema Diocese.

However, he prompts his colleague society pastors whenever they decide to provide an opinion on a matter in public on behalf of the society without the approval of the superintendent minister and the diocesan bishop.

....in the event where a member or officer violates a particular communication procedure, such a member is subjected to some form of warning or punishment as a way of preventing such a mistake from happening in the future.

The Superintended minister has the authority to constitute adjudicating ministers that will look into matters concerning church members. If there is a problem among pastors, the diocesan bishop can constitute a committee to deal with the matter.

4.2.6 Maintaining Peace Among Officers through Effective Communication

Effective communication has contributed to maintaining peace among officers at some individual society levels. According to Participant E:

....effective communication has contributed to maintaining peace among church officers. On the issue of finance, officers in charge of finance are directed to prepare and present audited report to quarterly meetings. This helps maintain peace and tranquility on the issue of finance and in extension other areas of the church.

4.2.7 Grievance Address System

At the Tema Diocese, the communication channels of the Methodist Church Ghana are functional, and these channels are the means of seeking redress for grievances. According to Participant G, a lay member can make a complaint to the class leader who will take it to the leaders' meeting and then to the quarterly meeting until the conference which is the highest decision-making body of the Methodist Church Ghana. After complaints or grievances are heard and dealt with at any level of the communication channel of the church, the redress is channeled through the communication channel down to the lay member at the society level.

Generally, the approach to dealing with grievances depends on the nature of problem at hand and also sometimes the individuals involved. According to Participant H:

....some problems are solved administratively.

Participant H, explained that, *when a problem has to do with minor administrative issues, they can be referred to stewards in the church to provide redress to them. When the problem demands the attention of an organizational leader or a class leader, the right leader will be tasked to handle it. When the problem seems to escalate or require a higher authority to manage it, the communication channel available in the church will be followed through until the problem reaches the right quarters for solution to be provided.*

Participant H, further maintained that, *the church also has a suggestion box system where members can write their issues and drop them in a suggestion box. The stewards can take up the issues and then channel them to the appropriate authority responsible for providing solution to the problem. If it needs to go to levels beyond the society, it will follow the laid down communication channel.*

4.2.8 Conclusion

The chapter focused on reviewing and analysing research data collected from some officers of the Methodist Church Ghana (Tema Diocese). Data was analysed along with the study's objectives and justified with theoretical frameworks underpinning this study. The findings made are summarized in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDING, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes summary, conclusions and recommendations by the researcher in line with the current study.

5.0 Summary

Summary of the results of the findings are presented in light of the research questions.

The purpose of the study is to examine the communication structure of the Methodist Church Ghana and its implication on church growth. The researcher adopted a descriptive research design and the main medium of collecting data was interview. Using the interview approach, data gathered were qualitative in nature and analysis of data was done on a thematic basis.

Primary data was collected from 1 bishop, 1 lay chairman, 2 pastors, 2 stewards and 2 lay members. These officers and lay members all provided valuable responses that were reviewed and analysed in the study.

The study sought to find answers to three research questions, generated from four research objectives, which were elaborated in chapter four. The researcher presents summary of the results below.

The first research question was to identify what is the communication structure in the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana? To obtain the best possible answers to this question, the constitution of the Methodist Church Ghana was combined with the response of some of the church officers sampled for the study. The churches' communication structure is embedded in the churches' organogram which has the Conference as the highest decision-making authority of the Methodist Church Ghana. Just beneath the Conference is the Presiding Bishop to whom the Administrative Bishop reports to. From the Administrative Bishop comes the

executives of the various Diocesan directorates. After the diocesan directorates come the circuit directorates and then the society directorate. This structure is used at the Tema Diocese. At the diocese level, the topmost decision-making authority is the diocesan synod with the diocesan Bishop coming next and then the circuit quarterly meeting and superintendent minister. Lastly comes the leaders' meeting at the society level and the society pastor.

The second research question was to identify what the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese consist of. It was found that the church's internal communication activities follow two official channels and one or more informal processes. The church has the class system and the organizational system. With the class system, members in each society are placed in classes with class leaders. Communication starts with members and runs through the class leaders, to the leaders' meeting at the society level, then to the quarterly meeting at the circuit level, then to the diocesan synod and then the conference. With the organizational system, members can willingly join church organizations such as youth ministry, women's ministry, men's ministry, brigade, and music ministry. Communication starts with the members and runs through the executives of the various organizations and then to the leaders' meeting and then the circuit quarterly meeting, to the diocesan synod and finally the conference. When the conference wish to send information to members in the societies, it reverses the process by sending information to the diocesan synod, then to the circuit meetings, to the leaders' meeting and then through the class leaders or organizational executives then to the lay members. At the society, circuit and diocese levels, there are online platforms such as WhatsApp group platforms where members share information informally in between leaders' meetings, quarterly meetings and synod.

The informal approach involves lay members approaching the church stewards or visiting the pastor in charge of the society to discuss that grievance or informally discuss their issue with the steward.

The third research question was to find out what were the implications of the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese? Based on the responses received from the interview, the internal communication activities were found to have contributed in various ways to church growth. Firstly, through the church's internal communication structure and channels, senior officers are able to call junior officers to order when they act in violation of the church's principles. Also, both formal and informal communication channels were harnessed to bring peace among members or officers who are feuding. Another implication of the internal communication activities in the Tema Diocese was that it helps check the manner in which information flows from the church to the public. No pastor in charge of a society is permitted to address the public on any matter on behalf of the society, circuit or diocese unless he is given approval by the superintendent minister or the diocesan bishop. On matters of national interest, only the presiding bishop has the authority to speak to an issue on behalf of the church.

5.1 Conclusions

The researcher observed that the implication of the effectiveness of internal communication on the Diocese was more on an individual level. The interviewees also spoke to what they experienced in their various societies and did not provide much information on how that is playing out in other societies. In addition, it was observed that the church's communication and channels are sometimes not adhered to by some members and officers sometimes deliberately and at other times due to ignorance on the part of some members on the procedure laid down to communicate information from one officer to another. However, officers who are privy to the procedure do not hesitate to prompt those who go against them.

The researcher therefore concludes that this study was insightful and the findings are significant to explain the amount of effort the Methodist Church Ghana has invested in building a formidable communication structure. Also, the findings of the study will help lay members

who are not privy to the communication structure and internal communication activities to become aware of them. Lastly, the findings will help the public, especially journalists to know which officers to approach when they needed an officer of the Methodist Church Ghana to address the public on a matter on behalf of the church.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are made for the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana and researchers.

To the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana, more attention needs to be paid to how each society is handling its internal communication channels. As the church is keen on maintaining order in its operations, it should flow through all communication channels, whether online or in practice. Considering the fact that the church relies heavily on its communication structure to ensure information reaches members at the society levels, it will be important to as much as possible eliminate any trace of bureaucracy that will hamper the quick flow of information, especially redress to grievances, so lay members can have response to their complaints as early as possible.

In addition, societies within the Tema Diocese should make efforts to deliberately teach members the available communication channels so they can work along the channel to get their problems and issues directed through the appropriate protocols.

To researchers and scholars, this study provides a valuable resource for future studies. With the scarce availability of studies particularly investigating how internal communication activities influence church growth, this study provides a new perspective on the subject and can be referenced in future studies. In addition, future studies can focus on other dioceses or conduct the study at the connexional level.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

I am a final year student of the Ghana Institute of Journalism, conducting research that is aimed at examining the implications of church communication on church growth. The study is purely academic-oriented, as such the researcher would like to assure you that your responses would not be used for any other purpose other than those stated. For the purposes of improving the quality of the study, the researcher humbly requests you to take your time to read and understand the items on this instrument before you respond to them. Objective responses offered will be highly appreciated. Please read the instruction(s) under each section of the instrument to assist you in your responses. Thank you so much for your willingness to participate in this study. You can contact me on 0244666539 for any clarification.

SECTION A

Background of Respondent

1. Gender
2. Level of education
3. Position
4. Number of years in service
5. Languages spoken

SECTION B

Bishop

6. What is the structure of the Methodist Church, Ghana?
7. What are the various channels of communication adopted and used in the Methodist Church, Ghana?
8. Please describe in detail the reporting structure in the Methodist Church, Ghana.
9. Can you say effective internal communication has played a key role in growing church membership within the Tema Diocese? If so, how has it?
10. As the Bishop of the Diocese, how do you leverage the internal communication system of the church to get things done towards growth.

Pastors/Stewards

11. Please describe in detail how communication flows among officers and between officers and lay members at the Society, Circuit and Diocesan levels of the Methodist Church, Ghana within Tema.
12. What systems have been put in place at the Tema Diocese of the Methodist Church, Ghana to check communication problems and how will identified problems be solved?
13. Has effective internal communication played a key role in maintaining peace among church officers within the various societies in the Tema Diocese? If so, how has it?
14. Has effective internal communication played a key role in identifying problems in the church, providing solutions to the problems and planning against such problems from occurring in the future? If so, how has it?
15. What systems are in place for pastors/stewards to communicate important information from Lay Members to Bishops and from Bishops to Lay Members?

Diocesan Lay Chairman

16. What process is in place for lay members in one society to coordinate with members of other society in fostering the collective goals of the various fellowships within the Circuit?
17. How do you convey information from the Diocesan level to the various Circuits and Societies?
18. Has effective internal communication played a key role in maintaining peace among Circuit Lay Chairmen within the various Circuits in the Tema Diocese? If so, how has it?
19. Has effective internal communication played a key role in identifying problems in the various Circuits, providing solutions to the problems and planning against such problems from occurring in the future? If so, how has it?
20. Can you say the communication channel within your Society is good enough? If so, kindly discuss why you think so.

Lay Members

21. What procedure is in place for lay members to communicate their problems to the Steward, Pastors, Lay Chairman and Bishop?
22. After authorities receive your complaints, what process do they follow in providing feedback on attempts made at solving the problem?
23. What systems are in place for lay members to channel good ideas to appropriate authorities to help improve the operations of Societies within the Circuit?
24. Can you say the communication channel within your Society is good enough? If so, kindly discuss why you think so.

25. In the event of an emergency or internal problem, what is the laid down procedure to communicate the matter to appropriate authorities?