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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH (SoGSaR)

**ASSEESING THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION TOOLS IN PETRA TRUST
COMPANY LIMITED**

BY

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this work is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in the work have been fully acknowledged. I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings. It was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the University.

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ABSTRACT

Employees play a crucial role in helping organizations achieve their predetermined goals of growth and development. Employees thus need to be always communicated to, to carry them along with organizational goals, strategy, and vision. Pradhan and Chopra (2008) postulate that “organizations cannot exist without communication, as it is one of the significant aspects allowing organizations to be what it is.” This study focuses on the assessment of the internal communication tools at Petra Trust Limited. This research relies on the Kevin Stephen Ruck’s theory dubbed “informed employee voice.” The study employs quantitative approach in analysing primary data collected from employees of the organization with a sample size of 86 participants. Findings revealed that the organization has measures that allow for all employees to understand the internal communication processes thereby facilitating full ownership and participations. As part of the recommendations given, the researcher advocates for the promotion of awareness of an internal communication policy at Petra Trust.

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DEDICATION

To The Glory Of God And To My Loving Husband, Amazing Family And To The Memory Of My Late Father, Mr. Albert Kojo Dotse.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Organizations today are constantly faced with a daunting task of managing both internal and external factors in their quest to stay afloat within a rather highly competitive business environment. Quite often, most of these organizations rather focus extensively on external factors whereas little attention is given to internal ones (Haas, 2007). This phenomenon is replicated in every facet of organizational functions including finance, communication and marketing. Taking communication for instance, we find many organizations concentrating more on external communication measures like advertising, public relations, etc. than they focus on internal communication like internal relations, meetings, etc. Perhaps the notion that the customer is the most prized asset of an organization has been deeply rooted in the philosophy of organizations. Clearly firms forget that employees act as internal customers of any organization (Ruck and Yaxley, 2013). The big question then remains, can we have a satisfied customer when there are ill informed employees? There is therefore no debate about the relevance of internal communication within organizational processes.

Robbins and Judge (2016) postulate in their paper that organizations do not operate in a vacuum and as such their very survival is hinged on how they effectively communicate with both internal and external audience. The importance of communication and for that matter internal communication cannot be glossed over. Employees are considered the internal audience of the organization and communication among them is critical in ensuring a full buy-in of corporate vision, mission and strategy. According to Dortok (2006), internal communication merits close

attention as employees are considered the most trusted information sources within the organization. Just as communication is a dialogue, internal communication is a dialogic process between employees and employer, and employees and employees.

The role and benefits of internal communication exist in abundance. Internal communication is critical during a change management phase within an organization (Robbins and Judge, 2016). It is also used to address key concerns that may be hindering the progress of the organizations. Another significant role is that it is used to deliver instructions, orders and directives to employees from top management. Hartley and Bruckmann (2015) believe that internal communication also allows management to fully understand plights and concerns of employees especially through the transmission of feedback. Internal communication allows for internal marketing to be successful giving employees the opportunity to understand features and properties of products offered by their organization.

Achieving effective internal communication within the organization is not a simple task. According to Rosenfeld et al (2004), for communication to be effective it must strike a balance that ensures members of the organization have the correct information at the correct time. Employers must make conscious efforts to answer questions like what they want to be communicated, who is supposed to communicate what, when to communicate, the various channels of internal communication, the internal communications tools to employ, among other hosts of questions. It is these plethora of issues that form stumbling blocks on the internal communication pathway of organizations. According to Miller (2006), internal communication goes beyond the officially designated tools used such as meetings, newsletters and notice boards. It also comprises all informal interactions used among employees like gossip, pleasantries and body language.

Internal communication channels have evolved massively over the past few years from the use of the traditional methods of face-to-face channels like meetings and seminars to reliance on more modern means like the electronic and print channels (Robbins and Judge, 2016). Today organizations have a wide array of communication tools to choose from ranging from emails, video calls, internet phones, telephones, mobile phones, letters among others. Each tool has its advantages and disadvantages and as such organizations should assess their need for each specific communication tool they choose. Therefore a simple choice of an internal communication tool by an organization bears a direct link with its success within the business environment (Ruck and Yaxley, 2013).

This study intends to shed light on the internal communication tools available at Petra Trust Company Limited. In doing so, the researcher wants to find out the kind of attention given to internal communication at Petra by evaluating the processes adopted by the organization.

Problem Statement

The business landscape in Ghana has been riddled with industrial disharmony among several organizations across different sectors of the economy. This is evident in the number of industrial actions that occur within the country every now and then. There are numerous cases of communication gaps especially between top management and employees; mostly below-the-line employees feel they are being kept in the dark or left out of decision making processes. These events tend to have a negative impact on organizational productivity and performance.

Petra has had its fair share of these events as it also operates within the Ghanaian context. The advent of COVID-19 has resulted in majority of staff working remotely away from the office space. This has further deepened the communication gap that existed. Again recent internal staff

wrangling over some unsettled disputes leaves much to be desired. The company in the recent years has witnessed fierce external competition as well as dwindling sales.

It is against this backdrop that the researcher set out to interrogate the internal communication processes that exist at Petra and find out employees views on the available internal communication tools.

1.2 Research Objectives

The specific research objectives are clearly spelt out as follows;

1. To evaluate the internal communication process at Petra Trust.
2. To assess the internal communication tools used at Petra Trust
3. To determine the internal communication challenges at Petra Trust.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Various studies have reported on internal communication processes, channels, tools, effectiveness and challenges within organizations (Thunberg et al, 1982; Hewitt, 2006; Ryerson, 2003). This research seeks to explain the internal communication gap that exists at Petra Trust Company Limited. This study also seeks to explore what internal communication tools exist at Petra and what internal communication challenges confronts employees. The findings of the study contribute to existing literature on internal communication systems. Additionally, findings about the challenges, mitigating actions and best practices can further inform how internal communication can be adopted, modified or enhanced by not only Petra Trust alone but by other organizations operating in different industries across Ghana and beyond.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The first major setback was the researcher's inability to conduct interview sessions which was ideally the preferable data collection tools the researcher wanted to employ. Most of the staff are

working remotely because of the impact of COVID-19, hence making it difficult for interviews to be organized. The second major limitation of the study was exhibited in the small sample size used in the study. The researcher acknowledges that the results would have been more accurate if a larger sample size was adopted. Again the constraint of time and finances limited the scope of study. The study would have gone further to increase the sample size of the study if not for the closeness of project submission deadline and financial constraint.

1.5 Organization of the Study

The study has been organized in five chapters. Chapter one introduces the study, states the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study and research methodology. Chapter two presents an overview of relevant literature on internal communication. Chapter three covers the research methodology which looks at methods adopted in carrying out the study as well as the profile of Petra Trust Company Limited. Chapter four focuses on data presentation and analysis while chapter five lays out a summary of the study findings, with conclusions and recommendations of the study drawn from the findings.

1.6 Chapter Summary

The scope of the study has been presented in this chapter. The study set three objectives which touches on internal communication processes, internal communication tools and internal communication challenges. There is a vast literature on the research topic but there is a gap in the context of Ghana and more particularly the pensions scheme industry. The major limitation of the study points mainly to the constraint of time. At the end, the researcher aims to add to the existing literature and also help management of Petra on ways to best manage their internal communication processes.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the empirical and theoretical review of the literature that relates with the chosen research topic of study, thus assessing the internal communications tools at Petra Trust Company Limited. The chapter begins by delving deep into the concepts of communication and internal communications tools. The theoretical framework will also be interrogated while various relevant studies will also be reviewed in a bid to identify their relevance to the objectives set out in chapter one. At the tail end, the various challenges associated with internal communication will also be presented in this chapter.

2.1.1 What is Communication?

The concept of communication is one that dates far back beyond the horizon of the human mind. In fact the definitions attributed to it although numerous, still border around the same basic tenets and principles. According to Greenberg (2011) communication can simply be interpreted as a process by which a person, group or organization (sender) transmits one type of information (message) to another person, group or organization (recipient). Robbins (1996) in his definition of communication places more emphasis on the purpose of information. In his paper, he asserts that communication involves the transfer of information in the form of symbols or certain languages in a manner where recipients understand the meaning and purpose of the information. Correspondingly, Gibson et Al. (2003) define communication as a process of transmitting and understanding information using the same signs. The emphasis in these definitions so far is that information transmitted during communication must be understood by the other party. Thus to say

there is no communication when the message is clearly misunderstood by the party at the other end.

Often, the word “information” and “communication” have been used interchangeably. Erlie (2003) attempts to draw the line that separates these rather two conjoined words. According to her the role played by the recipient is the major distinguishing factor between these two words. With information, the recipient is usually inactive while in communication, the recipient is an integral part of the process and data sent usually requires a response from the receiver. To buttress Erlie’s point, Quirke (2008) also places significance emphasis on feedback during the communication process. He claims that communication is a process that is only complete when the receiver responding to the signal sent by the sender, initiates another circle of meaning exchange has been sent to the sender (source). In a related article, Giffin and Patten (1976) also claim that communication is the process of creating meaning as well as ascribing it.

Communication is a broad field of study that goes far beyond words that are merely spoken with one another (Carroll, 2010). It is a complex phenomenon which surpasses the traditional linear model or the transactional model, which postulates that a sender/receiver sends a message through a channel which is usually influenced by noise (the distractions that disrupt transmission) within the context of a feedback and the entire communication. Interestingly, communication encapsulates both verbal and non-verbal reactions, signs, expressions, behaviours and a host of other factors. To drum this point further and clearer, communication can also be achieved without the use words. A message can be sent from one party to another in absolute silence without compromising on meaning, content and intent of the message (Dolphin, 2005). Furthermore, elements like culture, gender, location, organization and medium tend to have great influence on how communication is effected successfully.

It is evident that communication remains a vital part of our lives. Just as it important for individuals, communication is highly important for the survival of any organization. According to Pradhan and Chopra (2008), organizations all around the world cannot exist without communication, as it is one of the significant aspects allowing organizations to stay afloat and competitive. Communication is inevitable in the workplace and for that matter firms also have no choice than to manage it well so that receivers understand perfectly what the sender intends to send. Caywood (1997) in his study posits that communication is any activity that involves the exchange of information between two or more parties. He went further to state that this exchange may either be top-to-down, upward or horizontal within organization's hierarchy, units, departments, branches or subsidiaries. Communication as we know it will always remain a constant social interaction between an individual and the society for the mutual satisfaction of needs (Carroll, 2010).

2.1.2 Communication Objectives

The primary objective of any communication process is to inform. In the context of the organization, communication is supposed to convey information usually in the form of instructions, policies, directives or decisions in a manner in which actual meaning is not distorted. The communication process is complete when listeners either agree, disagree, or react to the information as intended by the sender. Another significant goal of communication is to request. There are instance where communication is done with the motive of making certain demands of the receiver. Such information must simply be granted or denied. Alternatively, communication can be done with the sole motive of persuading or negotiating in order to get the receiver along with the sender on an idea.

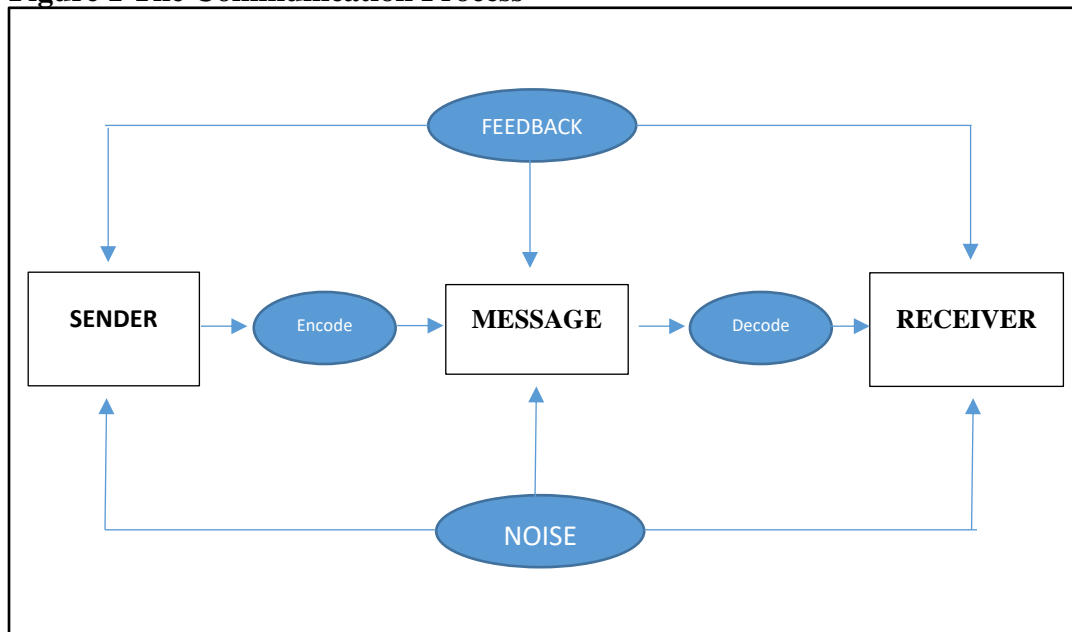
Additionally, relationships are built and fostered through effective communication. This objective requires consistent communication where the process is repeated over and over again within the context of feedback (Kitchen & Daly, 2002). The objectives may also include entertainment, knowledge sharing, brand awareness and motivation of employees. In reality, the objectives of communication remain vast and may not be exhausted for the purposes of this research. Hence, the objectives identified are just to mention a few.

2.1.3 The Communication Process

Every communication goes through series of actions and steps before information finally reaches the intended audience. It is these steps which come together to form what we know as communication process. These steps and actions may include the actual message being sent, the encoding of the message, the decoding of the message and transmission of the message. Aside these actions mentioned, the communication process also include the various agents involved in the communication. The main actors in the communication process are the communicator, channel and recipient. The overarching goal of any good communication process is to present a party with information that is clear and precise. To achieve this means the right channel must be employed by the sender of the information.

In their book Burnett and Dollar (1989) affirm that the communication process is not static but actually goes through a cycle until the message is understood. They refer to this phenomenon as the communication cycle. The communication process may be elaborate or simple depending on the organizational context. The main elements are the sender, message and the receiver. The other activities that make up the process are the feedback, encoding and decoding. A graphical depiction of the communication process is presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 The Communication Process



2.1.4 Stages of The Communication Process

A search through the literature indicates that there are seven major stages in the communication process. These are identified and explained below.

Stage one: This is where the sender conceives the idea and plans to send this idea to another party or group. This stage also involves the development of the idea conceived together with all thoughts and plans on how message will be sent.

Stage two: The sender encodes the idea at this stage. Encoding is basically the process where the message or idea is translated into a format that can easily be transmitted to the recipient.

Stage three: The sender selects the communication channel to use. Depending on the nature of message being sent, the sender at this point selects the best channel through which the message can be sent. Bear in mind that a wrong choice of communication channel may distort the information being transmitted.

Stage four: This stage witnesses the actual transmission of the information through the already selected communication channel. The main communication channels are electronic, print and oral.

Stage five: The message is finally received by the receiver. Here the receiver can either hear, see or feel the information depending on the form it comes.

Stage six: The receiver goes through the process of breaking down the message into a form which can be understood. This process is termed decoding of the information. Decoding enables the receiver to analyse the information in order to clearly understand the message.

Stage seven: Feedback is sent to the sender in the form of a reply by the receiver. Feedback basically makes the sender know if the message is understood clearly or otherwise.

The various communication stages identified are usually influenced by the environment and noise. Noise is generally known as a common barrier to communication. They may occur at any stage of the communication process and have the potential of distorting the message sent. This may create huge limitations to all actors within the communication process. Effective organizational communication requires that staff are able to follow the communication process thoroughly and at the same time minimize or eliminate potential noise which may hinder the smooth flow of information.

2.1.5 Models of Communication

Scholars have devised several models of communication over the years. However there are three distinct models which cannot be overlooked. They are linear, interactional and transactional models of communication. These models provide the lens that can be used to look through the whole concept of communication from theoretical perspectives. They bring a more simplistic understanding of the whole concept of communication.

Interactional Models

Interactive models assume a more dynamic approach to the concept of communication. The model postulate that there are two main channels in which the message and feedback flows between the sender and the receiver. This model highlights the significance of a feedback during any communication process. Feedback is a reactionary response to a message. It can either be verbal or non-verbal. Feedback helps the sender to know for certain if the message sent is received. It also helps the sender to know if the message has been clearly understood. Feedback affords the receiver the opportunity to actively engage in the communication process. Interactional models view communication as an ongoing process between the sender and the receiver. Interactional models also introduces a concept known as the field of experience. This concept posit that factors like environment, culture and experience have an effect on the communication process. These factors can affect both the sender and the receiver.

Even though the interactional models score significant points when it comes to portraying the dynamic nature of communication, it goes without saying that it is riddled with some challenges as well. Key amongst them is that it assumes individuals can play the roles of a sender and a receiver but fails to acknowledge that both can play these roles simultaneously. This is a major flaw as communication is more complex in the real world than the model make it seem.

Transactional Models

This is by far the most dynamic model of communication. It explains to a greater extent how communication actually occurs in the context of the real world. Transactional models cease to identify agents involved in the communication process as mere senders and receivers. The model refers to them as communicators. The model acknowledges that in order for people to communicate effectively, they need to share some overlapping factors like language, culture,

environment and relationship. The model sees communication as a transaction in the sense that the message sent by one communicator will determine the responses that will come from the other communicator. Clearly, messages sent within the communication process are interrelated. Each message therefore is a build-up of another message. This model forms the basis of a lot of modern communication theories existing today (Daniel, 2013).

Durham and Kellner (2001) argue that this communication model is more complex to apply relative to both the linear and interactional models. Another setback is that the model does not demonstrate how communicators play both sending and receiving roles simultaneously even though it posits that communication is dynamic.

2.2 Organizational Communication

The significance of communication within an organizational environment cannot be overemphasised. See organizational communication as a huge box that houses all forms of communication which are critical for the growth, sustainability and survival of any organization. It is the glue that binds the several facets of communication open to the organization. According to Ferreira (2006) communication in the organization represents a complex system of flow of information made out of two partially complementary systems namely, formal and informal communication networks.

Organizational communication can broadly take up either an internal or external focus depending on who the target audience are. Internal organizational communication addresses internal factors within the organization like staff, management and board members (Weihrich and Koontz, 1994). External organizational communication on the other hand addresses the public. Organizational communication mainly focuses on building relationships and interacting with both internal organizational members and interested external publics.

2.3 Internal Communication

Internal communications is a subset of organizational communication. This branch of communication only focuses on providing information and creating a sense of enabling community within the boundaries of an organization (Karanges et al, 2015). Internal communication is defined as a collective effort of the organizations group members to gather information in order to achieve employee engagement for the organization (Welch, 2013; Kataria et al., 2013). From a different perspective, internal communication is the bedrock on which organizational information and ideas are nurtured. Internal communication encompasses all the processes that are responsible for smooth circulation of information, participation and collaboration between participants within an organization.

According to Jameson (2001), internal communication refers to a group of processes or tools that engender smooth flow of information and promotes collaboration among internal participants within an organization. It is a communication concept that is expected to bring all internal players on board, thus top management, management and employees. From Blundel's (2004) view, information shared internally must be clear, transparent and consistent. According to him this is the only way to harness the real benefits that internal communication has to offer. The impact that internal communication has on the business can be traced in several areas including employee retention, operational success, profitability, customer service, employee motivation and satisfaction.

Every organization has its own internal strategy which situates well within the existing organizational culture. Although the goal of internal communication is aimed at getting the best out the employee, the end game is to satisfy the customer. Thus a well-motivated employee is a prerequisite for achieving customer satisfaction. Yates (2006) defines internal communication as

the exchange of both formal and informal information between management and employees within an organization. Ahmed and Rafig (2002) place emphasis on values and ideas at the work place and argue that internal communication results in value-producing process for organizations. Several scholars have used other names which are synonymous to internal communication. Some of these names include employee communication, employee relations, internal public relations, staff communications and integrated internal communications (Smith, 2008; Wright, 1995; Argenti, 1996; Stone, 1995; Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

2.3.1 Importance of Good Internal Communication

While research on internal communication spans only a few decades, its impact on organizational performance cannot be overemphasized. The importance attached to internal communication is ever rising as more organizations continue to place massive emphasis on it. Evidence reveal that effective internal communication results in creating harmony within the organization. This sets the right environment for work to be carried out effectively.

Clampitt and Downs (1993) reveal in their work that for organizations to reach their external goals and vision, there is the need for everyone within the organization to be aligned in the same strategic direction. This prerequisite can only be achieved when information is managed and disseminated thoroughly among all internal actors within the organization. In an identical view, Lesikar et al. (2008) also claim that internal communication is a direct reflection of the external communication that an organization exhibits. So organizations need to build a healthy internal communication as that in the end will lead to good brand image.

Internal communication is a major driver of employee engagement. According to Jameson (2001), internal communication brings leaders, management, employees and partners together to focus on information and knowledge sharing. This makes employees feel valued at the work place. The

long run effect of these engagements lead to higher productivity in the organization. Globalization has given rise to fierce competition among organizations especially in this 21st century. To stay competitive, organizations today need to master the art of being flexible and implementing change quickly. Internal organizational communication is therefore a crucial tool in helping manage employees during any change process. Employees are important elements when it comes to changes in the organizations. Effective internal communication allows employees to own the change process and also helps them move smoothly along with the new processes rather than resist them (Borgatti and Cross, 2003).

Communicating more with employees gives them a great sense of connection with the organization. This feeling motivates staff to give off their best at all times. Internal communication allows these motivated staff to pursue the goals and visions of the organization rather than personal goals (Barrett, 2002). Internal communication acts as a glue which binds together staff of diverse cultural affiliations. According to White et al (2010), communication breaks that cultural barrier at the work place and allows for constructive developments amongst staff. This creates the breeding ground for organizations to thrive.

2.3.2 Internal Communication Structures

Internal communication structures are simply the infrastructure that holds together an organizations internal communication strategies in place. The choice of the right communication structure is one of high importance as this will go a long way in affecting the fortunes of the organization. Conner and Patterson (1982) identified three main structures under internal communication and these are vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication.

With a conscious look at communication problems affecting most companies one will realize that majority of these problems find their roots to the nature of the existing internal communications

structures. Internal communication structures is supposed to ensure that every internal member of the organization is able to get the right information at the right time (Mast, 2006). In his paper, Mast (2006) identifies four distinct structures of internal communication.

Vertical Communication

Internal communication can either flow upwards or downwards when it comes to vertical communication structure. The former refers to information that flows from bottom to the top whereas the latter refers to vice versa. The flow of information occurs along a formal reporting line, where subordinates report to supervisors, who then report to line managers (Stoner et al., 2004). This flow continues until the highest body of the organization is informed. This kind of structure helps control the flow of information and decision-making. The top-down internal communication usually consists of orders, directions, instructions and policy decisions. Contrarily, the down-top structure consists of acknowledgements, concerns, ideas and disagreements. Most organizations prefer the vertical communication structure because it presents a formal way to interact with every member of the organization. There is little room that anyone will be left out in the communication process. It allows management to have a firm grip at the work place as every minute concerns and ideas worth knowing are brought to the fore (Rogers and Rekha, 1996).

One of the biggest critique of this structure is the potential bureaucracy it brings about. Vertical communication may be ineffective if it slows down information flow because of the various levels that information must travel before it gets to the intended target. Additionally, the negligence of superiors or any other element within the structure may result in disruption in information flow, a situation which may bring dire consequences to the organization. Despite these short comings, more and more organizations still prefer the vertical communication method when it comes to getting the job done.

Horizontal Communication

Horizontal communication is also referred to as lateral communication. The distinct characteristic to look out for is the fact that information transmission between employees, departments, branches and units within the same functional level of the organizational hierarchy. This structure can best be described as a peer-to-peer flow of information (Foss, 2004).

Unlike the vertical structure, this method is time saving as bureaucracies are reduced substantially. This method of internal communication fosters cooperation between employees of different departments working on the same project. This has a direct positive impact on efficiency and organizational productivity. Again, implementation of decisions taken by top management is further enhanced at the workplace when employees are able to cooperate and discuss to fully understand what is expected of them. Different views from various departments highlighted and team work is enhanced through the horizontal structure.

Interestingly there are some downsides to having a horizontal internal communication method in the organization. Firstly, there is the tendency for management to lose full control of employees as horizontal communication increases. Secondly, information may be concealed especially where there exist some rivalry between departments within the organization. Finally there is the lack of motivation to communicate due to the absence of strict supervision and control from top management. Information sharing may therefore be curtailed, a practice that could result in reduced productivity in the organization (Lehman and Dufrene, 2015).

Diagonal Communication

The key word under diagonal communication is cross-functional. As the name implies, this internal communication route allows functionally diverse groups to share information within the organization. There are instances where different departments with varying functions are

expectation to make significant input in the execution of a project. Diagonal communication therefore creates the avenue for information to be shared among these groups (Theaker, 2001).

Diagonal internal communication is also termed as crosswise communication.

One significant benefit of this structure is that it breaks the barriers that exist between higher managements and lower departments thereby promoting smooth and easier flow of information within the organization. Information also travels faster due to the absence of bureaucracies. Diagonal communication engenders employee motivation at the workplace because there is little resistance of information flow between departments with different functions.

One major disadvantage of this method is the tendency to create misunderstanding among members of the group because of their different functional backgrounds and expertise. Members may communicate based on their perspective, a situation which may not yield the needed results expected by management. Again, diagonal communication may result in the leakage of sensitive information from one department to another. What is regarded as sensitive by one department may not be regarded as same by another department. This paves the way for sensitive information to reach out to unintended recipients.

2.4 Internal Communication Channels and Tools

Internal communication channels and tools basically provide the means through which people in the organization can communicate. Simply put, without these tools it will be totally impossible for staff to engage. Depending on what task needs to be executed, the appropriate internal communication tool needs to be used. Imagine using a kitchen knife to weed a lawn, or better still using a spoon to cut a cake. It is quite obvious that the result will not be satisfying if not impossible. Using the right communication tool therefore yields in accurate and clear transmission of information within the organization. Perhaps no one has made this point strongly than McLuhan

(1964), who claimed that “the medium is the message.” He argues that each medium poses different effect on the recipient and as such may affect the scale and pace of the communication. The channels of internal communication have evolved over the years from traditional simple channels to more sophisticated channels. According to Berger (2008), internal communication tools can broadly be categorized under three main channels known as print, electronic and face-to-face (F-T-F)/ interpersonal channels.

2.4.1 Print Channel

Print channel literally means any information that is presented on a piece of paper. The main internal communication tools under the print channel include memos, letters, brochures, newsletters, reports, policy manuals, annual reports, noticeboard and posters. Memorandums are official documents which are used to send reminders, policies or instructions to a large number of people within an organization. Reports are formal documents that give an elaborative account of a specific task. Usually reports may include analysis of a phenomenon or may just be a mere presentation of facts. A good example is an annual report of an organization’s activities. Newsletters are information of interest which are sent out on schedule (usually monthly or weekly) to members of an organization (Stolzenberg and Heberler, 2009). Some organizations also employ the use of a noticeboard to communicate to staff. Information displayed on noticeboard are often of high importance to the staff. Staff therefore are entreated to check these noticeboards as often as possible. Policy manuals are critical official documents which contain information pertaining to organizational policies, strategies, processes and procedures.

The print tools are relatively old and efforts to trace the origin of some of them may prove futile. Although it is the most traditional method, it sometimes present the most effective way of communicating with staff. The print channel is relatively simple to use as compared to the other

two channels, hence the reason why is mostly a preferred medium by most organizations. Another typical feature of print communication tools and perhaps a positive one, is the opportunity one has to save, retrieve and replay the information when needed (Welch, 2012). A major downside of print tools is that they do not facilitate immediate feedback to the sender. Response to print tools could take hours or even days. It is also impossible to even give a feedback to some of the print tools especially in the case of a noticeboard. Again, the print tools lack the ability to fully express non-verbal communication across to the staff. The tone in the print tools often gives the recipient some idea about the mood of the sender but this can clearly be missed.

2.4.2 Electronic Channel

Electronic channel presents a more contemporary and sophisticated approach to internal communication within an organization. It is simply information that is transmitted electronically from end-to-end. In recent past, these tools have become the preferred means for most organizations mainly because of the flexibility, efficiency and convenience they present. The list of tools available for internal organizational communication is endless and includes e-mails, social media, telephone, mobile phone, intranet, internet, online chat and web cam. The innovation and technological advancement in electronic communication tools has been mind blowing and presents a lot of functionalities which allows for the impossible to be achieved. Electronic mails are the most commonly used internal communication tool currently. Telephones and intercoms are also used widely by organizations to transmit information internally. The intranet provides a local restricted communications network for an organization. The advent of the internet has fundamentally changed the landscape of internal communication within organizations. Employees are able to reach other employees who are stationed anywhere on the globe in real time with just a

click of a button. In fact electronic tools are able to fit in perfectly with whatever communication structure is present in the organization (Crescenzo, 2011; Men, 2014).

The positive features of electronic tools are exciting. Firstly, they present the organization with an opportunity for effective work to be carried out remotely. Employees do not have to engage physically in order to send information. Secondly it provides a cost efficient way of communicating internally. For instance it will cost less for a global organization to hold a meeting electronically for its employees than to bring them all together under one roof. Thirdly, this tool has the potential of communicating to a wide number of end users at a time. Fourthly, there is opportunity for timely feedback to be received when using electronic channel. Finally, knowledge sharing is encouraged in the organization as there is easy means of transfer of information at any point in time.

Fortunately, there are a few setbacks associated with electronic tools of internal communication. Principal amongst them is security threats including cyber attacks. Electronic tools are highly prone to security breaches and organizations spend fortunes in providing more secured electronic tools. Security breaches may lead to compromised information while cyber attacks may lead to loss of data, both of which can be detrimental to the survival of the organization. Another bottleneck is the potential occurrence of system downtime, fault and errors with the technology. This may lead to undelivered messages and distorted messages. Organizations therefore spend a lot of money on system updates and maintenance all in a quest to ameliorate this problem (Men and Tsai, 2013).

2.4.3 Face-to-Face (F-T-F)/ Interpersonal Channel

This is arguably the oldest communication channel known to mankind. Also known as word-of-mouth or oral communication, Doppler and Lauterburg (2008) describe this channel as the real

optimum communication tool to use. In fact interpersonal channel communicates both verbal and non-verbal information clearer than the other two channels. Face-to-face channel is an internal communication channel where the communicator transmits information in the presence of the receiver. The participants involved in the communication can vary from two to more parties. The tools under this channel include meetings, interviews, conferences, seminars, lectures and workshops. Meetings are formal assembly of people for a particular purpose or agenda. Discussions are done during meetings and decisions are made at the end. Interviews are formal meetings where parties are interrogated in order to arrive at a decision. Organizations employ seminars, lectures and workshops to train and share knowledge among staff.

The highlight of face-to-face internal communication tool is the way message is sent out together with all gestures, facial expressions, mood and demeanour. This ensures the information is undiluted and understood exactly the way it is intended. Another positive feature identified is that this tool can be used to send even the most complex information. Interpersonal communication also promotes relationship building and engenders trust among staff. Oral communication guarantees prompt feedback as recipient is cloaked with the opportunity to respond and also ask for clarity. This ensures accurate information is transmitted within the organization.

The challenges that confront interpersonal channel are quite a number. First on the list is the issue of logistical constraints when it comes to engaging staff physically. Often times a lot of prior arrangements will have to be made. In the instance where staff are scattered around different geographical locations, it is difficult to meet under one umbrella. Consequently even when it is possible to bring all employees from different locations together, the issue of set up cost as well as travelling expenses may crop in. This poses extreme difficulty for most organizations. Finally where the staff size is huge, it is somehow impracticable to meet these large numbers at a time.

Even if this is possible, interaction with huge numbers in person may be extremely difficult to control and conduct (Pincus et al., 1991).

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This research relies heavily on the theory dubbed “informed employee voice.” The theory is credited to Kevin Stephen Ruck who first mentioned it in his research paper he wrote in 2016 titled “Informed employee voice: the synthesis of internal corporate communication and employee voice and the associations with organisational engagement.” The theory draws insights from other range of concepts from the corporate communication traditions including excellence theory, rhetorical theory, relationship theory and critical theory.

The concept of informed employee voice simply emphasises the dual importance of information sharing that meets employee needs and opportunities to express work and organisation related ideas, suggestions, and views. Ruck (2015) makes the argument that employee voice is not effective unless employees are well enough informed to comment on what is going on in their organisation. For example, information about plans, goals, progress and achievements has a greater impact on employee engagement levels than information about pay, benefits, job opportunities and recognition. Giving employees opportunities to have a say also leads to higher engagement. These two activities, informing employees about topics they really want to know more about and giving them a voice, come together in the concept dubbed “Informed Employee Voice”

2.6 Internal Communication Strategies

Internal communication strategies are the roadmaps or better still blueprints that guide organizations to achieve internal communication success. According to Haywood (2005), communication strategy is a plan to shape the organization’s internal audience to advance the corporate objectives and preserve the goodwill towards the brand. In a similar view, Thommen

(2001) also claims in his paper that the purpose of strategic internal communication is to generate “buy-in” for an organisation’s goals and strategies. In fact only a few organizations address internal communication with a more conscious approach. What we see often is a reactionary approach to internal communication strategy by organizations especially when there is a crisis or a major event that requires addressing communication issues. The dangers of not having an internal communication strategy cannot be overstated.

In developing an internal communication strategy, organizations have to address four critical questions. First, it is important for the organization to know where they are now. This situational analysis addresses issues related to the organizations current audience, number of staff, demographics, current communication plans, organizational structure, current challenges, environmental influences, among several other factors. Second, the organization needs to answer the question, where do we want to be? In answering this question, the overall organizational goal and strategy must be recognised so that they run parallel with the new internal communication strategy. This phase also allows the organization to set communication objectives while focusing on the future destination. Third, the question of how to get there needs to be answered by the organization. This step involves targeting the audience, drawing communication tasks and schedules, selecting the right communication channels and tools and ultimately having a contingent plan to cater for delays, resource gaps, etc. Finally, the organization must answer the critical question; how do you know if it has worked? This step involves putting systems in place to measure achievements or failures against set objectives. Evaluation can also be conducted for channels and tools to identify which has been more successful, which needs improvement or which needs to be dropped. Periodic surveys can also be conducted to obtain stakeholders views and opinions. The key questions are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1 The Four Step Questions of Internal Communication Strategy

| STEP | QUESTION | ACTIVITIES |
|------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Where are you now? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience • Environmental Influences • Current Communications |
| 2. | Where do you want to be? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Focus • Organizational Goals • Communication Priorities • Objectives Setting |
| 3. | How will you get there? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Tasks • Audience Targeting • Channel & Tools Selection • Contingency Plans |
| 4. | How do you know you are there? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations • Measurements • Surveys and Feedbacks |

Hargie et al (2002) reiterate in their research the need for internal communication strategy to be designed, implemented and evaluated constantly by organizations in order for it to be as effective as possible. Many organizations have developed diverse internal communications strategies that work for them. There is no one-size fits all when it comes to internal communications strategy. Each organization is unique, and operates in its own environment and culture. Therefore, by undergoing these steps, organizations will guarantee the right strategy will be developed and implemented at all times.

2.7 Review of Related Studies

The existing literature on the assessment of internal communication tools is vast spanning from diverse organizational settings as well as different geographical locations. The study will focus on two studies as its main reference. The review will touch on the research title, authors, objectives, research questions if any, research methodology and finally the various findings and

recommendations raised in the study. The study intends to draw significant guidance that will lead to a robust research.

The first related paper is titled “Use of Internal Communication Tools among AG&P Employees.” The research was authored by Dianne Elaine L. Ozaeta and Imelda L. An. The paper was published by the Journal of education and literature in 2014. The study did not explicitly state any research questions but the objectives were clearly enumerated. Generally, their research aimed to identify the current internal communication tools used by AG&P employees in disseminating the company’s organizational goals and other internal information. The four specific objectives set out by the researchers are as follows;

1. To describe the profile of AG&P employees in terms of age, educational attainment and employment type.
2. To identify AG&P employees’ frequency of usage of various internal communication tools.
3. To test significant relationship between respondents’ profile and their usage of various internal communication tools.
4. To determine problems encountered in using internal communication tools.

The research design employed was a descriptive correlational design. This design was employed to determine the internal communication tools utilized by AG&P employees and the problems associated in using these communication tools. The total population of the study was the entire workforce of AG&P which at the time was a 1000 employees. The study intended to use a target sample of 10% of the entire population. The sample population of 100 employees were chosen through a purposive sampling method. The respondents vary from skilled to office workers including supervisors and managers. The researcher used a self-formulated or researcher-made questionnaire about internal communication tools and the challenges associated with using these communication tools. The respondents were asked to rate a series of statements using a modified

four-point Likert type scale. The collected data were tallied, encoded and presented in tabular form for easier analysis. The main data analysis software used for the study was SPSS version 18.

The findings of the study reveal that the top two internal communication tools used at AG&P are electronic and oral communication tools. The research also found that the higher the educational attainment, the more they used various internal communication tools. Employees rarely experience and encounter problems in using various internal communication tools. As part of the recommendations, the paper urges the management of the organization to sponsor scholarships to encourage employees to pursue higher education. The paper also advocated for a revamp of the AG&P information and communication centre in order to improve on the MIS infrastructure of the company. Internal communication training was also advocated for all employees of AG&P with emphasis on videoconferencing, PowerPoint presentations and preparing understandable technical reports. All departments were supposed to establish internal communication teams with a mandate of ensuring all internal communication tools are used effectively.

The second related research paper has the title ‘Evaluating Effective Communication Methods: Improving Internal Communication.’ This is a dissertation written by Amber L. Suthers at the East Tennessee State University as a partial n partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science in Allied Health in 2017. The general aim of the study was to determine the most efficient and effective forms of internal communications in the hospital setting. The objectives of the study were not clearly stated out in the research however we may be able to draw inference from the research questions which the researcher presented in page 12 of his paper. The following questions guided the research:

1. Are there protocols for employee notification in place to ensure that all employees are informed of internal changes?

2. Have employees expressed to communication officers the need to change the current mechanism(s) for notification?
3. Have employees provided to communication officers examples of their preferred method for receiving organizational communications?
4. If the communication tools in place are efficient and effective, how does the organization know?
5. What barriers of communication have been identified through employee feedback?
6. Does internal organizational communication have an effect on employee engagement?

The researcher used a quantitative study with a survey as the basic methodology for the study. The researcher also used a survey research design in order to collect data regarding the effectiveness of internal communication systems and employee satisfaction and engagement. This design allowed for participant confidentiality. The total population for the study consisted of communication officers, or those in similar positions employed in Tennessee hospitals in and east of Nashville. The survey was designed by the researcher using the Likert scale in which all answers were tied to a numerical value for analysis. The data collection tool employed was the mailing service. The searcher mailed the survey to 83 selected communication officers. Data from a Likert response format were coded numerically to facilitate analysis. An ANOVA was used and if there were differences based upon hospital demographic groups, a Tukey Post Hoc was performed to determine which survey items were significantly different. The researcher selected a 95% confidence interval for the study. A total of 16 communications officers responded to the study's invitation to participate.

The findings prove that there was an internal communication plan in place in both rural and urban hospitals. The data collected also support the narrative that information was delivered to employees in a timely manner. The study also found that 93.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that internal communications systems were vital. In regards to the effectiveness of current feedback methods, respondents did not agree about the effectiveness of their current

communication systems. The study made two critical recommendations based on the findings. They recommendations made are 1. Clear communication facilitates quality patient care and 2. Communication should function as an open flow of information between senders and receivers. The study is consistent with an exploratory study conducted by Bergman et al (2016) in Sweden, where a number of communication processes in a workplace setting were examined. The main objective outlined in the study was to explore communication processes during workplace meetings using a mixed method approach in a Swedish healthcare organization. The findings reveal that 46% of communication flow was accounted by the downward communication flow from management while only 13% of the flow represent upward communication flow from employees. Aside meetings, the organization employed other internal communication tools like letters and emails as a means of disseminating information.

2.8 Challenges Confronting Internal Communication

While organizations acknowledge the need for achieving effective internal communication, it has also never been more difficult to attain. There are numerous stumbling blocks that lie in the way of organizations today. Here are the main challenges that confront effective internal communication:

2.8.1 Absence of an Internal Communication Policy

An internal communication policy is an official document that outlines an organization's approach to internal communication. This policy spells out in 'black and white' all elements needed for the achievement of an effective internal communication. The policy document provides details about what information needs to be shared, how information has to be shared and who is actually supposed to share that information. The overall communication strategy of the organization is also detailed in the policy together with guidelines and goals. Internal communication policy eliminates

all internal communication doubts and confusion among staff which otherwise could lead to mistrust and disconnection. Unfortunately organizations today approach internal communication trivially as many lack internal communication policies that may act as guides to employees (Kataria et al, 2013). They forget that well-informed staff can be transformed into brand advocates for the organization.

2.8.2 Mismatch in Internal Communication Style

It is incumbent on organizations to adopt the right internal communication style on their quest to achieving effective internal communication. Adopting a wrong style may lead to adverse results. For instance using a too formal approach when communicating with younger generation of employees may not be the appropriate style of communication. Agreeably the use of a more informal approach may yield the desired results as the heavy dependence on social media by the new generation cannot be overlooked. Finding the right balance in terms of communication channels, tools and time is therefore critical. There are cases where communication tools available to the organization are ineffective. The occurrence of this bears a negative correlation with internal communication.

2.8.3 Cultural Barriers

The typical modern workplace embraces people from different walks of life with different religions, languages, values, norms, beliefs, just to mention a few. Many at times these differences create barriers during communication. A simple body language or gesture may send different meanings to an individual depending of their cultural inclination. Cultural barriers present a huge challenge to effective internal communication for most organizations. To overcome this barrier, organizations need to focus on ensuring that all information is clearly understood by staff.

2.8.4 Staff Reluctance to Share Information

There are times where staff simply act as listeners and not speakers. They are able to take orders, directions and comments from superiors but remain tight lipped when it comes to sending their views across. This could have detrimental impact on effective internal communication. The basic tenets of a good internal communication is to have full engagement of all and sundry within the organization. Some of the reasons why staff fail to fully engage range from fear, victimization, mistrust and sheer reluctance. While some fear they will be victimized by superiors for airing out their views, others simply do not trust that their views will be taken in good faith and for that matter may fail to speak (Barrett 2002). There is that section of staff who also fail to share their knowledge mainly because they feel they are protecting their intellectual property. Others also feel they might lose that one thing that perhaps makes them stand out within the organization. All these breakdown efforts to achieving effective internal communication.

2.9 Chapter Summary

The chapter gives insights on the major research constructs used in the study. The review of the literature also shed light on the wealth of work carried out by other researchers on similar topics. The theoretical framework was also presented, setting the direction in which the research method will advance. The chapter also presented importance of internal communication, various communication channels that exist and finally concludes with the main challenges associated with organizations with respect to their internal communications.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

In this chapter, the research methodology of the study is presented. The research design, sources and methods of data collection, data analysis technique as well as the profile of the case are discussed in the various sections within the chapter.

3.1 Research Approach/Strategy

The study adopts a quantitative approach. Quantitative approach deals with the use of numeric figures in analysis of a phenomenon (Saunders et al, 2009). Questionnaires are the main tools used for the collection of primary data for the research. The study adopts this method because it will give us a first-hand information which is reliable and valid. Questionnaires will allow us collect data in a cost effective and time efficient manner, thus the reason for its adoption.

A self-completing questionnaire with close-end questions was developed to aid in the collection of primary data. Close-end questions according to Brymen and Bell (2007) makes it is easier for the researcher to process answers. It also enhances the comparability of answers and makes it simple to establish relationships between variables. The questionnaire was organized in two parts. The first part pertains to the socio-demographic factors of the respondents, and this has four questions. The second part presents the various questions that pertain to the research question and this comprises of 17 questions that are broadly grouped under three main headers. These are; 1. Internal communication processes at Petra 2. Internal communications tools at Petra 3. Internal communication challenges at Petra. These constructs were developed and adopted from relevant existing literature. Some of the responses were scaled using the five-point Likert-type response

scales, i.e. 5 denoting Strongly Agree, 4 is Agree, 3 is Not Sure, 2 means Disagree and 1 implying Strongly Disagree.

3.2 Research Design

The research design covers the overall strategy of the study. This exploratory study is presented in a purely descriptive research design and the approach involves the adoption of series of observations and descriptions. The focuses on a particular group to make a generalization. Considering the limited time of the study, the case study presents a cost effective option to the successful execution of this project. It is also less time-consuming and is the reason why the researcher adopts it.

3.3 Source of Data

Data can be in the form of primary or secondary. Primary data refers to data that is collected directly by the researcher at first hand sources. Secondary data refers to data collected by other persons other than the user (Salant and Dillman, 1994). The research predominantly relies on primary data; thus data will be collected at source. Data to be used is quantitative. Questionnaires will be administered to staff of Petra Trust and through that, data will be obtained. Some data will also be collected through careful observations of staff of the Company.

3.4 Population

As indicated earlier, the total population for the study is the entire permanent staff of Petra Trust Limited. Petra has a total permanent staff size of approximately 140 employees.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique is used to select the respondents needed for the study. In simple random sampling, each member of the population has an equal probability of being

selected, mainly because selection is done randomly (Saunders et al, 2009). Random sampling eliminates any unconscious bias that could be exhibited by the researcher in the data collection process. This means it creates the avenue for less errors in the analysis of data collected. These are the main reasons why the study adopts this technique.

The researcher employs a 90% confidence interval in estimating the sample. This leaves a 10% margin of error in our estimation analysis. In arriving at the sample size, the researcher employs the formula adopted by Kothari (2004)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (N * e^2)}$$

Where, **n** is sample size

N is total population

e is the margin of error

In the study, N is 140 and e is 10%. This results in a sample size of 58.33. The study therefore plans to send out 100 questionnaires to cater for the sample size.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire designed for the study consists of predominantly closed-ended questions implying that they are presented with a set of fixed options from which respondents have to choose from (Bryman and Bell, 2007). According to Fisher (2004, p.14) “If you want to compare the views and experiences of a large amount of people, then it is easiest if closed approaches are used”. Against this backdrop, the study employs a rather short questionnaire, aimed at increasing response rate without affecting accuracy. Considering the prevailing pandemic and the times we find ourselves in, the questionnaires will be sent to the respondents through the email platform.

Considering the time constraint, these tools presents the most effective mode of collecting data that will be used for the study.

3.7 Return Rate of Respondents

Out of the total number of 100 questionnaires that were distributed, 86 valid responses were received. This implies a return rate of 86% which is above the acceptable level of 80% or above. The study therefore proceeded to conduct analysis based on the 86 valid responses received.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Reliability in research simply measures the stability and consistency of research results. Validity simply means that the results obtained are actually measuring what they are supposed to measure accurately (Nunally, 1978). The data to be collected for the study are primary data and will show the true reflection of what is on the ground. The results will be tested and the findings the researcher believes will be consistent. The research is deemed to be valid and reliable.

3.9 Organizational Profile

Petra is a corporate trustee dedicated to providing their clients and customers with top-notch pension services guaranteed to secure their future.

Petra Trust believes in the welfare of clients and customers and as such, they have designed schemes and products that promises to help customers and clients achieve their goals. They believe in a world where smiles never fade especially in the later years of life when you cannot work anymore. A world where you are not afraid to retire!

3.9.1 Corporate Mission

Partnering people to achieve their dreams.

3.9.2 Vision Statement

We leverage deep insight to create solutions that make us the preferred partner for people across Africa.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in line with highly established ethical standards. Respondents were duly informed and consented before eliciting information from them. All information obtained were treated with privacy and confidentiality. All respondents were treated fairly and with no discrimination. The researcher adhered to strict professional standards at all times during the execution of the project.

3.11 Limitation of Data Collection

Every researcher faces some form of challenge during the course of their study with regards to data collection. In order to produce an effective research, it is the duty of the researcher to manage and mitigate or if possible eliminate these challenges in the best possible way (Saunders et al, 2009). The main potential challenge to the study was in the administering of questionnaires. The use of the emails in the data collection process came with its own challenges as respondents had to be reminded over and over again before responses were returned. This situation could have been averted if the questionnaires were administered in person. However, in light of these shortcomings, I am very certain that the quality of the overall research was not adversely affected and the results and estimations were stated correctly.

3.12 Chapter Summary

The chapter begun with discussion of the research approach used in the study. The research design was also presented subsequently. The data sources were revealed as well as the sample size of the

study. The organizational profile was also presented in this chapter. The ethical considerations of the study was not left out. The chapter ended with the limitations that confronted the researcher during the course of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The findings and analysis of the data are presented in this chapter. The findings are strictly analyzed in accordance with the research objectives. The literature review also provides the context for the data analysis. The chapter is presented in two folds. Firstly, the assessment of the socio-demographic factors of the respondents involved in the study are presented. Secondly the various responses of the respondents are analyzed and presented accordingly. The study combines the use of tables, diagrams and graphs to present the findings of the study. This approach will enhance the understanding of the readers as comparison and analysis of variables is made easier.

4.1 Socio-Demographic Factors

It is important to subject the sample size to some preliminary tests to ascertain if they provide a fair basis for use in the research. In assessing if the sample provides a true representation of the entire population, we start off by first looking at the socio-demographic characteristics. The socio-demographic characteristics look at the gender, age, experience, qualification and job position of

respondents. In order to ensure a reliable and credible research, there is the need to pay keen attention to these socio-demographic factors in order to eliminate any form of bias.

4.1.1 Gender of Respondents

With respect to gender, out of the 86 respondents that participated in the study, 52 respondents were males (representing 60.47%) while the remaining 34 were females (representing 39.53%). The results indicate clearly the males outnumber the females. It is important to stress that observations indicate that there are more males than females currently employed at Petra Trust. In fact the number of males far outnumber the number of females. The study is therefore unbiased as it presents a fair representation of both genders in the company. The gender distribution of respondents are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2 Gender Distribution

| Gender | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| Male | 52 | 60.47 |
| Female | 34 | 39.53 |
| Total | 86 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data (2021)

4.1.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

The respondents involved in the study have diverse ages. For the purpose of easy analysis, the various ages have been grouped and presented in table 2 below. The findings reveal that majority of the respondents (41.86%) fall within the 30-40 years age bracket. The second majority belong to “Under” 30 years age group and are made up of 28 (32.56%) respondents. The age group of 41-50 years recorded 20 (23.26%) respondents while the last group 51 and above, has only 2 of the respondents. The age distribution is depicted in table 3 below.

Table 3 Age Distribution

| Age | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| Under 30 | 28 | 32.56 |
| 30 – 40 | 36 | 41.86 |
| 41 – 50 | 20 | 23.26 |
| 51 and above | 2 | 2.32 |
| Total | 86 | 100 |

Source: Field Data (2021)

4.1.3 Qualifications of Respondents

With regards to qualifications, the study tried to establish the highest level of qualification held by each respondent of the study. The findings reveal that all the respondents are highly qualified. This has a positive impact on the study. Out of the 86 respondents, 48 (55.81%) which make up the majority possess first degree, 21 (24.43%) possess a master’s degree while 12 (13.95%) have acquired some form of professional certificates related to the pensions and insurance. There were no record of a participant holding a PHD however there were 5 (5.81%) respondents who had acquired HND. The results are presented in the table 4 below.

Table 4 Level of Education

| Qualification | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|
| HND | 5 | 5.81 |
| Professional Certificate | 12 | 13.95 |
| First Degree | 48 | 55.81 |
| Masters | 21 | 24.43 |
| PHD | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 86 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data (2021)

4.1.4 Years of Work

There is ample evidence to support the existence of a positive causal link between experience and productivity in any organizations. In light of this, the study paid keen attention to the level of experience of respondents involved in the research. Majority of the respondents, thus 43.02% (37) of respondents involved in the study have over between 6 -10 years of work experience at Petra Trust. The remaining group which is made up of 28 (32.56%) respondents have between 1 to 5 years of work experience. 14 (16.28%) respondents boast of between 11 to 20 years of work experience while 7 (8.14%) respondents have worked over 21 years at Petra Trust. Clearly most of the participants have sufficient years of work experience under their belt and this is good for the study. The findings are presented in the table 5 below.

Table 5 Years of Experience

| Qualification | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 – 5 | 28 | 32.56 |
| 6 – 10 | 37 | 43.02 |
| 11 – 20 | 14 | 16.28 |
| 21 years and above | 7 | 8.14 |
| Total | 86 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data (2021)

4.1.5 Role Specification

The study focused primarily on staff who fall within different cross sectional departments of the organization. The researcher targeted both senior managers and ordinary officers who are involved in the daily operations at the organization. The 86 staff involved in the study were purposively picked from across several cross-sectional departments within Petra Trust. The study engaged managers and officers from functional areas like customer service, finance, claims and human

resources department. The researcher believes this act will yield a more comprehensive insight into understanding the research topic. See table 6 below for the breakdown.

Table 6 Role Specification

| Role | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| Management | 18 | 20.93 |
| Staff | 68 | 79.07 |
| Total | 86 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data (2021)

4.2 Presentation of Statistical Results

The statistical results are presented according to the objectives set in chapter one of the study. This study aims to answer three clear objectives. The findings are a collation of responses from respondents who participated in the research. The study initially planned to use 100 respondents for the study. Unfortunately only 86 valid responses were received and this forms the sample size for the research. Over a period of one month, the questionnaires were administered in a purposive manner to employees over the electronic mailing system. The questionnaires administered have also been incorporated in the results presented. The results have been grouped, analyzed and presented in tables to aid in better interpretation and understanding for readers.

4.2.1 Internal Communication Processes at Petra

This section seeks to tackle one of the main objectives of the study; to evaluate the internal communication processes at Petra Trust. The study aims to find out if indeed there exists an internal communication system in place at Petra and also if the system has clear processes and procedures laid out for all stakeholders to appreciate. Eight questions were administered to respondents in an attempt to find out what they know about internal communication processes at Petra Trust. The results from the questionnaires are presented in table 7 and table 8 below.

Table 7 Response on Internal Communication Process in Percentage

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Count (%) |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| Petra has an internal communication system in place | 22.09 | 63.95 | 13.96 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| Key performance criteria have been clearly identified in the system | 9.3 | 43.02 | 26.74 | 13.95 | 6.99 | 100 |
| The criteria have been set in close consultation with employees | 2.33 | 8.14 | 40.7 | 31.4 | 17.43 | 100 |
| There is clear understanding and support from key stakeholders | 15.12 | 25.59 | 20.93 | 16.28 | 22.08 | 100 |
| There is an internal communication policy in place at Petra | 1.16 | 11.63 | 54.65 | 12.79 | 19.77 | 100 |
| There is an internal communication strategy in place at Petra | 0 | 6.99 | 56.98 | 17.44 | 18.59 | 100 |
| There is frequent internal communication with superiors | 16.28 | 24.42 | 6.99 | 37.21 | 15.1 | 100 |
| There is frequent internal communication with peers | 20.93 | 66.28 | 3.49 | 9.3 | 0 | 100 |

Table 8 Descriptive Statistics on Internal Communication Process

| Measure | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|----|-------|---------|---------|------|----------------|----------|
| Petra has an internal communication system in place | 86 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4.08 | .561 | .314 |
| Key performance criteria have been clearly identified in the system | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3.34 | .592 | .351 |
| The criteria have been set in close consultation with employees | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.47 | 1.067 | 1.139 |
| There is clear understanding and support from key stakeholders | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.95 | 1.273 | 1.621 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|---|---|---|------|-------|-------|
| There is an internal communication policy in place at Petra | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.62 | 1.201 | 1.442 |
| There is an internal communication strategy in place at Petra | 86 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2.52 | 0.834 | 0.696 |
| There is frequent internal communication with superiors | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.90 | 1.252 | 1.567 |
| There is frequent internal communication with peers | 86 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 3.99 | 1.078 | 1.163 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 150 | | | | | | |

N=86 Source: Field Data (2021)

The first question that the researcher asked the respondents was whether Petra has an internal communication system in place. Majority of the respondents made up of 55 (63.95%) participants overwhelmingly agreed to this assertion while another 19 (22.09%) respondents strongly agree that indeed there was an internal communication system in place at Petra. On the contrary 12 (13.96%) respondents indicated their obliviousness about any such internal communication system at Petra. This question recorded a mean of 4.08 indicating that the average respondent agrees that there is some form of internal communication system in place at Petra. With a low standard deviation of 0.561 and a variance of 0.314, this clearly shows the results are not too far from the mean.

A test to whether “key performance criteria have been clearly identified in the system” was conducted by the researcher. The findings indicate that 37 (43.02%) respondents agree to the assertion together with 8 (9.3%) participants who also strongly agree. While a significant number of 23 (26.74%) respondents were not sure of this assertion, 12 (13.95%) respondents disagree while a minority class of 6 (6.99%) strongly disagree. Overall this question recorded a mean of 3.34 indicating that the average respondent was not sure whether key performance criteria have

been clearly defined in the internal communication system. The low standard deviation figure of 0.592 and a variance of 0.351 indicates the results are not too spread away from the mean.

The third question posed to the respondents was whether “the criteria have been set in close consultation with employees?”. The received an interesting response as majority of the respondents made up of 35 (40.7%) respondents were not sure whether they were consulted during the setting up of the internal communication performance criteria at Petra Trust. This is closely followed by 27 (31.4%) and 15 (17.43%) respondents who agreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Contrarily a modest number of 7 (8.14%) respondents agree while 2 (2.33%) strongly agree to the statement. This question recorded a mean figure of 2.47 indicating that the average respondent was not sure about the statement. It is worth nothing that the statement yielded a high standard deviation of 1.067 and a variance of 1.139 showing a high spread away from the mean.

Respondents were expected to answer the question pertaining to their understanding of the internal communication system and whether they receive the necessary support from key stakeholders. The highest number of 22 (25.59%) participants was recorded for persons who agreed. This was followed closely by 19 (22.08%) participants who strongly disagree of the notion. Subsequently, 18 (20.93%) were not sure, 14 (16.28%) disagreed and 13 (15.12%) participants strongly agreed. There was a high spread away from the mean with the descriptive statistics recording a high a high standard deviation of 1.273 and a variance of 1.621. Overall the mean value recorded was 2.95 indicating that the average respondent was either not sure or disagree with the assertion that they understood and had the right support from key stakeholders regarding the internal communication system at Petra.

When respondents were asked if there is an internal communication policy in place at Petra, a majority comprising of 47 (54.65%) respondents expressed their ignorance about such a policy document. Additionally, a total number of 17 (19.77%) respondents strongly disagree to this notion together with 11 (12.79%) other respondents who also disagree. Contrarily while 10 (11.63%) respondents agree to this statement a sole respondent strongly agreed that there was an internal communication document at Petra Trust. The mean value of 2.62 indicates that the average respondent disagrees that there is any such internal communication policy document.

On the question of whether “there is an internal communication strategy in place at Petra”, the resultant mean value of 2.52 indicates that the average respondent was either not sure or disagreed with the statement. The results recorded are 6 (6.99%) respondents agree, 49 (56.98%) respondents not sure, 15 (17.44%) respondents disagree and 16 (18.59%) respondents strongly disagree. The statement recorded a standard deviation of low 0.834 and a variance 0.696 of indicating that the results were not far spread away from the mean.

The seventh question the researcher raised was whether “there is frequent internal communication with superiors”. This will help establish if there is vertical communication structures in place that facilitates free two way flow of information among staff and management. With a resultant mean of 2.90, the result indicates that the average respondent is most likely not sure or disagree with this assertion. There was a sharp contrast between respondents who disagree and those who agree. While 32 37.21% respondents disagree, 21 (24.42%) respondents agree to the statement. However they were 6 (6.99%) individuals who were not sure about their response to the statement. While 16 (16.28%) respondents strongly agreed, 13 (15.10%) respondents strongly disagreed. The results were too spread away from the mean with a standard deviation of 1.252 and a variance of 1.567.

Finally, the researcher tried to discover how horizontal internal communication structure operates at Petra. This addresses how internal communication is administered within peers and departments within same functional operations. With a resultant mean of 3.99, the average respondent was either not sure or agrees with the statement. In fact majority of the respondents, thus 57 (66.28%) agreed to this statement while another 18 (20.93%) also strongly agreed. Subsequently while 8 (9.3%) respondents disagreed with the statement another 3 (3.49%) respondents were rather not sure about the statement when asked. The descriptive statistic resulted in a standard deviation of 1.078 and a variance of 1.163.

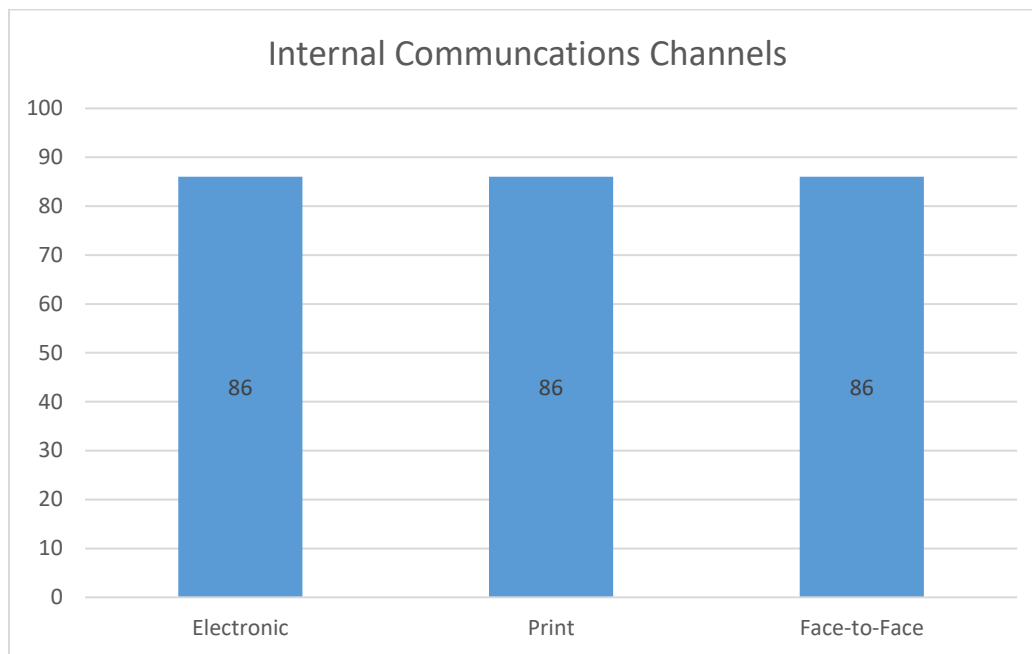
4.3 Internal Communication Tools at Petra Trust

The second objective of the study seeks to evaluate the internal communication tools that exists at Petra. In realizing this objective, the researcher posed four questions to the participants. The results have been presented in graphs below.

4.3.2 Internal Communication Channels at Petra

The study through the literature review places all internal communication tools under three main channels namely electronic, print and face-to-face channels. The respondents where asked to choose which of these channels exists at Petra. They were presented with a closed end questionnaire and were allowed to pick any channel related to Petra. The resultant is presented in the graph in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Internal Communications Channels at Petra



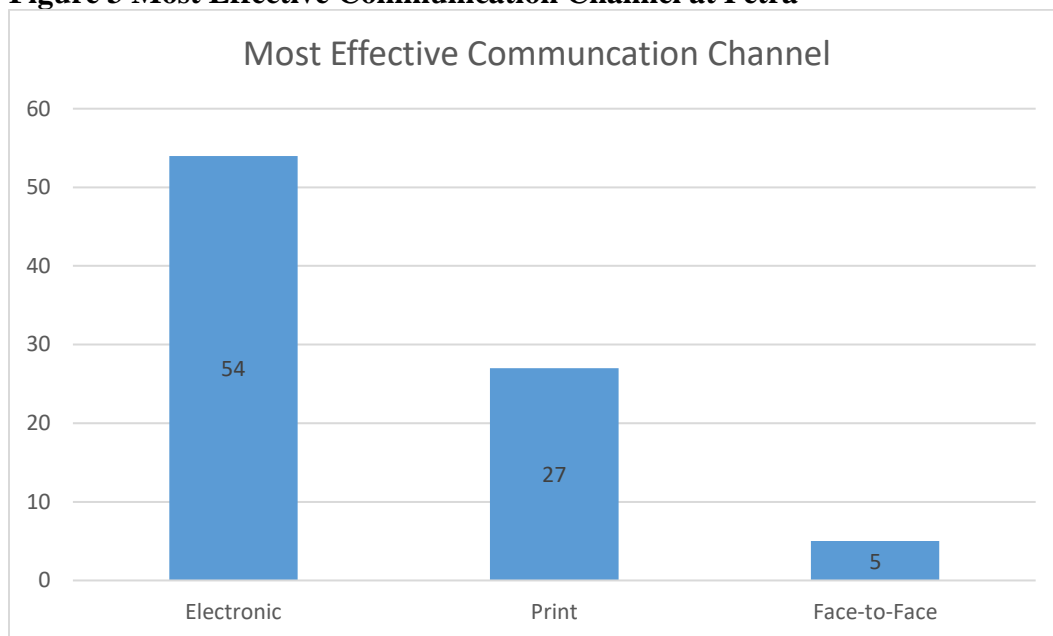
Source: Field Data (2021)

The graph above presents the answers picked by the respondents in the study when asked about which internal communication channel exists at Petra. The graph clearly shows that all the 86 (100%) respondents chose the three main communication channels and confirmed their availability and use at Petra Trust.

4.3.3 Most Effective Internal Communication Channel

Beyond their mere existence, the researcher wanted to find out which channel was the most used and effective within the employees. The most effective channel is obviously the channel that gets the communication process completed with clarity and consistency. Again the channel which result in feedback for the employees as well as one that pose little challenge to the end user is considered the most effective. The question was posed to the participants and the results are presented in the graph below.

Figure 3 Most Effective Communication Channel at Petra



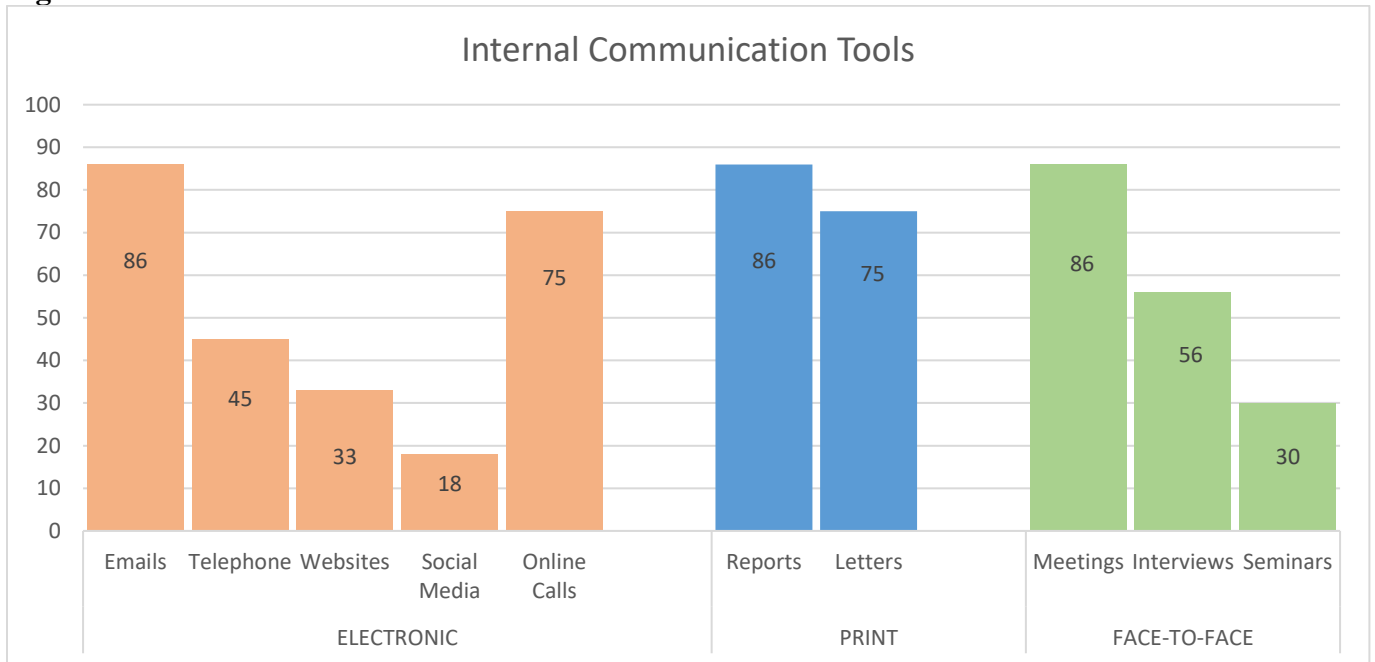
Source: Field Data (2021)

According to the graph, the majority of respondents thus 54 (62.79%) were of the view that the electronic channel remain the most effective channel used at Petra. This is followed by the print channel which was chosen by 27 (31.4%) respondents. The last channel was chosen by only 5 (5.81%) respondents making it the least effective communication channel at Petra.

4.3.4 Internal Communication Tools

The study subsequently aimed at discovering the various internal communication tools which were available and used at Petra. To achieve this, the respondents were provided with an array of internal communication tools and respondents were asked to choose among the lot which tools they were familiar with at Petra. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one tool. The results have been presented in figure 4 below.

Figure 4 Internal Communications Tools at Petra



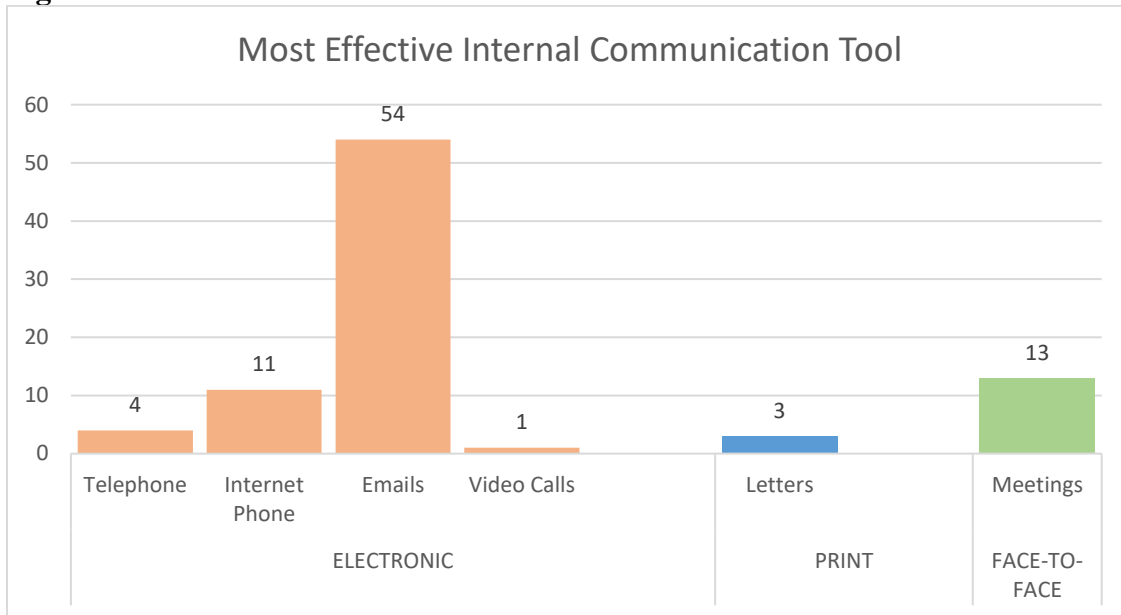
Source: Field Data (2021)

The results from the graph shows that all the tools identified have been grouped under the three main internal communication channels. In all, 4 tools were identified under electronic channel, 2 under print channel while 3 were identified under the face-to-face channel. All the 86 respondents claim they used emails, reports and meetings at Petra. 75 respondents used online calls and letters as means for internal communication. 56 respondents used interviews, 45 used telephones, 33 relied on websites, 30 attended seminars while 18 relied on social media as a means of internal communication tool at Petra.

4.3.5 Most Effective Internal Communication Tools

In a quest to establish the most used and effective internal communication tool at Petra, the researcher posed an open ended question to the participants. The participants were no limited in their choice of answers as the researcher wanted to eliminate any form of bias especially regarding this question. However, the participants were expected to choose only one tool as an answer to this question. The results have been presented in figure 5 below.

Figure 5 Most Effective Internal Communication Tool at Petra



Source: Field Data (2021)

From the graph it is evident that the most used and effective internal communication tool at Petra is the Email system. The result is consistent with the most effective communication channel as emails falls directly under the electronic channel. A majority number of 54 (62.79%) respondents chose emails followed by 13 (15.12%) respondents who believe meetings were the most effective internal communication tool. Subsequently, 11 (12.79%) respondents were of the view that internet phones were the most used tools while 4 (4.65%) respondents claim the telephone was actually the most effective tool. While 3 (3.49%) respondents believe letters remain the most effective tool, one (1.16%) respondent was of the view that video call remain the most effective means of communicating among employees at Petra.

4.4 Internal Communication Challenges at Petra Trust

The third objective of the study is to establish the main challenges confronting internal communication among staff at Petra. The literature review aided the researcher to narrow down the challenges to five main questions which were presented to participants. The participants were

expected to choose whether they strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree with the respective statements posed in the questionnaire. The results are presented in table 9 and table 10 below.

Table 9 Response on Internal Communication Challenges in Percentage

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Count (%) |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| I am able to communicate freely with my superiors | 4.65 | 9.3 | 20.93 | 34.88 | 30.24 | 100 |
| Internal communication is swift with instant feedback | 17.44 | 51.16 | 10.47 | 15.12 | 5.81 | 100 |
| I am aware of an internal communication policy | 1.16 | 11.63 | 54.65 | 12.79 | 19.77 | 100 |
| There are tools to communicate all sort of information at anytime | 10.47 | 19.77 | 30.24 | 25.58 | 13.94 | 100 |
| I am reluctant to share information | 1.16 | 8.14 | 5.81 | 48.84 | 36.05 | 100 |

Table 10 Descriptive Statistics on Internal Communication Challenges

| Measure | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|----|-------|---------|---------|------|----------------|----------|
| I am able to communicate freely with my superiors | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.23 | 1.046 | 1.094 |
| Internal communication is swift with instant feedback | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3.59 | .918 | .842 |
| I am aware of an internal communication policy | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.62 | 1.201 | 1.442 |
| There are tools to communicate all sort of information at anytime | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.87 | 1.252 | 1.567 |
| I am reluctant to share information | 86 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 1.86 | 1.047 | 1.096 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 86 | | | | | | |

N=86 Source: Field Data (2021)

To achieve this objective respondents were first asked whether they were able to communicate freely with their superiors at Petra. Answering this question will help the researcher know if indeed there were the right structures in place and if there were any bottlenecks that hinder free vertical flow of information within the organization. Interestingly majority of the respondents, thus 30 (34.88%) respondents disagree to this assertion together with 26 (30.24%) other respondents who

also strongly disagree. On the other hand, while 8 (9.3%) respondents agree, 4 (4.65%) other respondents also strongly agree to the statement. There were respondents who were indifferent as to their position of the matter and they are made up of 18 (20.93%) respondents. Overall, the average respondent holds the view that they are unable to communicate freely with their superiors.

How swift is internal communication at Petra and is feedback received often by staff? This is the second question the researcher posed to the participants in the quest to identify the internal communication challenges at Petra. This question was answered in the affirmative by a resounding majority of 44 (51.16%) respondents who agreed to the statement. Akin to this group of respondents were 15 (17.44%) respondents who also strongly agree. Contrarily 13 (15.12%) respondents disagree and another 5 (5.81%) respondents strongly disagree. Those who were not sure about this statement are made up of 9(10.47%) respondents. The average staff at Petra either agrees or not sure about the swiftness of internal communication and feedback.

Thirdly the question of internal communication policy pops up again and the result is no different from what respondents answered earlier under the first objective. A majority comprising of 47 (54.65%) respondents expressed their ignorance about such a policy document. Additionally, a total number of 17 (19.77%) respondents strongly disagree to this notion together with 11 (12.79%) other respondents who also disagree. Contrarily while 10 (11.63%) respondents agree to this statement a sole respondent strongly agreed that there was an internal communication document at Petra Trust. The mean value of 2.62 indicates that the average respondent disagrees that there is any such internal communication policy document.

Respondents were expected to respond to the statement “There are tools to communicate all sort of information at any time.” The researcher wanted to find out if staff were equipped with all the relevant internal communication tools that will enable them to communicate any form of

information at the workplace. This is premised on the notion that not all communication tools can be used for all manner of communication. The respondents were widely divided when it comes to this question as this is evident in a wide spread away from the mean of 2.87 with a standard deviation of 1.252 and a variance of 1.567. The result simply means the average respondent is either unsure or disagrees with this assertion. The results recorded are 9 (10.47%) respondents strongly agree, 17 (19.77%) respondents agree, 26 (30.24%) respondents not sure, 22 (25.58%) respondents disagree and 12 (13.94%) respondents strongly disagree.

Finally, another significant question which the researcher seeks to answer is whether staff are reluctant to share information with fellow staff. Are there any hindrances or disincentives to information sharing at Petra Trust? With a resultant mean value of 1.86, the study revealed that the average respondent disagrees with the assertion that they are reluctant to share information with their colleagues. The results from the questionnaire is presented as follows, 1 (1.16%) respondent strongly agrees, 7 (8.14%) respondents agree, 5 (5.81%) respondents not sure, 42 (48.84%) respondents disagree and 31 (36.05%) respondents strongly disagree.

4.5 Discussion

Although the study intended to make use of a sample of 100 employees, only 86 questionnaires were received by the researcher. This formed the basis of the study. Out of the 86 respondents, 52 were males and 34 were females. Majority of the respondents, thus 34 fell in the age bracket of 30 to 40 years. Most of the respondents had gained ample years of experience at Petra Trust with 37 respondents having worked between 6 to 10 years at the firm. Out of the total respondents, 18 are from management and the remaining 68 are regular staff of Petra.

The findings of the study show that there is an internal communication system in place at Petra Trust. This was confirmed by a staggering 63.95% of the participants. The participants were

divided when the question of their involvement during the formulation of this internal communication system was posed. This sends a signal to the researcher that there is a lack of ownership of the system by all staff. Majority of the respondents also disagree that there is a clear understanding of the internal communication system. The respondents believe that more support is needed from all key stakeholders when it comes to internal communication at Petra Trust. Interestingly, 54.65% of the respondents were not sure whether there is an internal communication policy in place at Petra. The researcher found this worrying as having a policy document remains a key step in achieving effective internal communication. Concurrently, 56.98% of the respondents claim there were not sure of an internal communication strategy at Petra Trust. Mazzei and Ravazzani (2014) note in their paper the importance of having an internal communication policy and strategy in place at all times. They go further to posit that these documents should be reviewed periodically for organization to stay relevant in the market. This points to the fact that although staff were communicating internally, they were doing this unconsciously without any clear direction from management. There was frequent horizontal flow of communication than vertical flow at Petra Trust. The result is consistent with the findings of Adler and Elmhorst (2002) who found there was more horizontal internal communication at General Electric. They however concluded that it was important to maintain a downward communication at the workplace so that employees will feel valued and ultimately satisfied.

The study revealed three main channels of internal communication at Petra Trust. They are Electronic, Print and Face-to-face channels. 54 of the respondents, which make the majority, claim that electronic channel remain the most effective internal communication channel at Petra Trust. There were a wide array of internal communication tools available to staff at Petra Trust and they include emails, telephone, websites, reports, letters, meetings, interviews and seminars. 54

respondents claim the emails remain the most effective internal communication tool that is used at Petra Trust. This was followed by meetings, thus the second most effective internal communication tool at Petra.

Most of the respondents revealed that they found it difficult to communicate freely with their superiors at work. The researcher believes that the existing organizational culture was primarily responsible for this challenge. A minority number of staff think that internal communication at Petra Trust is slow with no immediate feedback when information is sent. Over 50% of the respondents claim that they lack the right tools to communicate all sort of information at Petra Trust. Clearly some staff are unable to pass some information due to lack of proper channel and tools, a situation that may pose a threat to effective communication. This finding is in line with Kalla's (2005) study which found that the use of a wrong communication tool may send the wrong information to the intended party. Despite these challenges, staff at Petra Trust are not reluctant at all to share information at the workplace.

4.6 Chapter Summary

The data collected for the study was grouped, analyzed and interpreted in this chapter. Various statistical analyses were conducted to arrive at meaningful results that specifically addressed the three main objectives of the study. The results were further interpreted. The questionnaires constitute the research tool used in collecting the primary data for the study. At the end, the researcher was able to satisfy all the objectives set.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The summary of the study is presented in this chapter. Additionally, a comprehensive conclusion is drawn and recommendations are made based on the findings of the study. The objectives of the study as set out clearly before the study began have all been met. This study therefore adds new knowledge to the existing literature on the impact of internal communication tools within an organization.

5.1 Summary of Findings

Generally the study was conducted with a scientific approach where data was collected, grouped, analysed, tested and results formulated. The research design employed for the study was a case study. The nature of the study coupled with the limited time scope left us with no option but to adopt a case study design. One importance of case study is that it presents an objective way for investigating a phenomenon within a real life context. A quantitative research approach method was used in the study. The data collection tool was mainly questionnaires and interview sessions. A total of 100 questionnaires were sent but valid ones received was 86 which formed the basis for this research. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents needed for the study. The simple purposive sampling method is an equal-probability sampling method which is more accurate in dealing with the case study hence the reason for its adoption. The data used for the study was primary data and it shows the true reflection of what is on the ground. The results are therefore valid and reliable.

5.2 Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study have been presented in accordance with the objectives of the study below:

5.2.1 Socio-Demographic Factors

The study found out that there were more males than females at Petra Trust Limited. In view of this revelation, the research tried to maintain a balance between both genders by engaging 60.47% males and 39.53% females, a difference which can be considered modest. The majority of the respondents fall within the active age group of 30-40 years. Most of the respondents were highly skilled and fit enough to participate in the research. In terms of qualification, a total of 48 respondents out of the sample size of 86 had first degree. In addition, 43.02% of the participants had between six years and ten years work experience at the organization. The study focused on both management and staff classification. A comprehensive view from both groups were incorporated into the study. The results therefore represent a genuine and broad perspective about the reality on the ground.

5.2.2 Internal Communication Process at Petra Trust

The study proved that there exists an internal communication process at Petra Trust. An overwhelming 63.95% of the respondents agreed when this statement was posed to them. The findings show a rather poor level of staff involvement in the overall formulation of the internal communication process. Out of the 86 responses received, 40.7% were not sure whether the internal communication criteria have been set in close consultation with employees. There is also some lack of clear understanding and support from key stakeholders. While some agree this is the case, an equal number also disagree. This difference in opinion buttresses the point that indeed there is some form of ambiguity surrounding the internal communication process at Petra.

Additionally, majority of the respondents were not sure if there exist an internal communication policy at Petra Trust. This result is in tandem with the result for internal communication strategy as 56.98% of the respondents were not sure whether there exist any of such strategy at Petra. The study also found out that there exists more horizontal communication within Petra than Vertical communication.

5.2.3 Internal Communication Tools at Petra Trust

The study also set out to assess the internal communication tools that are used at Petra Trust. Top management has a crucial task of achieving organizational objectives in order to meet shareholders expectations. For this to happen, there is the need for employees to be able to communicate effectively. Effective communication requires the right tools and channels are accessible to all employees. The study shed light on three main internal communication channels that exist at Petra Trust namely print, electronic and face-to-face. The most effective channel identified by the respondents was the electronic channel. The staff went further to state that emails were the most effective internal communication tool used by staff at Petra Trust.

5.2.4 Internal Communication Challenges at Petra Trust

The final research objective looked at the internal communication challenges at Petra Trust. There were issues regarding fear of being victimized, receiving delayed feedback and lack of awareness about internal communication policy and strategy. Even though some of the concerns raised were highlighted by a minority of the respondents, there is still the need for them to be addressed by management to enable a total satisfaction by all staff.

5.3 Conclusion

Petra Trust operates in a highly competitive industry. Its survival therefore depends on how it performs effectively in the marketplace by sustaining and increasing its market share. Access to information is key to achieving organizational success. It translates into the establishment of a comprehensive internal communication system that in effect creates the vehicle that drives employee performance. A well-informed employee is able to meet set targets and increase the fortunes of the organization as a whole.

Petra Trust has in place a comprehensive internal communication system that is able to help disseminate critical information to internal staff. This system is fairly understood and supported by all stake holders. Top management has exhibited some commitment by providing the policy direction, needed resources and training to effectively implement the internal communication system. Employees have also portrayed the right commitment by demonstrating ownership of the internal communication system by employing the predominant use of electronic channels of communication at the workplace. Despite the findings of minor challenges in the form of unfair treatment and lack of proper feedback, the researcher strongly believes that the existing internal communication tools remain effective communication tools needed to promote overall success of the organization.

5.4 Recommendations

The recommendations of the study are as follow:

5.4.1 Promote Awareness of Internal Communication Policy

An effective internal communication system requires the existence of a comprehensive communication policy that gives clear direction on what information needs to be communicated

at what particular time and by who. It is this document that lays the foundation for a successful internal communication process to occur. The lack of awareness of such a policy document by the staff leaves much to be desired. It is therefore imperative on the top management to promote awareness of an internal communication policy amongst the staff.

5.4.2 Need for Regular Training for Staff

Honest, open and transparent employee communication is essential for a thriving organization (Stein, 2006). It is against this backdrop that the researcher believes employees must be regularly trained by management on how to communicate effectively and with clarity. Again the trainings should be aimed at improving the knowledge base and skill in the usage of several modern internal communication tools that spring up. ,

5.4.3 Promote More Internal Communication Between Staff and Management

The findings revealed that the internal communication that exists at Petra Trust was more of a horizontal nature, thus peer-to-peer and between departments to department. Although this is essential, there is also the need for more vertical communication to be promoted at Petra Trust. Upward communication flow allows for collaborative communication between employees and superiors. This way, there is broad consensus as ideas and feedback are transferred from staff to management which are then factored into critical decision making. Management must endeavour to communicate key messages that are essential for the achievement of set goals to all staff as often as possible. Promoting more vertical internal communication results in total buy-in of organizational strategy and vision by all and sundry (Argenti, 2007).

5.4.4 Constant Monitoring and Audit of Internal Communication Processes

A rigorous internal communication process requires a constant monitoring and audit procedures of all the various stages communication as well as the internal communication tools used by the organization. Constant monitoring can reveal which communication channels are more effective to use. Proactive surveys can be conducted to elicit critical information from staff. The audit can also reveal which communication tools result yield effective outcomes and by so doing management can know which tools to develop and which tools to expunge from the array of communication tools.

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The criteria have been set in close consultation with employees

There is clear understanding and support from key stakeholders

There is an internal communication policy in place at Petra

There is an internal communication strategy in place at Petra

There is frequent internal communication with superiors

There is frequent internal communication with peers

iii. Internal Communication Tools at PETRA

1. Which internal communication channel exists at Petra?
 - a. Electronic
 - b. Print
 - c. Face-to-Face
2. Which internal communication channel is most effective at Petra?
 - a. Electronic
 - b. Print
 - c. Face-to-Face

3. Which internal communication tool do you use at Petra?

| Electronic | Print | Face to Face |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| E-mails | Memos | Meetings |
| Intranet | Newsletters | Durbars |
| Telephone | Noticeboards | Interviews |
| Fax | Reports | Seminars |
| SMS | Brochures | Workshops |
| Websites | Letters | |
| Social Media | Posters | |
| Video Calls | | |

4. With reference from Q3, mention the most effective internal communication tool used at Petra.

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iv. Internal Communication Challenges

Kindly indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 the extent to which you agree to the statements below.

5-Stronly Agree 4-Agree 3.Not Sure 2-Disagree 1.Strongly Disagree

5 4 3 2 1

I am able to communicate freely with my superiors

Internal communication is swift with instant feedback

I am aware of an internal communication policy

There are tools to communicate all sort of information at anytime

I am reluctant to share information