

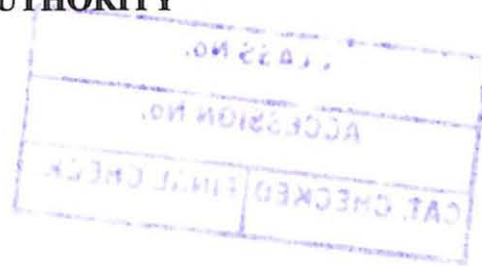
GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE PROMOTION OF PARAGLIDING AS A TOURISM EVENT IN GHANA: A PERSPECTIVE OF THE GHANA TOURISM AUTHORITY



**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM
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DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION**

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the outcome of my own research work carried out at the Ghana Institute of Journalism under the supervision of Dr. Modestus Fosu. References and sources cited in this study have been duly acknowledged. I therefore take sole responsibility for any shortcomings.

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SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised in accordance with guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

DR. MODESTUS FOSU

(SUPERVISOR)

SIGNATURE..........

DATE..........

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Almighty God, my wife, Mrs. Cynthia Adjoa Nelson and children; Dromo, Jormo and Kunim.

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana. It looks at the application of communication tools by the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) and how they apply to the promotion of paragliding.

The staff of Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) were purposely sampled and interviewed. The procedure of selection was the purposive sampling technique and thematic analysis was used to analyze the responses.

The findings reveal that respondents are aware of the importance of the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding in Ghana. Again, the study reveals that Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) currently does not have a planned communication strategy for their operations for promoting paragliding. Inasmuch as there is the lack of a communication strategy, the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) mostly relies on the traditional media to disseminate information about the paragliding event.

The study suggests that the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) should improve their promotional activities of the paragliding event through an intensive publicity plan.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAN	-	African Cup of Nations
DCE	-	District Chief Executive
ERP	-	Economic Recovery Program
FAO	-	Food and Agricultural Organization
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GSS	-	Ghana Statistical Service
GTB	-	Ghana Tourist Board
GTA	-	Ghana Tourism Authority
KDA	-	Kwahu Development Association
KSDA	-	Kwahu South District Assembly
KTA	-	Kwahu Traditional Area
KTC	-	Kwahu Traditional Council
KTI	-	Kwahu Tourism Initiative
LI	-	Legislative Instrument
MCE	-	Municipal Chief Executive
MDA's	-	Ministries Departments and Agencies
MOT	-	Ministry of Tourism
MOTCCA	-	Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts
MOTMCC	-	Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City
NADMO	-	National Disaster Management Organization
NRCD	-	National Redemption Council Decree
PANAFEST	-	Pan African Historical and Theatre Festival

SAP	-	Structural Adjustment Program
SAHPA	-	South African Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association
SMCD	-	Supreme Military Council Decree
USHPA	-	United States Hang & Paragliding Association
UNWTO	-	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WTO	-	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	-	World Tourism and Travel Council

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

This study seeks to examine the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana from the perspective of the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA). My assumption underlying this study is that communication plays a vital role in promoting paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana.

Tourism in this study is “the temporary movement to a destination outside the normal home and work place, the activities undertaken during the stay and the facilities created to cater for the needs of tourists” (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). It has become a major source of employment and personal income, providing governments of various countries with tax revenues and foreign exchange (Murphy, 1985). The main objective of the study is to identify the role of communication in promoting paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana. The specific objectives are to firstly, to examine the role of communication in promoting paragliding. Secondly, the study seeks to investigate whether the Authority faces communication challenges in promoting paragliding. Thirdly, the study is to ascertain whether the Authority has a mechanism in tracking communication feedbacks and finally to examine whether feedbacks on communication channels are incorporated into future communication plans especially with reference to paragliding.

The tourism industry dates back to the colonial period. It started with the establishment of the first hotel in the Gold Coast in 1903. The hotel, Sea View Hotel, served the expatriate community; their administrators, merchants and tourists. After independence, the fame of Ghana’s Pan Africanist

President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah together with the news of Ghana's attainment of independence spread around the world which attracted some black Americans, Pan Africanists and tourists to visit Ghana (Debrah, 2015: 21).

Currently, most of these facilities serve as tourist attractions although that was not their initial purpose. In addition, other facilities such as catering rest houses were put up in specific regions in Ghana to accommodate and entertain visitors during their stay in the Country. Now, all these facilities help in achieving the purpose of tourism. Other infrastructural facilities such as the Kotoka International Airport were then put in place. Again, the railway lines which were connected to the Cocoa growing areas and the mining areas in Obuasi, Nsuta and Akwatia (in the Ashanti and Eastern Regions) and the Ports in Takoradi and Tema were also constructed not for the purpose of Tourism but for the carting of Cocoa and Timber through the Ports and Harbours for export abroad (National Tourism Development Plan, 2014).

Ghana's reliance on Tourism as one of the foreign exchange earners of the economy came to bare during the period after the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) and the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) which were imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the 1980s on developing countries such as Ghana to help these countries diversify their economies from traditional exports to non-traditional exports when those countries were hit by economic crisis. Ghana had to diversify her economy from traditional export such as agriculture, mining, timber, to non-traditional export such tourism, shea butter, among others. The quest to place tourism where it belongs on the Ghanaian economic league table was a formidable challenge for years. "Thankfully, in 1985, Government decided that travel and hospitality belonged in the first five of the nation's

priority areas for advancing the economy. The subsequent legislative, strategic and administrative changes have made the sector attractive to investors, both foreign and local, and led to significant infrastructural development. There has also been realignment in portfolios, a move that has placed tourism, culture and the creative arts within the same basket for planning and promotion. The resultant synergies have begun to play out, positioning Ghana on the international tourism map via culture and creative arts” (Ofosu-Adjare, 2015).

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation’s (UNWTO) prediction is that Africa will increase its international arrivals from 56 million in 2014 to 85 million by 2020, and 134 million in 2030. These figures mean that Africa is at the bottom of the league table, accounting for only 6.3% or a maximum of 7.4% of the world total. No African country is in the first ten most attractive destinations in the world. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) estimated 1.8 billion as the number of international visitors who will crisscross the world by the year 2030 and jobs in the tourism industry are projected to reach 270,000 with more created in other sectors that derive business from the tourism trade (World Tourism Organization, 2013).

The definition of tourism as stated earlier tells us that tourism involves the movements and experiences of tourists, their expectations and the activities undertaken during the visit which mostly bring the tourists experiences. According to Mensah (2009: 80), “When people travel to specific destinations, they do not only eat and sleep but indulge in a number of recreational and entertaining activities which sustain them until their departure and hence the creation of recreational and entertainment facilities and the staging of events at most tourist destinations to cater for the

needs of both domestic and international tourists.”Swarbrooke (2002:6) classified these attractions as man-made and natural events.

Man-made events are organized at a particular time or season and ends at a certain time frame. For instance the paragliding event is a man-made event. On the other hand Natural events are events which have been established for a longer period and has come to be part of us. It has neither time frame nor season but continues to exist. Examples are theme parks like Disneyland in the United States and Efua Sutherland Children’s Park in Ghana which hosts recreational and other events frequently.

Today, events are playing a key role in our entertainment industry than ever before and helping as well in boosting the tourism industry in Ghana. Several events are staged to enhance the destination’s image and tourist experience, inclusive is the paragliding event held at Kwahu in the Eastern Region of Ghana, a special event which has become an integral part of the annual Easter celebrations in the Kwahu area. (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2010).

1.2 Paragliding as a sport

Paragliding is an aviation sport which provides a fresh impetus for Ghana’s domestic tourism delivery. It is also one of the major events on the tourism calendar in Ghana. In addition, the sport has contributed to Ghana’s domestic tourism socially, economically, culturally and religiously by promoting national cohesion. (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2010).

Paragliding is a sport that is enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people around the world. It is most popular in Europe where there is an estimated 400,000 pilots.

1.3 Paragliding Training

A basic training, enabling a person with no previous experience to fly a paraglider independently and safely, takes approximately 15 days, during which the theoretical and practical knowledge can be acquired. The training should be carried out under the supervision of experienced instructors and with the use of suitable and reliable equipment. Paragliding can also be performed with the use of a motor, attached to the back of the harness. This is known as paramotor. Such motorized flight can be initiated from any open space, either hill or flat area. The duration of flight with a motor is limited by the amount of fuel and may last up to two hours. Motorized flight is less dependent on a good take off area or weather conditions but requires greater skill and the tranquil experience of flying is diminished by the deafening noise of the motor. The paragliding equipment is made up of a canopy (an oval-shaped nylon material), a harness (seat) for both the pilot and the passenger and control panels attached to strings which are connected to the canopy. It may also include a motorola and anemometer and sometimes a camera for taking aerial photographs (Newmark, 2007)

1.4 Origin of Paragliding

The origin of paragliding has roots in the sport of parachuting. The popularity of paragliding arose when pilots in the French town of Mieussy successfully launched the wing by running down the hillsides of the Alps. Andre Bohn and Gerard Bosson were mostly responsible for developing the sport into how it is today. Bosson introduced paragliding at the 1979 World Hang Gliding Championships. It was not long until paragliding schools were opening up around the world such as the Godfrey's Manilla Paragliding School in Australia, associations and clubs such as the United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (USHPA) with its headquarters in Colorado, Springs, South African Hang Gliding and Paragliding (SAHPA) in Africa and Aberdeen Hang

Gliding and Paragliding in Scotland, UK Paragliding is a combination of two words, parachuting and gliding. A parachute is a rectangular or an umbrella- shaped apparatus allowing air flow whilst gliding involves moving smoothly and continuously by an aircraft or pilot without engine-power through the air (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2013).

The History of Ghana's Kwahu paragliding dates back to March 2001 when as the new minister of the then Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City, Mr. Jake Otanka Obetsebi-Lamprey visited the Kwahu Ridge as part of his familiarization tour of the country and by chance crossed path with the event organizer, Welter Naser (A South African Tandem Pilot). The Ministry through its Minister commissioned Welter Naser the paragliding expert to conduct a feasibility study on the suitability of the Odweanoma Mountain in the Kwahu ranges for paragliding and hang gliding. Upon Naser's recommendation, the Ministry, the then Ghana Tourist Board, now Ghana Tourism Authority and Kwahu Traditional Council made Mt. Odweanoma at Kwahu Atibie in the Kwahu- South District of the Eastern Region the host area for the event. Considering the climatic conditions present during the Easter festivity and also necessary for the event, the organizers thought it wise to fuse the event into the nationally acclaimed Kwahu Easter to give it an international touch hence "Okwawu Paragliding" or 'Kwahu Paragliding'. The first paragliding in Ghana was launched in April, 2005 by the late Vice President of Ghana, Alhaji Aliu Mahama. The paragliding event has since been successfully organized mainly by the now Ghana Tourism Authority (G.T.A) with support from the Ministry of Tourism, Kwahu Traditional Council, Kwahu Tourism Initiative, Kwahu South and West District Assembly among other sponsors and lasts for almost a week.

The event gathers tandem pilots (pilots who fly with passengers) and solo pilots (pilots who fly without passengers) from around the world to fly local Ghanaian spectators and foreign visitors. The five days event boasts of consistent flying conditions that begin around mid-morning and remain airborne until hours. The thermals are consistently large and mild and offer a fantastic opportunity for both newer pilots to gain valuable experience and airtime as well as for seasoned pilots who want to enjoy hours of "stress free" flying (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2013). Among the many activities to enrich one's experience of the annual Kwahu Paragliding in Ghana, as either a participating tandem pilot, a solo pilot or a non-flying guest includes: hiking the Odweanoma mountain, walk race (Walkerton), telescope viewing from Mt. Odweanoma observatory, jams, durbar of the chiefs and people of Kwahu, music album lunches, tent and chalets accommodation.

1.5 Kwahu Paragliding Festival

The paragliding event was initiated by the Ministry of Tourism in April, 2005 to coincide with the Easter festivities of the Chiefs and People in the Kwahu Traditional Area. It is organized at Kwahu-Atibie on Mount Odweanoma in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The main purpose is to boost domestic tourism in Ghana and provide employment opportunity for the local people in Kwahu and its surrounding areas. Paragliding is also patronized by both locals and international tourists during the Easter Season.

With the exception of 2009 where the event was unable to be hosted, the paragliding event has been organized successfully each year. During the paragliding event, pilots travel from countries such as South Africa, U.S.A, France, Japan, Norway, Peru, UK, Germany, Romania and Belgium to take part in the event (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2010). These pilots are usually invited by the

organizers of the event, the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), to come and fly passengers during the event. Most of the pilots are tandem pilots. Apart from South Africa, Ghana is the only African country that organizes the event regularly. In other words, Ghana is the second in Africa and first in West Africa in terms of paragliding.

The paragliding event attracts Ghanaians and foreigners alike to the magic of free flight at Kwahu for five days of spectacular aerial fun, ceremony and music hence bringing the international flying community together by providing a well-organized opportunity to visit Ghana and Kwahu specifically for the experience. From the forgoing, it can be realized that, the paragliding event have the drawing power of enriching a destination's experience which may add up to the overall visitor's experience, consequently increasing their average spending and length of stay at the destination (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2015). The paragliding event can be seen as a catalyst for attracting visitors, creating profile for destinations, positioning regions in the market and providing competitive marketing advantage for destinations (Bowdin et al., 2006).

1.6 Profile of the Ghana Tourism Authority

The first major step in the formal development of tourism in Ghana was an evaluation of the country's tourism resource in 1970, thirteen years after independence in 1957 (Obuan, 1972). The objective was to catalogue and classify the potential tourism resources for a five-year development plan covering the period 1972-1976. This led to the establishment of a formal sector organization by the National Redemption Council Decree (NRCD) 224 in 1973 as amended by the Supreme Military Council Decree (SMCD) 80 of 1977.

As part of its mandate, the tourism industry has contributed significantly to the country's economy, particularly in recent times, as the sector continues to demonstrate its potential as a key driver of economic growth. For example, between the year 2000 and 2005, visitor arrivals and spending increased by 46 per cent and 68 per cent respectively (Bank of Ghana, 2007). The industry is currently the fourth largest foreign exchange earner after gold, cocoa and remittances from abroad and has become one of the most important and fastest growing sectors of the Ghanaian economy (Bank of Ghana, 2007).

The government of Ghana as part of its efforts to expand the Ghana Tourist Board introduced Tourism Act, (Act 817) 2011 which established the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) as the main implementing agency of the Ministry of Tourism. The Act "is to promote the sustainable development of the tourism industry internationally and within the country". To achieve this objective, the Authority was mandated to perform the following functions:

- Implement and ensure compliance with the regulations developed in accordance with this Act
- Grant licenses for the tourism industry, regulate and supervise tourism enterprises.
- Regulate and monitor the activities of the issued licensees.
- Initiate, conduct, promote and encourage studies for the growth and development of the tourism industry.

- Oversee the administration of the tourism development fund and ensure that the fund is used for the required purposes.
- Ensure the management and development of appropriate designs for tourist sites.
- Ensure collaboration with other public, private and international agencies.
- Investigate and take measures to eliminate illegal, dishonorable, unsound and improper activities in relation to any activity regulated under this Act.
- Establish standards, guidelines and codes of practice in relation to carrying on or running a tourist enterprises and attractions.
- Ensure pro-poor, sustainable and responsible tourism.
- Develop standards and guidelines or designs for use at tourist attractions and enterprises to reflect Ghanaian culture.
- Take appropriate measures for the safety and security of consumers of the tourism industry.
- Collect, compile and publish information and statistics in respect of activities regulated under his Act.

- Advise the Minister on policy issues, generally on matters related to the tourism industry.
- Perform any other function incidental or conducive to the attainment of the object of the Authority. (Tourism Act of Ghana, Act 817, 2011).

In undertaking this mandate, the following legislative instruments were promulgated. They are:

1. Legislative Instrument (L.I) 1205. Accommodation and Catering Enterprises Regulations.
2. Legislative Instrument (L.I) 1293. Travel Trade Enterprises Regulations.
3. Legislative Instrument (L.I) 1050. Charter Flights Regulations.

However with the introduction of the Tourism Act 817, 2011 on 16th May, 2011, the functions of Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) have been widened to embrace other areas in the tourism and hospitality industry, such regulation include golf courses, hostels, beaches, movie houses, boat racing among other tourism related activities.

1.6.1 Vision, Mission, Core Values and Strategic Objectives

Vision

The vision of Ghana Tourism Authority is to make Ghana a leading tourism destination in Africa by developing and promoting sustainable tourism.

Mission

To conserve and preserve the natural and cultural heritage as well as provide socio-economic benefits in partnership with the private sector through the creation of unique Ghanaian tourism facilities and quality services with a highly qualified, well trained, motivated and dedicated staff to make the tourism industry the leading sector of the economy.

Core Values

- a. Transparency and Accountability
- b. Loyalty, Neutrality and Reliability
- c. Respect and Discipline
- d. Social Justice, Equality and Equity
- e. Security and Safety
- f. Good Governance
- g. Sustainability

Strategic Objectives

1. To promote tourism as a major source of national revenue.
2. To promote institutional and human resource capacity building in the tourism industry.
3. To promote good governance within the tourism industry.
4. To promote sustainable tourism to preserve historical, cultural and national heritage.

(Ghana Tourism Authority, 2012).

1.7 Statement of the problem

Communication is an integral part of any business and its . Communication strengthens the connection between an organization its stakeholders. Communication is the backbone of every organization, and acts as organizational blood. For any organization to be successful, communication must be effective. According to Goeldner and Ritchie (2006: 17), “the creation of special events is emerging as a competitive advantage for destinations in enhancing the image of the destinations”. As a result, the paragliding event in Ghana is emerging as a competitive advantage in enhancing the image of Ghana.

However, in spite of this emergence, not much attention has been given to the Kwahu paragliding in terms of the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event. Ghana as a nation in Sub-Sahara Africa serves as host to events such as National Chocolate Day, Emancipation and Panafest Celebrations, World Tourism Day Celebrations and Paragliding, Homofest and National Tourism Awards among other events of international appeal namely the Africa Cup of Nations (C.A.N). Despite being the only event presently organized in the whole of the West Africa sub-region and second to South Africa on the African continent, not much studies has been carried out regarding the role and impact of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana. The thrust of the study therefore is to determine the extent to which communication plays a role in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana from the perspective of the Ghana Tourism Authority.

1.8 Research Questions

1. To what extent does communication play a role in promoting paragliding in Ghana.
2. What type of communication channels does the Ghana Tourism Authority use in promoting paragliding and why?
3. What are some of the communication challenges that the Authority face in promoting paragliding?
4. What is the role of feedback in Ghana Tourism Authority communications concerning paragliding?

1.9 Significance of Study

Tourism is one of Ghana's largest and fastest growing industries and its importance to economic development is widely acknowledged. Today, more than one billion tourists travel to international destinations every year including Ghana. These billion tourists have made tourism a leading economic sector contributing 10% of global GDP and 6% of the world's total exports (Bank of Ghana, 2009). This research is mainly to investigate the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana from the perspective of the Ghana Tourism Authority. This study is very different from other related studies because investigations reveal that there is not enough literature related to the topic chosen. It is expected that at the end of the study, the research will contribute to knowledge on the paragliding event and also to help government and private agencies in establishing long term scheduling of events such as the paragliding event in the country so that our tour operators can promote them effectively.

It will also serve as knowledge to students among many others who wish to conduct research in other related fields by adding to the existing literature available. The study will also help researchers who are conducting research in similar fields to use it as a source of reference material in their work. Also, the study of the paragliding event will serve as a guide to key industry players who will be interested in packaging events to attract international tourists into the country, especially to the Kwahu area.

Again the study will contribute to the tourism industry by revealing the role communication plays in promoting paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana.

Finally, the study will enrich the researcher with much knowledge with regards to the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event and also whether there are some challenges associated with the role that communication plays in promoting the paragliding event.

1.10 Organization of the study

This study is made up of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction. It includes the introduction, the background of the study, the profile of Ghana Tourism Authority, assumption of the study, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, research questions and organization of the study. The second chapter deals with the Theoretical Framework and Literature Review. The theoretical frameworks discussed under this chapter are the Diffusion of Innovation Theory and the Participatory Theory. Tourism and Paragliding were also reviewed as part of this chapter. Chapter three discusses the methodology. It begins with an introduction, research design, data collection method, sampling approach, target sample size, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, challenges encountered and conclusion of the chapter. The fourth chapter will consider analysis and discussions. These would also include interpretation of data as well as

representation of a few tables and in-depth discussion of the interview granted as well as its relevance and implications. The final chapter, chapter five draws conclusions from the discussions and make recommendations where necessary. This chapter also looks at areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Literature review helps us to look at other peoples' work and generate ideas for our works and at the same time, analyse and find out possible ways that the other researchers could have used to go about their works. Again, this section elicits how warranty researchers handle various situations and it assists the researcher in evaluating his or her efforts by comparing them with related efforts made by others.

This section focuses on the theoretical backing of the research. There are few theories that relate to the study. The purpose of this literature review is to convey to readers of this study the knowledge that has been established already by academic scholars and researchers on communication's role in promoting tourism because the work failed to have a specific work done on paragliding.

Some of the theoretical framework that would be discussed includes the diffusion of innovation, participatory theory and a review of tourism and paragliding in Ghana.

2.1 DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION

According to Sahin (2006), the process of adopting new innovations has been studied for over 30 years, and one of the most popular adoption models is described by Rogers in his book, *Diffusion of Innovations* (Sherry & Gibson, 2002). Much research from a broad variety of disciplines has used the model as a framework. Dooley (1999) and Stuart (2000) mentioned several of these disciplines as political science, public health, communications, history, economics, technology, and education,

and defined Rogers' theory as a widely used theoretical framework in the area of technology diffusion and adoption.

Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory is the most appropriate for investigating the adoption of technology in higher education and educational environments (Medlin, 2001; Parisot, 1995). In fact, much diffusion research involves technological innovations so Rogers (2003) usually used the word "technology" and "innovation" as synonyms. For Rogers, "a *technology* is a design for instrumental action that reduces the uncertainty in the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome" (: 13). It is composed of two parts: hardware and software. While hardware is "the tool that embodies the technology in the form of a material or physical object," software is "the information base for the tool" (Rogers, 2003:259). Since software (as a technological innovation) has a low level of observability, its rate of adoption is quite slow.

For Rogers (2003), adoption is a decision of "full use of an innovation as the best course of action available" and rejection is a decision "not to adopt an innovation" (: 177). Rogers defines diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (: 5).

As expressed in this definition, innovation, communication channels, time, and social system are the four key components of the diffusion of innovations.

Four Main Elements in the Diffusion of Innovations

Innovation

Rogers offered the following description of an innovation: “An *innovation* is an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption” (Rogers, 2003:12). An innovation may have been invented a long time ago, but if individuals perceive it as new, then it may still be an innovation for them. The newness characteristic of an adoption is more related to the three steps (knowledge, persuasion, and decision) of the innovation-decision process that will be discussed later. In addition, Rogers claimed there is a lack of diffusion research on technology clusters. For Rogers (2003), “a technology cluster consists of one or more distinguishable elements of technology that are perceived as being closely interrelated” (:14).

Uncertainty is an important obstacle to the adoption of innovations. An innovation’s consequences may create uncertainty: “*Consequences* are the changes that occur in an individual or a social system as a result of the adoption or rejection of an innovation” (Rogers, 2003:436). To reduce the uncertainty of adopting the innovation, individuals should be informed about its advantages and disadvantages to make them aware of all its consequences. Moreover, Rogers claimed that consequences can be classified as desirable versus undesirable (functional or dysfunctional), direct versus indirect (immediate result or result of the immediate result), and anticipated versus unanticipated (recognized and intended or not).

Communication Channels

The second element of the diffusion of innovations process is communication channels. For Rogers (2003), communication is “a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding” (:5). This communication occurs through channels between sources. Rogers states that “a *source* is an individual or an institution that originates a message. A channel is the means by which a message gets from the source to the receiver” (:204). Rogers states that diffusion is a specific kind of communication and includes these communication elements: an innovation, two individuals or other units of adoption, and a communication channel. *Mass media* and *interpersonal communication* are two communication channels. While mass media channels include a mass medium such as TV, radio, or newspaper, interpersonal channels consist of a two-way communication between two or more individuals. On the other hand, “diffusion is a very social process that involves interpersonal communication relationships” (Rogers, 2003:19). Thus, interpersonal channels are more powerful to create or change strong attitudes held by an individual. In interpersonal channels, the communication may have a characteristic of *homophily*, that is, “the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs, education, socioeconomic status, and the like,” but the diffusion of innovations requires at least some degree of heterophily, which is “the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are different in certain attributes.” In fact, “one of the most distinctive problems in the diffusion of innovations is that the participants are usually quite heterophilous” (Rogers, 2003:19).

Communication channels also can be categorized as localite channels and cosmopolite channels that communicate between an individual of the social system and outside sources. While interpersonal

channels can be local or cosmopolite, almost all mass media channels are cosmopolite. Because of these communication channels' characteristics, mass media channels and cosmopolite channels are more significant at the knowledge stage and localite channels and interpersonal channels are more important at the persuasion stage of the innovation-decision process (Rogers, 2003).

Time

According to Rogers (2003), the time aspect is ignored in most behavioral research. He argues that including the time dimension in diffusion research illustrates one of its strengths. The innovation-diffusion process, adopter categorization, and rate of adoptions all include a time dimension.

Social System

The social system is the last element in the diffusion process. Rogers (2003) defined the social system as "a set of interrelated units engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal" (:23). Since diffusion of innovations takes place in the social system, it is influenced by the social structure of the social system. For Rogers (2003), structure is "the patterned arrangements of the units in a system" (:24). He further claimed that the nature of the social system affects individuals' innovativeness, which is the main criterion for categorizing adopters.

Relating the four main elements to the paragliding phenomenon in Ghana, the innovation was the annual paragliding event hosted by the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) at Odweanoma Mountains Atibie- Kwahu during the Easter festivities. The aim was to whip up interest of Ghanaians into participating in paragliding as a sport and a recreational activity. Again it was to make room for tourists from other parts of the world that paragliding was not part of their activities to have a

hands-on experience. It should be noted that paragliding is a new event in Ghana and an innovation is any new thing that brings income to the person who built the idea. As such GTA can only make the event an innovation when they apply communication and marketing strategies for people to accept the innovation and participate in it.

The type of communication channels used were that of the mass media. They failed to involve the people in the communication process. When the means of communication heavily rely on the mass media, there is the likelihood that the participation of people will be discouraging.

2.2 PARTICIPATORY THEORY

When the promises of the modernization paradigm failed to materialize, and its methods came increasingly under fire, and the dependency theorists failed to provide a successful alternative model, a different approach focusing on people's participation began to emerge. This participatory model is less oriented to the political-economic dimension and more rooted in the cultural realities of development.

The development focus has shifted from economic growth to include other social dimensions needed to ensure meaningful results in the long run as indicated by the consensus built in the definition of the Millennium Development Goals. Sustainability and people's participation became key elements of this new vision, as acknowledged also by the World Bank (1994:3) "Internationally, emphasis is being placed on the challenge of sustainable development, and participation is increasingly recognized as a necessary part of sustainable development strategies."

Meaningful participation cannot occur without communication. Unfortunately, too many development programs, including community-driven ones, seem to overlook this aspect and, while paying attention to participation, do not pay similar attention to communication, intended as the professional use of dialogic methods and tools to promote change. To be truly significant and meaningful, participation needs to be based on the application of genuine two-way communication principles and practices.

That is why communication is increasingly considered essential in facilitating stakeholders' engagement in problem analysis and resolution. Similarly, there is an increasing recognition that the old, vertical, top-down model is no longer applicable as a "one-size-fits-all" formula. While acknowledging that the basic principles behind the Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver model can still be useful in some cases, development communication has increasingly moved toward a horizontal, "two-way" model, which favours people's active and direct interaction through consultation and dialog over the traditional one-way information dissemination through mass media.

Many past project and program failures of the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) can be attributed directly or indirectly to the limited involvement of the target group in the decision-making process.

The horizontal use of communication, which opens up dialog, assesses risks, identifies solutions, and seeks consensus for action, came to be seen as a key to the success and sustainability of development efforts. There are a number of terms used to refer to this emerging conception (Mefalopoulos 2003); some of the better known are "another development," "empowerment,"

“participation,” and “multiplicity paradigm.” This last term, introduced by Servaes (1999), places a strong emphasis on the cultural and social multiplicity of perspectives that should be equally relevant in the development context.

The new paradigm is also changing the way communication is conceived and applied. It shifts the emphasis from information dissemination to situation analysis, from persuasion to participation. Rather than substituting for the old model, it is broadening its scope, maintaining the key functions of informing people and promoting change, yet emphasizing the importance of using communication to involve stakeholders in the development process.

Among the various definitions of development communication, the following two provide a consistent understanding of the boundaries that define this field of study and work.

The first is derived from the Development Communication Division of the World Bank (DevComm), which considers development communication as an interdisciplinary field based on empirical research that helps to build consensus while it facilitates the sharing of knowledge to achieve positive change in development initiatives.

It is not only about effective dissemination of information but also about using empirical research and two-way communication among stake holders. It is also a key management tool that helps assess sociopolitical risks and opportunities. The second definition emerged at the First World Congress of Communication for Development, held in Rome in October 2006. It is included in the document known as the Rome Consensus (see the appendix), in which the more than 900 participants of the Congress (World Bank et al. 2007: xxxiii) agreed to conceive it as a social process based on dialog using a broad range of tools and methods. It is also about seeking change at

different levels, including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating, and learning for sustained and meaningful change. It is not public relations or corporate communications.

The term “participatory development communication” is often used to draw attention to an emphasis on two-way communication processes, and to distance them from one-way communication approaches that involve disseminating messages, transmitting information, or persuading people to change their behavior. It wants to give preference to horizontal approaches that encourage dialogue centered on problem analysis and a search for solutions, as well as bottom-up approaches that aim to raise the awareness of decision-makers (Otsyina & Rosenberg, 1997). In spite of a diversity of approaches and orientations, there is a consensus today on the need for grassroots participation in development and on the essential role that communication plays in promoting development. This is very well said in a popular FAO slogan: “There is no development without communication” (Balit, 1988). White (1994) argues for more concrete commitment to participatory communication and, with several colleagues (White, Nair, & Ascroft, 1994) outlines methods. She returns to pressing the case for grassroots communication with an edited facilitator’s guide (White, S. 1999). “Communication” here refers to grass roots communication.

Many development communication researchers in this tradition build on the concepts of Freire and Boal, described above, which emphasize the participation of those most in need of economic development. Such approaches focus attention on group media and group discussion as agents of development.

Among the key aspects of their work are interactivity, the use of “small media,” awareness raising, and direct participation (Bessette, 2004). Each method consciously seeks to correct the dependency model’s national level emphasis on the relationship between communication and politicization with a political participation starting at the lowest levels. Dagrón (2001), in a report to the Rockefeller Foundation, describes 50 participatory projects in 30 countries, using media as diverse as cell phones, multimedia, community theater, community radio, and community video. Bessette and Rajasunderam (1996) outline an agenda for such communication in West Africa.

Another aspect of this paradigm, inspired also by Freire the “paradigm of another development” emphasizes not only material development but also the development of values and cultures (Richards, Thomas, & Nain, 2001). Where development communication interventions are concerned, it emphasizes the small media operating in networks and the use of grassroots communication approaches. According to this paradigm, grassroots participation reinforces the chances that communities will adopt activities appropriate for them. One of the models attached to this paradigm is the methodology of community media. Boal, the Brazilian theater activist who worked with Freire in São Paulo, has shown that theater, a group medium, can be a rehearsal for social change. Burkey (1993) also emphasizes self-reliance among rural peoples through their participation in local communication.

The concept of interactivity, with traditional media as its operational instrument, makes possible the endogenous acquisition of knowledge and skills within the framework of a search for solutions and the communication process. The inclusion of target audience and the community members in the

communication process of the paragliding event can go a long way to improve on the number that attend and also make it a year long program.

2.3 TOURISM AND PARAGLIDING IN GHANA

2.3.1 Tourism Industry

Pierce (1996), in his book, viewed tourist destinations from five broad sectors namely attractions, transports, accommodations, supporting facilities and infrastructures. He explains that attractions encourage tourists to visit the locations. The transport services enable them to do so, the accommodation and supporting facilities alike (e.g. shops, banks, forex bureau, saloon) cater for the tourist's well-being during their stay and the infrastructures assures the essential functioning of all the above sectors.

The tourism industry is often defines as those enterprises and organizations involved in facilitating travel and activity away from one's usual environment. One challenge in this approach to defining tourism is, of course, the fact that many enterprises which produce commodities for tourists also serve non-tourist (Nelson, 1993). For example, more restaurant meals are consumed by local residents than by tourists. Local attractions may draw local resident as well as tourists. A conceptual solution to this problem was proposed by the Canadian National Task Force on Tourism Data (1985). They proposed dividing tourism business into two tiers. Tier one firms are those that would not exist in absence of tourism. Example includes hotels, airlines, cruise ships, and travel agents. Tiers two firms are those that would continue to exist in the absence of tourism, but in a diminished form. The businesses include taxis, restaurants, rental car agencies, gift shops, and attractions and events.

The latest trend in the tourism industry is called “ecotourism which refers to travel that combines preserving the natural world and sustaining the well-being of the human cultures that inhabit it. (Mowforth and Munt 2003). In general ecotourism differs from traditional tourism in two main respects; first, ecotourism openly promotes environmentally friendly travel and seeks to ensure that visitors do not disturb the natural environment of flora and fauna, nor do they leave behind rubbish and hazardous materials, which can disrupt the delicate ecosystem. Tourism that destroys the natural environment, or that leads to the disappearances of local human cultures and values is not compatible with ecotourism. An early example of ecotourism occurred in Kenya in the 1970s when the Kenya Government began to collect fees for tourists to support conservation and park maintenance in the wildlife reserves.

2.3.2 Paragliding as a special event in Ghana

Paragliding is aerial sports which can be enjoyed by all classes of people including children and adults both men and women as it does not require any particular strength or exceptional physical fitness (Ayim, 2005). Paragliding is the recreational and competitive adventure sport of flying paraglide (lightweight, free-flying, foot-launched glider aircraft with no rigid primary structure, a non-motorized with inflatable wing). These gliders are easy to transport, launch, and easy to land. The paraglider itself is constructed of rip-stop nylon from which the pilot is suspended by sturdy kevlar lines. The pilot sits in a harness suspended below a fabric wing consisting of a large number of interconnected and baffled cells. The pilot is clipped into a harness and oriented in a sitting position for maximum comfort. The pilot is also attached to an oval or umbrella- shaped canopy taking off flight mostly from a hill or mountain. “With a paraglider, you actually fly like a bird just

from a hill or mountain, soaring upwards on currents of air, paraglider pilots routinely stay aloft for 3 hours” (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2013). Closely related to this sporting activity is the “Hang gliding” which is a close cousin, the only considerable difference is in equipment, the two activities offer similar pleasures and some pilots are involved in both sports. Despite not using an engine, paragliding flights can last many hours and cover many hundreds of kilometers, by skilful exploitation of sources of lift the pilot may gain height, often climbing to altitudes of a few thousand meters.

Paragliders are unique among soaring aircraft in being easily portable. The complete equipment packs into a rucksack and can be carried easily on the pilot's back, in a car, or on public transport. In comparison with other air sports this substantially simplifies travel to a suitable take off spot, the selection of a landing place and return travel (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2013). According to G.T.A, (2013), the paragliding aerial adventure sport is well celebrated in Ghana and marked as a special event on the event calendar. It is annually organized mainly by the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Creative Arts (MOTCCA), in collaboration with the Ghana Tourist Development Company, the Kwahu South and Kwahu East District Assemblies, the Kwahu West Municipal Assembly, the Kwahu Development Association and Kwahu Tourism Initiative. The paragliding take off is at the Odweanoma Mountains, Atibie-Kwahu whilst landing is at the Nkawkaw Stadium in the Kwahu South District of the Eastern Region. In March 2008, 27 pilots came from across the world including paragliding experts such as Welter Nesor, Sabrina Krewin and Charles Cecil Smith both from the United States of America (U.S.A) among other Solo Pilots to demonstrate the artistry of

flying to the admiration of spectators. This has made many to believe that the event in Ghana has come to stay.

As the only one currently underway in Sub-Sahara Africa, Ghana's paragliding event provides a good platform to highlight the tourism potentials of the Kwahu Traditional Area and puts Ghana on the Paragliding's World Map. The paragliding event draws individuals from near and far including countries such as America, Germany, South Africa, Nigeria, Togo, Norway, Egypt, Peru, Belgium, France, U.K among many others to a spectacular five days human stress free flight amidst hiking, drumming and dancing, local touch, durbars in the Kwahu area.

2.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

In literature review, it is important to demonstrate the awareness of the current state of knowledge in the chosen area of research. It is also important to show how the research being conducted fits into the wider context. For this reason, literature review forms a major part of the research report and this cannot be avoided in academia.

A lot of work has been conducted within the tourism industry, however, there is still yet to be, a work on paragliding. Resulting from the specificity of the topic, only one work will be reviewed relating to tourism in general. This literature is the work of Lindy Bowen, Francisco Diaz, James Tsai and Kevin Yee on 'Communication within the Tourism industry in Hong Kong' (Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2009) .

2.4.1 A review of 'Communication within the Tourism industry in Hong Kong' by Lindy Bowen, Francisco Diaz, James Tsai and Kevin Yee

The group presented a research work to the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Research Centre for Professional Communication in English on February, 2009 from the perspective of intercultural communication, the aim of their project was to collect descriptions and observe trends in English interactions within the tourism industry. Interactions that occurred naturally between tourists and tourism staff were recorded using Hymes's (1974) S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model and were rated on level of Formality and English level. Observations were performed at nineteen hotels, eleven shops, and six museums and over eighty three interactions were recorded. Results show that the price range of the hotels influenced the level of English spoken and also found the staff's position (e.g. concierge, front desk staff, and doorman) had an effect on English level.

Methodology

They employed the qualitative approach to research methodology and used the observation technique to gather data. They observed interactions between tourism staff and tourists made in museums, hotels, and shops in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. Six museums, nineteen hotels, and eleven shops were observed. All interactions were observed through naturalistic observation and each interaction involved at least one tourism employee and at least one customer.

Findings

Significant relationships were discovered between English level and price range of hotels and between English level and the position of the tourism staff. Employees at more expensive hotels were more likely to have a higher level of English. Concierges, museum tour guides and front desk workers (at both hotels and museums) were found to speak with higher levels of English, while restaurant staff and direction assistants were found to speak with the lower levels of English.

The researchers did well to outline their methodology and the procedure involved in the data analysis. However, their choice of observation as a method of data gathering is problematic. The reason being that actions of people may be misrepresented and it is likely they may also face issue of the audibleness of the observant.

2.5 Conclusion

The above chapter have discussed the theoretical framework such as the diffusion of innovation and participatory theories paragliding event. In addition, a review on tourism and paragliding has been done. Chapter three will discuss the methodology used namely research design, data collection ethical considerations and challenges encountered during the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study investigated the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana from the perspective of Ghana Tourism Authority. The main aim is to identify the role of communication in promoting paragliding. The questions that this study interrogates are to what extent does communication play a role in promoting paragliding in Kwahu, which type of communication tools are used in promoting paragliding in Kwahu and whether there are communication challenges that the staff of Ghana Tourism Authority face in the promotion of paragliding.

To successfully achieve the aforementioned research questions, the study used the qualitative research method to gather relevant data from key people in the research area as well as using secondary data sources on paragliding events in Ghana. This chapter describes and explains the research design, data collection method, the sampling approach, target population, the data collection process, data analysis, the ethical considerations as well as the challenges encountered.

3.1 Research Design

The research method used in this study is the qualitative method. Qualitative methods generally aim to understand the experiences and attitudes of a community and aim to answer questions about the “what”, “how” and “why” of a phenomenon rather than “how many” or “how much” which are answered by quantitative methods. The aim for the selection of the qualitative method was to delve deep into the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Kwahu and Ghana as a whole and use

the interpretative approach to investigate and establish the role communication plays in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Kwahu.

3.2 Data Collection Method

The interviewing method was used for the collection of data. The interview format used was semi-structured. The total sample considered was ten (10) and it spread across the Public Relations (PR) department, Special Events Department, Marketing Department, Research, Statistics and Information (RSI) and the Quality Assurance Department of the Authority. The selection of participants was to give a fair representation and insight into the questions being investigated.

3.3 Sampling Approach

The non-probability sampling, purposive sampling, guided the data process. This was done in order to take advantage of the positives in one sampling method while at the same time, overcoming some of the disadvantages found within the different procedure. The initial respondents were selected using the purposive sampling also known as judgmental sampling, thus specific informants valuable to the study and who were best positioned to provide the required data were targeted. According to Hammond (2015), purposive sampling is used where a member(s) is selected if considered to be particularly informative. Using this method, the researcher selected, at least one (1) management staff and one (1) middle level management staff from each department because these selected persons were identified by the researcher to be well vested in the organization of the paragliding event and their information accurate to this study.

3.4 Target Population

The sample is a subset of the whole population, which is investigated by the researcher and whose characteristics will be generalized to the entire population Struwig and Stead (2004). The sample size of 10 respondents, who were staff of the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) were selected and an interview guide given to them before they were interviewed. A sample is considered by most researchers as one of the practical methods of data collection especially when taking into account the large nature of the population which makes the study of all the elements impossible. The researcher took down notes during the interview. The researcher used two week to interview the interviewees. This is mainly because of the way the researcher has to probe further on the type of questions asked, and in addition the interviewee also seeking further clarification on some particular areas regarding the interview. It took the researcher an additional four weeks to analyse and interpret the data. In all the researcher used six weeks for the interview and analysis of data. The table below shows the selection of the samples from the various departments of the Ghana Tourism Authority.

TABLE 1: SELECTION OF SAMPLES FROM VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS.

No	Category	Number of people
1.	Public Relations department	2
2.	Special Events	2
3.	Marketing	2
4.	Research, Statistics & Information	2
5.	Quality Assurance Department	2
	TOTAL	10

For those in the quality assurance department, they were made up of one principal officer and one chief officer. Both people hold managerial positions with an average of 12.5 years of working experience with the GTA. The research, statistics and information (RSI) department also were represented by one manager, the head of the RSI, and a principal officer. They also have been working with the GTA for an average of 18 years. The interviewees at the marketing have been working with GTA for about 10 years as of the time the interview was being conducted. One was a chief marketing officer and the other was a principal marketing officer. The other two departments are the special events and the public relations. For the former, a manager and a chief event officer were interviewed. They have been working with the organization for an average of 18.5 years. Those in the public relations department were also made up of an officer and a manager with an average 12 years of working experience.

The numbers for sampling are not representative or biased in any way except that being a qualitative research, limited time and resource could only allow for a smaller representation of the entire population in each category. A qualitative research, such as this study, does not require a larger sample size and it is in this regard that a sample size of ten would be relevant to get the required responses needed to analyse the data gathered.

The above selection was made based on the depth of knowledge that the participants are supposed to have in the paragliding event. All the participants selected are senior officers and management staff of Ghana Tourism Authority who have in-depth knowledge on paragliding. These participants form the working team of the annual paragliding event because their departments are solely involved in the organization thus, they know the appropriate communication channels used, the role

communication plays in the promotion of the events and the challenges involved. The public relations department and the special events department are directly linked that is why all the senior staff of these two (2) departments were chosen while a section of the senior staff of the other departments like finance, marketing, planning and business development were not selected so as to prevent information overload. The participants wanted to remain unanimous so their names and details have been kept confidential.

3.5 Data collection

Two sources of data were used namely; primary and secondary data. Semi-structured interviews were used on the staff of the Authority. The questions were grouped under modules with topic guides which defined the areas to be explored. The topics were grouped under various areas such as role of communication, communication channels, benefits and challenges, feedbacks on communication and demographic variables of interviewees. These areas were all related to the research question. The questions were open-ended which required that the respondents generated their own answers. Examples of the open-ended question used are:

1. “How does communication play a role in promoting paragliding?”
2. “What are some of the communication channels that the Ghana Tourism Authority uses in promoting paragliding?”
3. “Do you think Ghana Tourism Authority is the best organization to handle paragliding in Ghana and why?”
4. “What are some of the challenges that Ghana Tourism Authority face in promoting paragliding?”
5. “What is the future of paragliding in Ghana?”

Such open-ended questions gave the respondents the opportunity to provide in-depth responses and the freedom in answering the questions. On the other hand, the open-ended questions triggered responses which the researcher was not expecting but which provided valuable information for the study.

The interviews were conducted strictly in English mainly due to the fact that the interviews were held in office settings where the mode of communication is largely English.

Secondary data which were mainly scholarly works published in academic journals and which were related to the topic were used. Academic publications on the internet and other information brochures published by the Ghana Tourism Authority were also referred to in this study.

3.6 Data Analysis

The researcher recorded the interviews and supported by note taking. Because the participants were given interview guides, beforehand about the interview, most of them took this opportunity to prepare for the interview. This proved very useful as it was obvious that some of the participants had done some research themselves and would be able to provide accounts of situations they had faced in the process of communication. This facilitated speedy conduct of the interviews. Almost all the participants voluntarily offered their continued co-operation to the interviewer to feel free to contact them for further clarification and interviews. In the interviewer's view, this could be seen as

a “quality control process” and a mechanism to be thoroughly certain that the responses received during data collection were complete and without errors.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were taken care of in the data collection process. Participants were told about the study and its purpose. In view of the researcher’s role as a staff of Ghana Tourism Authority, he foresaw uncertainty in the minds of some of the participants who might have thought the research was for a GTA publication or study. Therefore, to remove all doubts, the researcher had to repeatedly remind them that the research was purely for academic purposes. Secondly, the researcher (interviewer) did not coerce the respondents (interviewees) to answer interview questions the way he wanted but followed by procedures for conducting interviews. Thirdly, the fact that the interviewer did not ask leading questions also means that it was ethically conducted. In addition, the researcher conducted a pretesting interview with five interviewees and made adjustments in order for the interview to correspond with the actual work. For the purposes of confidentiality and data protection, the names and details of respondents have been upheld and are not reflected in this work which is presented. Research data has also been protected and shall continue to be protected for a period of five years, after which the data will be burnt.

3.8 Challenges Encountered

The researcher encountered a few challenges while conducting the interview. The challenges include reluctance on the part of some Ghana Tourism Authority staff to grant interview which they thought it was a waste of time. Again, some of the interviewees found it a bit challenging in assimilating the interview questions but that notwithstanding, the researcher overcame all these

challenges. As a result of these challenges, some staff had to be given further explanation and assurance of confidentiality before they participated in the study.

3.9 Conclusion

With the aforementioned, it can be deduced that the methodology discusses the research methods used that is the qualitative research method to gather relevant data from the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) staff in the research area. The chapter further discusses the research design, data collection method, sampling approach, target population, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations as well as challenges encountered. The next chapter will discuss the findings and discussions arising out of the methodology. It begins with the various headings and discussions and then a few figures like graphs and pie charts, and a lot of quotations from the respondents to buttress the discussions.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

What this chapter is about is to present the data gathered on the field into appropriate themes and tables. It does this by analysing and discussing the findings from the data analysis in line with stated objectives of this research. The discussion will be grouped under the following themes —Gender of respondents; Age of respondents; Rank/Position; Educational Background; Years of service; Challenges of GTA; Role of communication in promoting paragliding event; Communication strategies; Communication channels; Challenges in Communication; GTA as organizers of the paragliding event; Feedback of Communication channels for promoting paragliding event; and the future of paragliding event in Ghana.

4.1 Gender of Respondents

The table below presents data on gender of respondents. The figure shows that the male respondents formed the majority of the target population with a total of 9 representing 90%, and 1 female respondent representing 10% of the population.

Fig 4.1. Gender



Source: Field data September, 2015

The data shows a disparity between males and females of the GTA. This data also reflects the actual situation in the work place of GTA where majority of the managerial positions are held by males. Even though government, non-governmental organisations and other agencies are calling for about 40% female representative in political and other managerial positions, the reality on the ground is not good to be written about. However, this does not mean the research is male bias, what it implies is that the demographic nature of the organisation favours more males than females at the managerial level.

4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

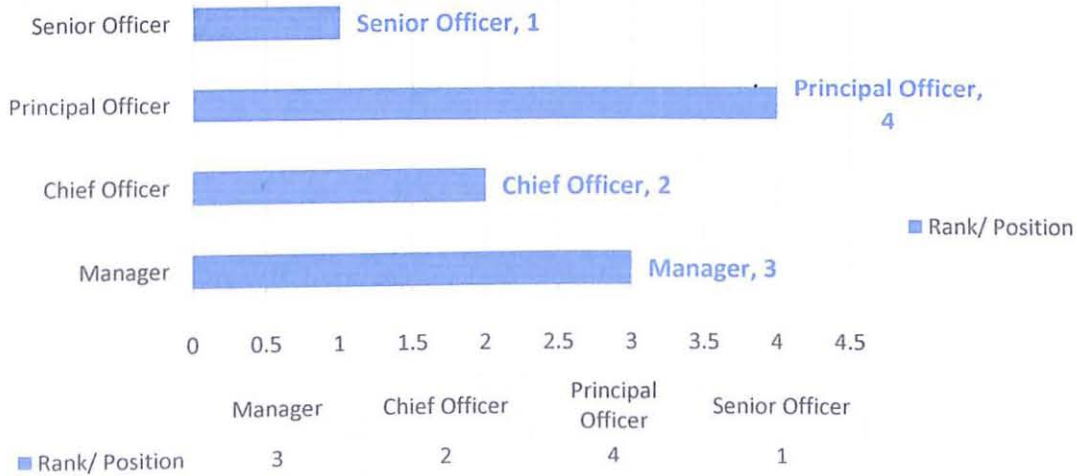
Analysing the data obtained from the interview, figure 2 reveals that 6 respondents between 41-50 years representing 59% formed the majority with 3 respondents each between the ages of 31-40 representing 29% and 1 respondent between the ages 51-60, representing 12%. There was no respondent between the ages 21 - 30.

What this data means is that in order to hold any managerial position in the organisation, one ought to have gained a considerable amount of working experience and, thus, you need to get older. This also means that there is a particular position within the organisation where middle level management staff would have to mark time until a certain period, which means they will be being underutilized at a particular point in time. Majority of the respondents fell between 41-50 years column and this implies that most of the respondents are relatively younger to work and share their experiences with the next generation of leaders.

4.3 Job Position of Respondent

This gives the various positions of employees who responded to the questionnaire. Principal Officers formed the majority with 4 representing 40%, 2 chief officers with 20% representation, 1 senior officer representing 10% and 3 Managers representing 30% of the total number of respondents. Since majority of the respondents are within the principal officer position, it means that information given is from people who really understand the operations of the GTA and have had a greater number of years working with the organisation.

Fig.4.3 Rank/Position



Source: Field data September, 2015

4.4 Educational Background of Respondents

It was also necessary for the study to determine the educational levels of the respondents as that could determine the in depth of responses obtained. Fig. 4 above presents the data of educational background of respondents. It can be seen that respondents hold a range of educational qualifications from HND to Masters Level. Four (4) of the respondents are graduates with first degree, five (5) of the respondents are Master degree holders with one (1) Higher National Diploma (HND) holder representing 40%, 50%, and 10% respectively. This suggests that people of different educational qualifications are present in the organization. This implies that different levels of opinions are displayed. This made it easier for data to be collected and interpreted since most of the interviewees already have done such exercises before.

4.5 Years of Service of respondents

The study also sought to find out the years of service the respondents have rendered to the organization to enable us put their responses into proper perspective. It is clear that majority of the respondents have served between 11- 15 years. This means the Authority has a blend of rich-experienced and professional employees who can help take the paragliding event to higher heights.

4.6 Challenges of the paragliding event

The analysis shows that Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) faces various challenges in organising the paragliding event, be it inadequate publicity, ineffective communication, lack of transparency, lack of add-on attractions to complement the event, insufficient logistics or resources. The most common challenge is inadequate funding of the event. Considerably, 40% of respondents are of the view that inadequate funding of the event is a major challenge. This situation has caused most tourists not to

have much interest in the programme since money is needed to fund the paragliding and to package the event very well. As noted, one of the respondents who shared that view said *'our major challenge is how to fund the paragliding and other major events. We don't have much as an organisation and sponsors too take a very long time to give us the nod'*.

4.7 Role of communication

Excellent communication plays a key role in the success of the paragliding event. It is not surprising that 80% of the respondents think that communication plays a very important role in promoting paragliding event. As one said, *'communication is what keeps our events moving. We can't do a lot nowadays without effectively communicating with our publics'*. In order for the paragliding event to have an essence and connect with the general public, communication needs to be very effective so that all parties of the society becomes aware of events and be enticed to participate in the events.

4.8 Views on communication strategies

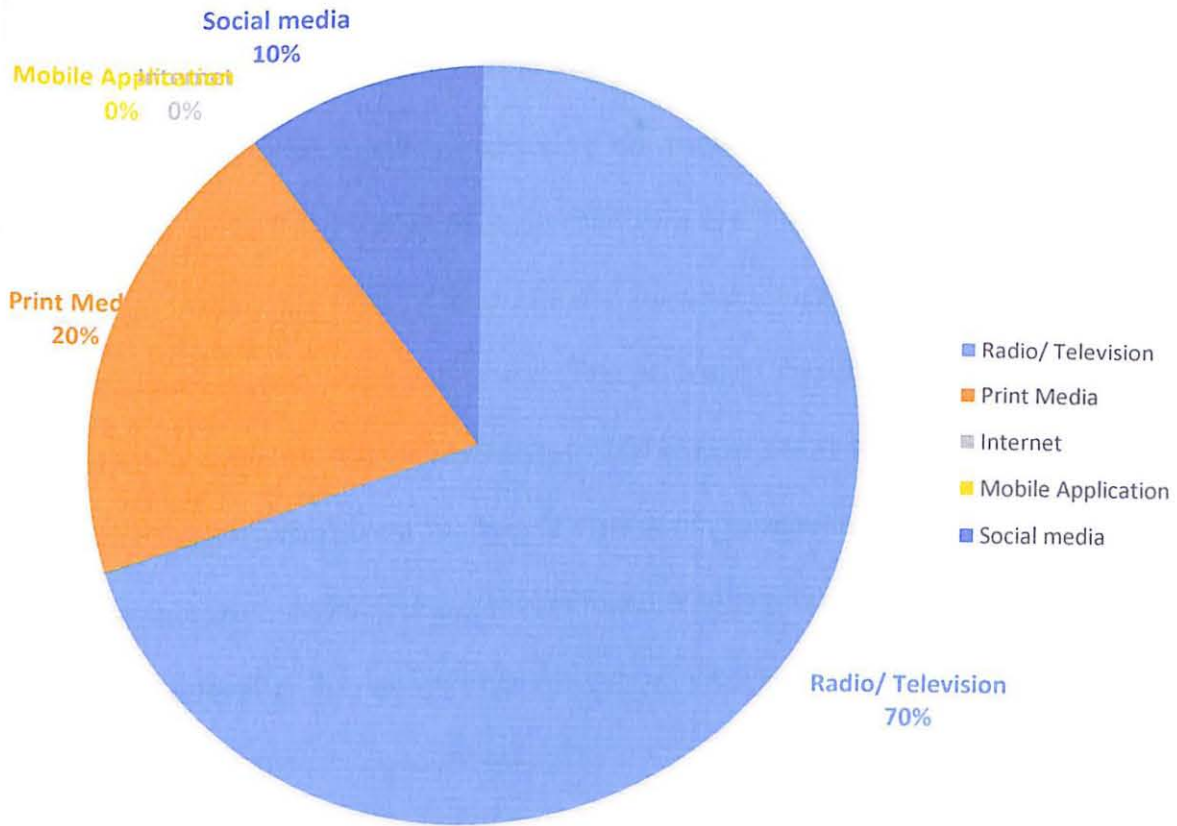
This analysis shows the respondents view on communication strategies of Ghana Tourism Authority. The Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) does not have any planned communication strategy, this is clear as over 80% of respondents think there is no communication strategy at all in place and even if there are, they have no idea. This therefore implies that without a planned communication strategy to effectively communicate the paragliding event to potential participants, the event has no future. This however contradicts the fact that the respondents know that communication is important yet are unable to draw a communication plan for such a major event on their calendar. It might be that the respondents are not putting what they know into practice or their activities are hampered with other external forces which they refused to disclose. One of the

interviewee said *'I am not sure whether we have a communication strategy or not, maybe we have but I really cannot tell'*.

4.9 Communication channels

It was very important to also look at some communication channels used by Ghana Tourism Authority in promoting paragliding event. From figure 9 below, radio and television are the commonest channel used representing 70% followed by the print media, representing 20%. GTA only use 10% of social media. Internet and mobile application are not used at all. It is important for the Authority to also consider other channels for a wider coverage. What this implies is that GTA still heavily relies on the traditional media channels for its information dissemination. However, the organisation can use the social media mostly to connect with their publics on different topics. *'I think in these modern times of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), it is extremely important for GTA to consider social media as well as internet and mobile application as part of its communication channel in communicating a lot in order to promote the paragliding event effectively, This is because they are cheaper and has a wider coverage than the other forms of media'* said one of the interviewees.

Fig. 4. 9. Communication channels



Source: Field data September, 2015

4.10 Promotional Challenges

According to 40% of the respondents interviewed, the major challenge in promoting the paragliding event is one-size-fit all kind of communication. This means that GTA's communications is not exactly directed at promoting paragliding events. 30% of respondents are of the opinion that inadequate preparation towards the event every year is a big challenge in communicating the right kind of message geared towards promoting the event. *'There is always a rash preparation to organising the paragliding event, because of this we are always behind time in terms of promoting it effectively. I think this kind of slow attitude must stop, and if it must be done, it must be done well'*. Exclaimed one of the interviewee. Ten percent (10%) think the Authority lack necessary technology in communication or passing the right kind of message to the public. Additionally, 20% of respondents think insufficient funding is a barrier in communication. This implies that GTA wait until the eleventh hour before putting pieces together to organise the paragliding event and it goes a long way in affecting the entire organisation of the event especially the communication and promotional aspects.

4.11 Opinion on communication feedback

Respondents were asked to give their opinion on feedback of communication channels, 20% think over the years GTA has taken no action on the feedback that are obtained, but 30% think the feedbacks are very positive and that GTA should take a critical look at them, 10% are of the opinion that there is no feedbacks at all because GTA has no platform to collect feedback. Forty percent (40%) think the feedback is inadequate. Feedback is an essential tool to every group in the sense that it helps the group to understand whether its communication was well understood or not. It helps them make adjustments to their communication, or maintain them. To the managers,

communication feedback helps them to make informed decisions. As one said, *'without the feedback, our subsequent programmes wouldn't have gained any changes or improvements'*. So they all believe in the fact that feedback is necessary, however, there is a syndrome of inadequate feedback reaching them, and this makes their work a little bit difficult.

4.12 Respondent's opinion on the future of paragliding in Ghana

The above shows that 70% of the respondents think that the future is very bright for paragliding in Ghana. They are very optimistic that paragliding will be the next big event in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. As one of the interviewee said *'Paragliding has a bright future but a lot more has to be done to sustain it, and i think if that is done, it will certainly transform Ghana's economy in the near future.'* Twenty (20%) think there is no future at all as it is a drain on the scarce resources of GTA and a misuse of tax payers' money. Ten percent (10%) of the respondents are not sure of the future of paragliding in Ghana. *'I cannot really tell whether paragliding has a future or not. I don't really like the way it is being handled anyway'*, said one of the respondents.

4.13 Conclusion

This chapter analyses the findings and conclusions of the study. Thirteen main headings were generated out of the above findings. Topics such as gender of respondents, age distribution of respondents, role of communication, respondents view on communication strategies and future of paragliding were analyzed and discussed. In order to make the interpretation for the data clearer and simpler, figures such as gender, communication channels, communication feedbacks and future of

paragliding were generated. Chapter five, the final chapter will discuss the summary of conclusions and recommendations of the entire study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary

The raw data from the respondents were analyzed by the use of figures. Thirteen (13) figures were used in for the analysis. To begin with, there were ten respondents made up of nine (9) males and a female. Considering the demographic variables of the ten (10) respondents, six (6) were between the ages of 41-50, three (3) between the ages of 31-40 and one (1) between the ages of 51-60. There were no respondents between the ages of 21-30. It is again worthy of note that the majority of the respondents have 11-15 years working experience and the least working experience is between 1-5 years. In terms of the rank or position of the respondents, it is important to note that there were four (4) principal officers, three (3) managers, two (2) chief officers and a senior officer. Furthermore, four (4) of the respondents hold first degrees, five (5) are master degree holders and one (1) is an HND holder.

In the area of communication, it has been established that there is a correlation between communication and promotion of paragliding. This therefore supports the assumption of the researcher that communication will lead to the promotion of paragliding event in Ghana. In addition, it also answers one of the research questions where it was asked whether communication can lead to the promotion of paragliding event in Ghana. Again, this assertion can be linked to the conceptual framework of the participatory theory of communication in the literature review that the paragliding event is a form of participatory theory because various stakeholders both at the grassroots through the middle level to the topmost hierarchy were all consulted and involved from

the onset before the feasibility study began, and this has brought about full participation of all these stakeholders as of now. It was noted again that 80% of the respondents are of the view that there is no communication strategies put in place to promote the paragliding event. Then again it can also be linked to the conceptual framework literature review. Still in the area of communication, 70% of the respondents think that radio and television are the major communication channels used by the Authority, followed by the print media and social media.

Addressing the challenges GTA faces in the promotion of the paragliding event, majority of the respondents mentioned inadequate funding as the major challenge. This area answers the research question where it addresses whether GTA faces some communication challenges in promoting the paragliding event. Again this portion can also be linked to the literature review, where in the conceptual framework the top down approach, the dependency theory did not favor those at the bottom. It is therefore necessary for a collaboration in order to have effective communication. Addressing the challenges in communication in promoting of the paragliding event, 40% of respondents think that communication is not entirely directed at promoting the paragliding event, 30% think inadequate preparations toward the event is another challenge, 20% also attributed it to insufficient funding while 10% also think the Authority lacks the technology used in effective communication.

Majority (80%) of the respondents stated that for GTA to continue to host the paragliding event, there should be a public-private partnership in the organization of the paragliding event. 10% of the respondents also want GTA to be the sole organizer of the paragliding event and the final 10% also think the organization of the paragliding event should be left solely to the local people of Kwahu.

Last but not least, respondents were asked about their views on the feedback GTA receives from the communication channels in the promotion of the paragliding event. Here, 20% of the respondents think GTA has taken no action on the feedback obtained, 30% also think the feedback the Authority receives is very positive and that the Authority should take a critical look at it, 10% also think there are no feedbacks because the Authority has no platform to collect the feedback. It can be said that majority, 20% of the respondents think that GTA has taken no action on feedback. Linking it to the literature review, it can be deduced that the dependency type of communication does not bring about adequate feedback as seen from the findings above which eventually affects the whole system of communication, and the last 40% also think that there is inadequate feedback.

Finally, in response to the future of the paragliding event, 70% of the respondents were optimistic that the future was very bright for the event and worth looking forward to, 20% of the respondents also think that there was no future at all for the paragliding event while 10% of the respondents were in a dilemma and chose to sit on the fence. The above finding goes to buttress the topic reviewed in the literature with regards to Major tourism events. As a major tourism event the paragliding event has been in Ghana for ten years now and it has a great future if the government and the private sector come together to continue to package it well by coming together to market and promote it well, by bringing an add on attractions to make it more attractive.

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is worthy of note that the interviewer using the qualitative research method, carefully chose interviewee with specific demographic variables such as specific ages, ranks, educational background and years of service mainly because of their experience. Again, the interviewer asked open-ended questions simply with the aim that the respondents will be free to express themselves without restrictive directions and instructions. This accounted for the wide range of responses from the respondents. It can therefore be established that communication play a role in promoting paragliding as a tourism event. The assumption which was written down buttresses this claim.

5.2 Recommendations

Firstly, leisure and recreational activities must be incorporated into the overall paragliding event so as to widen the spectrum of activities for all interest groups. Though during the 2015 paragliding festival efforts were made by the organizers to add a few recreational activities such as local tours, photo exhibition, indoor games such as playing cards and oware. It is extremely important to add side attractions like Live Band Music, Cultural Performances and Tug of War in order to whip up the enthusiasm for the event.

Promotional activities prior to the event can be improved through an intensive publicity plan. The media channels can market the event from another angle including promoting the touristic (value) aspect and the traditional significance of the festival instead of just informing the public about which artistes are gracing the occasion each year.

Again, GTA must liaise more closely with collaborators such as the Kwahu South and Kwahu East District Assemblies, the Kwahu West Municipal Assembly, the Kwahu Development Association and the Kwahu Tourism Initiative and other stakeholders to ensure effective development of potential tourist products in the Kwahu area alongside the paragliding event. During the 2015 paragliding event, an adventure sport known as Abseiling was introduced and this is in the right direction.

There should be training of local pilots to take up the paragliding in the near future which has been one of the main purpose of introducing this event in the country. This will also reduce the huge cost being incurred on the foreign pilots annually during the paragliding event.

Finally, government and stakeholders especially in the private sector should establish a long term scheduling of the paragliding event so that tour operators can package and promote it effectively.

5.3 Areas for further Research

It is undisputable that a lot of research work has not been done in the area of tourism. It is therefore recommended that further studies should be undertaken into assessing the knowledge levels of Ghanaians about tourism.

This means that Ghana must adopt a paradigm shift from the practice of providing a general tourism product to a series of market-driven specific tourism products in tandem with the various market segments. To this end the following areas are proposed:

- The socio-economic impact of paragliding in Ghana.

- An assessment of community based tourism in the Kwahu area.
- Communications in the public service: A study of Ghana Tourism Authority

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**APPENDIX A: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWEE WHO
ARE ORGANISERS OF THE PARAGLIDING EVENT**

I am a graduate student pursuing Master of Arts (Development Communication) from the Ghana Institute of Journalism, Accra. As part of the program pursued, I am required to write a dissertation on the topic.

**‘The role of communication in the promotion of paragliding as a tourism event in Ghana:
A perspective of Ghana Tourism Authority’**

I would be grateful if you could spare some few minutes of your time to be granted an interview on the above topic. The information you provide will therefore be used purely for academic purposes and will be treated confidentially.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Jones .A. Nelson

M.A Student (GIJ)

0279331397

MODULE A

Demographic variables of interviewees

- 1. Sex: Male..... Female.....

- 2. Age: 21-30.... 31-40.....41-50.....51-60.....

- 3. Department/ Region.....

- 4. Rank/ Position.....

- 5. Education: HND..... Degree..... Masters.....PhD.....

- Other (specify).....

MODULE B

Role of communication in the promotion of paragliding

6. How long have you been working with the Ghana Tourism Authority?

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7. What are some of the challenges that you have encountered at the Authority?

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8. What can you say about the role of communication in the promotion of paragliding?

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9. What are your views about the communication strategies of paragliding?

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MODULE C

Communication channels (mode of communication) used in promoting paragliding

10. What are some of the communication channels that Ghana Tourism Authority use in promoting paragliding?

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11. What are some of the communication challenges that the Authority face in promoting paragliding?

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12. What is your position on the Authority as the organizers of the paragliding over the years?

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MODULE D

Feedbacks on communication channels

13. What is your opinion on feedbacks of communication channels that the Authority uses in promoting paragliding?

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14. How often has feedbacks on communication channels been taken into consideration for future planning of paragliding?

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15. What can you say about the future of paragliding in Ghana?

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