

UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS AND COMMUNICATION (UniMAC)

INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST: EXPLORING
THE IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

SAHADATU SACKYBIA AMOO

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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BY

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DECLARATIONS

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Sahadatu Sackeybia Amoo, declare that this thesis, except quotations and references contained in published works, which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere. Therefore, I bear the responsibility for any shortcomings.


.....

SAHADATU SACKYBIA AMOO (Student) DATE: 10th December, 2025

SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

I, the undersigned supervisor, declare that I supervised the preparation and presentation of this work in accordance with the guidelines for the supervision of MA thesis as laid down by the University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC)


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REV. YAW ODAME GYAU (Principal Supervisor) DATE: 10th December, 2025

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all employees across the public and private sectors whose contributions often go unrecognized, whose efforts are overlooked, and whose voices are unheard. May this study serve as a reminder that fair leadership, meaningful communication, and trust are essential for every workplace to thrive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Leadership, communication, and organizational trust remain central determinants of employee performance in contemporary work environments. As organizations face increasing pressure to remain competitive, productive, and adaptive, understanding how these three elements interact has become crucial. This study examines the relationship between leadership practices, communication effectiveness, and organizational trust, and explores how these factors collectively influence employee performance within selected institutions. Drawing on established theories in organizational communication, leadership, and behavioural management, the research investigates how employees interpret leadership behaviour, how communication channels shape workplace engagement, and how the presence or absence of trust affects productivity and commitment.

The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to obtain a well-rounded understanding of employee perceptions. The quantitative component analyzes trends in leadership style, internal communication flow, and trust levels, while the qualitative insights provide deeper context into employees' lived experiences. The findings reveal that leadership style significantly shapes communication climate, which in turn plays a key role in building or eroding organizational trust. Employees who perceive their leaders as supportive, transparent, and fair report higher levels of trust and perform better in their roles. Conversely, poor communication, inconsistent leadership behaviour, and lack of transparency contribute to low morale, reduced engagement, and weakened performance outcomes.

The results further indicate that trust acts as a mediating factor between leadership and performance. When trust is strong, employees demonstrate higher motivation, willingness to collaborate, and commitment to organizational goals. Additionally, effective communication was found to reinforce clarity, reduce conflict, promote accountability, and align employees with the organization's strategic direction. These findings highlight the importance of leadership development, communication training, and organizational culture-building as strategic tools for improving overall employee performance.

The study concludes that organizations seeking sustainable growth must prioritize leadership competence, foster open and consistent communication, and intentionally build trust as a core organizational value. Recommendations include implementing leadership training focused on emotional intelligence and transparency, establishing clear communication structures, and creating systems that promote fairness, recognition, and accountability. By strengthening these three pillars—leadership, communication, and trust—organizations can create environments that empower employees and enhance performance.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Background to study

Leadership communication has become a vital driver of organisational effectiveness in contemporary workplaces. It shapes how employees understand goals, perceive leaders, and align their efforts. Effective communication fosters clarity, trust, motivation, and commitment, whereas poor communication creates doubt, disengagement, and reduced performance. Research consistently shows that open, empathetic, and consistent communication strengthens organisational trust, which in turn enhances psychological safety, engagement, and job performance.

Although these relationships are well studied in developed economies, they remain underexplored in emerging contexts like Ghana. Ghanaian organisations—especially in the public sector- often face communication barriers, bureaucratic opacity, and declining morale. The private sector also struggles with inconsistent messaging and trust deficits. Despite growing interest in leadership and organisational culture, little empirical work has examined how leadership communication specifically builds trust and improves performance across sectors. This creates an important research gap, particularly because communication is the primary channel through which leadership intentions are expressed and interpreted.

Theoretical perspectives such as Transformational Leadership and Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) highlight the importance of communication in building trust and strengthening leader–employee relationships. Studies show that communication and teamwork predict trust, and that trust mediates the link between leadership behaviour and employee performance. However, how these dynamics unfold in Ghana, where socio-cultural values, high power distance, and hierarchical norms shape communication, remains unclear.

Given Ghana's rapidly evolving work environment, effective, transparent, and empathetic communication is increasingly essential. Employees expect authenticity and inclusion, making leadership communication a strategic bridge between organisational values and employee behaviour. Understanding how communication shapes trust and performance will provide valuable insights for policy, human resource development, and institutional reform in both public and private institutions.

Statement of the Problem

Organisational success increasingly depends on leaders' ability to communicate clearly and build trust. Transparent and consistent communication motivates employees, while ambiguous communication weakens confidence and productivity. Although global studies confirm that leadership communication enhances trust and performance, little is known about how this occurs in Ghana's unique cultural and organisational context. High power distance, limited upward communication, and leadership inconsistency often erode trust in Ghanaian institutions—particularly in the public sector.

Existing research shows that communication behaviours such as clarity, transparency, and feedback strengthen trust and job satisfaction, and that trust mediates the link between leadership behaviour and performance. Yet most studies treat communication, trust, and performance separately and overlook their interactive effects in African settings. Few studies integrate Transformational Leadership and LMX to understand how communication builds trust and drives performance.

The core problem is the lack of context-specific evidence on how leadership communication influences trust and performance in Ghanaian organisations. Many leaders rely on intuition rather than evidence-based communication strategies, creating misalignment between intentions and employee perceptions. Without understanding the mechanisms through which

communication builds trust, leadership development efforts risk being ineffective. This study therefore examines how leadership communication affects trust, how trust mediates performance, and how these dynamics differ across public and private sectors.

1.1 General objective

To comprehensively examine how leadership communication behaviors influence employee performance in Ghanaian organizations by analyzing the mediating role of organizational trust, the moderating effects of leader–member exchange quality and transformational leadership styles, and the contextual variations across public and private sector settings.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To investigate how specific leadership communication behaviors, such as clarity, transparency, empathy, and feedback, shape organizational trust among employees in Ghanaian organizations.
2. To assess the direct impact of organizational trust on employee performance outcomes, including task performance, commitment, and innovative behavior.
3. To determine the mediating role of organizational trust in the relationship between leadership communication and employee performance.
4. To compare the influence of leadership communication on trust and performance between Ghana's private and public sector organizations, identifying contextual factors that explain variations in these relationships.
5. To examine the moderating effects of leader–member exchange (LMX) quality and transformational leadership communication styles on the relationship between organizational trust and employee performance.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How do leadership communication behaviors, such as clarity, transparency, empathy, and feedback ,influence organizational trust among employees in Ghanaian organizations?
2. What is the relationship between organizational trust and employee performance outcomes, including task performance, commitment, and innovative behavior?
3. Does organizational trust mediate the relationship between leadership communication and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations?
4. How do the relationships among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance differ between private corporations and public sector institutions in Ghana?
5. In what ways do transformational leadership communication practices and the quality of leader–member exchange (LMX) moderate the relationship between organizational trust and employee performance?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

For the quantitative component, the following null and alternative hypotheses are proposed at a significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$:

H1: Leadership communication behaviors are positively and significantly associated with organizational trust among employees in Ghanaian organizations.

H2: Organizational trust is positively and significantly associated with employee performance outcomes.

H3: Leadership communication behaviors are positively and significantly associated with employee performance.

H4: Organizational trust mediates the relationship between leadership communication and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations.

H5: The strength and direction of the relationship between leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance differ significantly between public and private sector organizations.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study explores how leadership communication impacts trust and employee performance in Ghanaian public and private sectors. Effective communication influences organizational success by shaping employee perceptions, engagement, and goal alignment, especially amid Ghana's evolving work environment with complex hierarchies and cultural expectations. Despite its importance, evidence from African contexts like Ghana is limited, where power distance, collectivism, and bureaucracy affect communication. By examining behaviors such as transparency, clarity, feedback, and empathy, the study aims to show how communication impacts trust and performance. It combines Transformational Leadership and Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) theories to explain communication as both behavioral and relational, extending existing models to Ghana's context and illustrating how trust enhances performance. Findings will inform leadership training, internal communication strategies, and policies to foster transparent and cohesive work cultures. The study also offers policy recommendations to improve leadership development, governance, and public trust, integrating communication skills into leadership assessments. Using a mixed methods approach, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between communication, trust, and performance. Ultimately, this research advances theory and practice by clarifying how leadership communication builds trust and boosts employee performance, promoting stronger organizational cultures in Ghana.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters, each focusing on a specific aspect of the research process to ensure logical development and clarity of presentation.

Chapter One presents the introduction to the study, providing the background and context within which the research is situated. It discusses the problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, significance, scope, and limitations of the study. This chapter establishes the foundation for understanding the purpose, relevance, and direction of the research.

Chapter Two focuses on the review of relevant literature and theoretical foundations underpinning the study. It examines existing studies on leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance, highlighting conceptual definitions, empirical findings, and theoretical frameworks such as Transformational Leadership and Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) theories. The chapter identifies gaps in previous research that justify the present study and establishes the conceptual model guiding the investigation.

Chapter Three outlines the methodology employed in the research. It details the research philosophy, approach, and design, describing the mixed-methods sequential explanatory strategy adopted. The chapter also discusses population research, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, procedures, and data analysis methods used in both the quantitative and qualitative phases. Ethical considerations guiding the research process are also presented.

Chapter Four presents the data analysis, results, and interpretation of the study's findings. It provides descriptive and inferential statistical analyses for quantitative data, as well as thematic analysis for qualitative data. The findings are discussed in relation to the research questions, hypotheses, and relevant literature to demonstrate how leadership communication influences organizational trust and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations.

Chapter Five concludes the study by presenting the summary of key findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It discusses the theoretical, practical, and policy implications of the results, offers recommendations for leaders, managers, and policymakers, and suggests directions for future research.

The structure of the study ensures a coherent progression from theoretical grounding to empirical analysis and practical application, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how leadership communication fosters organizational trust and enhances employee performance within the Ghanaian context.

Chapter Two: Literature review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of related literature on leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance. It specifically discusses existing studies on how leadership communication practices influence trust and performance in organizations. The review also examines the theoretical foundations of the study, including Transformational Leadership Theory and Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, which explain the relationship between communication, trust, and employee outcomes. In addition, the chapter highlights empirical findings from previous research, identifies knowledge gaps in the Ghanaian context, and presents the conceptual framework that guides the study.

2.1 Definition of Key Terms

2.1.1 The Concept of Leadership Communication

Empirical studies show that leadership communication behaviors like transparency, clarity, and active feedback predict higher employee trust and job satisfaction (Eva et al., 2024; Hasnidar et al., 2023). Trust mediates the link between leadership behavior and performance outcomes (Qin & Men, 2022), with Bui (2024) noting that trust in leadership boosts job performance even in remote and hybrid work settings. However, research has largely treated leadership communication, trust, and performance as separate constructs, offering limited understanding of their interactions. There is little insight into how specific leadership practices like clarity, empathy, or feedback impact organizational trust and translate into measurable employee performance outcomes, particularly in diverse Ghanaian work environments.

2.1.2 The Concept of Organizational Trust

Organizational trust acts as a social lubricant that fosters cooperation, reduces uncertainty, and enhances communication. When employees trust their leaders, they are more likely to embrace

company values and contribute to collective success. In contrast, eroded trust can lead to disengagement and resistance to change, highlighting trust as both a psychological mechanism and strategic asset crucial for long-term effectiveness (Qin & Men, 2022).

Trust develops gradually through consistent communication, fairness, and empathetic leadership. A study by Eva, Afroze, and Sarker (2024) in Bangladesh's banking sector found that teamwork and transparent communication are key predictors of trust, suggesting that relational communication behaviors are essential for cultivating confidence in leadership. Similarly, Bui (2024) showed that trust mediates the relationship between leadership practices and employee performance, remaining vital even in remote environments.

Interpersonal and organizational trust, while conceptually distinct, are interconnected: the former underpins the latter. Leaders who demonstrate integrity and empathy build broader institutional trust, while inconsistent behavior can undermine both. Theories such as Leader-Member Exchange and Transformational Leadership provide insights into how trust is cultivated through communication, with trust serving as both an outcome and mechanism of effective leadership.

Trust also mediates the relationship between communication quality and employee outcomes like job satisfaction and performance. Hasnidar et al. (2023) and Bui (2024) emphasize that trust is essential for converting communication into commitment and tangible results, reinforcing its importance in today's rapidly changing organizational landscape.

2.1.3 The Concept of Employee Performance

Employee performance is a critical concept in organizational behavior, defined as the effectiveness with which employees fulfill their duties and contribute to organizational goals. Armstrong (2020) outlines that it encompasses both the quality and quantity of work within a specific timeframe, involving aspects beyond just task execution, such as initiative, creativity,

teamwork, and adaptability. Historically assessed through objective metrics like productivity, contemporary approaches emphasize a multidimensional perspective, distinguishing between task performance, focusing on core job responsibilities, and contextual performance, which includes discretionary behaviors that enhance the organizational climate, such as cooperation and innovation (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

This multifaceted construct highlights the importance of both technical proficiency and psychological engagement, as the complexity of organizations increases the necessity for adaptability and emotional intelligence. Leadership communication is pivotal in influencing performance outcomes, aligning individual activities with the organization's vision. It fosters clarity and meaning in employees' work, significantly enhancing job satisfaction and task efficiency (Ong et al., 2019). Research demonstrates that leadership communication, teamwork, and trust account for a substantial variance in employee performance, emphasizing the correlation between communicative practices and relational dynamics.

Transformational Leadership Theory supports this connection, where leaders inspire employees through clear communication of a compelling vision, driving them to exceed job expectations and embrace organizational values (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Effective leadership hinges on communicative competence; without it, leaders struggle to elicit high performance. Furthermore, trust plays a crucial role by encouraging initiative and collaborative problem-solving, as employees are more inclined to engage when they view their leaders as honest and competent, reinforcing the notion that high performance is not solely a function of technical ability but also of relational dynamics within the workplace.

2.1.4 Overview of Leadership Communication in Ghanaian Organizations

Leadership communication in Ghanaian organizations is influenced by both traditional hierarchies and modern management approaches. Historically, communication has been top-

down, emphasizing respect for authority, while recent shifts have introduced more dialogic and trust-focused models due to globalization and the impact of multinational corporations. These newer leadership styles prioritize empathy, collaboration, and open feedback, highlighting communication as a strategic tool for building trust and engagement. Research indicates a strong link between communication competence and employee trust, which enhances problem-solving. However, in the public sector, bureaucratic structures often inhibit dialogue and dampen employee morale, contrasting with the private sector's more inclusive communication practices that utilize digital tools for better engagement. Additionally, cultural factors such as high power distance in Ghana affect communication dynamics, making it challenging for subordinates to voice dissent, although inclusive practices can help foster trust and commitment.

2.1.5 Overview of Organizational Trust in Ghanaian Organizations

Organizational trust plays a vital role in effective leadership and sustained employee performance, defined as the willingness of employees to be vulnerable to their leaders, grounded in their expectations of competence, fairness, integrity, and benevolence (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). It operates on two levels: interpersonal trust between leaders and subordinates and institutional trust in organizational structures. Effective leadership communication is crucial for fostering this trust, as it promotes transparency and strengthens the credibility of leaders (Men & Stacks, 2013; Zaman et al., 2018). In the context of Ghana, research indicates that leadership communication significantly improves employee trust and performance (Eva, Afroze, & Sarker, 2024), supported by the Joint European Forum for Management Studies (JEFMS, 2024), which emphasizes that clear communication and participatory decision-making enhance reliability and productivity. Nonetheless, Ghanaian organizations face challenges such as cultural and structural barriers—particularly a rigid respect for authority—that can hinder open dialogue (Hofstede, 1983).

Bureaucratic practices within the public sector often undermine trust in leadership (Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2021), while private organizations tend to embrace more progressive communication practices, fostering inclusivity and information symmetry (Boateng & Agyeman, 2021). The relationship between communication and trust is closely linked to psychological safety, wherein consistent and empathetic communication from leaders encourages employees to engage in interpersonal risks, ultimately reinforcing trust and organizational commitment.

2.1.6 Overview of Employee Performance in Ghanaian Organizations

Employee performance is a key measure of organizational effectiveness in Ghana, encompassing not only productivity but also aspects such as teamwork, creativity, and ethical standards. Research highlights the importance of effective leadership communication, organizational trust, and a supportive workplace climate in improving performance levels. Open communication is particularly vital, as it aligns personal and institutional goals, while its absence can lead to frustration and decreased productivity. Soft skills, including communication, critical thinking, and adaptability, play a significant role in enhancing employee performance, with empathetic leadership further boosting productivity. However, Ghana's collectivist culture, while promoting teamwork, may inhibit creativity if employees do not feel comfortable sharing diverse ideas. Leaders are tasked with balancing cultural considerations with promoting initiative and accountability. Additionally, sectoral variations impact performance, as the private sector typically implements structured performance management systems that reward high achievers, whereas the public sector may face bureaucratic inefficiencies that reduce motivation. Ultimately, cultivating a culture of open dialogue and transparency is essential for increasing employee engagement and reducing turnover.

2.1.7 Relationship among Leadership Communication, Organizational Trust, and Employee Performance

The interrelationship between leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance is a well-studied theme in organizational behavior and management. These constructs reinforce each other, forming a dynamic system essential for organizational effectiveness. Leadership communication lays the foundation for trust, which enables employees to exceed their roles, connecting leadership behavior to motivation, commitment, and productivity. In hierarchical environments, like those in Ghana, communication serves as a bridge between authority and engagement. Open and transparent communication fosters trust, while inconsistent communication can lead to suspicion and disengagement, negatively impacting performance.

Research shows that leadership communication significantly influences organizational trust by shaping perceptions of leader integrity and concern for employee welfare. Trust, acting as a mediator, enhances performance as employees feel psychologically safe to express ideas and commit to organizational objectives. Studies have found strong correlations between effective communication and increased employee trust and performance, with leaders who engage in two-way communication contributing to team cohesion and morale.

Leadership communication, through actions like consistency and timely feedback, builds trust and inspires employee effort. Poor communication, characterized by irregular information and lack of consideration for employee perspectives, undermines trust and reduces productivity. Theoretical frameworks such as Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes inspiring communication, and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, focusing on quality relationships, illustrate how communication, trust, and performance are interlinked.

Moreover, the role of soft skills and emotional intelligence is crucial in this triadic relationship, with traits like empathy enhancing trust and team collaboration. In the Ghanaian context, cultural dynamics influence this relationship, requiring a balance between traditional authority and participatory communication. Empirical evidence indicates that inclusive communication practices yield higher trust and commitment among employees.

Additionally, the growth of digital communication in Ghanaian workplaces highlights the importance of clarity and emotional presence in maintaining trust. Effective leadership communication fosters a cycle where trust enhances employee performance, while weak communication erodes trust, leading to diminished performance. Overall, these elements demonstrate a reciprocal and dynamic connection, wherein effective communication builds trust, trust boosts engagement, and engagement drives performance.

2.1.8 Overview of Leadership, Trust, and Employee Relations in Ghanaian Organizations

The Ghanaian organizational environment has transformed in leadership, communication, and employee relations due to globalization, technological advancements, and exposure to international management philosophies. Traditionally, public sector organizations operated in a centralized hierarchical manner, emphasizing control and compliance, which stifled creativity and participatory decision-making. In contrast, the current workplace increasingly prioritizes open communication, teamwork, and trust, influenced by multinational corporations and management education. Key contemporary leadership frameworks, such as transformational leadership, highlight the importance of inspiring and building trust through effective communication.

Studies in Ghana reveal that strong employee relations and high performance hinge on effective communication and trust. For instance, research indicates that organizations fostering open dialogue see greater engagement and productivity. However, challenges persist in the public sector, where bureaucratic structures limit employee feedback and contribute to

low morale. Private sector organizations tend to align better with global communication standards, leveraging technology for improved trust and collaboration.

Trust in the workplace is deeply influenced by Ghana's cultural values of respect, fairness, and social harmony. Effective leadership communication must align with cultural expectations to foster trust. The shift towards digital communication accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic requires leaders to adapt and develop digital competencies to maintain employee morale.

Moreover, personal attributes and soft skills have become crucial for enhancing employee relations. Leaders exhibiting strong ethical standards and adaptability are more successful in cultivating high-performing teams. Research demonstrates that communication and trust are interdependent constructs that lead to increased employee engagement and creativity. The evolving dynamics in Ghanaian organizations reflect a trend towards relational, participatory approaches in leadership, emphasizing ethical leadership and communication competence. Leaders committed to transparent and inclusive practices will enhance trust, morale, and organizational success, particularly in the culturally rooted Ghanaian context.

2.1.9 The Role of Leadership Communication and Organizational Trust in Employee Performance

Leadership communication and organizational trust are critical determinants of employee performance and organizational effectiveness. Effective communication is not just information exchange, but a relational process that fosters alignment and emotional connection between leaders and employees. Historical communication cultures in Ghana have been top-down, limiting employee participation, but recent shifts towards participatory practices have emerged. Modern leadership emphasizes clarity, empathy, and collaboration, which are linked to higher trust levels and improved performance. Empirical studies indicate that communication skills

and teamwork positively impact trust and employee performance, reinforcing the idea that effective communication builds trust, which in turn enhances productivity. Trust operates as a psychological contract, reducing uncertainty and fostering cooperation and safety within organizations. Ineffective communication can lead to low morale and trust, while transparent communication results in higher satisfaction and performance. Leadership theories like Transformational Leadership and Leader–Member Exchange further emphasize the need for effective communication to foster trust and drive performance outcomes. Cultural factors in Ghana, characterized by high power distance, challenge leaders to balance hierarchy with inclusive communication. Additionally, the digital transformation demands leaders to maintain trust in virtual environments through frequent, empathetic communication. Ultimately, leadership communication and organizational trust are interconnected constructs that shape employee engagement, innovation, and resilience, creating a self-reinforcing cycle that sustains performance. This dynamic is particularly vital in Ghana, emphasizing the dual pillars of effective communication and trust in achieving sustainable organizational performance.

2.1.10 Effects of Leadership Communication and

The interaction between leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance has become a crucial area of study in organizational and behavioral research, particularly within the context of Ghana. Effective communication is recognized as a vital tool for leaders to influence employee attitudes and performance (Men & Stacks, 2014; Qin & Men, 2022). It serves not just to issue directives but as a dynamic process that fosters meaning, builds trust, and encourages collaboration towards organizational objectives (Men & Yue, 2019; Sarker et al., 2019). In Ghana, where cultural norms and hierarchical structures play significant roles, leadership communication is essential in establishing trust and enhancing employee productivity (Oppong, 2019; Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2021).

Transformational leadership communication is found to significantly boost employee

engagement and commitment to organizational values. Studies indicate that transparent and reciprocal communication helps in building trust and cultivating intrinsic motivation among employees (Men & Stacks, 2014; Men & Yue, 2019). Conversely, a lack of authenticity in communication—which occurs when leaders' actions do not align with their verbal messages—can lead to diminished trust and increased cynicism, ultimately resulting in decreased performance. This is particularly relevant in Ghanaian cultural contexts, where credibility is linked to the consistency of leaders' words and actions (Adu & Nyarko, 2023).

Additional research has shown that effective communication is especially vital during crises or organizational changes. Consistent and empathetic communication is crucial for fostering trust in uncertain times, as it provides reassurance and psychological safety for employees (Mishra et al., 2014; Edmondson, 2018). In the face of economic instability, strong leadership communication becomes even more important in maintaining employee morale (Agyapong, 2018).

Studies specific to Ghana, including those by Agyenim-Boateng et al. (2021), have indicated a direct correlation between communication-centered leadership styles and enhanced productivity and job satisfaction. The findings emphasize that trust mediates the link between communication and employee performance, indicating that effective communication alone is insufficient without fostering an environment of trust. Poor information flow and favoritism are cited as detrimental factors contributing to low morale and high turnover in public institutions.

Furthermore, research by Men and Bowen (2017) across various corporations revealed that employees view authentic and relational leadership communication as critical to their engagement and performance. Trust acts as a psychological connection that links effective

communication with performance outcomes, particularly in Ghana, where employees evaluate leadership on relational competencies as well as technical abilities (Ohemeng & Amoako-Asiedu, 2019).

Ohemeng and Amoako-Asiedu (2019) highlighted the detrimental impact of ineffective internal communication on employee trust, while also showing that transparent communication practices can enhance innovation and service delivery. Trust serves not only as a motivational force but also as a regulatory mechanism for ethical accountability in organizations (Mayer et al., 1995; Hasnidar et al., 2023).

The significance of leadership communication extends to fostering teamwork and driving performance excellence, asserting that collaboration and trust-based practices enhance organizational outcomes (Eva et al., 2024). The importance of perceived fairness and reliability in communication as predictors of trust is emphasized, along with the negative correlation of mistrust with poor employee behaviors such as absenteeism (Men & Yue, 2019; Bui, 2024).

Ghanaian scholars argue that cultural dimensions, such as collectivism and respect for authority, impact the communication-trust-performance relationship. Leaders are urged to promote open dialogue while respecting hierarchical norms to enhance transparency (Gyekye, 2017; Mensa-Bonsu, 2019). Culturally intelligent leadership is essential for promoting trust and performance, particularly in collectivist societies (Truong & Laura, 2015; Chan, 2013).

In an increasingly digital environment, the communication landscape has shifted, emphasizing the importance of emotional connections that digital tools can sometimes obscure (Bui, 2024). To sustain trust in hybrid workplaces, leaders need to demonstrate empathy and authenticity across all communication forms.

Ultimately, the literature consistently supports the notion that effective leadership

communication and organizational trust are interdependent factors influencing employee performance. By fostering clear, empathetic, and reliable communication, organizational leaders, especially in Ghana, can enhance trust, encourage engagement, and achieve better performance outcomes, signifying that trust-driven communication is pivotal for organizational success.

2.1.11 Effects of Leadership Communication and Trust on Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness, defined as an institution's capacity to achieve strategic objectives through coordinated efforts, adaptability, and innovation, is heavily reliant on leadership communication quality and the level of trust within the organization. These elements create a relational infrastructure essential for collaboration, commitment, and performance, as highlighted by Men & Bowen (2017) and Robbins & Judge (2018). In a complex organizational landscape, leaders' ability to communicate clearly, authentically, and inclusively significantly influences not only goal pursuit but also employees' understanding, adaptability to change, and alignment with institutional values (Qin & Men, 2022; Sarker et al., 2021).

Robbins and Judge (2018) stress the critical role of communication in organizational success, as it fosters shared understanding, reinforces culture, and aligns strategic intent with employee behavior. Effective communication enhances the environment of psychological safety and engagement, while barriers like limited feedback and inconsistent messaging lead to mistrust and inefficiency (Ibrahim et al., 2017; Jabeen & Rahim, 2021). These issues are particularly evident in Ghanaian organizations, where hierarchical structures often stifle upward communication and employee involvement in decision-making (Ohemeng & Amoako-Asiedu, 2019). Here, leadership communication is not just instrumental; it is transformational, acting as a mechanism to build trust, morale, and organizational cohesion. Empirical studies further reveal that leadership communication is a significant precursor to

organizational effectiveness. Research by Men and Stacks (2013) indicates that transparent and interactive communication enhances performance by positively affecting trust and employee engagement. Trust acts as a mediator in the relationship between communication quality and organizational outcomes, facilitating cooperation, reducing conflict, and boosting productivity. Similarly, Men and Bowen (2017) found that communication practices characterized by openness, empathy, and consistency improve employee identification with the organization, leading to enhanced service delivery and innovation. In the Ghanaian context, the credibility of leadership communication often dictates employees' readiness to accept change and adhere to institutional goals (Amponsah-Tawiah & Dartey-Baah, 2021). The relationship between trust and communication is also explored by Albrecht et al. (2018), who establish that trust-oriented communication fosters emotional engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), both vital for sustained performance. Trust cannot be merely asserted through words; it must be demonstrated through consistent leader behavior. Visible leadership integrity encourages employees to adopt organizational goals proactively (Zaman et al., 2018; Chan, 2013). Conversely, insincere communication erodes trust, leading to cynicism and conflict (Jabeen & Rahim, 2021). Supporting evidence from Ghana indicates that ineffective communication and low trust in leadership contribute to inefficiencies and bureaucratic corruption in local government institutions (Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2021). Organizations employing participatory communication approaches, where employee input and feedback are actively sought—exhibit improved accountability and productivity. This is corroborated by Ohemeng and Amoako-Asiedu (2019), who assert that transparent communication in Ghana's public sector enhances operational efficiency and rebuilds trust in leadership.

Additional support comes from Kernan and Hanges (2020), who found that communication

and trust act as "stability mechanisms," helping maintain morale and performance during times of change. Their insights resonate in the context of Ghanaian organizations adapting to technological changes and remote work, necessitating strategic communication practices to uphold trust and engagement (Adu & Nyarko, 2023).

Eva, Afroze, and Sarker (2024) further validate these assertions, noting that inclusive and dialogic communication fosters team cohesion, enhances trust, and establishes collective accountability, all instrumental for organizational effectiveness. The study "The Impact of Leadership and Organizational Trust on Employee Performance" (JEFMS, 2023) revealed that high-trust environments promote innovation and reduce turnover, highlighting that trust-enriched workplaces yield critical organizational benefits.

Ghosh and Sekhar (2019) conceptualize trust as a "strategic organizational asset," linking employee management to shared objectives. Their findings illustrate that organizations fostering transparency and participatory leadership outperform those with opaque communication structures. This theoretical view aligns with Ghanaian realities, where hierarchical rigidity and trust deficits have historically hampered efficiency (Adjei & Agyeman, 2020). Organizations that neglect inclusive communication risk alienating employees and diminishing morale.

Conversely, Ghanaian organizations prioritizing dialogue and relational communication report enhanced effectiveness in innovation, service delivery, and stakeholder trust (Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2021; Gyekye, 2017). Culturally intelligent leaders, who blend empathy and participatory communication, navigate Ghana's collectivist context while ensuring accountability and transparency (Truong & Laura, 2015; Clarke, 2017). Such

leaders cultivate trust through consistent actions and genuine engagement, maintaining performance amid challenges.

Collectively, the reviewed literature indicates that leadership communication and organizational trust are fundamental to organizational effectiveness. Communication aligns understanding, while trust fosters commitment and cooperation. The reinforcement of these two elements leads to greater adaptability, innovation, and resilience in organizations (Men & Bowen, 2017; Eva et al., 2024; Bui, 2024). For Ghanaian institutions facing governance reforms and a rapidly changing global landscape, establishing a trust-based communication culture is not just beneficial but essential for strategic competitiveness, legitimacy, and long-term efficacy.

2.1.12 Measures to Strengthen Leadership Communication, Organizational Trust, and Employee Performance

Several studies underscore the importance of effective communication and trust between leaders and employees for enhancing performance and sustaining organizational success. Key barriers such as weak communication structures, lack of transparency, and absence of trust hinder employee engagement, innovation, and productivity (Men & Bowen, 2017).

Therefore, building leadership communication and organizational trust necessitates comprehensive strategies that integrate leadership behavior, institutional policies, and employee development.

Men and Stacks (2013) advocate for an open communication culture where leaders engage in two-way dialogues, enhancing morale and inclusion among employees. This participatory approach minimizes misunderstandings and reinforces employees' sense of belonging, ultimately boosting performance. Consistency between leaders' words and actions is crucial, as noted by Mazzei and Butera (2021). They emphasize that perceived credibility and trust in management flourish when leaders align their behavior with organizational values through

frequent feedback, employee forums, and transparent communication.

Albrecht et al. (2018) highlight that trust can be institutionalized through ethical leadership, fairness, and recognition systems, with integrity and openness contributing to psychological safety, a key driver of innovation and collaboration. Within the Ghanaian context, Agyenim-Boateng et al. (2021) found that hierarchical communication patterns often inhibit feedback and transparency, advocating for decentralized structures and capacity-building programs for managers to enhance leader-employee interactions.

Ohemeng and Amoako-Asiedu (2019) suggested a performance management system that fosters trust through integrated communication feedback loops, leading to improved alignment of individual and organizational goals and enhanced job satisfaction. Kernan and Hanges (2020) further assert that a culture of openness and fairness during uncertain times preserves trust and mitigates resistance, advocating for leadership training focused on strategic communication and emotional awareness.

Eva et al. (2024) determined that teamwork thrives when leaders promote information sharing and respect, citing trust as essential for effective communication and performance.

Ghosh and Sekhar (2019) emphasize that ethical leadership and fairness are integral for cultivating loyalty and enhancing organizational performance through cooperative behaviors.

Men and Bowen (2017) conclude that organizations must view communication as a strategic leadership function, employing internal audits, trust-based policies, and digital platforms to enhance transparency and accountability. In summary, strengthening leadership communication and organizational trust demands a holistic approach marked by transparency, ethical leadership, employee engagement, and consistent feedback mechanisms. Such strategies are vital for Ghanaian institutions striving for resilience and competitive performance in the modernization landscape.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundations of this study are grounded in two complementary models of leadership, Transformational Leadership Theory and Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory. These frameworks collectively explain how leadership communication shapes organizational trust and, in turn, influences employee performance. While Transformational Leadership Theory highlights the inspirational and motivational dimensions of leadership communication, LMX Theory focuses on the quality of dyadic relationships and the role of trust in mediating leader–follower interactions. Both theories converge on the notion that effective communication is the central mechanism through which leaders build trust, stimulate commitment, and enhance performance outcomes within organizations (Men & Yue, 2019; Qin & Men, 2022).

2.2.1 Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory, initially introduced by Burns (1978) and later elaborated by Bass and Riggio (2006), emphasizes that effective leaders inspire their followers through a compelling vision, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and role modeling via idealized influence. This theory differentiates between transformational and transactional leadership, where the former focuses on intrinsic motivations and emotional engagement rather than mere rewards or punishments. Communication is pivotal in transformational leadership, as it allows leaders to articulate vision, values, and expectations in a manner that is clear, emotionally resonant, authentic, and inspiring (Men & Stacks, 2013; Men & Yue, 2019). This effective communication helps employees grasp not only their tasks but also their significance, fostering commitment and purpose.

Trust is identified as a critical factor connecting transformational communication to performance outcomes. Research by Mishra et al. (2014) and Sarker et al. (2019) asserts that when leaders communicate authentically and align their words with ethical actions, it fosters

employee trust and enhances engagement, innovation, and performance. Conversely, discrepancies between leaders' rhetoric and their actions may undermine trust and motivation (Jabeen & Rahim, 2021).

Empirical studies conducted in Ghanaian organizations have shown that communication-centric leadership significantly boosts employee morale and performance. Agyenim-Boateng et al. (2021) highlight that by sharing a vision and providing feedback, leaders can foster commitment through relational and participatory communication. Moreover, findings from Eva, Afroze, and Sarker (2024) indicate that transformational communication promotes teamwork, trust, and productivity, demonstrating that leaders who communicate clearly and compassionately inspire loyalty and discretionary effort.

Ultimately, Transformational Leadership Theory presents a compelling framework for understanding the intersection of communication, trust, and performance, suggesting that visionary, ethical, and participatory leadership communication cultivates psychological safety and alignment, thereby propelling organizational success.

2.2.2 Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, introduced by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), enriches Transformational Leadership Theory by emphasizing the varied quality of relationships between leaders and subordinates. It identifies two primary relationship types: high-quality, trust-based "in-groups" and more transactional "out-groups." These relationships significantly affect employee attitudes, trust, and performance outcomes. Communication is central to LMX, enabling the creation of trust, respect, and mutual obligation, with high-quality exchanges featuring open dialogue and mutual feedback, contrasted with low-quality exchanges that exhibit limited communication and mistrust.

In high-LMX relationships, employees show increased organizational commitment, job

satisfaction, and a willingness to exceed formal job roles. Trust becomes essential, as it influences communication quality. Effective communication fosters psychological safety, encouraging employees to express opinions and solve problems creatively, while poor communication leads to decreased engagement and performance. In Ghana, particularly in the public sector, LMX Theory helps explain employee trust and performance variations due to a high power distance culture, which typically results in top-down communication.

Leaders in Ghana can enhance employee loyalty and discretionary effort through inclusive communication. Additionally, in digital hybrid organizations, maintaining high-quality exchanges requires a careful balance of technological efficiency and relational empathy. Research supports these findings, indicating that organizations that promote feedback and transparent communication see improved LMX quality and performance. Ultimately, LMX Theory demonstrates that trust mediates the connection between communication quality and employee outcomes, suggesting that fostering trust through quality exchanges boosts engagement and productivity in the context of Ghana's dynamic organizational culture.

2.2.3 Integrative Perspective: Linking Communication, Trust, and Performance

While both theories offer distinct perspectives, they converge on a fundamental principle: **leadership communication is the engine that drives trust, and trust is the mechanism that converts leadership influence into performance.** Transformational Leadership Theory explains how visionary and ethical communication inspires collective purpose, while LMX Theory clarifies how individualized and reciprocal communication fosters relational trust. Together, they provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how leaders build both emotional commitment and operational effectiveness within organizations (Men & Yue, 2019; Qin & Men, 2022; Eva et al., 2024).

In the context of Ghanaian organizations, where cultural norms of respect, hierarchy, and communalism shape workplace dynamics (Gyekye, 2017), these theories jointly underscore the need for leaders to balance authority with empathy, and structure with participation. Leaders who communicate vision with authenticity (Transformational) and nurture personal, trust-based relationships (LMX) are better positioned to cultivate commitment, innovation, and long-term performance (Sarker et al., 2019; Bui, 2024).

Thus, the theoretical foundation of this study posits that **effective leadership communication fosters organizational trust, which mediates its impact on employee performance.** In turn, the quality of leader–member exchange and transformational communication styles moderate this relationship by strengthening trust and amplifying performance outcomes, particularly within the culturally nuanced and hierarchical structures of Ghanaian organizations.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology adopted to examine the relationship among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations. It outlines the research design, target population, sampling procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed in the study. The methodological framework integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of how leadership communication behaviors influence trust and performance outcomes across public and private sector institutions in Ghana. The mixed-methods design was adopted to capture not only statistical relationships among variables but also the contextual and experiential insights of employees and managers. This chapter further discusses issues of validity, reliability, and ethical considerations, ensuring that the research process remained rigorous, credible, and aligned with established academic standards.

3.1 Research Design

Given the multidimensional nature of this study, which sought to explore both the statistical relationships and the experiential dynamics among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance, a mixed-methods research design was adopted. This approach combined the strengths of quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

The quantitative component focused on identifying and analyzing significant relationships among the study variables, leadership communication, trust, and performance, across different organizational contexts. This was complemented by a qualitative component that captured deeper insights into employees' and managers' lived experiences, perceptions, and

interpretations of leadership communication and trust-building practices within their workplaces (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2020).

Unlike purely quantitative approaches, which primarily focus on measurable patterns and correlations, the mixed-methods design allowed for the integration of numerical data with narrative evidence to produce a richer and more holistic account of organizational dynamics.

The quantitative phase utilized a cross-sectional survey design and involved collecting data from a broad sample of employees within both public and private sector organizations in Ghana at a single point in time. This approach proved particularly useful for testing the hypothesized relationships among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance (Saunders et al., 2019; Eva, Afroze, & Sarker, 2024).

The qualitative phase involved conducting semi-structured interviews with selected managers and employees to explore the contextual meanings, attitudes, and interpersonal factors that shaped leadership communication and trust in Ghanaian workplaces. This enabled the researcher to understand how communication behaviors were interpreted across hierarchical levels and how they influenced trust and performance within real organizational settings (Bui, 2024).

Overall, the mixed-methods design provided a systematic framework for triangulating findings, enhancing both the validity and depth of the research outcomes. By combining the objectivity of quantitative measurement with the interpretive richness of qualitative inquiry, the study produced a well-rounded understanding of how leadership communication behaviors impacted trust and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations.

3.1.1 Rationale for Quantitative Approach

The study adopted a quantitative approach to generate measurable and generalizable data on the relationships among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee

performance in Ghanaian organizations. This method facilitated systematic collection and analysis of numerical data, allowing the identification of statistical associations and testing of hypothesized relationships (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Mertler et al., 2021).

Structured instruments like questionnaires ensured consistent and valid data, minimizing researcher bias and objectively measuring respondents' perceptions (DeSimone & Harms, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). The approach enabled the use of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, revealing correlations between leadership communication factors—such as clarity, transparency, empathy, and feedback—and levels of trust and performance (Hair et al., 2020; Eva, Afroze, & Sarker, 2024).

Additionally, the quantitative method allowed for generalization of findings across diverse sectors, enhancing the study's applicability to the broader population of organizational employees in Ghana (Bui, 2024). This structured approach supported the use of correlation, regression, and mediation analysis to validate the proposed relationships.

In summary, the quantitative method provided the precision and analytical depth necessary to explore the complexities between leadership communication, trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian workplaces.

3.1.2 Rationale for Qualitative Approach

The inclusion of a qualitative component in this study was driven by the need to gain deeper, contextual, and experiential insights into how leadership communication and organizational trust influenced employee performance within Ghanaian organizations. While the quantitative phase provided statistical evidence of relationships among the study variables, the qualitative approach enabled the researcher to explore the meanings, perceptions, and interpretations that underlay these relationships (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This

dual focus ensured a comprehensive understanding of both what relationships existed and why they occurred within specific organizational contexts.

Qualitative inquiry was particularly suited to uncovering the nuances of human behavior and organizational culture that could not be fully captured through numerical data. Through semi-structured interviews and open-ended discussions, the study captured employees' and managers' lived experiences with leadership communication practices, trust-building processes, and performance expectations. This approach allowed participants to express their thoughts in their own words, generating rich and detailed data that revealed how communication and trust functioned within the hierarchical and culturally embedded structures typical of Ghanaian workplaces (Saunders et al., 2019; Gyekye, 2017).

Unlike quantitative surveys, which may overlook the subtleties of interpersonal relationships and emotions, the qualitative approach facilitated the exploration of contextual factors, such as cultural values, communication tone, leadership style, and institutional norms, that shaped the dynamics of trust and performance. This was particularly important in the Ghanaian context, where respect for hierarchy, collectivism, and communal harmony influenced how employees interpreted leadership behavior and responded to managerial communication (Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2021).

Moreover, the qualitative component provided an opportunity to triangulate findings from the quantitative data, thereby enhancing the study's credibility and validity (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2020). By comparing statistical results with narrative accounts, the researcher was able to confirm or clarify emerging patterns, identify exceptions, and understand variations in responses between public and private sector employees. This triangulation process enriched the interpretation of results and ensured that conclusions were grounded in both empirical evidence and lived experience (Bui, 2024; Eva, Afroze, & Sarker, 2024).

In addition, the qualitative analysis offered insight into the emotional and relational dimensions of leadership communication, such as empathy, authenticity, and feedback quality, that quantitative methods did not fully capture. Understanding these dimensions was essential for explaining how trust was built, maintained, or undermined in everyday organizational interactions.

In summary, the qualitative approach complemented the quantitative data by providing depth, context, and meaning to the statistical findings. It illuminated the subjective experiences of employees and leaders, offering a holistic picture of how communication practices and trust mechanisms shaped performance in Ghanaian organizations. Together, both approaches strengthened the overall explanatory power and practical relevance of the study's conclusions.

3.2 Population

The study adopted a quantitative approach to generate measurable and generalizable data on the relationships among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations. This method facilitated systematic collection and analysis of numerical data, allowing the identification of statistical associations and testing of hypothesized relationships (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Mertler et al., 2021).

Structured instruments like questionnaires ensured consistent and valid data, minimizing researcher bias and objectively measuring respondents' perceptions (DeSimone & Harms, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). The approach enabled the use of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, revealing correlations between leadership communication factors—such as clarity, transparency, empathy, and feedback—and levels of trust and performance (Hair et al., 2020; Eva, Afroze, & Sarker, 2024).

Additionally, the quantitative method allowed for generalization of findings across diverse sectors, enhancing the study's applicability to the broader population of organizational

employees in Ghana (Bui, 2024). This structured approach supported the use of correlation, regression, and mediation analysis to validate the proposed relationships.

In summary, the quantitative method provided the precision and analytical depth necessary to explore the complexities between leadership communication, trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian workplaces. study focused on employees and management personnel within selected public and private sector organizations in Ghana, specifically in the Greater Accra Region. The region was selected because it represented Ghana's most economically vibrant and organizationally diverse environment, hosting a wide range of institutions including government ministries, financial institutions, manufacturing firms, service companies, and non-governmental organizations. These organizations exhibited varying leadership structures, communication cultures, and management styles, making the region an ideal setting for examining the influence of leadership communication and organizational trust on employee performance (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021; Agyenim-Boateng et al., 2021).

The population for the study included employees and managers aged 18 years and above who had worked in their respective organizations for at least one year. This inclusion criterion ensured that participants possessed sufficient experience and exposure to meaningfully assess leadership communication patterns, trust dynamics, and performance-related behaviors in their workplaces (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The study targeted individuals across multiple hierarchical levels—from junior staff to top management, to capture a holistic understanding of communication flow and trust relations within the organizational structure.

The choice of this population was informed by the recognition that leadership communication and trust were relational and context-dependent constructs that manifested differently across organizational settings. In Ghana's public sector, leadership communication was often characterized by bureaucratic processes and hierarchical rigidity, whereas private organizations

tended to emphasize performance-based communication and participatory management (Ohemeng & Amoako-Asiedu, 2019; Agyapong, 2018). Including both sectors therefore provided a comparative perspective and enhanced the generalizability of the study's findings.

The selected organizations were drawn from diverse industries, including education, health, finance, telecommunications, and public administration, to ensure that the study captured variations in communication style, leadership approach, and organizational culture. This diversity reflected the heterogeneity of Ghana's workforce and provided a representative sample for understanding how leadership communication behaviors might affect trust and performance outcomes (Eva, Afroze, & Sarker, 2024).

To determine an appropriate sample size that allowed for rigorous statistical analysis while ensuring representativeness, the study employed Yamane's (1967) formula. The total working population in the Greater Accra Region, as reported by the Ghana Statistical Service (2021), served as the basis for estimating the sampling frame. This approach ensured that the sample size was adequate to detect significant relationships between leadership communication, trust, and performance variables with acceptable levels of confidence and precision (Saunders et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2020).

Overall, the study population was characterized by a broad range of socio-demographic variables relevant to the analysis of communication and trust, including gender, age, educational level, job rank, years of experience, and organizational sector. This diversity allowed for meaningful comparisons and the identification of patterns across different workplace settings. By focusing on both employees and leaders in varied organizational environments, the study provided a comprehensive and contextually grounded understanding of how leadership communication and organizational trust jointly influenced employee performance in Ghanaian organizations (Bui, 2024).

3.3 Sampling Technique

This study utilized a mixed sampling approach, integrating both probability and non-probability techniques to capture perspectives from employees and managers in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. A stratified random sampling method was employed for the quantitative component, ensuring the sample represented various demographic and organizational characteristics, such as sector, size, job rank, gender, age, and experience. This approach minimized selection bias and allowed comparisons across different groups, such as public vs. private sectors and management vs. subordinates.

The sample size for quantitative analysis, estimated at around 200 respondents, was calculated using Yamane's formula to balance statistical reliability and practical feasibility. For the qualitative component, purposive sampling was utilized to select participants for semi-structured interviews based on relevant experience and leadership roles, ensuring informed insights on leadership communication and employee performance.

Combining both sampling methods enhanced the study's robustness, with stratified random sampling supporting statistical generalization and purposive sampling providing in-depth, context-specific insights. This mixed approach effectively addressed the study's objectives of exploring relationships between leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian contexts.

3.4 Sample Size

Determining an appropriate sample size was crucial for the validity and generalizability of this research on leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations (Mascha & Vetter, 2018). For the quantitative phase, Yamane's (1967)

formula was utilized to estimate a sample size from an estimated population of 1,000 employees in the Greater Accra Region:

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

Substituting the relevant values, the calculation yielded approximately 286. However, practical constraints led to a final sample size adjustment to 200 respondents, maintaining a 95% confidence level with an increased margin of error of about 6.8% (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

To achieve a high response rate, efforts such as clear communication and follow-up reminders were implemented. Aiming for a 70% response rate, which helps minimize bias, 200 structured questionnaires were distributed. The response rate was calculated as:

$$\text{Response Rate} = \frac{\text{Number of Valid Responses}}{\text{Number of Questionnaires Distributed}} \times 100$$

For the qualitative phase, approximately 10 participants were purposively selected from the survey respondents, including organization leaders and experienced staff, to explore themes complementing the quantitative findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

In summary, the sample of 200 for the quantitative phase and 10 for the qualitative phase was robust enough to provide a comprehensive view of how leadership communication and trust affect employee performance in Ghanaian organizations.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

This study utilized a systematic approach to explore the relationships among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations, employing a mixed-methods design to provide comprehensive insights (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The quantitative phase involved a structured questionnaire designed to gather

measurable data on the core variables alongside demographic information. The instrument was developed using validated scales from prior studies and was culturally adapted for Ghanaian workplaces, undergoing expert review and pilot testing among twenty employees to ensure clarity and reliability (Bhalla et al., 2023).

The final questionnaire was distributed both physically in Accra and Tema and electronically via email and social media to enhance accessibility. Data collection occurred over four weeks, with trained research assistants facilitating the process, leading to improved response rates and reduced bias (East et al., 2021).

To enrich the findings, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with ten purposively selected participants in leadership roles. These interviews explored themes related to leadership communication and trust, lasting 30 to 45 minutes and conducted in English, either face-to-face or virtually. With consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Quantitative data were processed using SPSS, with cleaning procedures in place to address missing values and outliers, and reliability tests ensuring consistency (Corrales et al., 2018). Qualitative analysis followed Braun and Clarke's thematic framework, providing contextual insights that complemented the quantitative findings. Measures were implemented throughout the data collection process to ensure reliability and validity, including pre-testing the questionnaire and training research assistants (Sürücü & Maslakci, 2020).

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

This study employed a structured questionnaire as the primary instrument for quantitative data collection, complemented by a semi-structured interview guide for the qualitative component. The questionnaire was carefully developed to align with the study's research objectives and questions, ensuring comprehensive coverage of leadership communication, organizational

trust, and employee performance within Ghanaian organizations. The instrument was designed to be clear, concise, and contextually appropriate for respondents drawn from both public and private sector institutions across the Greater Accra Region.

The structured questionnaire consisted of four main sections. The first section collected demographic information such as age, gender, educational background, organizational type, job position, and years of work experience. This demographic data was used to assess potential variations in perceptions and experiences across different employee categories and sectors.

The second section focused on leadership communication behaviors, measuring the extent to which leaders practiced clarity, feedback, transparency, empathy, and active listening in their interactions with employees. These items were adapted from the Leadership Communication Scale developed by Men and Stacks (2013), with contextual modifications to reflect the Ghanaian workplace environment.

The third section assessed organizational trust, evaluating employees' confidence in the integrity, competence, and fairness of their leaders and institutions. This section was informed by the Organizational Trust Inventory developed by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) and updated based on recent adaptations by Qin and Men (2022).

The fourth section measured employee performance, incorporating both task-related and contextual dimensions such as productivity, commitment, teamwork, and innovation. The measurement items were guided by the framework proposed by Podsakoff et al. (2003) and supported by Armstrong (2020), who emphasized the behavioral and attitudinal dimensions of employee performance.

Each section consisted primarily of closed-ended items structured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree (1)" to "Strongly Agree (5)." This scale allowed for

quantitative analysis of respondents' perceptions and ensured consistency across responses. In addition, a few open-ended questions were included to provide respondents with the opportunity to elaborate on their experiences or perceptions, thereby adding contextual richness to the quantitative data.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts in communication, leadership, and organizational behavior. Their feedback was incorporated to improve item clarity, cultural relevance, and technical accuracy (Pedrazzini & Scheuer, 2018). A pilot test was conducted with approximately twenty employees from selected public and private organizations in Accra. The aim of this pilot phase was to evaluate the clarity, sequence, and relevance of the questionnaire items and to identify any ambiguities or wording issues (Bhalla et al., 2023). Based on feedback from the pretest, necessary revisions were made to improve comprehension and ensure consistency in response options.

For the qualitative phase, a semi-structured interview guide was developed to gain deeper insights into participants' lived experiences and perceptions related to leadership communication and organizational trust. The guide covered broad thematic areas including communication patterns, trust-building processes, employee motivation, and the perceived impact of leadership on performance. The flexible structure of the guide allowed participants to share their views freely while still ensuring alignment with the research questions and objectives.

The questionnaire was administered in both print and electronic formats to ensure accessibility for all potential participants, regardless of geographic location or digital literacy. Physical copies were distributed within selected organizations, while electronic versions were shared via email and online survey platforms such as Google Forms or Microsoft Forms. This

hybrid approach was expected to facilitate inclusivity and convenience, enabling participation from a wide range of respondents (Vera, 2021).

All completed questionnaires were collected either in person or through secure digital channels. Responses were stored in encrypted, password-protected databases to ensure participant confidentiality and compliance with ethical research standards.

In summary, the questionnaire and interview guide were designed and implemented to collect robust, reliable, and comprehensive data. By combining structured quantitative measures with qualitative insights, the study captured both the measurable and experiential dimensions of leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance. This dual approach provided a solid foundation for subsequent analysis and interpretation.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this study aimed to explore the relationships among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations. Using a mixed-methods design, the analysis combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to enhance validity through triangulation of data.

In the quantitative phase, data cleaning and validation were conducted on completed questionnaires to ensure accuracy. Valid responses were numerically coded according to key constructs and analyzed using SPSS version 28 for descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics summarized respondent demographics and perceptions, while inferential techniques tested research hypotheses via correlation analysis, multiple regression, and mediation analysis to investigate the influence of leadership communication on employee performance. Additional tests, like t-tests and ANOVA, identified significant differences across groups.

To establish the reliability of measurement instruments, Cronbach's alpha was used, with values above 0.70 deemed sufficient. Validity was supported through expert review and pilot testing, confirming that the questionnaire accurately measured theoretical constructs.

Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews underwent thematic analysis, focusing on participants' experiences related to communication, trust-building, and performance. Themes around communication tone, leadership credibility, and trust were derived from the narratives, adding context to the quantitative findings.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative results during interpretation highlighted both measurable patterns and the contextual dynamics at play, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how communication influences trust and performance in Ghanaian workplaces. Overall, the study's analytical approach was rigorous and multifaceted, producing findings grounded in empirical evidence and lived experiences.

3.8 Data Validity and Reliability

Establishing the validity and reliability of the research instruments was essential to ensure that the findings of this study were credible, accurate, and representative of the phenomena under investigation. Given that the study explored the interrelationships among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations through both quantitative and qualitative methods, multiple procedures were adopted to strengthen methodological rigor and enhance the authenticity of the data.

Construct validity was ensured by carefully aligning the questionnaire items with the study's conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Each item was developed to reflect the key dimensions of leadership communication, trust, and performance as articulated in the Transformational Leadership Theory and the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory. This alignment guaranteed that the questionnaire effectively captured the constructs it intended to

measure. In addition, face validity was established through consultations with academic experts in communication, leadership, and organizational behavior, who reviewed the questionnaire for relevance, clarity, and contextual appropriateness within the Ghanaian setting. Their feedback was used to refine the wording, sequencing, and cultural sensitivity of the items, ensuring that the instrument resonated well with the target population. Furthermore, criterion-related validity was pursued by benchmarking the questionnaire against established instruments from previous research, including the Leadership Communication Scale by Men and Stacks (2013), the Organizational Trust Inventory by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995), and the Employee Performance Scale by Podsakoff et al. (2003). This comparison ensured that the instrument corresponded closely with recognized standards in leadership and organizational studies.

A pilot test was conducted with approximately twenty employees drawn from selected public and private organizations in Accra to evaluate the clarity, coherence, and relevance of the questionnaire items. Feedback from this pretest was instrumental in identifying and addressing minor issues related to phrasing and scale interpretation, thereby enhancing the comprehensibility and precision of the final instrument. Additionally, the pilot phase offered insights into the estimated time required to complete the questionnaire and the logical flow of questions, facilitating further refinement of the overall design.

To ensure the reliability of the data, several statistical and procedural strategies were implemented. Reliability, which refers to the consistency of the instrument in measuring a variable across time and different conditions, was assessed primarily through internal consistency measures. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each construct to determine how closely related the items within leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance scales were. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher was considered indicative of acceptable internal consistency. In addition to internal consistency,

test–retest reliability was employed to examine the temporal stability of the responses. This involved administering the questionnaire to a small subset of respondents at two different points in time and comparing the results to verify consistency over the intervals.

Procedurally, inter-rater reliability was promoted by standardizing data collection protocols and providing comprehensive training for the research assistants responsible for administering the questionnaires. These enumerators were instructed to maintain neutrality, offer objective clarifications, and follow uniform administration procedures to minimize researcher bias and inconsistencies during data collection. Data entry was carefully managed through cross-checking and verification processes designed to identify and correct any discrepancies or errors, thus improving the overall accuracy of the dataset.

For the qualitative component, reliability and validity were addressed through methodological triangulation, member checking, and transparent coding processes. Participants were given the opportunity to review their interview transcripts to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations. Coding and thematic analysis were conducted with attention to consistency and rigor, ensuring that data representation remained faithful to the original narratives. The use of direct quotations and the maintenance of an audit trail throughout the analysis further enhanced the trustworthiness and credibility of the qualitative findings.

In summary, by combining construct, face, and criterion validity with multiple reliability assessments, including internal consistency, test–retest, and inter-rater reliability, this study ensured that its instruments were both dependable and credible. These rigorous validation and reliability procedures strengthened the quality of the data collected and built confidence in the accuracy and replicability of the study’s findings. As a result, the research outcomes were methodologically sound and contextually relevant for understanding

the influence of leadership communication and organizational trust on employee performance within Ghanaian organizations.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations formed a fundamental part of this study, ensuring that the entire research process adhered to the highest standards of integrity, respect, and professionalism. Given that the study involved human participants drawn from various public and private organizations, it was critical to protect their rights, welfare, and privacy throughout data collection and analysis. Ethical protocols were implemented in accordance with the University of Ghana's Research Ethics Guidelines as well as international standards outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2017) and the Belmont Report (1979).

Before data collection began, formal permission was sought from the management of all participating organizations to conduct the study within their institutions. Each participant was provided with a detailed informed consent form clearly explaining the purpose of the study, its objectives, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any point without penalty. Participants were assured that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes and would remain anonymous and confidential. To uphold this assurance, no identifying information such as names, employee identification numbers, or organizational codes was recorded on the questionnaires or interview transcripts. Consent was obtained in writing from all respondents prior to their completion of surveys or participation in interviews.

Confidentiality was rigorously maintained throughout the research process. All completed questionnaires and interview recordings were securely stored, with digital data encrypted and password-protected to prevent unauthorized access. Physical documents were kept in locked cabinets accessible only to the researcher. During transcription and data analysis, pseudonyms and codes replaced participants' real names to safeguard anonymity. Any direct quotations used

in the final report were presented in a manner that concealed personal or organizational identities.

The study also observed the principles of non-maleficence and beneficence by ensuring that no participant experienced harm, discomfort, or distress due to their involvement. Research questions were framed neutrally to avoid psychological discomfort, and participants were encouraged to skip any questions they found uncomfortable. The research was designed to offer potential benefits to participants and their organizations, especially by generating knowledge that could enhance communication effectiveness, trust-building, and employee performance within Ghanaian workplaces.

To maintain objectivity and integrity, the researcher actively avoided any form of bias throughout data collection, analysis, and reporting. Research assistants were thoroughly trained to remain neutral and respectful, avoiding any coercion or undue influence during questionnaire administration and interviews. Participants were also reminded that their responses would not be shared with employers and would not affect their employment status or evaluations. Ethical transparency was maintained at all stages of the study, including careful acknowledgment of all secondary sources used in the literature review to prevent plagiarism (Resnik, 2020).

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented and justified the methodological framework adopted for investigating the relationship among leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations. The chapter began with an overview of the research design, explaining the rationale for employing a mixed-methods approach that integrated both

quantitative and qualitative techniques to capture the complexity and contextual nuances of the research problem. The quantitative component provided measurable evidence of relationships among variables, while the qualitative component offered interpretive depth into employees' lived experiences of communication and trust within organizational settings.

The study population comprised employees drawn from public and private organizations in the Greater Accra Region, reflecting Ghana's diverse organizational and socio-cultural context. A total sample of 200 participants was determined using Yamane's formula (1967) and selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representativeness across demographic and occupational categories. The data collection instruments included a structured questionnaire for the quantitative phase and a semi-structured interview guide for the qualitative phase. Both instruments were designed and refined through expert consultation and pilot testing to enhance clarity, reliability, and contextual suitability.

Data collection was conducted through both physical and electronic modes to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. The questionnaire gathered information on leadership communication behaviors, levels of trust, and employee performance, while interviews explored participants' perceptions, experiences, and reflections on communication practices and workplace trust. Data analysis involved the use of SPSS (version 28) for quantitative data, employing descriptive and inferential statistics such as correlation, regression, and mediation analyses to test hypotheses and examine relationships among key variables. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2019) framework to identify recurring themes and patterns that complemented the statistical findings.

Measures to ensure validity and reliability included construct and criterion validity, internal consistency tests using Cronbach's alpha, test-retest reliability, and inter-rater reliability checks. The study also adhered to rigorous ethical standards by obtaining informed consent,

ensuring confidentiality, and maintaining data integrity throughout the research process. Approval from the University of Ghana Institutional Review Board (IRB) was secured prior to data collection, affirming the study's compliance with ethical research guidelines.

In summary, this chapter provided a detailed account of the methodological procedures adopted to achieve the research objectives. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods strengthened the study's analytical robustness and enhanced its ability to generate credible, nuanced, and contextually grounded findings. The next chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data collected, discussing how leadership communication and organizational trust influence employee performance within Ghanaian organizational contexts.

Chapter Four: Results And Interpretation

4.1 Introduction and Research Design Context

This chapter reports the comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the data collected to examine the influence of leadership communication (LC) and organizational trust (OT) on employee performance (EP) within Ghanaian organizations. The study adhered to an **Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design**, a complex strategy where quantitative data collection and analysis precede and inform the subsequent qualitative phase.

As articulated by Leedy and Ormrod (2023), this design is instrumental when the overarching goal is to use qualitative findings to help explain, elaborate on, or generalize initial quantitative statistical outcomes. The quantitative phase established robust, generalizable relationships, while the subsequent qualitative phase provided rich, context-specific narratives essential for explaining *how* these statistical relationships—particularly those concerning trust and sectoral differences—manifest within the daily organizational realities of Ghanaian employees.

The structure of this chapter systematically progresses from the presentation of descriptive and inferential quantitative results to the thematic analysis of qualitative narratives, culminating in a scholarly discussion comparing the findings with extant literature and outlining the theoretical and practical contributions.

4.2 Presentation of Data: Quantitative Results

The quantitative component of the study involved a valid sample of 198 respondents (N=198) drawn from both public and private sector organizations in Ghana. The statistical analysis utilized standard SPSS procedures, including descriptive statistics, reliability tests, linear regression, and independent samples t-tests, suitable for Master's level research.

4.2.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic composition, detailed in Table 1, reflects a highly qualified and experienced professional workforce. The sample exhibited a near-equal distribution by gender (51.0% male) and was primarily composed of the young to mid-career segments (75.8% aged 26–45 years). Significantly, a substantial majority possessed advanced academic qualifications (52.0% Bachelor's, 40.9% Master's), with 50.5% reporting 6–10 years of professional experience, lending credence to the validity and professional grounding of the survey responses.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

(N=198)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	101	51.0
	Female	97	49.0
Age Group	18 – 25 years	12	6.1
	26 – 35 years	79	39.9
	36 – 45 years	71	35.9
	46 – 55 years	36	18.2
Educational Level	Bachelor's Degree	103	52.0
	Master's Degree	81	40.9
	Diploma / HND	14	7.1
Organization Sector	Private Sector	117	59.1
	Public Sector	81	40.9
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	7	3.5
	1 – 5 years	69	34.8
	6 – 10 years	100	50.5
	11 years or more	22	11.1

4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Prior to hypothesis testing, the psychometric properties of the scales were assessed. Table 2 confirms exceptional internal consistency across all constructs, as evidenced by Cronbach's Alpha (α): Leadership Communication ($\alpha = .970$), Organizational Trust ($\alpha = .939$), and Employee Performance ($\alpha = .711$).

The descriptive analysis indicated that participants generally perceived high levels of both Leadership Communication ($M=1.32$) and Organizational Trust ($M=1.24$). However, the mean score for Employee Performance ($M=2.12$) was comparatively lower, suggesting a potential gap between highly rated organizational inputs (communication and trust) and self-reported performance outcomes.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Cronbach's α	Interpretation
Leadership Communication	9	1.32	0.63	.970	Excellent
Organizational Trust	4	1.24	0.59	.939	Excellent
Employee Performance	5	2.12	0.49	.711	Acceptable

4.2.3 Hypothesis Testing and Inferential Results

A. Direct Effects (H1, H2, H3)

The linear regression analysis, summarized in Table 3, established robust, positive, and statistically significant relationships among the key variables:

- **H1 (LC $\longrightarrow$ OT):** This hypothesis was strongly supported ($\beta = .844$, $p < .001$). Leadership Communication accounted for a substantial 81.8% of the variance in Organizational Trust ($R^2 = .818$), indicating that communication is the primary mechanism for trust cultivation.
- **H2 (OT $\longrightarrow$ EP):** Supported ($\beta = .642$, $p < .001$). Organizational Trust was confirmed as a potent predictor of Employee Performance, accounting for 58.7% of its variance ($R^2 = .587$).
- **H3 (LC $\longrightarrow$ EP):** Supported ($\beta = .623$, $p < .001$). A significant direct association was found, where Leadership Communication explained 63.6% of the variance in Employee Performance ($R^2 = .636$).

Table 3: Regression Results for Direct Relationships

Hypothesis	Path	R ²	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	LC $\longrightarrow$ OT	.818	.844	29.64	< .001	Supported
H2	OT $\longrightarrow$ EP	.587	.642	16.70	< .001	Supported
H3	LC $\longrightarrow$ EP	.636	.623	18.50	< .001	Supported

B. Mediation Analysis (H4)

Hypothesis 4, proposing Organizational Trust as a mediator of the Leadership Communication–Employee Performance relationship, was tested using regression-based mediation procedures.

As shown in Table 4, the total effect of LC on EP was significant ($\beta = .623$). When OT was introduced to the model, the direct effect of LC on EP decreased significantly but remained significant ($\beta = .448$, $p < .001$), while OT itself emerged as a significant predictor ($\beta = .208$, $p = .014$). This outcome confirms the presence of **Partial Mediation**, suggesting that Organizational Trust is an essential, but not exclusive, channel through which leadership communication exerts its influence on employee performance.

Table 4: Mediation Analysis (Dependent Variable: Employee Performance)

Model Stage	Predictor	β (Standardized)	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
Total Effect	Leadership Comm.	.623	18.50	< .001	Significant effect
Mediation Model	Leadership Comm.	.448	5.75	< .001	Effect remains significant
	Organizational Trust	.208	2.49	.014	Significant mediator
Result					Partial Mediation Supported

C. Comparative Context (H5)

The interaction effect analysis for Hypothesis 5, comparing the strength of the LC–EP relationship across public and private sectors, was statistically non-significant ($p = .265$), leading to its **rejection**. This indicates that the psychological mechanism linking communication, trust, and performance operates uniformly across both sectors.

However, an Independent Samples T-test revealed a **statistically significant difference in the mean level of Employee Performance** ($t = -4.46$, $p < .001$). Private sector employees reported significantly higher performance scores ($M=2.25$) compared to their public sector counterparts ($M=1.95$). This finding warrants qualitative elaboration, as it suggests the outcome level, rather than the process mechanism, is sector-dependent.

Table 5: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Decisions

Hypothesis	Proposed Relationship	Result	Remark
H1	Leadership communication is positively associated with organizational trust.	Supported	Strong correlation ($R^2 = .818$)
H2	Organizational trust is positively associated with employee performance.	Supported	Strong correlation ($R^2 = .587$)
H3	Leadership communication is positively associated with employee performance.	Supported	Strong correlation ($R^2 = .636$)
H4	Organizational trust mediates the relationship between communication and performance.	Supported	Partial mediation confirmed
H5	The relationship strength/direction differs between public and private sectors.	Rejected	No significant interaction effect ($p > .05$)

4.3 Qualitative Findings and Interpretation

The qualitative phase, which involved in-depth interviews, served to explain the 'how' and 'why' behind the statistical results, particularly the partial mediation (H4) and the performance mean difference (H5). The analysis yielded two primary themes.

4.3.1 Theme 1: The Critical Role of Behavioral Integrity and Timeliness in Mediating Performance (Elaborating H1 and H4)

The qualitative findings elucidated the mechanism underpinning the partial mediation confirmed in H4, highlighting that trust is fundamentally built on **behavioral integrity** and **timeliness**, not just message content. Employees consistently reported that clarity was often present, but communication effectiveness was destroyed by late delivery and inconsistency between the leader's words and actions.

*"I'd rate my leader's communication around 65-70%. The biggest issue is that **communication often comes late**... Once communication is late, they pressure you, and that pressure affects the quality and timeliness of delivery." (R1, Private Sector)*

The absence of consistency was cited as the principal destroyer of organizational trust, aligning the act of communication with perceived fairness (Bui, 2024; Hasnidar et al., 2023):

*"They should **follow through with what they say**. When leaders don't act on their words, it breaks trust. Right now, most of us don't feel led; we just follow orders." (R2, Public Sector)*

This narrative evidence reinforces the mediation model: Leadership Communication (Clarity, Transparency) initiates the process, but the resulting Organizational Trust (Belief in Behavioral Integrity) is the critical resource that converts communication into employee willingness to perform (EP).

4.3.2 Theme 2: Systemic Bureaucracy as a Performance Cap (Explaining Sectoral EP Difference)

The statistical finding that the mean level of performance was significantly lower in the public sector ($M=1.95$) despite similar psychological mechanisms was explained by **systemic, non-communication-related constraints** inherent in bureaucratic environments.

Public sector employees emphasized that even effective communication from immediate leaders could not overcome external organizational inertia, such as slow resource allocation or bureaucratic resistance.

*"My leader communicates clearly, and I believe they are honest. The issue is structural... My performance is often **hindered by these systemic bottlenecks**... In the public sector, it's hard to hold superiors accountable, which is why **our performance feels lower**." (R3, Public Sector)*

In contrast, private sector employees reported performance driven by **visionary motivation** and direct accountability linked to commercial results, confirming the perceived link between organizational outcomes and individual effort.

*"My leader constantly communicates a **compelling vision for the organization** that makes my role feel significant... I trust the organization to treat me fairly, and because of this trust, I am motivated to **consistently exceed my targets**." (R4, Private Sector)*

This suggests that the lower public sector performance is not a failure of leadership communication or trust establishment, but rather a function of the external organizational and structural environment (Eva et al., 2024).

4.4 Comparison with Existing Literature

4.4.1 Support for Direct and Mediated Relationships (H1, H2, H3, H4)

The robust findings affirming the significant direct paths (H1, H2, H3) and the partial mediation of Organizational Trust (H4) are substantially consistent with global literature on organizational behaviour and communication science.

The strong influence of LC on OT (H1, $R^2 = .818$) confirms the foundational premise of Relational Leadership Theory, where effective, transparent, and empathetic communication is recognized as the key mechanism for reducing uncertainty and fostering shared understanding (Bui, 2024). The qualitative data, highlighting the importance of consistency and fairness, aligns with the concept of trust as a cognitive assessment of competence and integrity (Hasnidar et al., 2023).

The establishment of OT as a powerful predictor of EP (H2) supports Social Exchange Theory and psychological contract literature. Trust is the relational resource that provides psychological safety, encouraging employees to go beyond prescribed duties and engage in discretionary effort and creative problem-solving (Qin & Men, 2022).

The confirmation of **Partial Mediation (H4)** is a key contribution, validating the contemporary understanding that LC's effect on EP is multifaceted. It demonstrates that communication has both a direct, informational impact (clarity leads to efficient task execution) and an indirect, relational impact (clarity builds trust, which builds commitment). This integrated model offers a more comprehensive explanation of how communication ultimately drives performance outcomes.

4.4.2 Discussion of Sectoral Context (H5)

The study's unique finding, the uniformity of the LC-OT-EP mechanism (H5 Rejected) coupled with a significant performance difference by sector, introduces a critical contextual nuance for organizational studies in Ghana.

This finding suggests that the psychological and relational principles of effective leadership are universal, irrespective of whether the organization is focused on profit or public service. However, the significantly lower EP reported in the public sector is not a failure of communication *effectiveness*, but a challenge of structural efficacy. The qualitative data attributed this gap to "systemic bottlenecks" (R3) and the "slow pace of resource allocation," factors external to the immediate leader-employee relationship. This challenges generic performance models and suggests that environmental factors act as performance ceiling moderators in bureaucratic systems, limiting the expression of the commitment and creativity generated by high communication and trust.

4.5 Implications of Findings

4.5.1 Theoretical Relevance

This research makes two primary theoretical contributions:

1. **Validation of the Partial Mediation Model in an African Context:** The study empirically validates the {LC} —→ {OT} —→ {EP} mediation model within Ghanaian organizations, providing robust data from a sub-Saharan African developing economy. This strengthens the generalizability of global leadership and communication theories, positioning Organizational Trust as a critical and quantifiable cognitive resource that catalyzes the final performance outcome.

2. **Refining Sectoral Moderation:** The findings refine the understanding of sectoral influence. It is proposed that organizational sector does not moderate the *strength* of the psychological relationship (LC-OT-EP), but rather moderates the **ceiling of achievable employee performance (EP)** due to non-psychological, structural factors like bureaucracy and resource certainty. Future theoretical models of performance in emerging economies should therefore include **structural constraints** as a moderating variable on the final performance outcome.

4.5.2 Practical Relevance

The findings translate into clear, evidence-based strategic mandates for organizational leadership in Ghana:

1. **Mandate for Behavioral Integrity:** Leaders must shift focus from simply transmitting information to demonstrating **consistency and follow-through**. HR and leadership development programs should prioritize training in *administrative fairness* and *accountability*, recognizing that "leaders don't act on their words" is the primary source of trust erosion (R2).
2. **Strategic Communication for Trust and Performance:** Organizations must implement systems that guarantee **timely and two-way communication**, especially concerning sensitive operational matters like deadlines, transfers, and resource availability. This proactive approach mitigates the detrimental effects of late information and pressure on employee quality of output.
3. **Targeted Intervention for Public Sector Efficacy:** Public sector leadership interventions should extend beyond soft skills (LC and OT) to address the **execution environment**. Training for public sector managers should include skills in **strategic advocacy, bureaucracy navigation, and efficient resource mobilization** to break the systemic bottlenecks that currently cap employee performance and commitment.

4.6 Conclusion

The findings of this mixed-methods study confirm that Leadership Communication is a highly significant precursor to Organizational Trust, and that Organizational Trust, in turn, is a critical partial mediator linking communication to Employee Performance. The study establishes that while the fundamental relational processes are universal across Ghanaian organizations, public sector entities must confront systemic structural issues to fully realize the performance potential generated by effective leadership communication and trust.

Chapter 5 :Conclusion, Recommendations, and Future Research

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by synthesizing the core findings derived from the integration of quantitative and qualitative data regarding the relationship between Leadership

Communication (LC), Organizational Trust (OT), and Employee Performance (EP) in Ghanaian organizations. It provides a comprehensive summary of the key outcomes, draws definitive conclusions, and presents policy, academic, and practical recommendations. Finally, it outlines avenues for future research to further advance the understanding of these critical organizational variables.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study successfully tested five hypotheses using a robust Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods approach (N=198) and confirmed four out of the five proposed relationships.

5.2.1 Core Relational Findings (H1, H2, H3)

The quantitative analysis established strong, positive, and statistically significant associations among all core constructs:

- **H1 (LC $\rightarrow$ OT) Supported:** Leadership Communication was confirmed as the primary driver of Organizational Trust, accounting for over 81% of the variance in trust, underscoring its foundational role in relationship building.
- **H2 (OT $\rightarrow$ EP) Supported:** Organizational Trust proved to be a powerful predictor of Employee Performance, confirming that high levels of trust foster the psychological safety and commitment necessary for employees to perform effectively.
- **H3 (LC $\rightarrow$ EP) Supported:** A strong direct link exists between Leadership Communication and Employee Performance, demonstrating that clear, timely, and transparent messages directly facilitate efficient task execution.

5.2.2 The Mediating Role of Organizational Trust (H4)

- **H4 (Mediation) Supported:** Organizational Trust was confirmed as a **Partial Mediator** in the relationship between Leadership Communication and Employee Performance. This finding confirms that communication affects performance through two channels: directly, by providing clarity, and indirectly, by building the trust that motivates employees to exert discretionary effort.
- **Qualitative Elaboration:** The qualitative data provided critical context for this partial mediation, revealing that the quality of trust is dependent on **Behavioral Integrity** and **Timeliness**. Inconsistency between a leader's words and actions, or late communication, were cited as the primary destroyers of trust, thus impeding the final performance outcome.

5.2.3 The Role of Sectoral Context (H5)

- **H5 (Interaction) Rejected:** The hypothesis that the *strength* of the LC-OT-EP mechanism would differ between public and private sectors was statistically rejected. This indicates that the fundamental psychological processes of how communication and trust impact performance are universal across both sectors.
- **Performance Difference Confirmed:** Despite the uniformity of the psychological mechanism, an Independent Samples T-test showed a **significantly lower mean performance level** in the public sector compared to the private sector.
- **Qualitative Explanation:** The qualitative data explained this performance gap by attributing it to **Systemic Bureaucracy** and **Structural Bottlenecks** (e.g., slow resource allocation, lack of top-level accountability) within the public sector environment. This suggests that structural factors act as a ceiling, limiting the achievable performance output regardless of high communication or trust levels.

5.3 Conclusion

This study concludes that in Ghanaian organizations, effective Leadership Communication is paramount not only for establishing clarity but, more critically, for cultivating Organizational Trust through demonstrated integrity and timeliness. While this relational pathway (LC $\rightarrow$ OT $\rightarrow$ EP) is robust and universal, its ultimate impact on measurable performance is constrained by the organizational context. For public sector organizations, the ability to realize the full performance benefits of high trust and communication is severely hindered by inherent structural rigidities. Therefore, optimizing employee performance requires an integrated approach that addresses both the quality of relational leadership and the efficiency of the bureaucratic environment.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for various stakeholders:

5.4.1 Practical Recommendations for Organizational Leadership

1. **Prioritize Behavioral Integrity over Message Volume:** Leaders should be trained to focus on consistency between their stated intentions and their executed actions (behavioral integrity). Organizational trust building should be an organizational Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for all leadership roles, tied directly to the reliability of follow-through.
2. **Mandate Timely and Two-Way Communication Systems:** Implement communication protocols that ensure critical information is shared proactively, not reactively. Leaders must open genuine, safe channels for upward feedback to prevent late communication from creating pressure and negatively impacting performance quality (as detailed by R1).

3. **Target Structural Efficacy in the Public Sector:** Public sector managers need support and training in **strategic advocacy, efficient resource mobilization, and bureaucracy navigation**. Interventions should move beyond soft skills to address the structural and policy-related constraints that R3 identified as performance bottlenecks.

5.4.2 Academic and Policy Recommendations

1. **Refining Theoretical Models:** Academic researchers should integrate the study's conclusion that **Structural Constraints** (e.g., resource certainty, bureaucratic inertia) act as a moderating variable on the final performance outcome (EP). Future theoretical models of performance in African contexts should include this non-psychological factor.
2. **National Policy Review of Bureaucracy:** Government and policy bodies must initiate comprehensive reviews of public sector accountability mechanisms and resource allocation systems. Policies should aim to reduce systemic bottlenecks to unlock the commitment and performance potential of a workforce that, based on this study, is relationally driven but structurally constrained.
3. **Inclusion of Trust in Performance Audits:** Public and private sector regulators should incorporate standardized measures of Organizational Trust and Leadership Communication effectiveness into mandatory annual organizational performance audits, recognizing these as leading indicators of long-term organizational health and sustainable performance.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

The following areas are suggested to deepen the understanding of the dynamics explored in this study:

1. **Formal Moderation Testing of Structural Constraints:** Future quantitative research should formally test **structural certainty** (e.g., predictable resource availability, policy stability) as a moderator of the Organizational Trust $\rightarrow$ Employee Performance relationship using advanced statistical techniques.
2. **Exploring Specific Leadership Styles:** This study used a broad measure of Leadership Communication. Subsequent research should investigate the differential effects of specific leadership styles (e.g., Transformational Leadership vs. Servant Leadership) on trust formation and performance outcomes in the Ghanaian context.
3. **Longitudinal Study of Trust Decay and Repair:** A longitudinal design is recommended to track how Organizational Trust develops, decays following breaches (e.g., R2's mention of broken promises), and is potentially repaired over extended periods, providing insights into the dynamic nature of the LC-OT link.
4. **Comparative Analysis of Trust Dimensions:** Further research could focus on differentiating between **Cognitive Trust** (trust in competence and reliability)
5. **Affective Trust** (trust in care and emotional connection) to see which dimension of trust is more predictive of employee performance in different organizational settings.

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APPENDICES

Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

I am Sahadatu Amoo, a Master of Arts (MA) student at the University of Media, Arts and Communication (UNIMAC). I am conducting a study on leadership communication, organizational trust, and employee performance in Ghanaian organizations.

Your participation will provide valuable insights into how communication between leaders and employees affects trust and performance at work. There are no right or wrong answers, only your honest opinions and experiences. Your responses will remain confidential and used solely for academic purposes.

Thank you for your time and participation.

A. Quantitative Instrument (Questionnaire)

Title: Leadership Communication, Organizational Trust, and Employee Performance in Ghanaian Organizations

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other
2. Age: ☐ 18–25 ☐ 26–35 ☐ 36–45 ☐ 46–55 ☐ 56 and above
3. Educational Level: ☐ Diploma ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ PhD ☐ Other
4. Type of Organization: ☐ Public ☐ Private

5. Years of Work Experience: ☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1–5 years ☐ 6–10 years ☐ 11 years or more

6. Current Position/Role: _____

Section B: Leadership Communication Behaviors

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Clarity

1. My leader communicates goals and expectations clearly.
2. Instructions from leadership are easy to understand and follow.

Transparency

3. My leader shares important organizational information openly.
4. Management decisions are explained to employees in a transparent manner.

Empathy

5. My leader shows concern for employees' feelings and well-being.
6. My leader listens to employees' personal or work-related concerns.

Feedback

7. I receive regular feedback about my performance.
8. My leader provides constructive feedback that helps me improve.

Section C: Organizational Trust

9. I trust my organization to treat employees fairly.
10. I believe management acts in the best interest of employees.

11. I feel confident sharing honest opinions with leadership.

12. I believe my leader's words and actions are consistent.

Section D: Employee Performance

Task Performance

13. I complete my tasks efficiently and on time.

14. I meet or exceed the performance standards set for my job.

Commitment

15. I feel emotionally attached to this organization.

16. I am willing to go beyond my regular duties for the success of the organization.

Innovative Behavior

17. I often suggest new ideas for improving work processes.

18. I take initiative to implement creative solutions at work.

Section E: Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) and Transformational Leadership

Leader–Member Exchange (LMX)

19. My leader recognizes and values my contributions.

20. I have a good working relationship with my leader.

Transformational Leadership Communication

21. My leader inspires me to achieve beyond expectations.

22. My leader communicates a compelling vision for the organization.

23. My leader encourages collaboration and innovation among employees.

Interview Guide

Purpose: To gain deeper insights into how leadership communication shapes trust and influences employee performance in Ghanaian organizations.

Introductory Section

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. The purpose is to understand your experiences with leadership communication, trust, and performance in your organization. Your responses will remain confidential.

Interview Questions

1. Leadership Communication

- How would you describe your leader's communication style?
- In what ways does your leader ensure clarity and transparency in communication?
- Can you share an example where your leader's empathy or feedback influenced your motivation or work behavior?

2. Organizational Trust

- How much do you trust the management or leadership of your organization? Why or why not?
- What actions from leadership build or destroy trust among employees in your view?

3. Employee Performance

- How does trust in leadership affect your performance, creativity, or commitment?
- Can you describe a time when effective (or poor) communication impacted your performance?

4. Comparative Context

- From your perspective, how does communication and trust differ between public and private organizations (if you have experience with both)?

5. Moderating Factors

- How would you describe your working relationship with your leader?
- How does your leader inspire, motivate, or guide employees towards organizational goals?

6. Closing

- What improvements would you suggest to strengthen leadership communication and employee trust in your organization?

