

**UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS AND COMMUNICATION- INSTITUTE OF
JOURNALISM**

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

**“THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH
INSURANCE AUTHORITY (NHIA) GHANA”.**

ABIGAIL SIMPSON

MAPRM24032

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF
MEDIA, ARTS AND COMMUNICATION, INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM, IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH MARKETING**

DECEMBER, 2025

CONTENTS

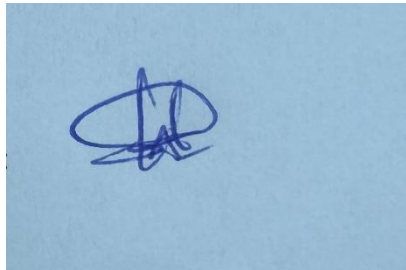
DECLARATION.....	v
SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION.....	vi
DEDICATION.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Objectives.....	5
1.3.1 Specific Research Objectives.....	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	6
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.6 Chapter Conclusion.....	6
CHAPTER TWO.....	7
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.0 Chapter Introduction.....	7
2.1 Conceptualizing Organisational Culture.....	7
2.2 Understanding Internal Communication.....	9
2.3 The Interrelationship Between Internal Communication and Organizational Culture.....	10
2.4 Leadership, Internal Communication and Culture.....	11
2.5 Technology and Internal Communication.....	13
2.6 Employee Engagement and Organisational Commitment.....	14
2.7 Theoretical Framework.....	16
2.7.1 Schein’s Organizational Culture Theory.....	16
2.7.2 The Communication Satisfaction Theory.....	17
2.7.3 Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions Theory.....	18
2.8 Chapter Summary.....	20
CHAPTER THREE.....	21

METHODOLOGY	21
3.0 Chapter Introduction.....	21
3.1 Research Paradigm.....	21
3.2 Research Approach and Design.....	22
3.3 Sampling Strategy.....	22
3.4 Data Collection Techniques.....	23
3.5 Data Analysis Technique.....	24
3.6 Chapter Conclusions.....	25
CHAPTER FOUR.....	26
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	26
4.0 Introduction.....	26
4.1 Data Preparation and Analytical Procedures.....	26
4.2 Trustworthiness of the Findings	27
4.3 Participant Profile.....	28
4.4 Overview of Emerging Themes.....	29
4.5 Internal Communication Practices and Organisational Culture at NHIA	30
4.5.1 The Nature and Effectiveness of Internal Communication Practices at NHIA	30
4.5.2 Dominant Characteristics of the Organisational Culture at NHIA	32
4.6 The Interaction Between Communication and Culture	34
4.6.1 Influence of Internal Communication on Organisational Culture.....	34
4.6.2 Organisational Culture’s Impact on Communication Flow, Employee Engagement and Institutional Performance.....	36
4.7 Discussion of Findings	39
4.7.1 RQ1: What are the current internal communication practices at the NHIA, and how effective are they perceived to be?.....	39
4.7.2 RQ2:	40
4.7.3 RQ3:	41
4.7.4 RQ4:	43
4.8 Implications of the Findings.....	44
4.9 Practical Recommendations for NHIA	46

4.10 Chapter Conclusion	47
CHAPTER FIVE	49
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	49
5.0 Introduction.....	49
5.1 Summary of Findings	49
5.2 Conclusions.....	50
5.3 Limitations of the Study	51
5.4 Recommendations	52
5.5 Chapter Conclusion	53
REFERENCES.....	54
APPENDIX A	57
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE	57
APPENDIX B	60
INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	60

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis, entitled "*The Interplay Between Internal Communication and Organizational Culture: A Case Study of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) Ghana*". is the result of my own original research. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for the award of any degree at this or any other academic institution. All sources used have been duly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the APA 7th edition referencing style.

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light blue background. The signature is stylized and appears to be 'AS'.

ABIGAIL SIMPSON

8TH DECEMBER, 2025

MAPRM24032

Signature

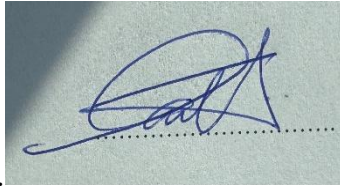
Date

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation of this dissertation was supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Media Arts and Communication.

DR. IKE TANDOH

(Supervisor)

...  .

Signature

8TH DECEMBER 2025

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Almighty God, whose grace and guidance have been my source of strength throughout this academic journey. I also dedicate this thesis to my family, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and sacrifices made it possible for me to pursue and complete this research. To my mother, mentors, and friends who constantly inspired me to persevere, this work is for you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to Almighty God for granting me wisdom, strength, and resilience to complete this research successfully. I also extend my gratitude to the management and employees of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), Ghana, for their cooperation and willingness to share their experiences and insights, which were central to this study.

Special thanks go to the academic community for their intellectual support, discussions, and encouragement. Finally, I am profoundly grateful to my family and friends for their love, patience, and unwavering belief in me throughout this academic journey.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the interaction between internal communication and organisational culture within the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) of Ghana. Guided by the interpretivist paradigm and a qualitative case study approach, the research explored how communication practices shape cultural norms and how the existing organisational culture influences communication flow, employee engagement, and institutional performance. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and direct observations, and analysed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The findings showed that while NHIA has formal communication structures, issues of timeliness, clarity, hierarchical filtering, and weak feedback systems compromise their effectiveness. The organisational culture was found to be highly hierarchical, bureaucratic, relational, and subtly affected by political dynamics. The study demonstrated a reciprocal relationship between communication and culture, indicating that effective communication promotes cultural cohesion, trust, and collaboration, whereas poor communication leads to uncertainty, silence, and disengagement. The research concludes that improving communication practices and shifting cultural assumptions are crucial for enhancing institutional performance and employee engagement at the NHIA. Recommendations include increasing transparency, decentralising decision-making, strengthening feedback mechanisms, investing in communication leadership training, and modernising internal communication technologies.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One establishes the study's foundational context by introducing the problem under investigation, identifying research gaps, and emphasising the importance of exploring the relationship between internal communication and organisational culture within the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). The chapter begins by discussing the importance of communication and culture in influencing organisational effectiveness, especially within public institutions. It then presents the statement of the problem, highlighting gaps in the existing literature from a contextual, theoretical, empirical, and methodological perspective. Further, the chapter outlines the research objectives and questions that guide the study, as well as the research's significance for both academia and practice. Overall, Chapter One sets the stage for understanding why this study is necessary and how it adds to ongoing debates about organisational development and public sector performance in Ghana.

1.1 Background

Effective internal communication is widely recognised as a cornerstone of successful organisational functioning. It serves not only as a medium for information dissemination but also as a mechanism for shaping employee attitudes, behaviour, and ultimately, organizational culture (Men & Yue, 2019). Organisational culture, in turn, defines the shared values, beliefs, and norms that influence how employees interact and make decisions (Schein & Schein, 2021). The interplay between these two elements is especially crucial in public sector organisations such as Ghana's National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), where transparency, employee engagement, and shared purpose are integral to operational efficiency and public trust.

Organizational culture and internal communication are closely interwoven dimensions of organizational life. Seminal theorist Edgar Schein (2010) argues that organisational culture is created and reinforced through shared communication processes, while more recent studies emphasise the reciprocal nature of this relationship. For instance, Men and Yue (2019) found that transparent, two-way internal communication fosters a culture of trust, collaboration, and innovation. Similarly, Ruck and Welch (2018) assert that effective internal communication systems help build inclusive and high-performing cultures in both private and public organizations. The relevance of this interplay is particularly pronounced in the context of public sector organizations, where bureaucratic structures often impede open communication and adaptive cultures (Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2020). In Ghana, the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) plays a critical role in implementing the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), a pivotal component of the country's health policy framework. While there have been studies on public service delivery and administrative performance in Ghana, limited research exists on the internal dynamics that shape organisational effectiveness, particularly the role of internal communication in shaping organisational culture within state agencies like the NHIA. Exploring this nexus is crucial not only for improving the Authority's internal cohesion but also for fostering a culture that aligns with the broader goals of universal health coverage and responsive public service.

In a dynamic and evolving public administration landscape, internal communication has become more than just an administrative function. It is now a strategic tool for reinforcing cultural values and aligning employee behaviour with institutional goals (Ruck & Welch, 2018). As Ghana continues to reform and strengthen its public health infrastructure, understanding the relationship between internal communication and organisational culture within key agencies like the NHIA becomes imperative. This research investigates how internal communication practices influence

and are influenced by the organisational culture of the NHIA, offering insights that could enhance employee engagement and service delivery. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by examining how internal communication practices at NHIA affect its organisational culture, and how, in turn, the prevailing culture shapes communication flow, employee morale, and institutional performance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Internal communication and organisational culture are critical components of institutional effectiveness, particularly within public sector organisations where performance is often influenced by bureaucratic structures and rigid hierarchies (Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2020). In Ghana, the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) plays a central role in implementing the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), a vital pillar of the country's healthcare delivery system. However, despite the NHIA's strategic significance, it continues to face challenges related to low employee morale, communication inefficiencies, and a disengaged workforce, issues that point to potential weaknesses in its internal communication strategies and organisational culture (Ghana Health Service, 2022).

Contextual Gap: While research on internal communication has gained traction globally, most empirical studies have focused on private sector organisations in Western contexts (Men & Yue, 2019; Mazzei, Butera, & Quaratino, 2021). There is limited contextualised research that examines the dynamic between internal communication and organisational culture within African public sector institutions, particularly in Ghana. Public agencies like the NHIA operate under distinct cultural, political, and administrative frameworks that differ significantly from those of private organisations. This context-specific gap limits the generalizability of existing findings and calls

for localised research to understand how internal communication and culture interact within the NHIA.

Evidence Gap: Although anecdotal reports and internal assessments indicate communication-related inefficiencies at the NHIA, there is a dearth of empirical studies that document the specific nature of these challenges or assess their impact on organisational culture and employee performance. Studies such as Ruck and Welch (2018) and Lee et al. (2020) have shown that internal communication influences organisational commitment and performance, but have similar results. Still, similar empirical evidence within Ghana's public health institutions remains sparse. Without such evidence, interventions to improve organisational effectiveness remain speculative and potentially misaligned.

Knowledge Gap: The interrelationship between internal communication and organizational culture remains under-explored in the Ghanaian public sector context. While both constructs have been studied independently, little is known about how they interact to influence employee behaviour, institutional performance, and change management within the NHIA. As noted by Karanges, Johnston, Beatson, and Lings (2021), understanding how communication systems embed, reinforce, or transform organisational culture is essential for strategic human resource and institutional development. The lack of integrated studies exploring this interplay constitutes a significant knowledge gap.

Methodological Gap: Most studies in existing literature adopt quantitative methods to examine internal communication effectiveness (Karanges et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2020), often relying on standardized surveys without accounting for organizational nuances and lived employee experiences. This presents a methodological limitation, especially for complex constructs like organizational culture that require interpretive depth. A case study approach can offer richer

insights into and the underlying dynamics shaping internal communication and culture at the NHIA.

Theoretical Gap: Much of the literature on internal communication is rooted in managerial or transactional communication models, with limited application of integrative theories that capture the cultural and symbolic dimensions of organisational life (Mazzei et al., 2021). The absence of a robust theoretical framework that holistically addresses the interaction between communication processes and organizational culture weakens the analytical rigor of existing studies. This study intends to fill this theoretical gap by drawing on relevant organisational communication and culture theories such as Schein's cultural model and the communication accommodation theory to understand better how communication practices shape and are shaped by institutional culture in a Ghanaian public health context.

1.3 Research Objectives

Broad Objective: The main objective of this research is to critically examine the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture within the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) of Ghana.

1.3.1 Specific Research Objectives

- To examine the nature and effectiveness of internal communication practices at the NHIA.
- To assess the dominant characteristics of the organizational culture at NHIA.
- To explore how internal communication influences organizational culture within NHIA.
- To investigate how organisational culture affects internal communication flow, employee engagement, and institutional performance.

1.4 Research Questions

- What are the current internal communication practices at the NHIA, and how effective are they perceived to be?
- What are the prevailing features of NHIA's organizational culture?
- In what ways does internal communication influence the organizational culture at NHIA?
- How does the existing organizational culture impact communication flow, employee engagement, and institutional performance at NHIA?

1.5 Significance of the Study

For practitioners and leaders within NHIA and similar public institutions, the findings of this study offer actionable insights for improving internal communication systems and promoting a more inclusive and performance-driven organisational culture. Understanding how communication affects and is shaped by culture can help managers design interventions that foster transparency, trust, and employee engagement. This has the potential to enhance service delivery, boost employee morale, and improve the NHIA.

1.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has established the foundation for the study by articulating the background, problem, rationale, and research purpose. It demonstrated that the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture remains an underexplored yet critical area within the NHIA and similar public institutions. By identifying key research gaps and presenting clear objectives and questions, the chapter provides a coherent framework for the inquiry. The subsequent chapters build on this foundation by reviewing relevant literature, outlining the research methodology, analysing empirical findings, and offering a comprehensive discussion of their implications.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Chapter Introduction

The relationship between internal communication and organisational culture has gained increasing scholarly attention in recent years, especially within the context of public service delivery in developing countries. Institutions such as the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) of Ghana provide a rich case for examining this relationship, as they operate in bureaucratic environments but are simultaneously tasked with delivering responsive, citizen-centric services. In such a setting, internal communication does more than transfer information. It serves as the vehicle through which cultural norms are transmitted, reinforced, or challenged. The literature reveals that while organisational culture provides the behavioral blueprint for members, internal communication activates and sustains it. Therefore, understanding the interplay between the two offers insight into improving performance, employee engagement, and strategic alignment, especially in public health institutions where both effectiveness and accountability are paramount. This review delves into the conceptual underpinnings of organisational culture and internal communication, explores their intersections, discusses leadership and technological factors, and identifies gaps in the literature, concluding with a review of relevant theoretical frameworks.

2.1 Conceptualizing Organisational Culture

Organisational culture is widely recognized as the set of shared values, beliefs, assumptions, and norms that shape the behavior of individuals within an organization. This culture governs “the way things are done” and serves as the implicit social order that binds employees, guiding their actions and decisions without the need for constant supervision. Edgar Schein (2010), a leading scholar in this field, developed a foundational three level model of organizational culture comprising

artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. Artifacts are the visible and tangible elements such as dress codes, office layout, or formal documents; espoused values are the stated norms and philosophies; and underlying assumptions are the deep-rooted, often unconscious beliefs that truly shape organizational behaviour. These levels interact to form the cultural essence of any institution.

In public sector institutions like NHIA, organizational culture often exhibits hierarchical and bureaucratic traits, which influence how employees relate to authority, interact with colleagues, and perform their duties (Boateng & Kosi, 2021). Unlike the private sector, where innovation and competition often shape organizational norms, the public sector is typically characterized by formal rules, job security, and slow responsiveness. This culture significantly impacts service delivery and employee motivation, often resulting in procedural rigidity and poor adaptability to change. Hofstede et al. (2010) also emphasized that national culture significantly influences organizational culture. In Ghana, for instance, cultural attributes such as collectivism, respect for hierarchy, and high power distance are embedded within the workplace, reinforcing vertical communication lines and limiting open dissent or bottom-up feedback. Alvesson (2012) adds that organizational culture in bureaucracies is also closely linked to leadership styles and institutional history, meaning that change is often incremental and driven from the top.

In the context of the NHIA, understanding organizational culture becomes critical not only because it shapes employee behavior but also because it determines how effectively health insurance policies and strategies are implemented. The cultural norms of the NHIA can either reinforce or obstruct reforms, innovations, and employee engagement initiatives, especially when the institutional goals involve coordination among different levels of bureaucracy. Therefore, any

effort to enhance communication and performance within the NHIA must consider the deeply entrenched cultural values that influence daily practices and strategic execution.

2.2 Understanding Internal Communication

Internal communication encompasses the processes, tools, and behaviours through which information flows within an organization. It includes formal mechanisms such as meetings, memos, emails, and newsletters, as well as informal channels like social interactions, grapevine networks, and spontaneous dialogue. Welch (2012) defines internal communication as a dynamic, multi-directional flow of information intended to facilitate knowledge sharing, align organizational goals, and foster trust among employees. Within public institutions like the NHIA, where coordination across multiple departments and regional branches is essential, internal communication serves not just as an administrative function but as a strategic lever for organizational coherence and service quality. The effectiveness of internal communication depends on both the communication infrastructure and the cultural environment in which it operates. According to Kalla (2005), internal communication is most effective when integrated into the strategic management process rather than treated as a mere support function. This integration involves leadership support, employee feedback systems, and clarity in message delivery. In bureaucratic institutions like the NHIA, however, communication often follows rigid hierarchical structures, which can hinder timely feedback, reduce transparency, and limit employee participation in decision-making (Ampofo et al., 2020). The result is a communication climate where information is top-down, with little room for employee voices, which in turn reduces organizational responsiveness and morale.

Moreover, the credibility of internal communication hinges on the consistency between messages and actions. Tourish and Robson (2006) note that when organizational rhetoric is not matched by

practice such as promoting a culture of openness while punishing dissent, it leads to employee cynicism and disengagement. In Ghanaian public institutions, such disconnects are common, often fuelled by politicization, favouritism, and lack of transparency in leadership communication (Adzoyi, 2020). Consequently, employees may either disengage or rely on informal communication networks that, while efficient, may foster misinformation and institutional distrust.

Effective internal communication, therefore, requires more than dissemination. It requires cultural sensitivity, feedback mechanisms, and leadership commitment to transparent engagement. In health institutions like NHIA, where policy implementation requires coordination and clarity, internal communication becomes a critical determinant of operational success. Ensuring that communication is not only top-down but also inclusive and participatory can improve employee morale, reduce resistance to change, and enhance service delivery outcomes.

2.3 The Interrelationship Between Internal Communication and Organizational Culture

The interplay between internal communication and organizational culture is characterized by a bidirectional influence while culture shapes communication styles and preferences, communication practices simultaneously reinforce or challenge cultural norms. This dynamic relationship is particularly significant in public institutions such as NHIA, where policy mandates, political influence, and service expectations intersect. Cornelissen (2017) argues that communication is not simply a vehicle for transmitting information; it is a process through which organizational realities are constructed, shared, and negotiated. Thus, the way communication unfolds within an organization reflects its underlying values and norms.

Empirical studies affirm that internal communication is both a product and a shaper of organizational culture. Men and Bowen (2017) contend that transparent, two-way communication

contributes to a culture of openness, trust, and accountability. In contrast, rigid and unidirectional communication patterns reflect and reinforce cultures of hierarchy, mistrust, and disengagement. In many African public institutions, including NHIA, communication is often formalized and bureaucratic, influenced by cultural attributes such as high power distance and deference to authority (Ampofo et al., 2020). These cultural factors limit the scope of employee feedback and innovation, as staff may be reluctant to express dissent or challenge leadership decisions.

At the same time, communication strategies can be used to reshape culture. For instance, promoting horizontal communication and participatory decision making can gradually foster a culture of collaboration and shared ownership (Mahdi et al., 2022). This has implications for change management and organizational learning, as effective communication is often the starting point for cultural transformation. In the NHIA context, where communication is essential for coordinating health policy implementation, training staff, and responding to client concerns, fostering an internal culture that values open communication can significantly improve operational effectiveness.

Ultimately, communication and culture are not distinct entities but interwoven systems that influence one another in subtle and profound ways. An organization that seeks to change its culture must begin by examining its communication practices, and vice versa. For NHIA, building a culture that values dialogue, feedback, and inclusivity is critical not only for employee engagement but also for delivering efficient and equitable health services to the Ghanaian populace.

2.4 Leadership, Internal Communication and Culture

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping both internal communication and organizational culture. Leaders serve as cultural architects who establish norms, set the tone for communication practices, and model the behaviours they expect from their teams. In organizations such as the National

Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), the centralization of authority and formalized bureaucratic procedures make leadership influence even more critical in determining how communication is perceived and practiced. Leaders have the power to either reinforce rigid, hierarchical cultures or initiate a shift toward more open, participatory environments that prioritize two-way communication.

Research by Men and Stacks (2014) emphasizes that transformational leaders those who inspire, motivate, and actively engage with their employees tend to foster cultures of openness, trust, and innovation. These leaders communicate vision, listen to feedback, and provide recognition, which not only improves internal communication but also enhances organizational commitment. In contrast, transactional or authoritarian leadership styles, often observed in African public sector institutions, are linked with a communication culture of top-down directives, limited feedback, and suppressed dissent (Molefe & Chinomona, 2021). Such environments may ensure compliance but typically discourage creativity, reduce motivation, and erode employee morale.

In Ghanaian public organizations, including the NHIA, leadership styles are deeply influenced by sociocultural norms, including deference to hierarchy, age, and authority. This often manifests in leadership practices that prioritize order and control over engagement and dialogue (Boateng & Kosi, 2021). Consequently, communication becomes a function of rank, where junior staff feel constrained from speaking freely, and upward communication is stifled. Leaders who fail to recognize the value of inclusive communication inadvertently contribute to a stagnant culture that resists innovation and change.

However, leadership can also be a powerful lever for cultural and communicational transformation. When senior executives prioritize transparency, create safe spaces for dialogue, and model ethical communication behaviours, they can initiate shifts in organizational culture even in traditionally

hierarchical institutions. For the NHIA, such leadership is essential in building a responsive and learning oriented organization, especially as the agency navigates reforms and public health challenges. Leadership development, therefore, should be viewed as a strategic imperative for strengthening the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture.

2.5 Technology and Internal Communication

Technological advancement has revolutionised the landscape of internal communication, offering new platforms and tools for information sharing, collaboration, and real-time engagement. In public sector institutions like NHIA, the integration of technology into internal communication systems can enhance efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. However, the adoption and effectiveness of such technologies are often mediated by organizational culture, digital literacy, and infrastructural constraints. Digital tools such as intranets, instant messaging apps, video conferencing, and email systems have transformed the way employees interact, breaking down geographical and hierarchical barriers. According to Mazzei (2014), organizations that leverage digital communication technologies effectively can cultivate cultures of responsiveness and collaboration. These tools allow for asynchronous communication, knowledge management, and the decentralization of information flow, thereby supporting participatory cultures. For example, platforms like Microsoft Teams cross functional communication and empower employees at all levels to contribute to ongoing conversations.

In the context of Ghana, however, the adoption of technology in public institutions like NHIA is uneven, influenced by infrastructural limitations, budgetary constraints, and resistance to change (Abor & Biekpe, 2019). Moreover, older employees or those in rural branches may lack the digital literacy needed to engage with new platforms effectively, which can create communication challenges. Additionally, organizational culture plays a decisive role in how technology is used. In

institutions where culture prioritises control over collaboration, technology may be used merely as a tool for directive communication rather than interactive engagement.

There is also the challenge of information overload, where excessive digital communication, such as emails, updates, and messages, can overwhelm employees and reduce productivity. As Tourish and Robson (2006) note, the quality, clarity, and purpose of communication matter more than the volume. Therefore, technology must be strategically integrated into communication systems, accompanied by training and cultural alignment, to ensure its effectiveness.

For NHIA, adopting a strategic approach to digital communication can enhance coordination between headquarters and regional offices, improve staff engagement, and support the timely dissemination of policy updates. However, the success of such initiatives depends not just on the technology itself but on cultivating a culture that values transparency, participation, and continuous learning.

2.6 Employee Engagement and Organisational Commitment

Employee engagement is a critical outcome of effective internal communication and a positive organisational culture. It refers to the emotional and psychological investment employees make in their work, often manifesting in higher productivity, loyalty, and discretionary effort. In public institutions like NHIA, where motivation is frequently challenged by bureaucratic inertia and limited resources, fostering engagement through strategic communication and cultural alignment becomes essential. Engaged employees are more likely to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals, communicate openly, and act as ambassadors of the institution's mission. Saks (2006) theorizes that engagement results from the fulfilment of psychological conditions, meaningfulness, safety, and availability, all of which are influenced by the organization's

communication climate and cultural values. Clear communication of goals, recognition of contributions, and mechanisms for employee voice are thus central to promoting engagement.

In the Ghanaian public sector, however, employee engagement remains low due to factors such as poor feedback mechanisms, lack of trust in leadership, and limited professional growth opportunities (Adzoyi, 2020). Internal communication in such settings often focuses on directives and compliance rather than dialogue and development. This creates a transactional environment where employees feel disconnected from the organisation's mission and undervalued in their roles.

Organizational culture also influences engagement by shaping perceptions of fairness, belonging, and purpose. Cultures that prioritize hierarchy over inclusiveness may inadvertently marginalize staff, especially junior or support-level employees, reducing their sense of commitment. Conversely, cultures that promote collaboration, respect, and shared goals foster a sense of ownership and pride in one's work.

For NHIA, improving employee engagement requires both communicational and cultural interventions. Leaders must create spaces for two-way communication, encourage feedback without fear of retribution, and recognize employee contributions. Training programs, performance feedback systems, and informal interactions can be leveraged to build trust and emotional connection among staff. Ultimately, the interplay between communication and culture shapes the engagement landscape and improving both can yield significant benefits in terms of organizational performance and public service delivery.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

2.7.1 Schein's Organizational Culture Theory

Edgar Schein's (2010) model of organizational culture remains one of the most influential frameworks for understanding how culture operates within institutions. Schein conceptualises organisational culture as existing at three interrelated levels: artefacts (visible organisational structures and processes), espoused values (stated strategies, goals, and philosophies), and basic underlying assumptions (unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values). This theory posits that while artefacts and espoused values are often publicly expressed and observable, it is the underlying assumptions that truly guide behaviour. Artefacts and espoused values are often publicly expressed and observable; it is the underlying assumptions that truly guide behaviour and influence how members interpret internal communication.

In the context of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), Schein's framework is instrumental in diagnosing cultural barriers to effective communication. For example, the prevalence of top-down communication in NHIA may be an artifact of a deeper cultural assumption rooted in hierarchical authority and deference to power. Similarly, while NHIA may espouse values of transparency and stakeholder engagement, if underlying assumptions prioritize control and conformity, communication practices will remain rigid and non-participatory.

Schein's theory also allows for the identification of cultural misalignments, such as when management promotes openness in policy but discourages upward feedback in practice. These misalignments create what he calls "cultural inconsistencies" that contribute to mistrust and employee disengagement. For NHIA to realign its internal communication with its cultural aspirations, it must first examine and possibly reform the basic assumptions held by leadership and staff.

Furthermore, Schein's model provides a pathway for cultural change by illustrating that transformation must begin at the level of assumptions. Leadership communication, therefore, must not only articulate new values but also reinforce them through consistent behaviour, rewards, and systems that support openness and dialogue. As such, Schein's theory supports a holistic understanding of how communication both reflects and shapes culture, making it highly applicable to institutional reforms in the NHIA.

2.7.2 The Communication Satisfaction Theory

Communication Satisfaction Theory, developed by Downs and Hazen (1977), although not recent, remains a foundational framework in internal communication literature. The theory posits that employee satisfaction with communication within an organization significantly affects their productivity, morale, and organizational commitment. It identifies key dimensions of internal communication satisfaction, including the adequacy of information, feedback mechanisms, communication climate, supervisory communication, and horizontal and vertical information flow.

While initially developed in a corporate setting, the theory has been widely applied to public sector organizations, including healthcare institutions, where communication plays a critical role in policy implementation and service delivery. In the NHIA, communication satisfaction can serve as a diagnostic tool to assess how employees perceive the flow of information, their ability to give and receive feedback, and their involvement in decision-making processes.

Recent studies, such as those by Clampitt and Downs (2004), have found a strong correlation between communication satisfaction and employee engagement, particularly in organizations undergoing reform or service expansion. Within NHIA, where staff operate across various departments and regions, ensuring communication satisfaction is vital to maintaining alignment

with institutional goals. Dissatisfaction can lead to confusion, disengagement, and resistance to change, all of which undermine performance.

Moreover, this theory sheds light on the emotional and psychological dimensions of communication, emphasizing that how messages are delivered can be as important as what is communicated. For example, even when NHIA disseminates accurate policy updates, if they are communicated in a one-sided or authoritarian tone, employee satisfaction may decrease. As such, communication training, especially for supervisors and middle managers, becomes essential in fostering a positive communication climate.

The theory also reinforces the need for feedback systems and participatory communication structures. For NHIA, incorporating regular employee feedback surveys, suggestion boxes, and open forums can increase satisfaction levels and bridge communication gaps. Therefore, Communication Satisfaction Theory provides a practical and evaluative lens for enhancing internal communication systems within NHIA, especially in culturally hierarchical organisations.

2.7.3 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (Hofstede et al., 2010) offers a cross-cultural framework for understanding how national culture influences organisational behaviour, including communication patterns. The theory identifies six dimensions: power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence vs. restraint. Of these, power distance and collectivism are particularly relevant in the Ghanaian context and, by extension, within the NHIA.

Ghana scores high on power distance, meaning that hierarchical structures are respected and authority is rarely challenged. This cultural trait is reflected in public institutions like NHIA, where

communication often flows top-down and junior staff are hesitant to provide upward feedback. Hofstede's theory suggests that in such cultures, leadership must be especially intentional in encouraging participatory communication and flattening hierarchies in decision-making processes.

Collectivism also shapes internal communication in NHIA. Ghanaian culture places emphasis on harmony, group cohesion, and loyalty to the organization. While this can support teamwork and shared goals, it may also discourage open criticism or whistleblowing, as employees may prioritize group harmony over transparency. Hofstede's framework helps explain why communication strategies that work in Western, low power distance cultures may not be effective in Ghana without cultural adaptation.

Understanding these cultural dimensions enables NHIA leadership to design communication systems that are culturally congruent. For example, using indirect feedback methods or anonymous channels may be more effective in eliciting honest input than direct confrontation. Additionally, recognizing the cultural emphasis on respect for elders and authority can help in selecting communication ambassadors who are credible and culturally respected.

Hofstede's theory therefore offers a valuable perspective for contextualizing the interplay between internal communication and organizational culture. It emphasizes that communication practices cannot be divorced from the broader cultural environment, and that effective strategies must be tailored to reflect and navigate these cultural realities. For NHIA, applying Hofstede's insights can enhance cultural sensitivity in communication planning, ultimately improving organizational cohesion and effectiveness.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This literature review has explored the intricate relationship between internal communication and organizational culture, focusing on their mutual influence within public institutions, particularly the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) in Ghana. Internal communication is not merely a technical function of disseminating information but a cultural practice that reflects and reinforces the underlying assumptions, values, and beliefs of an organization. A healthy organizational culture characterized by openness, trust, and collaboration enhances the effectiveness of internal communication, while dysfunctional cultures often result in communication breakdowns, disengagement, and organizational inefficiencies. The thematic discussions have shown that leadership plays a critical role in shaping communication norms and cultural orientation. The adoption of technology presents both opportunities and challenges, requiring culturally sensitive implementation strategies. Employee engagement emerges as both an outcome and a catalyst of effective internal communication and a positive cultural climate.

The theoretical frameworks employed Schein's Organizational Culture Model, the Communication Satisfaction Theory, and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory have offered robust lenses through which to analyse the NHIA context. These theories underscore the need for alignment between communication practices and cultural realities, particularly in hierarchical and collectivist cultures like Ghana's. For the NHIA, understanding and improving the interplay between internal communication and organizational culture is not just an academic concern. It is a strategic imperative. As the institution continues to evolve to meet the healthcare needs of the Ghanaian population, fostering a culture of open, inclusive, and effective communication will be essential to its success.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Chapter Introduction

Chapter Three outlines the methodological framework that guided this study. It begins by explaining the philosophical paradigm underpinning the research, followed by a detailed justification for the qualitative case study approach adopted. The chapter also describes the sampling strategies, data collection techniques, and analytical procedures used to explore the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture within the NHIA. Additionally, it discusses the measures taken to ensure research rigour, including credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. This methodological foundation ensures that the findings presented in later chapters are grounded in systematic and coherent research processes.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The interpretivist paradigm underpinned this study's philosophical orientation. Interpretivism posits that reality is socially constructed, complex, and subjective, requiring researchers to understand phenomena through participants' perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This paradigm was appropriate given the study's aim to explore the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture, two inherently human and socially mediated constructs. Organisational culture is shaped by shared values, norms, and meanings (Schein, 2010), while internal communication is both a vehicle for and a reflection of these shared meanings (Tourish & Robson, 2006). Thus, understanding their interplay necessitated an interpretive lens that prioritises the voices and experiences of organisational actors.

3.2 Research Approach and Design

This study adopted a qualitative case study design. As Yin (2018) explains, a case study is appropriate when the research seeks to explore a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined. The NHIA, as a government institution responsible for implementing Ghana's National Health Insurance Scheme, operates within a bounded system in which internal communication practices and organisational culture are deeply intertwined.

A single case, embedded design was employed, wherein the NHIA is treated as the main case, and its various internal structures, such as the head office in Accra, selected district and regional offices, and operational departments, will be treated as embedded units. This approach enabled a nuanced examination of how communication practices manifest across different hierarchical and functional levels within the organisation. Furthermore, the case study design allowed for methodological flexibility, enabling the use of multiple data sources to gain a holistic understanding of the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture. This aligns with Merriam's (2009) assertion that qualitative case studies are particularly effective for studying complex organisational dynamics that require contextual interpretation.

3.3 Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy employed for the study was purposive sampling non-probability technique. This non-probability technique allowed the researcher to select information-rich cases that were most relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2015). Participants were selected based on their roles and responsibilities within the NHIA, with particular attention to those directly involved in internal communication processes and organisational development initiatives. These included communication officers, human resource personnel, departmental heads, and frontline staff.

The sample was drawn from various administrative levels within the NHIA, including national headquarters, regional and district offices, to ensure diversity in experiences and perspectives. The rationale for this is rooted in the understanding that communication practices and organisational culture are experienced differently across organisational levels and locations (Mazzei, 2010). This stratified purposive approach allowed the researcher to uncover patterns and divergences in the communication culture nexus. Additionally, snowball sampling was used to identify individuals who may not hold formal communication roles but are regarded by peers as influential in shaping internal discourse or embodying cultural norms. As noted by Marshall and Rossman (2016), snowball sampling is particularly effective in accessing informal networks and hidden voices within organisational structures

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

Given the qualitative nature of this research, data collection involved triangulation of methods, including in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. This triangulation enhanced the credibility and richness of the findings (Denzin, 2012).

In-depth Semi-Structured Interviews: The primary data collection method was semi-structured interviews with approximately 5 participants. These interviews followed an interview guide with open-ended questions designed to elicit participants' views on communication practices, leadership communication styles, message clarity, feedback mechanisms, and the influence of communication on organisational norms and values. Semi-structured interviews are particularly suitable for qualitative studies as they allow for deep probing of meanings while providing the interviewer with flexibility to explore emerging themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with groups of 8 participants, targeting frontline staff and mid-level officers. FGDs helped uncover collective perspectives and provide insight into how communication practices and cultural norms are co-constructed within teams (Krueger & Casey, 2015). They are especially valuable for identifying shared values and tensions in organisational communication systems.

Direct Observation: The researcher conducted non-participant observations of staff meetings, internal briefings, and workplace interactions. These observations aimed to capture communication practices in real time and to identify cultural artefacts such as rituals, language use, and behavioural norms that may not be fully captured through self-report methods (Yin, 2018). Field notes were maintained systematically and coded during analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis, as developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis involves six phases: familiarisation with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. This method allowed on participants' narratives while remaining guided by the research objectives. Qualitative data from interviews, FGDs, and field notes were transcribed verbatim and coded manually. Codes were grouped into categories and themes that reflect the interplay between communication practices and cultural expressions. Thematic analysis is particularly appropriate for organisational research, as it facilitates the identification of both explicit and latent themes across multiple data sources (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012).

To ensure trustworthiness, the analysis adhered to the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation of data sources, member checks with participants, and detailed audit trails were also used to enhance the rigour of the study.

3.6 Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has presented the methodological approach employed in the study, detailing the philosophical orientation, research design, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and analytical procedures. By adopting an interpretivist, qualitative case study approach, the research captured the complex lived experiences of NHIA staff regarding communication and culture. The triangulation of methods and rigorous thematic analysis strengthened the credibility and richness of the findings. The next chapter presents the results of this analytical process and discusses them in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the study's findings on the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture within the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) of Ghana. The analysis is grounded in the interpretivist paradigm that underpinned the study and the qualitative case study design described in the methodology. By drawing on semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and direct observations, the chapter explored how NHIA employees perceive communication practices within the organisation, how these practices shape the broader organisational culture, and how the prevailing culture influences communication flow, employee engagement and overall institutional performance.

The analysis therefore proceeds by identifying themes that emerged from the data, illustrating them with anonymised verbatim quotations, and situating the findings within the theoretical and empirical literature reviewed in Chapter Two.

4.1 Data Preparation and Analytical Procedures

Before the analysis began, all interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed verbatim and anonymised. The transcripts, together with field notes taken during observations of meetings and informal interactions, were read repeatedly in order to become deeply familiar with the content and to identify initial impressions. This immersion provided a strong foundation for the thematic analysis that followed.

The analysis was conducted using the six phases of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke. The first stage, familiarisation, involved reading and re-reading the transcripts to identify preliminary patterns and meanings. In the second stage, initial codes were generated. These codes

captured significant features of the data relevant to the research questions, including codes such as “unclear communication”, “hierarchical influence”, “feedback limitations”, “collaborative practices”, and “cultural contradictions”. Some codes reflected issues anticipated based on the interview guide and research objectives, while others emerged inductively from the participants’ narratives.

The third stage involved searching for themes by clustering related codes together. For instance, several codes associated with clarity, timeliness and responsiveness were grouped to form a potential theme relating to the effectiveness of internal communication. Likewise, codes concerning hierarchy, authority, shared values and workplace norms were clustered under a broader theme relating to NHIA’s organisational culture. During the fourth stage, themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the data and that there was coherence within each theme. In some cases, themes were merged or narrowed to ensure clarity. The fifth stage involved defining and naming each theme by identifying its core meaning and determining the scope of what it captured. Finally, the sixth stage entailed producing the written analysis, integrating verbatim excerpts and linking the findings with the literature and theoretical perspectives discussed in earlier chapters.

4.2 Trustworthiness of the Findings

The study adopted several strategies to ensure that the findings were credible, dependable, confirmable and transferable. Credibility was strengthened by triangulating multiple data collection methods, namely interviews, focus groups and direct observations, to ensure that themes were supported by more than one form of evidence. Member checking was also conducted by sharing summary interpretations with a selected number of participants to verify the accuracy of the researcher’s understanding.

Dependability was enhanced through careful documentation of the research process, including coding decisions, theme development and analytical reflections. This audit trail ensured that the analytical method was logical and consistent. Confirmability was supported through reflexive practices, with the researcher acknowledging personal biases and ensuring that interpretations were grounded in the participants' own words. Transferability was addressed by providing detailed descriptions of the NHIA's context, the communication environment, and its cultural characteristics, thereby enabling future researchers or practitioners to determine whether the findings may be applicable to similar settings.

4.3 Participant Profile

The study included five participants who took part in semi-structured interviews and eight additional participants who formed the focus group discussion. Interview participants represented a range of units and roles across both the headquarters and regional offices of the NHIA, including communications, human resources, district management, monitoring and evaluation, and claims processing. Their years of experience within the NHIA ranged from three to ten years, providing insights from both relatively new employees and more experienced staff who had observed changes in organisational practices over time.

The focus group discussion comprised frontline staff and mid-level officers who work directly with the public or provide administrative support. Their contributions offered practical insights into the everyday realities of internal communication and the organisation's cultural expectations. The diversity of roles and experiences enriched the analysis by providing perspectives from different organisational levels. Senior staff tended to focus on strategic communication challenges and leadership practices. At the same time, frontline officers concentrated on the operational

aspects of communication, such as the timeliness of directives, clarity of instructions, and the availability of information necessary to carry out their duties.

Across all participants, there was a shared understanding that NHIA is characterised by a strong hierarchical structure, which shaped both communication patterns and staff's lived experiences. The variety of voices represented in the study contributed to a holistic and multi layered understanding of how internal communication and organisational culture interact within the Authority.

4.4 Overview of Emerging Themes

The analysis yielded four major themes that structure the remainder of this chapter. The first theme centres on the nature and effectiveness of internal communication practices within NHIA, covering issues such as clarity, timeliness, the use of communication channels, and barriers to adequate information flow. The second theme addresses the dominant characteristics of NHIA's organisational culture, including hierarchical relationships, bureaucratic tendencies, informal norms and the tension between espoused and enacted values. The third theme explores how internal communication shapes organisational culture, highlighting that transparent communication fosters trust and cohesion, while poor communication contributes to frustration and disengagement. The fourth theme examines how organisational culture influences communication flow, engagement and performance, demonstrating that cultural assumptions and norms can either encourage open dialogue or suppress upward communication and staff involvement.

These themes collectively illustrate the reciprocal and dynamic relationship between communication and culture within NHIA. They also provide the foundation for the subsequent detailed analysis and interpretation presented in Part Two of this chapter.

4.5 Internal Communication Practices and Organisational Culture at NHIA

4.5.1 The Nature and Effectiveness of Internal Communication Practices at NHIA

The first major theme that emerged from the data relates to the nature and effectiveness of internal communication practices within the National Health Insurance Authority. Participants described communication within NHIA as involving multiple formal and informal channels, including emails, memos, circulars, team briefings, WhatsApp platforms, and face-to-face engagements. However, while the organisation appears to have a relatively structured communication system, the effectiveness of these practices varied significantly across departments and hierarchical levels. Many participants spoke about the formal structures for internal communication, noting that official information often originated at headquarters and cascaded down to regional and district offices. According to one senior communications officer, “NHIA has a well-defined system for circulating information from the top. The challenge is not the lack of channels but the inconsistency in how quickly or clearly messages get to the people who need them.” His view captures the general perception that although communication structures exist, their operational effectiveness depends on how diligently they are used.

Several participants, especially those at the frontline, noted issues concerning clarity and timeliness. A frontline officer from the focus group described an experience where her team received key operational directives late, remarking that “sometimes you get information on the same day you are supposed to implement it, and you are left wondering how to meet the targets.” This suggests that although channels exist, the timing of communication does not always support efficient planning or execution. Such delays have implications not only for staff effectiveness but also for service delivery to clients.

Another recurring issue mentioned by participants was the presence of communication breakdowns between hierarchical levels. A district scheme manager explained that communication

sometimes becomes distorted as it moves downward. He noted, “By the time information gets to the district level, the emphasis may have shifted. Sometimes it feels like Chinese whispers, where the message is not exactly what was intended.” This reflects challenges associated with multi-layered bureaucratic communication systems and demonstrates how hierarchical filtering can influence information accuracy.

Participants also highlighted challenges relating to feedback. Although formal mechanisms exist, such as staff meetings and reporting lines, many staff members expressed concerns that feedback travels upwards far less effectively than directives travel downwards. One monitoring and evaluation officer stated, “We send our reports, we ask questions, but responses from the top are not always forthcoming. You can wait for weeks.” This lack of responsiveness can create feelings of disconnection and undermine staff morale. It also reflects an organisational tendency to prioritise downward communication over upward or lateral communication, which has implications for organisational learning.

In response to these challenges, staff often resort to informal communication channels to obtain quicker, more reliable information. WhatsApp groups, personal networks, and informal consultations with colleagues were frequently mentioned as workarounds. A claims processing officer remarked, “Sometimes if you want the real picture, you call someone you know in Accra or you check the WhatsApp group. The official memo might come later.” This illustrates the coexistence of formal and informal systems and highlights the role of informal networks in compensating for formal inefficiencies.

Overall, participants described internal communication at NHIA as functional but uneven. Although the organisation has established channels, their effectiveness is undermined by delays, limited opportunities for feedback, hierarchical filtering, and inconsistent adherence to

communication protocols. The reliance on informal networks underscores staff efforts to navigate communication gaps but also indicates underlying structural weaknesses in the organisation's formal communication system. These findings illustrate the complexity of communication within a bureaucratic public institution, where established systems exist but do not consistently operate to fully support organisational objectives.

4.5.2 Dominant Characteristics of the Organisational Culture at NHIA

The second major theme concerns the dominant cultural characteristics that shape everyday behaviour and experiences within the NHIA. Participants consistently described the organisation's culture as hierarchical, formal, and bureaucratic, shaped by a combination of institutional history, national cultural norms, and leadership influence. This culture manifests through patterns of deference to authority, limited upward communication, collective solidarity among staff, and an emphasis on compliance and procedure.

One of the clearest cultural characteristics that emerged from the data is the strong respect for hierarchy. Many staff members indicated that NHIA operates on clearly defined lines of authority, where communication and decision-making flow primarily from the top down. A human resource officer commented that "people are very conscious of rank here. You speak carefully depending on who is in the room. Even when you have good ideas, you measure your words." This indicates that seniority and authority shape not only the flow of communication but also employees' willingness to express themselves openly.

This hierarchical culture also influences staff attitudes towards leadership. Many participants believed that leadership decisions are rarely questioned, not necessarily because staff always agree with them, but because the culture does not encourage open dissent. As one focus group participant observed, "In NHIA, you don't challenge a directive openly. You can only suggest quietly or find

someone senior to speak for you.” This culture of respectful silence has implications for upward communication and innovation, as employees may withhold concerns or ideas that could improve organisational performance.

Alongside hierarchy, participants described the culture as strongly bureaucratic, characterised by formal procedures, documentation requirements, and slow decision making processes. A district manager noted that “everything has to go through several layers of approval. Even small requests like getting a printer fixed can take weeks.” This bureaucratic tendency creates inefficiencies and contributes to staff frustration. At the same time, it reflects a broader public sector culture emphasising compliance and accountability, especially in organisations responsible for public funds.

Despite these challenges, participants also highlighted positive elements of the organisational culture, particularly the strong sense of interpersonal cohesion among staff. Many described NHIA as having a “family-like” atmosphere where colleagues support one another informally. One frontline officer stated that “even if the system is tough, the people are nice. We help each other a lot because we all understand the pressures.” Such expressions of collectivism are consistent with Ghanaian cultural norms that value group harmony and mutual support.

However, this same collectivism can sometimes reinforce cultural contradictions. Participants noted that although NHIA officially espouses values such as transparency, openness and accountability, the enacted culture does not always reflect these ideals. A participant remarked that “you hear about openness, but in practice people are careful. You have to know who to talk to about what. It’s not as open as the documents say.” These contradictions align with Schein’s distinction between espoused values and underlying assumptions, where formal organisational statements do not always align with lived realities.

Another dimension of the culture relates to political undertones. Some participants suggested that political influence occasionally shapes decision-making and behaviour within the NHIA, especially in leadership appointments or policy directions. Although participants spoke cautiously on this subject, the sentiment was captured by a claims officer who noted, “Sometimes you can feel the political pressure. It affects how confident people are in voicing their opinions.” This further highlights how external cultural forces shape internal organisational dynamics.

Overall, the organisational culture at NHIA can be described as hierarchical, bureaucratic, relational, and occasionally politically influenced. The culture has both enabling and constraining effects. While the strong interpersonal bonds promote solidarity and collegiality, the hierarchical and bureaucratic tendencies restrict upward communication, limit employee participation in decision-making, and contribute to a climate of cautious conformity. These cultural characteristics directly influence the extent to which internal communication practices succeed or falter.

4.6 The Interaction Between Communication and Culture

4.6.1 Influence of Internal Communication on Organisational Culture

The third major theme explores how internal communication practices shape the organisational culture at the NHIA. The findings demonstrate a clear reciprocal relationship between communication and culture, with participants stating that the effectiveness, clarity, and tone of internal communication significantly influence the organisation's values, attitudes, and behavioural norms. Communication is not merely a technical process at NHIA; it is a cultural force that actively reinforces how people relate to one another, how they interpret the intentions of leadership, and how they perceive their place within the institution.

Many participants described moments when good communication strengthened cohesion and trust within their teams. For example, a senior communications officer explained that “when leadership

takes the time to explain decisions properly, it changes how staff respond. People feel respected, and they understand why things are happening.” His view underscores the cultural value that employees attach to transparency and inclusiveness. Clear communication from leadership not only improves understanding but also contributes to a culture where staff feel acknowledged and valued.

Similarly, a human resource officer noted that internal communication helps shape the organisation’s sense of unity and shared purpose. She stated that “anytime there is open communication, it creates a feeling that we are all in this together. It makes people more willing to support one another.” This statement demonstrates how communication operates as a cultural glue within the Authority, promoting collective identity and mutual support among employees.

However, several participants also highlighted instances indicating its powerful influence on organisational culture. A frontline officer described how inconsistent communication created anxiety within her unit. She explained, “Sometimes you hear something from someone in a different department, but nothing official has been said. It creates speculation, and people start panicking.” In such cases, the absence of timely and authoritative communication shapes a culture of uncertainty and rumour circulation.

Another participant recounted how unclear communication from management affected morale. A monitoring and evaluation officer stated, “When directives are vague, you feel like you’re working in the dark. It becomes the culture that people just ‘manage’ their way through tasks, even if they are not sure what is expected.” This observation suggests that unclear communication can normalise a culture of improvisation and informal interpretation, thereby undermining organisational consistency and accountability.

The influence of communication on organisational culture was also evident in discussions about feedback. Many staff reported that restricted opportunities for upward communication contribute to a culture of silence, in which employees hesitate to express dissent or share innovative ideas. A district manager commented, “If people feel that their feedback goes nowhere, they stop bothering. Over time, it becomes the norm that you keep quiet and do what you’re told.” This shows that communication practices can entrench behaviours that reinforce hierarchical distance and discourage initiative.

Participants also noted that communication practices influence cultural perceptions of fairness and transparency. A claims processing officer explained that “when information is shared selectively, it creates cliques. People feel some groups are favoured more than others.” This suggests that communication inequalities can foster a culture of perceived favouritism and division, affecting trust in leadership and weakening organisational cohesion.

Overall, the findings show that communication at NHIA is a key cultural mechanism. When communication is transparent, timely, and inclusive, it contributes to a positive culture characterised by trust, collaboration, and shared purpose. However, when communication is slow, unclear, inconsistent, or selective, it fosters negative cultural traits such as anxiety, silence, low morale, and suspicion. These dynamics confirm the central proposition in the literature that communication does not merely reflect culture but actively shapes it. The NHIA case clearly illustrates this interdependency.

4.6.2 Organisational Culture’s Impact on Communication Flow, Employee Engagement and Institutional Performance

The fourth and final theme concerns how NHIA’s organisational culture influences the flow of communication, the level of employee engagement, and the institution’s overall performance. The findings reveal that organisational culture acts as both an enabler and a barrier to communication.

Cultural norms around hierarchy, authority, collegiality, and conformity play powerful roles in determining whether communication is open or restricted, whether employees feel confident to express themselves, and whether organisational goals are achieved efficiently.

Participants consistently described NHIA's hierarchical culture as having a profound impact on communication flow. A frontline officer in the focus group explained that "you have to be mindful of who you are talking to. Here, communication is based on rank, not just on what needs to be said." This indicates that hierarchical norms shape communication behaviours, often making junior staff cautious in their interactions with senior personnel. Such caution can suppress timely communication, especially upward communication, and limit the sharing of useful insights or concerns.

Several participants described cultural barriers that discourage open dialogue. A participant from the IT unit stated that "people don't want to be seen as challenging authority, so even if something is not working, they may not say it directly." This aligns with Hofstede's concept of high power distance, which was also highlighted in the literature review. The result is a culture that prioritises respect and deference over open discussion, hindering problem-solving and innovation.

Participants also described how the culture influences employee engagement. Many staff members noted that a lack of open communication reduces their enthusiasm and sense of involvement. A claims officer reflected that "if decisions are made without explanation, it makes you feel disconnected from the organisation. You do the work because it's your job, not because you believe in it." This illustrates how cultural patterns that limit communication can weaken emotional commitment and reduce engagement.

On the other hand, the organisation's relational culture, characterised by strong interpersonal bonds and teamwork, positively impacts communication. Staff often rely on informal networks to

share information and support one another. A frontline participant said, “We might not get all the information officially, but we talk among ourselves. The relationships help us get things done.”

This suggests that while formal cultural norms may inhibit open communication, informal cultural norms enable collaboration and serve as a compensatory mechanism.

The findings also show that organisational culture directly affects institutional performance. Several participants noted that delays in communication or a lack of feedback can slow down operational processes, create inefficiencies, and reduce service quality. A district manager explained that “if headquarters delays in giving us the information we need, clients suffer. The culture of waiting for approval before acting slows everything down.” This indicates that cultural norms around control and centralised decision-making can impede timely service delivery.

Moreover, the culture of caution and deference prevents staff from raising issues that might affect performance. A monitoring officer remarked, “If people don’t feel safe to speak up, small issues become bigger before anyone addresses them.” This highlights how communication and culture jointly influence risk management and organisational learning.

In sum, NHIA’s organisational culture has a considerable impact on the way communication operates within the institution. Hierarchy and respect for authority restrict open communication and reduce engagement, while interpersonal solidarity and informal networks promote cooperation and mitigate some systemic gaps. These cultural forces collectively influence performance outcomes, demonstrating the interdependence between culture, communication, motivation, and institutional effectiveness.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

4.7.1 RQ1: What are the current internal communication practices at the NHIA, and how effective are they perceived to be?

The first research objective examined the nature and effectiveness of internal communication practices within the NHIA. The findings revealed that although the organisation possesses a variety of communication channels, emails, memos, WhatsApp platforms, meetings, and cascading directives, their effectiveness is undermined by issues of timeliness, clarity, hierarchical filtering, and feedback limitations. These findings corroborate the arguments made by scholars such as Welch and Jackson (2007) and Men (2014), who emphasise that internal communication in public institutions often suffers not from a lack of channels, but from inconsistencies in their use and deficiencies in leadership responsiveness.

The experiences of NHIA staff reflect this pattern. Participants expressed frustration with communication delays and unclear directives, echoing the concerns of Downs and Adrian (2004), who argue that unclear communication within public bureaucracies creates operational inefficiencies. The reliance on informal channels such as WhatsApp and personal networks also aligns with Johansson's (2015) findings, which note that when formal structures are weak, employees create parallel informal systems to fill gaps. These informal channels serve practical purposes but also indicate structural shortcomings.

The challenges identified in the NHIA's communication practices also align with the literature on communication overload and bureaucratic filtering. Katz and Kahn (1978) note that as communication passes through hierarchical layers, messages are often distorted or stripped of nuance. NHIA participants described the same phenomenon, comparing it to "Chinese whispers." Similarly, the limited avenues for effective upward communication resonate with the work of

Trombetta and Rogers (1988), who argue that many organisations privilege downward communication while neglecting upward and horizontal communication.

Therefore, the findings affirm that the NHIA's internal communication practices are shaped by both structural and cultural factors. While formal channels exist, their inconsistent use, hierarchical filtering, and lack of feedback mechanisms undermine their effectiveness. This conclusion strongly aligns with the body of literature suggesting that communication in public sector organisations is often uneven and hierarchical in nature.

4.7.2 RQ2: What are the prevailing features of NHIA's organizational culture?

The second research objective examined the dominant cultural characteristics of the NHIA. The findings reveal a culture that is strongly hierarchical, bureaucratic, relational, and at times politically influenced. These characteristics shape employees' behaviours, attitudes, and communication patterns.

The hierarchical nature of the NHIA aligns closely with Hofstede's (1980; 2001) concept of high power distance, which is prevalent in many African and particularly Ghanaian organisational settings. Participants' remarks that "you speak carefully depending on who is in the room" and that junior staff rarely challenge leadership decisions reflect Hofstede's argument that power distance influences communication openness. The findings also support Schein's (2010) proposition that underlying assumptions about authority and hierarchy often override espoused organisational values such as openness, transparency and participation.

The bureaucratic tendencies observed in the NHIA shows slow processes, multi-layered approvals, and a strong emphasis on compliance which align with Weber's theory of bureaucracy. As Weber (1946) and later scholars argue, public institutions tend to become highly formalised, with

elaborate procedures that sometimes impede responsiveness. NHIA staff described similar patterns, noting that even minor decisions must pass through several layers of approval.

Despite these restrictive aspects, the NHIA also demonstrates a relational culture characterised by strong interpersonal bonds, mutual support and informal collaboration. This supports the arguments of Ayiku (2015) and Opoku Mensah (2019), who note that African workplaces often exhibit strong collectivist tendencies, where interpersonal relationships buffer the stresses of bureaucratic systems. The findings also support Schein's assertion that organisational cultures are multi-layered and sometimes contradictory, with both positive interpersonal norms and restrictive hierarchical assumptions coexisting simultaneously.

The perception of political influence within the organisation, although subtly expressed by participants, aligns with studies on public institutions in Ghana. Scholars such as Ayee (2013) argue that public agencies often experience political pressures that shape leadership appointments and decision-making processes. While participants were cautious in discussing this, their concerns reflect a broader pattern in public sector governance across Ghana and other African contexts.

Thus, the organisational culture of the NHIA reflects a complex mixture of hierarchical authority, bureaucratic organisation, interpersonal collectivism, and subtle political undertones. These cultural traits align with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and help clarify the communication patterns outlined in the findings.

4.7.3 RQ3: In what ways does internal communication influence the organizational culture at NHIA?

The third research objective explored how internal communication influences organisational culture. The findings clearly reveal that communication is a critical cultural force within the NHIA. Transparent, timely and inclusive communication fosters trust, cohesion and a sense of unity

among staff, whereas unclear, delayed or inconsistent communication contributes to anxiety, mistrust, rumours and disengagement.

These findings strongly align with Schein's perspective that communication is central to organisational culture formation. Schein (2010) argues that organisational culture is transmitted and reinforced through communication practices, both formal and informal. At the NHIA, communication practices clearly shape the underlying assumptions and norms that guide staff behaviour. When leadership communicates openly and explains decisions clearly, employees perceive leadership as trustworthy and respectful, reinforcing a culture of inclusion. Conversely, when communication is delayed or ambiguous, a culture of speculation and caution arises.

The findings also resonate with Cornelissen's (2017) work, which suggests that communication is not merely a tool but a constitutive force that shapes organisational reality. NHIA employees' descriptions of communication as creating "uncertainty," "confidence," "unity," or "tension" highlight its emotional and cultural impacts. Similarly, Welch and Jackson's (2007) internal communication matrix emphasises the importance of strategic communication in shaping a supportive internal environment.

In addition, the findings echo the literature on sensemaking and organisational identity. Weick (1995) argues that organisations make sense of changes through communication, and when communication is unclear, employees engage in informal sensemaking processes, often through rumours or speculation. This was clearly reflected in participants' comments that unclear communication "creates speculation" and encourages reliance on informal channels.

Overall, the findings confirm that internal communication practices are pivotal in shaping the cultural climate of the NHIA. Effective communication strengthens positive cultural attributes such as unity and trust, while poor communication reinforces hierarchical silences and uncertainty.

4.7.4 RQ4: How does the existing organizational culture impact communication flow, employee engagement, and institutional performance at NHIA?

The fourth research objective investigated how organisational culture shapes communication flow, employee engagement and overall institutional performance. The findings reveal that NHIA's hierarchical and bureaucratic culture restricts open communication, suppresses upward communication, and limits proactive engagement. Meanwhile, its relational culture encourages informal information sharing and collaboration that help employees navigate structural limitations. The impact of hierarchy on communication flow closely aligns with Hofstede's high power distance dimension, which predicts that employees in such cultures will be cautious about expressing dissent and wait for instructions from authority figures. Participants' statements that "you have to be mindful of who you are talking to" or that "people do not want to be seen as challenging authority" illustrate this dynamic. These behaviours limit upward communication and discourage the sharing of innovative ideas, consistent with findings in African organisational studies by Kuada (2010) and Ohemeng (2015).

Organisational culture also influenced employee engagement. When communication is one-directional and decision-making is centralised, employees feel excluded and disengaged. This supports the arguments of Men and Stacks (2014), who found that participatory communication enhances employee commitment and trust. At the NHIA, employees noted that decisions made without explanation made them feel "disconnected from the organisation," resulting in compliance rather than genuine commitment.

The impact on institutional performance is also clear. The culture of procedural compliance and centralisation slows down operations, affects service delivery, and creates operational bottlenecks. This aligns with the literature on Ghanaian public sector inefficiencies, where scholars such as

Ayee (2013) and Antwi (2020) identify bureaucratic rigidity and hierarchical structures as key performance constraints. Participants' comments about delayed decisions leading to client dissatisfaction strongly reflect this trend.

Interestingly, the NHIA's relational culture partially offsets some of these structural limitations. Staff rely on informal networks to share information, lend support and address problems when formal systems are slow. This finding aligns with the literature on African relational cultures, which emphasises communal support systems within workplaces (Opoku Mensah, 2019). However, while relational culture helps employees cope, it does not substitute for strong institutional structures.

Therefore, the findings confirm that organisational culture significantly influences communication behaviours, employee motivation, and institutional performance at the NHIA. Hierarchy and bureaucracy restrict communication and engagement, while relational solidarity enables collaboration but does not fully compensate for structural constraints.

4.8 Implications of the Findings

The findings from this study have significant implications for the NHIA's internal communication systems, organisational culture, leadership practices and broader institutional performance. The analysis demonstrated that communication and culture interact in ways that either strengthen or undermine the organisation's functioning. As such, the findings provide insights into the structural and behavioural reforms required to enhance communication effectiveness, promote a healthy organisational culture and support improved service delivery to the Ghanaian public.

A key implication of the study is that effective communication is central to building a positive organisational culture. When communication is transparent, timely and participatory, employees feel valued, respected and informed. This strengthens trust in leadership and reinforces a culture

of collective responsibility. Conversely, delayed or unclear communication creates uncertainty, mistrust and anxiety, which weakens cohesion and promotes a culture of silence and speculation. Leaders at the NHIA must therefore recognise communication as a cultural tool, not merely an administrative function.

Another major implication relates to the effect of hierarchical and bureaucratic cultural norms on communication flow. The study showed that power distance within the NHIA is high, and this suppresses upward communication and constructive feedback. Employees often hesitate to speak openly because the culture does not consistently reward openness or initiative. This limitation prevents the organisation from learning effectively, adapting to emerging challenges and addressing problems proactively. Leadership must therefore consider ways of shifting cultural assumptions around authority, encouraging dialogue and creating safer spaces for upward communication.

The findings also have implications for employee engagement. When communication is restricted and employees feel excluded from decision-making processes, engagement declines. Staff become passive recipients of instructions rather than proactive contributors to organisational development. This affects motivation, morale and productivity. Improving communication and culture is therefore essential to enhancing employee engagement and strengthening commitment to organisational goals.

Institutional performance is another area significantly affected by the interaction between communication and culture. Bureaucratic processes and centralised decision-making slow down the flow of information, impede timely action and affect service delivery efficiency. To improve performance, the NHIA must modernise its internal communication practices, decentralise certain decision-making processes, and strengthen coordination across departments and levels.

Finally, the findings imply that informal networks, although useful as coping mechanisms, are not sustainable substitutes for strong communication systems. While staff rely on interpersonal relationships to fill communication gaps, this practice may lead to inconsistencies, information inequities and perceptions of favouritism. Institutional reforms must therefore focus on reinforcing formal communication structures while preserving positive aspects of relational culture.

4.9 Practical Recommendations for NHIA

Drawing on the findings, several practical recommendations emerge for improving both internal communication and organisational culture at the NHIA.

One critical recommendation is for leadership to strengthen the transparency and timeliness of communication. This could involve developing clear communication protocols that outline how information should be disseminated, the timelines for doing so, and the responsibilities of various units. Leadership should commit to sharing information promptly and clearly, especially on issues that directly affect daily work processes and employee welfare.

It is also recommended that the NHIA establish more robust feedback mechanisms. Platforms for upward and horizontal communication should be formalised and encouraged. Regular staff forums, open-door policies, anonymous feedback channels and participatory meetings could help staff feel heard and valued. Leadership must also provide timely responses to feedback so that staff see that their contributions matter.

The organisation should also seek to decentralise some levels of decision-making. Allowing regional and district offices to make certain operational decisions without excessive reliance on headquarters would reduce delays and enhance efficiency. This would also empower staff and help shift the cultural perception that decision-making is the exclusive preserve of senior leadership.

Training and capacity building are also essential. Managers and supervisors should be trained in communication leadership, emotional intelligence and participatory management. These skills will help leaders at all levels create more inclusive communication environments and model the behaviours they wish to see in the wider organisation.

In addition, the NHIA should consider adopting a modernised internal communication system, possibly incorporating digital platforms that support real-time communication and coordination. A well-integrated intranet system or internal communication software could help reduce fragmentation and reliance on informal channels.

Finally, efforts should be made to sustain the positive aspects of the organisational culture, particularly the strong interpersonal relationships among staff. Initiatives that promote team-building, cross-departmental collaboration and recognition of teamwork will help maintain the supportive relational culture while strengthening formal communication systems.

4.10 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed the findings of the study concerning the interplay between internal communication and organisational culture within the National Health Insurance Authority. The thematic analysis revealed four major themes: the nature and effectiveness of internal communication practices, the dominant cultural characteristics of the organisation, the influence of communication on culture and the impact of culture on communication flow, employee engagement and institutional performance.

The integrated discussion demonstrated that communication and culture are deeply intertwined within the NHIA. Communication practices shape cultural norms and attitudes, while cultural assumptions influence communication behaviours and patterns. The findings align with the theoretical frameworks of Schein, Hofstede and the Communication Satisfaction Theory, and

correspond with existing literature on public sector communication, organisational behaviour and African workplace cultures.

Overall, the study highlights the importance of strengthening both communication structures and cultural norms to enhance engagement, build trust, improve collaboration and support effective service delivery.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter brings together the major outcomes of the study by presenting a comprehensive summary of the findings, drawing conclusions based on the research objectives, outlining the limitations encountered during the research process, and offering recommendations for policy and practice. The chapter examines how internal communication and organisational culture intersect to shape employee experiences and institutional performance at the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). Through these reflections, the chapter highlights the significance of the study and situates its contributions within the broader discourse on public sector organisational behaviour. The chapter concludes with a summary that re-emphasises the importance of strengthening communication practices and transforming cultural dynamics within the Authority.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study set out to explore the relationship between internal communication and organisational culture within the NHIA and to understand how these two constructs influence institutional functioning. The findings revealed that both formal and informal channels characterise internal communication within the NHIA. Formal channels such as emails, memos, circulars, official meetings and policy directives constitute the official modes of information dissemination. However, their effectiveness is sometimes undermined by delays, limited clarity, hierarchical filtering and inconsistencies in communication practices. As a result, informal communication mechanisms, especially interpersonal conversations, WhatsApp platforms and peer networks, often fill the gaps created by delays in formal communication.

The study further established that hierarchical relationships, bureaucratic structures and relational interactions among staff shape NHIA's organisational culture. While the hierarchical culture promotes respect for authority and adherence to formal procedures, it also unintentionally creates communication barriers, especially in upward communication. Employees often exercise caution in expressing dissenting views or offering honest feedback due to perceived power distances. At the same time, relational cultural elements such as collegiality, solidarity and informal support among employees foster a sense of belongingness and smooth interpersonal collaboration.

The findings also revealed a mutually reinforcing relationship between internal communication and organisational culture. Effective communication practices supported the cultivation of a positive culture characterised by trust, openness and collective engagement. Conversely, weaknesses in communication, such as delays, insufficient feedback and restricted information flow, contributed to uncertainty, rumours and uneven interpretations of organisational decisions. Likewise, aspects of the prevailing culture, especially hierarchy and bureaucratic procedures, shaped how information moved within the institution and influenced the extent to which employees felt empowered to participate in decision-making.

Ultimately, the study showed that both communication and culture have significant implications for institutional performance. When communication is clear, timely and inclusive, employees demonstrate higher engagement and stronger alignment with organisational goals. When communication is inconsistent or opaque, performance is affected through reduced morale, delays in operations and weakened staff cohesion.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings, several conclusions can be drawn. First, internal communication within the NHIA is not merely a technical function but a cultural process that shapes employee perceptions,

work behaviours and overall organisational effectiveness. Communication influences how employees understand institutional priorities, interpret changes and align themselves with organisational expectations. Second, the study concludes that organisational culture plays a central role in determining the quality and effectiveness of communication practices. The NHIA's hierarchical and bureaucratic cultural traits, while useful for administrative order, tend to restrict open dialogue and limit upward communication. These cultural attributes create an environment where employees are often hesitant to voice concerns or offer constructive criticism.

Third, the study concludes that communication and culture jointly influence employee engagement and organisational performance. A communication system that is transparent, participatory and timely supports a culture of trust, collaboration and high morale. Conversely, limited transparency and restricted feedback mechanisms weaken cultural cohesion, encourage silent dissatisfaction and reduce organisational responsiveness.

Finally, the findings show that informal communication networks, although useful, should not replace strong formal communication systems. They are beneficial for clarifying information, strengthening interpersonal relationships and enabling swift sharing of operational details. However, reliance on them due to weaknesses in formal structures can lead to inconsistencies and misinformation.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

Like all research endeavours, this study was conducted within certain limitations. One major limitation lies in the sampling size. Although the qualitative approach prioritises depth of insight over statistical generalisation, the relatively small number of participants limits the extent to which the findings can be generalised to all public institutions in Ghana. Another limitation is the time

constraints within which data were collected. Extended periods of observation would have enriched the findings and provided deeper insight into day to day communication behaviours. Additionally, the sensitive nature of organisational politics and workplace dynamics posed a challenge. Some participants were cautious about expressing candid views, particularly regarding leadership practices and political influences within the Authority. This may have limited the richness of the data in certain areas. Finally, the single case study design means that the findings reflect the unique context of the NHIA and should be interpreted with that specificity in mind.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings and conclusions provide a strong basis for recommending several interventions that could strengthen internal communication and organisational culture within the NHIA. First, leadership needs to prioritise transparency and timeliness in communication. Clear and consistent dissemination of information across all levels of the organisation will reduce uncertainty and enhance staff alignment with operational directives.

Second, the Authority should enhance its feedback mechanisms to foster upward and horizontal communication. Institutionalising platforms such as regular staff forums, anonymous suggestion systems and structured feedback reviews will encourage employees to express their perspectives without fear of reprimand. This will promote an environment of inclusion and shared ownership of organisational decisions.

Third, decentralising certain decision making processes will improve efficiency and responsiveness. Allowing regional and district offices the autonomy to address context-specific issues without excessive dependence on headquarters will streamline operations and reduce communication bottlenecks.

Fourth, investment in communication leadership training is essential. Managers and supervisors should be equipped with the skills to practise participatory leadership, manage conflict constructively and communicate effectively with diverse staff groups. Such training will help create a more open and collaborative cultural environment.

Finally, improving the organisation's internal communication infrastructure is critical. The development of a centralised digital communication platform such as a robust intranet system will harmonise information flow, reduce fragmentation and enhance record-keeping. At the same time, the Authority should maintain the positive relational aspects of its culture by strengthening team-building initiatives, promoting employee recognition and nurturing a supportive work environment.

5.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has presented a comprehensive synthesis of the study by summarising the major findings, drawing relevant conclusions, acknowledging the limitations and proposing recommendations for practice and policy. The chapter underscores the mutual influence of internal communication and organisational culture and the implications of this relationship for institutional effectiveness at the NHIA. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening communication systems and cultivating a culture that supports openness, participation and mutual respect. As the NHIA continues to fulfil its mandate of expanding health insurance coverage and improving service delivery, attention to organisational culture and communication will be critical to sustaining institutional performance and enhancing staff engagement.

REFERENCES

- Abor, J., & Biekpe, N. (2019). The dynamics of ICT adoption in African public institutions. *Journal of African Business, 20*(2), 155–175.
- Adzoyi, P. (2020). Leadership communication and employee trust in Ghanaian public institutions. *Ghana Journal of Public Administration, 12*(1), 44–63.
- Alvesson, M. (2012). *Understanding organizational culture* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Ampofo, A., Osei-Owusu, B., & Kumi, I. (2020). Communication barriers in Ghanaian public organisations. *Public Organization Review, 20*(4), 499–514.
- Ayee, J. R. A. (2013). Public sector reforms and institutional performance in Ghana. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations, 7*(4), 183–196.
- Boateng, F. G., & Kosi, I. (2021). Bureaucracy and public service delivery in Ghana. *International Journal of Public Sector Management, 34*(6), 689–708.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.
- Clampitt, P., & Downs, C. (2004). Employee communication and satisfaction: Strategies for improving communication climate. *Communication Journal, 18*(3), 113–128.
- Cornelissen, J. (2017). *Corporate communication: A guide to theory and practice* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design* (4th ed.). SAGE.
- Denzin, N. (2012). *The research act in sociology*. McGraw-Hill.
- Downs, C. W., & Adrian, A. (2004). *Assessing organizational communication*. Guilford Press.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K., & Namey, E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. SAGE.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Johansson, C. (2015). Patterns of internal communication in public sector organisations. *Public Relations Inquiry, 4*(1), 79–98.
- Kalla, H. (2005). Integrated internal communications: A multidisciplinary perspective. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 10*(4), 302–314.
- Katz, D., & Kahn, R. (1978). *The social psychology of organizations* (2nd ed.). Wiley.

- Krueger, R., & Casey, M. (2015). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Lee, H., Kim, M., & Kim, J. (2020). Communication effectiveness in hierarchical public institutions. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 20(2), e1976.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE.
- Mahdi, O., Asim, M., & Bakar, A. (2022). Participatory communication and organisational change. *Organizational Development Journal*, 40(1), 49–65.
- Mazzei, A. (2014). Internal communication for employee engagement. *Corporate Communications*, 19(1), 82–95.
- Men, L. R. (2014). Strategic internal communication for trust building. *Public Relations Review*, 40(2), 167–176.
- Men, L. R., & Bowen, S. (2017). Excellence in internal communication. *Journal of Communication Management*, 21(2), 170–195.
- Men, L. R., & Yue, C. A. (2019). Creating a culture of trust through strategic communication. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 56(3), 338–361.
- Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass.
- Molefe, S., & Chinomona, R. (2021). Leadership style and communication in African public institutions. *Africa Journal of Management*, 7(1), 1–19.
- Opoku Mensah, S. (2019). Social relations and workplace behaviour in Ghana. *Ghana Social Science Journal*, 16(2), 88–104.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). SAGE.
- Sachs, A. (2006). Employee engagement and organisational support. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 17(3), 245–268.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Schein, E. H., & Schein, P. (2021). *Organizational culture and leadership* (5th ed.). Wiley.
- Tourish, D., & Robson, P. (2006). Sensemaking and communication breakdown. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19(2), 229–252.

Weber, M. (1946). *Essays in sociology*. Oxford University Press.

Weick, K. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. SAGE.

Welch, M. (2012). Approaches to internal communication. *Corporate Communications*, 17(4), 291–311.

Welch, M., & Jackson, P. (2007). Rethinking internal communication. *Corporate Communications*, 12(2), 177–198.

Yin, R. (2018). *Case study research and applications* (6th ed.). SAGE.

APPENDIX A

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Study Title: **The Interplay Between Internal Communication and Organizational Culture: A Case Study of the National Health Insurance Authority, (NHIA), Ghana.**

Introduction for Participants (Moderator's Script):

Thank you all for joining today's discussion. This focus group is part of a research study aimed at understanding how internal communication and organisational culture interact at NHIA. There are no right or wrong answers what matters is your honest perspective. Please feel free to speak openly. All responses will remain confidential, and your names will not be attached to any part of the final report. The discussion will last approximately 40–60 minutes. I will guide the conversation through key questions, and I encourage you to also build on each other's points respectfully.

Warm-Up Questions:

1. Let's begin by introducing ourselves. Please tell us your name, your department/unit, and how long you've worked with NHIA.
2. What's one word or phrase you would use to describe working at NHIA?

SECTION A: Internal Communication Practices at NHIA

(Objective 1: To examine the nature and effectiveness of internal communication practices at NHIA)

3. What communication channels are most commonly used in NHIA to share information internally?
4. How effective do you find the current communication practices in terms of clarity, timeliness, and responsiveness?

5. Are there challenges or barriers that affect how well communication flows across the organisation?

SECTION B: Characteristics of Organisational Culture

(Objective 2: To assess the dominant characteristics of the organizational culture at NHIA)

6. How would you describe the organisational culture at NHIA?
7. What kinds of behaviours, values, or norms seem to be most accepted and encouraged here?
8. How does leadership influence the working environment and employee behaviour?

SECTION C: Influence of Communication on Culture

(Objective 3: To explore how internal communication influences organisational culture within NHIA)

9. In what ways has communication shaped the values, collaboration, or attitudes within your team or the wider NHIA?
10. Can you share an example where good or poor communication significantly impacted the workplace environment?
11. Do you think improving communication could change or strengthen NHIA's organisational culture? How?

SECTION D: Culture's Impact on Communication, Engagement, and Performance

(Objective 4: To investigate how organisational culture affects internal communication flow, employee engagement, and institutional performance)

12. How does NHIA's culture influence the way people share ideas or raise concerns?

13. In what ways does the culture encourage (or discourage) engagement and collaboration among employees?

14. How do you think NHIA's culture contributes to the overall effectiveness and performance of the organisation?

Closing Questions:

15. What changes or improvements would you suggest to make communication and workplace culture more effective?

16. Is there anything we haven't discussed that you think is important to share regarding communication or culture at NHIA?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

**Study Title: The Interplay Between Internal Communication and Organizational Culture:
A Case Study of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), Ghana**

Introduction:

Good day and thank you for participating in this research. My name is Abigail Simpson, a student at the University of Media and Communication, Institute of Journalism pursuing a Master of Arts Degree in Public Relations with Marketing. I am conducting a study on the interplay between internal communication and organizational culture at the NHIA. Your insights will help deepen understanding of how communication practices and culture shape organisational effectiveness. This interview is confidential, and your responses will be anonymized and will be used for the purposes of this academic study only. Your kind permission is being sought to record the interview as it will be useful in transcription and analysis of the interview.

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Can you briefly describe yourself, your role and how long you've been with NHIA?
2. What department or unit do you belong to?

SECTION B: Nature and Effectiveness of Internal Communication

(Objective 1: To examine the nature and effectiveness of internal communication practices at NHIA)

3. What internal communication channels (e.g., meetings, emails, memos) are most commonly used within NHIA?
4. How would you assess the clarity, accuracy, and timeliness of communication from management?
5. In your opinion, how open and effective is communication between management and staff?

SECTION C: Characteristics of Organizational Culture

(Objective 2: To assess the dominant characteristics of the organizational culture at NHIA)

6. How would you describe the general workplace culture at NHIA (e.g., formal, flexible, collaborative, hierarchical)?
7. What values or behaviours do you think are most promoted or rewarded in NHIA?
8. How does leadership influence the everyday culture and morale of staff?

SECTION D: Internal Communication's Influence on Organizational Culture

(Objective 3: To explore how internal communication influences organizational culture within NHIA)

9. In your view, how has communication (or lack thereof) shaped the behaviours, values, or attitudes of employees?
10. Can you share an example where communication practices directly impacted organisational culture (positively or negatively)?
11. How do staff communications affect team cohesion or collaboration at NHIA?

SECTION E: Organizational Culture's Influence on Communication, Engagement, and Performance

(Objective 4: To investigate how organizational culture affects internal communication flow, employee engagement, and institutional performance)

12. How does the organisational culture at NHIA impact how employees share information or express concerns?
13. In what ways does NHIA's culture affect employee motivation, commitment, and participation in decision-making?
14. To what extent do you think the organisational culture contributes to or hinders institutional performance?

Closing Question

15. Is there anything else you'd like to share about communication or culture within NHIA?