

**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**AN ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION FLOW OF  
ORGANISATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY AND NATIONAL  
INSURANCE TRUST (SSNIT)**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, except for references to other people's work, for which I have acknowledged, this study is the true reflection of my own research towards the award of Master of Arts Degree in Public Relations.

I further declare that this thesis has been supervised in accordance with the guidelines of the Institute.

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to the almighty God whose grace and mercy brought me through as well as to my husband David Tsey and children Bubune, Sefakor and Sedudzi for all the sacrifices, prayers and support.

To God alone be all the praise.!

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## ABSTRACT

Communication is regarded as the key to the success of every organization. Internal communication is the process used to interpret and communicate organizational strategies and goals. Through effective internal communication strategies, employees are well equipped with relevant information which will enable them to adequately address customer issues leading to improved customer satisfaction. Therefore, the importance of effective internal communication cannot be overemphasized. This study investigated the internal communication flow within the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), Ghana. It adopted a mixed method research design, which involved the administration of questionnaires and interviews to the staff of SSNIT who constituted the respondents and participants respectively in the study area. The responses of the respondents and participants were analysed thematically. The result of the investigation revealed the need for improved internal communication within the organization. Management staff who were interviewed revealed that although internal communication is the role of the Corporate Affairs Department, it is also the responsibility of all staff members. A high number of neutral responses was received from the study participants, suggesting a disillusionment rising from ineffective internal communication practices within the organization. The study recommends that management staff should make internal communication a priority by undertaking frequent evaluations, assessments and audit of the approaches and outcomes of communication practices. In addition, management staff must maintain open door policy, approachable and accommodating towards staff members of the organization.

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## CHAPTER 1

### GENERAL OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### Introduction

“Communis” which means ‘to share’ is the Latin word for Communication. It requires a sender, a message as well as a recipient. Communication entails the transfer of ideas, thoughts, or feelings from a sender to a receiver through a medium which could be verbal or non-verbal. It refers to the conveying of an information. Communication can therefore be regarded as the key to the success of every organisation. An organisation that is attentive to its customers is likely to improve on its services and business. According to Thomson and Hecker (2007), most organisations are in the position to unlock the full potentials of their business and brands through their people, unfortunately, they fail to do so. Lattimore et al., (2004) also note that the outcome of satisfied and productive employees, increased customer base, enhanced community and investor relations as well as the attainment of organisational goals, can be traced to organizations effective employee communication. Certain cultures guide how employees work in organizations. So an effective employee communication would be dependent on establishing firm organizational culture, which would clearly communicate policies, missions and goals of the organisation through which employees get well informed and boldly relay their views on issues to their superiors.

Internal communication is therefore the process used to interpret and communicate organisational strategies and goals. Through effective internal communication strategies, employees are well informed thereby resulting in customer satisfaction. According to Thomas et al. (2009), internal communication increases trust in organisations, and this results in the success of the business. They also believe that communication plays an important role in the

development of trust within an organization. They, therefore, encouraged that organizations pay much attention to internal communication as it affects the organization positively. Organisations committed to effective internal communication tend to benefit extensively. For instance, Quirk (1996) is of the view that the most satisfied employees are those that are well-informed. As a result, they are more productive and does the best of their jobs for the organisation. They play the roles of spoke-persons outside the workplace on behalf of the organisation. These effective interactions with the organisation's stakeholders eventually result in influencing positive relationships with the community, media and other potential investors.

Pollitt & Brown (2008, p. 29) stated that a fringe benefit is not the only best incentive for employee motivation but a simple listening ear to employees, appreciating their contributions as well as valuing them as individuals with unique strengths and needs. These acts significantly increase profits in many organisations. "In fact employees who work in environments where everyone's suggestions and contributions are sought, employees feel up to ten times more valued than in companies where all ideas are generated from the top." Pollitt & Brown (2008, p. 29)

In Miller's (2006) viewpoint, internal communications do not only refer to those formal channels such as the internal news bulletins, newsletters, staff meetings or even the notice boards. Neither is it a process that goes from the top to the bottom, nor volunteers or interns but rather, constant interactions within an organization that transmits meaning. Internal communication also covers both undisguised communication through meetings, memos and more even the informal forms such as gossip, exchange of pleasantries and even through body language.

Internal Communication despite its vital role in organisations is often neglected during communication strategies. It is however through communication that the core assets of every organisation, that people, directly relate and ensures the effective functioning of the organisation. Just as the human body, a problem with any part of the body has an adverse effect on its effective functioning, so the need to acknowledge the fact that, when people who make up the organisation do not work in unity, it would hinder the rate at which the objectives of the organisation would be achieved. An internal communication strategy is therefore crucial in ensuring a united organization that is focused on achieving its goals and objectives.

According to Miller (2006), it is important for organisations to note that, despite the fact that the organisation has a clearly written out mission and vision statements, which are mostly based on basic values and human rights, it must be worthy of note that, not all members of the organisation could communicate those missions. So where an organisation adopts an effective communication with its internal stakeholders be they management, employees or volunteers, a cohesive culture is developed where everyone is seen to be focused on the same goals and objectives. By this, stakeholders are able to collaborate and effectively work. There is therefore the need to develop sound internal communication processes but most importantly necessary to periodically evaluate these internal communication processes.

Research suggests that most of the literature on internal communication and its impact on employee productivity are limited to the European countries. This, therefore, calls for the need to explore studies into this side of the world and most importantly, country of nationality, Ghana. The study seeks to explore the flow of communication within the internal customers of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), as an organization.

## **1.1 Statement of Problem:**

While effective communication should be the goal of any organization, merely communicating is just the first step. An organization however that remains quiet can experience the worst outcomes as it forces employees to speculate, listen to the grapevine and turn to the media for information about their company (Hoover, 2005, p. 25.) There has most often been some level of dissonance between management and their subordinates in most Ghanaian organisations and this is often traced to a communication gap between the top and bottom level of the organisational hierarchy. Most often those at the lower level feel left in the dark as far as information flow is concerned. The Watson Wyatt Worldwide (2004) survey found that, “organizations that communicate effectively overall are significantly more likely to be effective in a number of aspects of communications” (p. 5). Unfortunately, same cannot be said of the internal customers of SSNIT since they are often seen not at speed with new trends within the organisation and for that matter unable to effectively relay such information to their external customers.

Through customers’ feedback and observations, it has been realised that most staff of SSNIT seem not to be informed of activities that take place in the organisation and even when the information on new policies or strategies are disseminated, it is often delayed or not received at all sometimes.

Hoover (2005) stated that "even in a time of crisis, good communication keeps employees engaged and the organization moving forward" (p. 25). However, the lack of communication, on the contrary, he said results in "disparity between what employees hear from their manager and what they see in the media, it leads to distracted, de-motivated employees who feel a lack of trust caused by lack of transparency -whether that is real or perceived" (p. 25).

These reasons are what necessitated the desire to embark on this research which seeks to analyse the communication flow within an organization using SSNIT as the case study

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

This study seeks to achieve the following goals and objectives:

- i. Identify and analyse the nature of communication flow in the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT)
- ii. Examine the effectiveness of the internal communication process from the perspectives of SSNIT staff.
- iii. Examine the strength and weaknesses of the communication flow
- iv. Examine the impact of effective communication on staff performance.
- v. Determine the ways by which communication flow can be increased

## **1.3 Research Questions**

- i. What is the nature of communication flow amongst the internal staff of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT)?
- ii. How effective are the communication processes from the SSNIT staff perspective?
- iii. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the communication flow?
- iv. How does effective communication impact the performance of staff?
- v. How can the communication flow be increased?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study seeks to bring to bear the appropriate perspective to employee communication flow as well as identify any possible existing barriers. In addition to increasing the already existing information on internal communication of organizations, it will guide organizational communicators to see the need for using communication tools that would enhance a two-way communication flow, which is communicating different kinds of information across different organizational levels and diverse audiences. Furthermore, it should provide insight for further research which can spark interest in conducting similar studies in other organisations.

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

For a fair representation of staff of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), and with the limited time for research, respondents would be limited to the Head Office only. With a sample size of 50, at least 3 respondents would be selected from each of the Eight (8) Divisions of the organisation which is well represented at the Head office. Research would be an analysis of the internal communication flow of SSNIT for the past year.

#### **1.6 Organization of the Study:**

The study is organized as follows:

The general overview and background to the study can be found in Chapter One. Here, there is an introduction as well as a discussion of the statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions, significance, scope and organization of the study as well as some operational definitions. In Chapter Two there is a review of existing literature and an explanation of the theoretical framework for the research. Chapter Three presents the methodology by which data will be gathered for analysis leading to findings and conclusion

which is then found in Chapter Four. The last Chapter is a write-up on the findings, summary, conclusion and recommendations for further studies.

### **1.7 Operational Definitions**

To have an effective comprehension of the research topic, there is the need to have an understanding of certain keywords identified in the research problem. So below are some identified key concepts and their brief definitions;

I. **Organisation** - According to the Oxford dictionary, an organisation refers to an organised group of people with a particular purpose such as a business or government department.

II. **Communication** - Communication entails the transfer of ideas, thoughts, or feelings from a sender to a receiver through a medium which could be verbal or non-verbal. Communication is a two-way process that involves a sender and a receiver, so communication can be considered to be completed only if the receiver understands the message received as intended by the sender. (M. J. Rouse and S. Rouse, 2002).

Communication inside companies and organizations is often described in research as either “corporate communication” or “internal communication”. According to Cornelissen, (2008), “Corporate communication is a management function that offers a framework for the effective coordination of all internal and external communication with the overall purpose of establishing and maintaining favorable reputations with stakeholder groups upon which the organization is dependent”

III. **Internal Communication** - “Internal communication is the strategic management of interactions and relationships between stakeholders at all levels within the organization

(Welch, 2015, p. 5), through verbal communication and technical applications to facilitate the process of information flow as a two-way process”

**IV. Communication Flow** - Communication mostly in business entities involves varied groups of workers as well as various functional parts of the organisation. The flow, therefore, refers to the patterns of communication and these are often grouped according to the direction of interaction such as upward, downward, diagonal, horizontal or external. Communication flow therefore basically, refers to the manner or direction in which information is sent across within an organisation or business entity.

**V. Channels of Communication** - This refers to the medium through which one intends to send information or message across to its intended audience. These channels could be verbal, non-verbal, written or visual.

**VI. Communication climate** - The meteorological terms of cold, humid, hot, hazy and the likes come to mind whenever the word climate comes up. A communication climate, therefore, refers to the social tone of a relationship. This tone can be either positive or negative and because it can change, it is important to understand them. For instance, a communication climate can be said to be positive when participants feel valued and vice versa when negative.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reviews existing literature on the research topic. It synthesizes arguments in books, articles and other academic resources focused on the internal communication flow in organizations. The conceptual framework on which the research is built, is also discussed in this section. This review of related literature is done in sub-headings for the purpose of clarity.

#### **2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study relies heavily on the communication theory as its underlying framework. Specifically, the models of communication are discussed to explain the social process of communication.

##### **2.1.1 The Communication Process**

Scholars of communication recognize communication as more than just the flow of information. Fundamentally, communication is a complex process associated with sending, receiving and interpreting messages. According to Corey (2009), “Communication is the process of creating, interpreting, and negotiating meaning. Communication can be verbal, nonverbal, or textual. It can be aural, visual, or even physical. Although communication occurs in a variety of different ways, it is always a learned behavior. While most human beings are born with the physical abilities to speak, to hear, to see, and so on, people must learn to communicate through codes, symbols, and systems of language. In this way, communication is a collective practice in which people use symbols to generate and interpret meaning.”

In order to explain the social process of communication, scholars have developed several models, however, the three most well-known models for communication are Linear, Interactional, and Transactional. West & Turner (2007) posit that each model sheds light on the development of communication but emphasizes different parts of the communication process.

**Linear Model:** This model was originally developed by Shannon & Weaver in 1948 and describes communication as a linear process. It describes how a sender, or speaker, transmits a message to a receiver, or listener. More specifically, the *sender* is the source of the message. The linear or transmission model of communication describes communication as a linear, one-way process in which a sender intentionally transmits a message to a receiver (Ellis & McClintock, 1990). This model focuses on the sender and message within a communication encounter. Although the receiver is included in the model, this role is viewed as more of a target or end point rather than part of an ongoing process. A *message* may consist of the sounds, words, or behaviors in a communication interaction. The message itself is transmitted through a *channel*, the pathway or route for communication, to a *receiver*, who is the target or recipient of the message. There may be obstacles in the communication process, or noise. *Noise* refers to any interference in the channel or distortion of the message. This is a fairly simple model in which a message is simply passed from sender to receiver (Corey, 2009). This model was considered problematic and limited because communication is considered more dynamic than the linear model suggests. It reflects a give and take between senders and receivers in which listeners are not simply passive receptacles for a sender's message. This model is also limited because it provides only one channel for only one message which implies that messages themselves are clear-cut with a distinct beginning and a distinct end. However, as Corey (2009) observes, communication is rarely, if ever, as neat and tidy as a linear model would suggest.

The scholars who designed this model extended on a linear model proposed by Aristotle centuries before that included a speaker, message, and hearer. They were also influenced by the advent and spread of new communication technologies of the time such as telegraphy and radio, and the technical influences within the model are evident (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). The main flaw in the linear model is that it depicts communication as a one-way process where speakers only speak and never listen. It also implies that listeners listen and never speak or send messages.

**Interactional Model:** To capture a more dynamic view of communication, the interactional model follows two channels in which communication and feedback flow between sender and receiver. *Feedback* is simply a response that a receiver gives to a sender. Feedback can be verbal (saying 'yes,' for example) or nonverbal (that is, a nod or smile). Most importantly, feedback indicates comprehension. It can help senders know if their message was received and understood. The interactive or interaction model of communication describes communication

as a process in which participants alternate positions as sender and receiver and generate meaning by sending messages and receiving feedback within physical and psychological contexts (Schramm, 1997). The main drawback in the interactive model is that it does not indicate that communicators can both send and receive messages simultaneously. This model also fails to show that communication is a dynamic process which changes over time.

**Transactional Model:** The transactional is considered the most dynamic of communication models. One notable feature of this model is the move from referring to people as senders and receivers to referring to people as *communicators*. This implies that communication is achieved as people both send and receive messages. Fundamentally, this model views communication as a transaction. In other words, communication is a cooperative action in which communicators co-create the process, outcome and effectiveness of the interaction. As the study of communication progressed, models expanded to account for more of the communication process. According to Barnlund (1970), many scholars view communication as more than a process that is used to carry on conversations and convey meaning. The transaction model differs from the transmission and interaction models in significant ways, including the conceptualization of communication, the role of sender and receiver, and the role of context.

According to the seminal 1952 article by Karl Deutsch on *Communication Models in the Social Sciences*, models are a simplified representation or template of a process that can be used to help understand the nature of communication in a social setting. Such models are not necessarily one-to-one maps of the real world, but they are successful only insofar as they accurately represent the most important elements of the real world, and the dynamics of their relationship to one another. Although there are many models available, these three constitute standard categories of models in the communication process.

## 2.2 OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a term that has proven not easy to define; it is a concept of wide understanding. The wide scope in defining communication shows the notion that communication is a process that is continuous and complex and cannot be arbitrarily isolated. Communication unfolds over time (Miller, 2009). Etymologically, the word 'communicate' is derived from the Latin verb - *communicare*, adjective - *communis* and old French adjective -

*comun*. The key root is '*mun*' stemming from the Latin word '*munus*' meaning to share publicly, or impart, or to make common.

According to Amudavalli (2008), the word seems to have entered English language vocabulary in the 14th and 15th centuries. The term originally meant sharing of tangible things: food, land, goods, and property. Today, it is often applied to knowledge and information processed by living things or computers. Communication connects people and places. Whereas people have always communicated, the process of communication became the subject of study in the 20th Century. The formal study of communication was necessitated by the development of technologies (Amudavalli, 2008).

Communication implies the transmission of information, knowledge, and skills from the sender to end users through a chain of processes that involve message generation, description, and encoding. Messages are transmitted over a channel of interest, often determined by the sender. The end user then must effectively decode, reproduce, and re-create the original message, with a potential degradation in quality and meaning (Haykin, 2001; Shannon, Weaver, 1949).

Organizational communication, according to Yüksel (2013), is one of the broadest subfields of the communication discipline. Not only is it quite extensive, but it also spans and intersects with various other subfields within communication, and with other disciplines. It also has both theoretical and professional dimensions. There are, however, scholarly debates on the characteristics of the field since the 1980s. The main debate concerns the content, methodology and applications that define the scope of the field and separate it from other related sciences and disciplines. The main argument focuses on the need for a perspective and theory to conceptualize communication as a foundation for the organizations (Putnam, 1983). The debate is critical in the sense that it further helps to shape the identity of organizational communication as a full academic field by developing its own scholarship, applications and theory and distancing itself from the management school (Taylor et al., 2001).

Over time, the approach to internal communication has been forced to adjust to numerous changes in the workplace. Argenti (1998) writes of changes in organizations that affected the workplace and, in turn, employees. He asserts that "the overall environment is more competitive than ever before, more global than in the past, and more interdependent on other organizations... These changes put pressure on today's employees and create the need for a more coordinated approach to employee communications" (p. 199). To deal with these

changes, a study conducted by the Conference Board, a business membership and research organization, asked managers from over 200 companies what they considered effective employee communication. The board believed that effective communication should: improve morale, create a positive relationship between employees and management, inform employees about internal changes, explain employee benefits, and increase understanding about the organization's goals and culture (Troy, 1988). These goals demonstrated the beginning of a shift from simple one-way communication toward the development of strategic communication plans. Argenti identified issues in employee communication, the function of key players, and two-way communication, but research on the relationship between employees and internal communication was yet to be explored.

Despite the evolutionary nature of communication, communication inside organizations is still being treated as a minor activity in the company's communication system (Fernandez, 2009). Sałek-imińska and Mazur-jelonek (2011) aver that any thoughts on the effectiveness of internal communication should begin with focusing on internal target groups, which requires different expertise and experience. With the growing contemporary importance of the skill of proper communication as a required quality of a good employee, the smooth flow of information becomes the foundation for the existence of an organization, as well as the clarity and transparency of all matters concerning the internal functioning of the company. Regardless of their place in the organizational structure, all employees should create an efficient system of mutual communication. Effective, multidirectional and multilateral exchange of information is possible only then. (Sałek-imińska and Mazur-jelonek, 2011).

Internal communication has been recognized as a strategic focus for business communication, second only to leadership concerns (Barnfield, 2003). Jo and Shim (2005) note that given the emerging paradigm of public relations by relationship management, the terms of internal communication need to be redefined as part of building favorable relationships between management and employees. Managers within organizations are in a role of personal influence in their relationships with employees. Numerous studies have linked internal communication and the degree to which employees are informed to job satisfaction and performance (Gray & Laidlaw, 2002; Bartoo & Sias, 2004).

## 2.3 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

From the methodological stance of the functional perspective, organizations are defined as places where groups or individuals work in cooperation in pursuit of common goals and interests (Jones et al., 2004). Organizations acquire a physical, rigid, and container-like quality and communication is something that occurs in this physical space (Putnam, 1983). The scholars in this view tend to see organizations as fixed entities that can be understood based on their size, structure, hierarchical charts, and task practices. Using this perspective, the source of the power comes out of the fixed structural position of organizational members rather than situated activities of individuals (Yüksel, 2013).

From an interpretive perspective, organizations are viewed as a range of factionalized groups with diverse and multiple goals (Putnam, 1983). They are dynamic; and are produced, reproduced and transformed through the ongoing activities of its members (McPhee and Zaugg, 2001), such that, a hierarchical chart is defined with a screen metaphor which implies the power structure existing in chart is the product of the interaction among organizational members rather than their structural positions.

Critical theorists consider organizations to be sites of struggle. The creation of meanings in the communication process is fundamentally mediated by power, leading to a struggle over meaning domination (Mumby, 1993, 2001). For instance, in Smith and Eisenberg (1987), the family metaphor in times of conflict was reinterpreted in a different way by employees and managers that caused tension among them. Family metaphor had been used to indicate closeness among all employees and difference from other parks for a long time. However, during the strike, family metaphor was interpreted differently by employees and managers. While employees perceived management's economic measures to be a threat to the family, management tried to reinterpret family emphasizing that "family life can sometimes be hard, and families must make sacrifices if they are to survive" (Smith and Eisenberg, 1987: 375). This example clearly shows conflicting implications of metaphors in organizations which is a sign of struggle over meaning. Thus, critical scholars denote communication, power and organization as interdependent phenomena (Mumby, 2001).

## 2.4 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Internal communication penetrates the whole organization. The process of internal communication involves personal management, internal marketing, managerial communication abilities and skills and finally company information and communication infrastructure. Only the synergy of all the above-mentioned activities can guarantee effective internal communication as the base of company management. Good internal communication is based on the principle that there is a need to treat employees as internal partners (i.e., internal customers) who should meet their own needs associated with the global company performance and lead them to the common goals (Miller, 2009).

With the introduction of applying marketing strategies to employees, a shift in internal communication came. According to Debussy, Ewing, and Pitt (2003, p. 149), "the notion of internal marketing in which companies are considered markets and employees as internal customers, emerged during the 1980s". In the same way that loyalty of external customers is driven by their satisfaction, so are employees driven by their job satisfaction. Debussy et al. (2003) note that internal marketing should include a two-way communication process between management and employees and that its significance lies in its ability to "reach and motivate lower-level employees within organizations" (p. 153).

Scholars have attempted defining internal communication as an integrative approach (Kalla, 2005), as relationship based (Welch and Jackson, 2007), boundary spanning (Cornelissen, 2011), involving consistent distribution of information (Verčič, Verčič and Sriramesh, 2012) and related to planning, alignment and measurement (Dortok, 2006). Kalla (2005), for example, describes it "as integrated internal communication" which brings the practices of business, management, corporate and organizational communication together. In essence it is "all formal and informal communication taking place internally at all levels in the communication strategy appropriate for the future of the company, an internal communication plan aligning employees' expectations with the expectations of the company, as well as application, measurement and evaluation." Welch and Jackson (2007), on the other hand, define internal communication from a stakeholder perspective - "as the strategic management of interactions and relationships between stakeholders within organizations across a number of interrelated dimensions including, internal line manager communication, internal team peer communication, internal project peer communication and internal corporate communication." They place internal

communication within the ambit of integrated corporate communication and discuss how relationships shape the function's outcome.

Dortok (2006) defines internal communication as “a cycle consisting of a communication strategy appropriate for the future of the company, and internal communication plan aligning employees' expectations with the expectations of the company, as well as application, measurement and evaluation”. The author considers internal communication to have a strategic linkage with business results.

From a public relations perspective, internal communication is firmly part of the strategic corporate communication mix (Welch & Jackson, 2007) with a focus on a distinct 'audience'. However, in many organisations it reports into the human resources department, or is viewed as 'internal marketing', suggesting the discipline does not have a solid historic foundation (Ruck & Yaxley, 2013). Pilkington (2012) aligns internal communication to Grunig and Hunt's (1984) four stages, describing these as: entertaining, informing, persuading and employee engagement. Smith and Mounter (2008) cite three evolutionary phases proposed by Brandon (1997), to which they assign the labels: industrial relations (pre-1960s), realistic journalism (1960s-1980s) and marketing (post-1980s). They contend a fourth stage could be added to include listening and employee contributions. Brandon (1997) does not provide any evidence to support his progressive model, using it mainly to argue for employee communication as “the marketer of management strategy to employees”.

The definitions of internal communication support a focus on the discipline as grounded in stakeholder theory (Welch & Jackson, 2007), direction of information flow (Kim, 2007) and efficient provision of information (Vercic et al., 2012). These distinctions reflect conceptualisations within separate academic and professional spheres. Internal communication is viewed as the management of strategic relationships and interactions (Welch and Jackson, 2007), impacting organizational effectiveness (Welch, 2011) and as a systematic process and distribution of information at all levels (Verčič, Verčič and Sriramesh, 2012). Yates (2006) assert that effective communication in organizations manifests in eight ways or areas: educating employees about the organizational culture and values, helping connect employees to business, aligning employees' actions with customer needs, providing financial information and objectives, clarifying and promoting new programs and policies, integrating new employees into the organization, sharing information on the value of total rewards program and demonstrating leadership during change (Verghese, 2017).

## **2.5 SYMMETRICAL INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

The two-way symmetrical model of public relations as described in Grunig's Excellence Theory is focused primarily in making sure that decisions made by an organization are mutually beneficial between itself and its audiences. The goal of Grunig's symmetrical communication model is one that embraces negotiation between the organization and its publics, and one that also fosters mutual understanding. Unlike one-way communication which disseminates information through monologue, two-way communication exchanges information through dialogue (Grunig and Grunig 1992). According to Grunig and Grunig (1992:308), the two-way symmetrical model is not only the most ethical approach to public relations, it is also the "model most effective in meeting organizational goals.

Grunig (2006) states that the conceptualization of symmetrical communication was stimulated by Carter (1965) and Chaffee and McLeod's (1968) concept of coorientation. In contrast to traditional approaches about how to develop messages to change attitudes or behavior, co-orientation emphasizes how two people or levels of a system are jointly oriented to each other. Similarly, the basic premise of a symmetrical model is how individuals, organizations, and the public use communication to adjust their thinking and behavior, rather than control or manipulate how the other party thinks or behaves. Thus, symmetrical communication favors understanding, collaboration, responsiveness, and the creation of long-term and mutually beneficial relationships (L. A. Grunig et al., 2002).

It has been established that communication is an important antecedent of organizational commitment, and that employees who engage in reciprocal dialogue with organizations would demonstrate a sense of belonging to and appreciation of organizations due to the community spirit symmetrical communication creates (Elving, 2005). Men (2014) describes symmetrical communication systems as those where managers and their employees engage in dialogue and listen to each other to reach mutual understanding and build relationships. Examples of channels used in times of change management to foster symmetrical communication and dialogue include committee meetings, town halls, skip-level meetings, and informal channels such as breakfasts, coffees and lunch meetings that connect supervisors with employees (Neill, 2018).

According to Grunig (1992:536), organizations approach employee relations in a manner similar to relationships with other stakeholders. He describes excellent programs as characterized by “an integrated communication function, the managerial role, and the two-way symmetrical model of public relations”, adding that symmetrical communication requires “trust, credibility, openness, relationships, reciprocity, network symmetry, horizontal communication, feedback, adequacy of information, employee-centered style, tolerance for disagreement, and negotiation” (Grunig, 1992: 558). The two-way symmetrical model “focuses on two-way communication as a means of conflict resolution and for the promotion of mutual understanding between an organisation and its important publics” (Guth & Marsh, 2006).

The purpose of the two-way symmetrical model of communication is to gain mutual understanding and build dialogue between parties based on two-way communication with balanced effects. In this model, communicators thus use research and dialogue to manage conflict, improve understanding and build relationships. As such, it represents the most acceptable and mutually rewarding form of communication (Steyn et al., 2011). This is also true in an organizational context. Mersham, Rensburg and Skinner (1995:39) argue that “People should be given equal opportunity and be respected as fellow human beings. Anyone, regardless of education or background, may provide valuable input into an organization”. McGowan (2007: 63-64) found that internal activism among employees can even prompt two-way symmetrical communication among management.

In the two-way symmetrical model of communication, power is spread equally between the organization and its stakeholders; communication is reciprocal; all parties are prepared to adjust their attitudes and behavior; and a true dialogue subsequently emerges (Gower, 2006; Fill, 1999). Given these characteristics, two-way symmetrical communication presents the benefits of building a participative culture that increases employees’ motivation and job satisfaction (Grunig et.al., 2002: xi); fosters their loyalty to and identification with the organization they work for (Grunig et.al., 2002:329); and facilitates understanding between managers and staff (Argenti, 1998). Internal symmetrical communication in the organization is based on the principles of employee empowerment and participation in decision-making (Grunig & Grunig, 2011). In such a communication system, managers and followers engage in dialogue and listen to each other; internal media disseminate information required by employees to foster mutual understanding and understanding of individual roles. Thus,

symmetrical communication fosters a participative organizational culture and organic structure.

## **2.6 INFLUENCE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

Internal communications have a strategic role (Smith, 2005) which are reflected in organizational outcomes and enable individual employees to see the relationship between their role and those outcomes (Keenan and Hazelton, 2006; Dewhurst and Fitzpatrick, 2007). Research that measures internal communication's link to job satisfaction identifies a causal relationship between the two (Asif & Sargeant, 2000; Goris, Pettit, & Vaught, 2002). Some scholars (Smidts, Pruyn, & Riel, 2002; DeBussy, Ewing, & Pitt, 2003; DeRidder, 2004; Holtz, 2004;) find that communication not only improves employee satisfaction but also produces organizational identification (Smidts et al.), trust, support in organizational goals, commitment (DeRidder), reputation, credibility, retention, and shareholder value (Holtz).

Links between good internal communications and organisational success are abundant (Welch and Jackson, 2007, Clampitt and Downs, 1993). It is described as a core process for organisations (Welch and Jackson, 2007) and one that should be on the agenda for all management strategic meetings (Barrett, 2002). Smith (2005) warns that companies “underestimate the power of internal communication at their peril” (p. 19). The role of internal communications, however, is one that is seen to be undergoing, or to have undergone considerable change (Chalmers, 2008). Its various iterations – described as “eras” (Theaker, 2004) - include those of entertaining employees (1940s), informing (1950s) and persuading (1960s) to open communication (1980s to date) (Theaker, 2004). Today’s internal communication practitioner is focused on challenging and stimulating employees, managing change and gaining employee engagement and commitment (Smith, 2005; Tench and Yeomans, 2006). The aim has moved from controlling and directing people, through providing information, making announcements and supporting industrial relations, to supporting the development of a flexible work environment which adapts to change, seeks improvement, shares knowledge and know-how, generates ideas and involves people in achieving strategic goals (Keenan and Hazelton, 2006; Smith, 2005).

Internal communication practitioners need to understand people in organizations and how to influence employees' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours (Strauss and Hoffman, 2000). They must be able to gauge an organisation's communications climate (L'Etang, 2008) and analyse the cultural, political and relational dimensions present within their organisations (Conrad, 1994). This is a role which is complex and challenging. This is illustrated by Conrad and Poole's assertion that "strictly rational theories of decision making simply do not reflect the complex maze of personal, interpersonal, political, and ethical considerations that employees incorporate into their choices." (Conrad and Poole, 2005, p. 291). Another most cited role for the internal communications function is that of developing employee commitment, involvement and engagement in support of the achievement of business goals. This is important as organizational success is dependent on employee support (Therkelsen and Fiebich, 2003) and employees who are committed to an organisation identify personally with it, are concerned for its future and are loyal to it (Garbarina and Johnson, in Thomson et al, 1999).

To make a full contribution, internal communications must be strategic, support strategic objectives and focus on relationships (Barrett, D. 2002; Welch and Jackson, 2007 cited in Chalmers, 2008). It needs to form part of the business planning and performance management process at both individual and functional level (Barrett, 2002). The implications for competencies here are around such issues as strategic understanding, business planning and process management. Internal communication should form and reflect itself in the culture of the organization by encouraging all employees to communicate freely and directly in order to build collegial, professional relationships, and build the identity of the company they belong to (Berger, 2009).

An important role of strategic internal communication is to generate "buy-in" for an organization's goals and strategies. No matter how brilliant the business strategy, it must reach and win employees to achieve optimum effectiveness. Employees want to know where their organization is headed and how they contribute to achieving the vision (Moorcroft, 2003). Employees need a "core story" that consistently puts strategy into the context of the mission and values of the organization (Sanchez, 2004). It is widely acknowledged that the CEO sets the tone for internal communication (Schein, 2000; Tourish and Robson, 2003). The leader of an organization is automatically the designated chief communication officer, and successful internal communication is impossible without CEO support, because "successful companies lead through effective top-down communication" (Van Nostran, 2004, p. 10).

Researchers have shown that the effectiveness of internal communication is a leading indicator of organizational success (e.g. Ehling et al., 1992; Ruck and Welch, 2012). According to Meng and Berger (2012), the values created by excellent internal communications in organizations are often future-oriented, such as issue recommendations and potential growth in investor opportunities. In recent years, as companies have begun recognizing the importance of engaged employees for direct business outcomes such as good performance, innovation, and productivity (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008), employee engagement has emerged as a vital concept that affects organizational effectiveness and competitiveness (Morris, 2010). Employees' satisfaction with internal communication is an important factor in their performance (and ultimately organizational success) (Erasmus-Kritzinger, 2002). Effective internal communication can give meaning to jobs, make people feel connected and accountable and increase productivity (Roberts, 2002). Internal communication policies should thus encourage frequent, honest, open, job-related, two-way communication among managers and subordinates facilitated by an accommodative internal environment (Van Heerden, 1994).

## **2.7 RELATED STUDIES**

Kang and Sung (2016), conducted a study to examine how a company's symmetrical internal communication efforts could influence its employees' perception of relationship outcomes with the company. Employee communication behaviors (ECB) about the company to others and their turnover intention, were also examined. The research revealed that employee/internal communication management was linked with employee engagement; and that employee engagement enhanced supportive employee communication behaviors and reduced turnover intention. The findings of the study demonstrated that the effects of employee relationship management and symmetrical internal communication indeed exist beyond ECBs to the actual managerial outcomes. The findings also suggested a three-stage model of employee communication management: employee/internal communication management antecedents; employee engagement; and supportive outcomes of effective employee communication programs, such as supportive/extra ECBs.

Steyn et al., (2011) conducted another study to investigate internal communication at DaimlerChrysler South Africa (DCSA) from a two-way symmetrical model of internal

communication and internal marketing perspective. Their research explored the lives of participants in order to understand and interpret the meaning they (respondents) attach to events or objects related to internal communication. They found that managers perceived DCSA's internal culture and value system as authoritarian and top-down in nature, resulting in most of the internal communication problems they experienced. Staff members also described the internal communication as "authoritarian", "top-down" and "them versus us", observing that managers rather focused on mistakes than achievements.

Garg (2020) set out to analyze Grunig's Two-Way Symmetrical Model in the context of NGOs, with the aim of understanding the PR Practices of three (3) different NGOs. He questioned how their interactions affected public visibility of the organizations and found that all three NGOs took different steps and approaches (symmetric and two-way communication approaches) to incorporate public relations practices in their activities and dealings with their publics. Organizations that applied the two-way communication approach were viewed favorably by their publics, unlike those adopting the symmetric approach.

## **2.8 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented a review of literature on the topic considered in this research. Articles, academic papers and other research have been discussed within various subheadings that further break down the concept of internal communication for a thorough examination. The theoretical framework on which this research is built has also been discussed in this section.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focus on the methods, techniques and processes that was used in conducting the research. These include a description of the study area, research design, sample frame, instrument used, data collection procedure and data analysis.

#### **3.1 DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA: SOCIAL SECURITY AND NATIONAL INSURANCE TRUST (SSNIT)**

The Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) is a statutory public Trust charged under the National Pensions Act, 2008 Act 766 with the administration of Ghana's Basic National Social Security Scheme. Its mandate is to cater for the First Tier of the Three-Tier Pension Scheme. The Trust is currently the largest non-bank financial institution in Ghana. The primary responsibility of the Trust is to replace part of lost income of workers in Ghana due to old age, invalidity or death of a member where dependents receive lump sum payment. It is also responsible for the payment of emigration benefits to a non-Ghanaian member who is leaving Ghana permanently. The Pension Scheme as administered by SSNIT has an active membership of over 1.6 million as at January 2021 with over 226,000 pensioners who regularly receive their monthly pensions from SSNIT.

The Trust was established in 1972 under NRCDC 127 to administer the National Social Security Scheme. Prior to 1972, the Scheme was administered jointly by the then Department of Pensions and the State Insurance Corporation. The Trust administered the Social Security Scheme as a Provident Fund Scheme until 1991 when it was converted to a Social Insurance Pension Scheme then governed by the PNDC law 247. The scheme in Ghana was reformed by an Act of Parliament, Act 766 of 2008 and was implemented in January 2010 to replace all pension schemes in Ghana including Cap 30. In 2014, the National Pensions (Amendment) Act 883 was passed to amend portions of Act 766.

The vision of SSNIT is "To be the model for the administration of Social Protection Schemes in Africa and beyond", and its mission is "To provide income security for workers in Ghana through excellent business practices". The core functions of the organization are: to register

employers and workers, collect contributions, manage records on members, invest the funds of the Scheme, process and pay benefits to eligible members and nominated dependents. SSNIT operates from eight (8) area offices, fifty-one (51) Branches and twenty-three (23) Day offices spread across the country. The core values of SSNIT include Professionalism, Leadership, Integrity, Customer focus, Commitment, Innovation, and Teamwork (source: SSNIT website - <https://www.ssnit.org.gh/about-us/>).

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design used in this study was the mixed method. Cohen and Manion (1986: 254) define mixed method as an “attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint”. Altrichter et al. (1996: 117) regard mixed method as a means to achieve “a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation”. The combination of both quantitative and qualitative approach allowed for an effective assessment of the internal communication within the organization, taking into consideration the objectives of the study.

### **3.3 POPULATION**

Sekaran (2000: 266) defines population as the entire group of people, events, or thing of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. According to Kumar (2000), the population is the set of all objects that have some common set of predetermined characteristics with respect to some research problems. The population of the study area (SSNIT) is about 2,200 comprising the entire workers and managers of the organization. The population studied included the general staff of SSNIT, including the management of the institution. The reason for this choice was to get a balanced view in determining the internal communication practices and how effective these are, within the organization.

### **3.4 SAMPLE**

A sample is a proportion of a population. According to Osuala (2007), “Sampling is taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe.” To make research effective and plausible, a reasonable portion of the population was sampled. This made it possible for a reliable generalization of the findings. A sample constitutes a set of individuals or participants selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey (Salant & Dillman,

2004). A sample can be defined as a group of relatively smaller number of people selected from a population for investigation purpose. Fink (2003:1) defines sample as a proportion or subset of a larger group called a population, observing that ‘a good sample is a miniature version of the population of which it is a part – just like it, only smaller.’ As a result of cost, time and other constraints, it would have been very difficult to study an entire population. It therefore became necessary, reasonable and feasible to study a portion of the population which is described as sample.

The sample for this study was chosen from the population which was the staff of SSNIT and with the limited time for research, respondents were limited to the Head Office only. The non-probability sampling was applied to this study.

### **3.4.1 Sampling Technique**

The general aim of all sampling techniques is to obtain a sample that is representative of the target population (Oribhabor & Anyanwu, 2019). Sampling techniques can be categorized according to the approach they take to the probability of a particular unit being included (Scott, 2007). According to Noordzig et al. (2010), there are two types of sampling techniques: Probability sampling technique, and non-probability sampling technique. A probability technique is a sampling procedure in which the sample is selected based on well-defined mathematical guidelines whereby every member of the universe has equal chances of being selected (Noordzig et al. 2010). Types of probabilistic sampling techniques include Simple Random Sampling, Stratified Sampling, and Cluster Sampling. Non-probability technique, on the other hand, is a sampling procedure that does not follow any mathematical guideline, and as such the members of the population do not have equal chance of being selected. This method was based on the principle of availability, not on prescribed formula or guidelines.

Purposive and convenient sampling are two types of nonprobability sampling, and was used for this study. Parahoo (1997: 232) describes purposive sampling as a method of sampling where the researcher deliberately chooses who to include in the study based on their ability to provide necessary data. Convenience sampling is selecting participants because they are often readily and easily available. Typically, convenience sampling tends to be a favored sampling technique among students as it is inexpensive, and an easy option compared to other sampling techniques (Ackoff, 1953). In this regard, the population was put into two groups: Staff and

Management. Management were interviewed while questionnaires was administered to other staff members. Because of the role that management plays in the institution, interviews were more effective in collecting data because it allowed them to freely express their thoughts on questions asked. Also, because of the population of managerial staff, compared to general staff, interviews were more achievable. The population of general staff, as well as their schedules, justifies the application of questionnaires. Questionnaires were designed in a straightforward and simple manner so that time and results can be maximized.

### **3.4.2 Sample Size**

The sample size is a significant feature of any empirical study in which the goal is to make inferences about a population from a sample (Taherdoost, 2017). A sample size generally depends on five study design parameters: minimum expected difference or also known as the effect size, estimated measurement variability, desired statistical power, significance criterion, and whether a one- or two-tailed statistical analysis is planned (Scott, 2007). Salkind, 2010 opines that an appropriate sample size is necessary for any research because too small sample size is not a good representative of the population. Too small sample size may lead to committing Type I error, which is the probability of wrongly rejecting a particular finding when it in fact to be accepted (Sekaran, 2013). Sekaran (2013) further argues that too large sample size is not appropriate because of possible problem of type II error, which is accepting a particular finding when it is supposed to be rejected.

In this study the total number of participants was 50 which was selected from each of the divisions of the organization well represented at the Head office. The Director General and his three Deputy Director Generals are assisted by seven (7) General Managers who oversee the following functions in the Trust:

1. Investment and Development
2. General Counsel
3. Finance
4. Operations
5. Management and Information Systems (MIS)
6. Administration and Human Resource
7. Benefits

There are however three other designations same as the general managers namely the Corporate Affairs Manager, the Chief Internal Auditor and the Chief Actuary. Five out of the above General Managers or any of the managers working under them were approached to participate in the study. They formed five out of the 50 participants required for the study. The remaining participants were the general staff of the Trust who belonged to either of the ten listed divisions in the Trust situated at the Head office. There was at least three questionnaires administered to staff within these divisions.

### **3.5 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

This research made use of both primary and secondary data sources. According to Nagy, Biber & Leavy (2011), data collection techniques allow the researcher to learn about a phenomenon by gathering information from individuals, groups, and text in any medium. There are both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Either way, data can be collected through surveys, observation, focus groups, among others. The Case Study method was used for this research. Case studies are in-depth investigations of a single person, group, event or community. Typically, data are gathered from a variety of sources and by using several different methods (e.g. observations & interviews) (Kabir, 2016). Case study is known as a triangulated research strategy. Snow and Anderson (1991) assert that triangulation can occur with data, investigators, theories, and even methodologies. In case studies, this could be done by using multiple sources of data (Yin, 1984).

### **3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The research instruments used in this study were questionnaires and interviews. Data was collected by the issuance of questionnaires to respondents, and the conducting of interviews. Questionnaires were online and consisted of a set of questions which all respondents were asked to complete. Once the questionnaire was created, it was delivered to many respondents with little effort. Face-to-face interviews also had a distinct advantage of enabling the researcher establish rapport with potential participants and therefore gained their cooperation. The interviews yielded good response rates and allowed the researcher to clarify ambiguous answers and when appropriate, sought follow up information (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with management staff because of the nature of their jobs, and because of their population compared to the general staff. The researcher sought to get

first-hand information from managers through interviews that allowed them to speak freely and expressed their thoughts. For the reason of anonymity and staff number, questionnaires seemed more suited to the general staff, which allowed them the opportunity to share their thoughts and views conveniently.

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

Structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides was used to collect data from the participants and respondents because the method offers high response quality; takes advantage of the facilitator's presence and combines questioning, cross-examination and probing approaches (Owens, 2002). Semi-structured interviews are flexible interviews in which the interviewer asks important questions in the same way each time but is free to alter the sequence of the questions and to probe for more information. Some items were structured while others were opened. The respondents were free to answer the questions in any way they chose. The interviews were also conducted with the aid of audio devices such as the recorder and smartphones. Notes were also taken during the interviews.

### **3.8 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data gathering, according to Gordon (1994), was displayed in tables and graphs essentially to help make sense of the high collection of data and make intelligent use of the results. Data analysis commenced after the questionnaires were issued and received, and the interviews also conducted. The analysis of data was descriptive in nature. In the study, meanings were formulated from extracted statements and then organized into themes to provide a full understanding of the participants' experiences. Analysis of the quantitative data was done using tables and charts. Much quantitative data was not expected, except from sort categories such as demographics. Hence, these categories were analyzed using tables. Further sections of the questionnaire containing key responses to topical issues in the research, were analyzed thematically. Qualitative data obtained from the interviews were analyzed and grouped thematically. Literature was used to further support the deductions made from these two data sources.

### **3.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed the methodology applied to this research. The population, research design, sampling, data collection procedure, and data analysis were examined here. A brief presentation of the study has also been made in this chapter. This forms the framework for data collection in this research.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings made from this study. It focused on the interpretation and analysis of data received from respondents. The study set out to analyse the internal communication flow of organizations, using the case study of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), Ghana. An online survey was prepared on google forms and shared to respondents. Interviews were also conducted with the management staff of the organization. The findings presented in this section are based on the data received from and inputted by respondents. A total of 47 respondents participated in the study. 45 questionnaires and 2 interviews were administered to the general staff and management staff respectively.

#### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	21	46.7%
Male	24	53.3%
<b>Age Range</b>		
26-30	10	22.2%
30-35	13	28.9%
36-40	12	26.7%
40-45	8	17.8%
46-50	1	2.2%
51 and above	1	2.2%
<b>Education or Qualification</b>		
O'Level	1	2.2%
Diploma / HND	1	2.2%
Diploma/HND: First Masters	1	2.2%
First Degree	16	35.6%
First Degree: Professional member GhIS	1	2.2%
Masters	25	55.6%

**Number of years in Organisation**

Less than 1 year	1	2.2%
1-3 years	6	13.3%
4-7 years	19	42.2%
8-10 years	8	17.8%
11-13 years	8	17.8%
14 + years	3	6.7%

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A total of 45 respondents participated in the study. From the data shown above, 46.7% of the respondents were females while 53.3% were males. Fairness and inclusivity were achieved as shown by the percentage participation of both males and females. The ages of respondents as represented in the table, ranged from 26 to 51 and above. 22.2% of the respondents were between the ages of 26 and 30, 28.9% between 30 and 35, 26.7% between 36 and 40, and 17.8% between 40 and 45. About three percent of the respondents were between the age range of 40 and 45, and another three percent from 51 upwards. The variety in the age ranges of the respondents shows a good level of age inclusivity employed during the study.

Respondents' educational qualifications were also taken into consideration during the study. As represented above, a greater percentage (55.6%) of the staff are master's degree holders, followed by the percentage of staff who hold a first degree (35.6%). Other respondents had O'Level, Diploma/HND, First Degree and Professional membership with the Ghana Insurance Service, as well as a graduation from Diploma to first degree and then to master's degree.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the number of years that they had worked with the organization. 13% of the respondents indicated that they had been working in organization for 1 to 3 years, 18% for 11 to 13 years, seven percent for 14 years and above, 18% for 8 to 10 years. A greater percentage of respondents (42%), as indicated above, have been working with the organization for 4 to 7 years. Only two percent of the respondents (1 respondent) had been working with the organization for less than a year. The respondents, though being staff members of SSNIT, work in different departments and play different roles in the organization. The different departments and roles played by the participants are explained in the table below.

## 4.2 HOW RESPONDENTS FEEL ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Your superior makes you feel free to talk with him/her		6.7	6.7	51.1	35.6
Your superior really understands your job problems		8.9	11.1	51.1	28.9
Your superior encourages you to let him/her know when things are going wrong on the job.		11.1	17.8	35.6	35.6
Your superior makes it easy for you to do your best work		6.7	17.8	48.9	26.7
Your superior expresses his/her confidence with your ability to perform the job		6.7	15.6	48.9	28.9
Your superior encourages you to bring new information to his/her attention, even when that new information may be bad news	2.2	6.7	26.7	40	24.4
Your superior makes you feel that things you tell him/her are really important		11.1	26.7	42.2	20
Your superior is willing to tolerate arguments and to give a fair hearing to all points of view	6.7	6.7	26.7	40	20
Your superior has your best interests in mind when he/she talks to his/her boss		11.1	28.9	42.2	17.8
Your superior is a really competent, expert manager	2.2	4.4	17.8	37.8	37.8
Your superior listens to you when you tell him/her about things that are bothering you	2.2	6.7	22.2	40	28.9
It is safe to say what you are really thinking to your superior	4.4	4.4	31.1	42.2	17.8
Your superior is frank and candid with you		8.9	24.4	44.4	22.2
You can communicate job frustrations to your superior		11.1	17.8	42.2	28.9
You can tell your superior about the way you feel he/she manages your department	4.4	11.1	33.3	40	11.1
You are free to tell your superior that you disagree with him/her	4.4	15.6	33.3	40	6.7
You think you are safe in communicating ""bad news"" to your superior without fear of retaliation on his/her part		17.8	31.1	37.8	13.3
You believe that your superior thinks he/she really understands you		13.3	26.6	40	20
You believe that your superior thinks that you understand him/her		8.9	28.9	44.4	17.8
Your superior really understands you	4.4	8.9	28.9	40	17.8
You really understand your superior	4.4	8.9	22.2	53.3	11.1

You think that people in this organization say what they mean and mean what they say	4.4	22.2	35.6	24.4	13.3
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Respondents were asked several questions to determine their feelings about their relationships with their immediate supervisors. As Troy (1988) observes, effective communication should improve morale and create a positive relationship between employees and management, among other things. A greater percentage of the staff respondents (51.1%) agreed that their superiors made them feel free to talk with them. 35.6% strongly agreed while seven percent disagreed, and another seven percent were neutral. The respondents were also asked whether their supervisors understood their job problems. Nine percent disagreed, 11.1% were neutral, 51.1% agreed, and 28.9% strongly agreed. When asked whether their superiors encouraged them to communicate when things are going wrong on the job, 35.6% of the respondents agreed, 35.6% strongly agreed, 17.8% were neutral, and 11.1% disagreed.

Asked whether their superiors made it easy for them to do their best work, a total of 48.9% respondents agreed, 26.7% strongly agreed, 17.8% were neutral, while seven percent disagreed. 40% of the respondents agreed that their superiors encourage them to bring new information to their attention, even when that new information may be bad news. 24% strongly agreed to this, 26.7% were neutral and seven percent disagreed. A small percentage (two percent) strongly disagreed, exposing the unwillingness of their superiors to receive new information from them. This does not align with Berger (2009)'s position that internal communication should form and reflect itself in the culture of the organization by encouraging all employees to communicate freely and directly in order to build collegial, professional relationships, and build the identity of the company they belong to.

While 42.2% of respondents agreed that their superiors make them feel that the things they tell them are really important, 20% strongly agreed, 26.7% were neutral, and 11.1% disagreed. Respondents were also asked whether their superiors were willing to tolerate arguments and gave fair hearing to all points of view. 40% agreed, 20% strongly agreed, 26.7% were neutral, seven percent disagreed and the same percentage also strongly disagreed. Because communication in organizations exist at different levels, participants were asked whether their superiors have their best interests in mind when speaking to their boss. 42.2% agreed, 17.8% strongly agreed, 28.9% were neutral, and 11.1% agreed.

Responding to questions on their superiors' competence and expertise, ability to listen to junior staff members, as well as the provision of safe space for communication, 37.8%, 40% and 42% agreed respectively; 37.8%, 28.9% and 17.8% strongly agreed; 17.8%, 22.2%, and 31.1% were neutral; five percent, seven percent, and another five percent disagreed respectively to those questions; while three percent, another three percent, and five percent strongly disagreed. Respondents were also asked if their superiors were frank and candid with them, and whether they could communicate their job frustrations with these superiors, 44.4% and 42.2% agreed respectively, 22.2% and 28.9% strongly agreed, 24.4% and 17.8% were neutral, 8.9% and 11.1% disagreed. Also, respondents answered to whether they could tell their superiors how they felt about their management methods, or whether they were free to disagree with the said superiors. An equal percentage of 40 agreed on both cases, 11.1% and 6.7% strongly agreed respectively, an equal percentage of 33.3 were neutral, 11.1% and 15.6% disagreed, and four percent of respondents strongly disagreed with the idea that they could tell their superiors how they felt about their management strategies.

The question of mutual understanding is important to establishing and maintaining a two-way communication in organizations. The data in the table shows, among other things, the level of understanding that respondents felt existed between themselves and their superiors. The cumulative percentage indicates that a greater number of the respondents see themselves and their superiors as understanding each other. A good percentage of respondents are either neutral or disagreed with the question.

In his interview, one of the management staff mentions a trickle-down flow of information – from the top to the bottom. In his words, “management normally communicates to managers then we bring the information to our staff. And then if we delegate maybe we assign them duties, staff also give us feedback. So, the flow of information within an organization within the branch level, the area level, the departmental level it can transcend down to the district level.” This is what he refers to as internal communication. He further stated that “every staff is responsible,” and that in his estimation, communication should be a two-way traffic: top-bottom, bottom-top where everyone within the organization is actively involved.

In another interview with another management staff, however, she stated that internal communication, for her, is “just passing on information from one entity, person, department, and unit, whatever to another within the organization. So, it is internal because it is within the

organization; and it is information relevant to one another's work. The person you are sending it to, it is relevant to them, their work and everything; but it stays within the organization.” Here, she presents internal communication simply as a spatial component or function, limiting it to the linear model of communication. She further stated that internal communication is the sole duty of the Public Affairs Department within the organization.

### 4.3 HOW RESPONDENTS FEEL ABOUT THE QUALITY OF INFORMATION THEY RECEIVE IN THEIR CURRENT POSITION

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
People in top management say what they mean and mean what they say	4.4	17.8	35.6	37.8	4.4
People in this organization are encouraged to be really open and candid with each other	4.4	17.8	35.6	35.6	6.7
People in this organization freely exchange information and opinions	4.4	8.9	46.7	35.6	4.4
You are kept informed about how well organizational goals and objectives are being met	0	8.9	28.9	53.3	8.9
Your organization succeeds in rewarding and praising good performance	4.4	24.4	20	37.8	13.3
Top management is providing you with the kinds of information you really want and need	2.2	22.2	26.7	44.4	4.4
You are pleased with the management's efforts to keep employees up to date on recent developments that relate to the organization's welfare - such as success in competition, profitability, future growth plans, etc.	6.667	17.8	42.2	24.4	8.9
You are notified, in advance, of changes that affect your job	6.667	22.2	33.3	33.3	4.4
You are satisfied with explanations you get from top management about why things are done as they are	44.444	33.3	35.5	20	6.7
Your job requirements are specified in clear language	2.222	8.9	24.4	44.4	20

Van Nostran (2004:10) asserted that the leader of an organization is automatically the designated chief communication officer, and successful internal communication is impossible without CEO support, because “successful companies lead through effective top-down communication.” People in top management positions should say what they mean and mean what they say. Staff within the organization should also be encouraged to be candid with one another. Respondents were asked to assess these two attributes in their organization, including the freedom to freely exchange information and opinions. 37.8%, 35.6%, and 35.6% respectively agreed; five percent, seven percent, and five percent strongly agreed, 35.6%, 35.6% and 46.7% were neutral, 17.8%, 17.8% and nine percent disagreed, while a recurring percentage of 4.44 strongly disagreed.

Respondents were asked whether the organization kept them informed about how well organizational goals and objectives were being met. 53.3% agreed, nine percent of the respondents strongly agreed, 28.9% were neutral, and nine percent disagreed. Furthermore, respondents were asked whether the organization succeeds in awarding and praising good performance. 37.8% agreed, 13.3% strongly agreed, 20% were neutral, 24.4% disagreed, and five percent strongly disagreed. The provision of kinds of information that is really needed, and notification, in advance, of changes that affect their jobs, is such a crucial determinant of the level of communication within an organization. 44.4% and 33.3% of respondents agreed that top management provides them with the kind of information needed, and that they are notified in advance of changes that affect their jobs. Five percent and another five percent strongly agreed on these issues; 26.7% and 33.3% were neutral, 22.2% each disagreed, while three percent and seven percent strongly disagreed.

In the survey, respondents were also asked if they were pleased with the management's efforts to keep employees up to date on recent developments that related to the organization's welfare - such as success in competition, profitability, future growth plans, etc. A greater percentage of respondents (42.2%) chose neutrality; 24.4% agreed while nine percent strongly agreed; 17.8% disagreed, and seven percent strongly disagreed. Respondents were also asked about their satisfaction with explanations they get from top management about why things are done as they are. 20% agreed, seven percent strongly agreed, 35.6% neutral, 33.3% and 44.4% disagreed and strongly disagreed. Very importantly, these staff respondents were also asked whether their job requirements were specified in clear language. 44.4% agreed, 20% strongly agreed, 24.4% were neutral, nine percent disagreed, while three percent strongly disagreed.

#### 4.4 AVAILABILITY OF OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMUNICATE TO UPPER MANAGEMENT

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Your opinions make a difference in the day-to-day decisions that affect your job	4.4	15.6	40	28.9	11.1
You believe your views have real influence in your organization	4.4	20	37.8	33.3	4.4
You can expect that recommendations you make will be heard and seriously considered	8.9	15.6	40	28.9	6.7

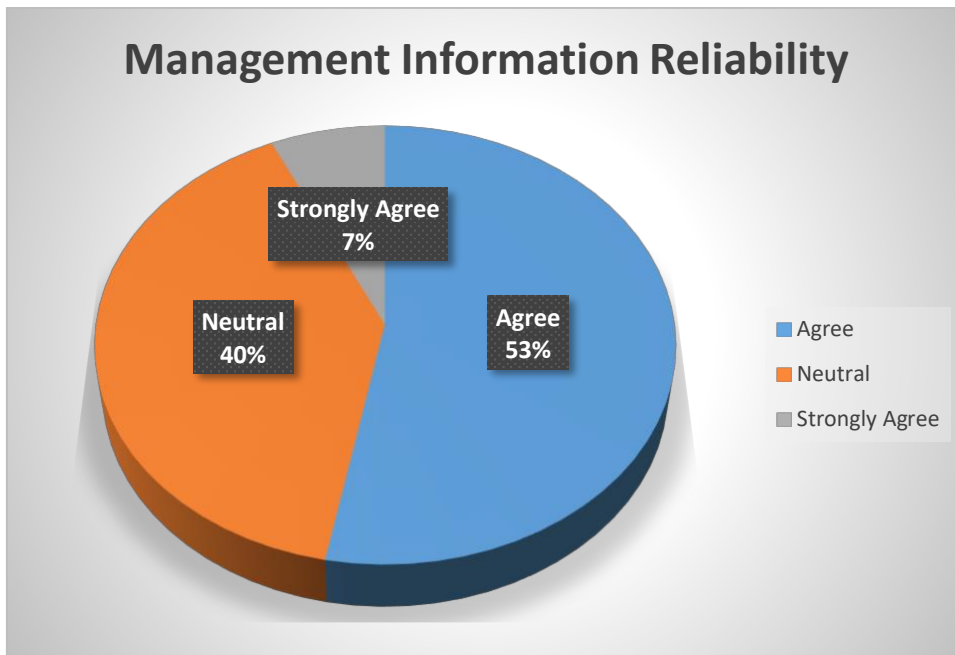
Respondents were asked questions to determine the availability of opportunities to communicate to upper management in the organization. This is important because the goal of internal communication should be to encourage frequent, honest, open, job-related, two-way communication among managers and subordinates facilitated by an accommodative internal environment (Van Heerden, 1994).

Asked whether their opinions make a difference in the day-to-day decisions that affect their jobs, 28.9% of the respondents agreed, 11.1% strongly agreed, 40% were neutral, 15.6 disagreed, and five percent disagreed strongly. Respondents were also asked if they believe that their views have real influence in their organization. 33.3%, as shown in the table above, agreed, five percent strongly agreed; 37.8% were neutral, 20% disagreed, and five percent strongly disagreeing.

Within the organization, can the staff expect that their recommendations will be heard and seriously considered? Majority of the respondents were neutral (40%); 28.9% agreed and seven percent strongly agreed, 15.6% disagreed and nine percent strongly disagreeing. Effective internal communication can give meaning to jobs, make people feel connected and accountable and increase productivity (Roberts, 2002). Employees' satisfaction with internal communication is an important factor in their performance (and ultimately organizational success) (Erasmus-Kritzinger, 2002).

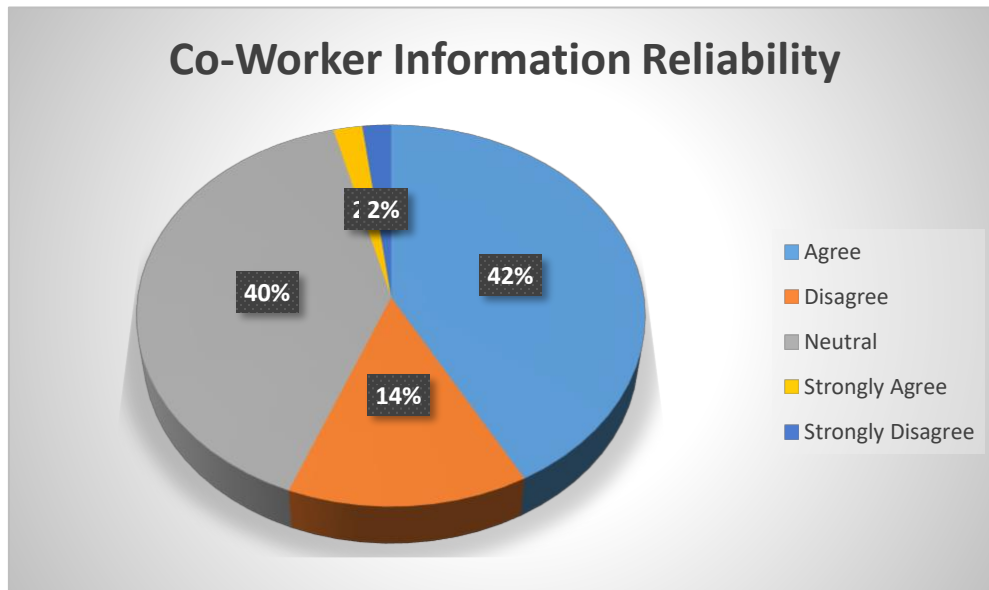
## 4.5 RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION RECEIVED AT THE ORGANIZATION

### 4.5.1 You think that information received from management is reliable



As indicated in the bar chart, majority of the respondents consider information received from management to be reliable. A good number of respondents were also neutral on the matter. In the interview of one of the management staff of the organization, he stated that “at the branch level or the department level when the information comes from the General Manager to us at the department level, the manager will ensure that it is passed on until the information gets to the staff. So, at the branch level and the department level and the unit level, we are like operatives we give legs to the information that comes from the top and give feedback.” It appears, for this conversation, that status and ranking give credibility to information shared within the organization.

#### 4.5.2 You think that information received from your colleagues (co-workers) is reliable



The chart shows that a good number of respondents trust the information received from their colleagues or co-workers. Closely following is the number of people neutral on the matter. More than five correspondents disagreed with this.

In responding to the interviewer's question on whose role is it to ensure that there is effective communication within the organization; between the Management and employees, a management staff asserts that, "The role I suppose will go to the Public Affairs, Corporate Affairs Division... but the responsibility I think lies with all of us. The role would go to Corporate Affairs Division because it is their mandate to ensure effective communication and, of course, HR also does a lot of communication to staff. With HR, it is more specific to, you know, HR policies, HR regulations, Staff Welfare and all of that. So, it is more specific, it is more tailored but with Corporate Affairs it covers everything. ... You asked about role, so that is what I would say. But if you ask about responsibility, I would say it is for all of us; because somebody speaks and somebody must listen and understand. So, it is for all of us."

#### 4.6 RESPONDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE ORGANIZATION'S CHOSEN COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>
Intranet	0	46.7	44.4	8.9	0	0
Printed Newsletters	11.1	28.9	35.6	22.2	2.2	0
Blogs	20	13.3	35.6	24.4	6.7	0
Posters, Flyers, Brochures, Banners	8.9	22.2	35.6	28.9	2.2	2.2
Emails	0	46.7	40	13.3	0	0
Employee recognition and rewards ceremonies or presentations	8.9	17.8	33.3	26.7	11.1	2.2
Training Sessions	4.4	17.8	35.6	33.3	4.4	4.4
Meetings with Senior Management	6.7	15.6	28.9	37.8	6.7	4.4
e-Newsletters	8.9	20	44.4	20	4.4	2.2

The categories listed above relate with the communication media and channels. Respondents were asked to indicate their levels of satisfaction with each channel of communication which the organization uses for internal communication. For each medium, there is a majority fraction of the total who are either satisfied or very satisfied with the medium. The table shows that the majority (46.7%) of respondents are very satisfied with the use of the Intranet. 35.6% are satisfied with the use of printed newsletters, 35.6% are satisfied with the use of blogs, and 35.6% are satisfied with the use of banners, 46.7% are very satisfied with the use of emails. For the employee recognition and reward ceremonies or presentations, 33.3% are satisfied with that medium, while 35.6% seem satisfied with training sessions. Most of the respondents (37.8%) are neutral in the matter of meetings with senior management, while 44.4% are satisfied with newsletters.

The presentation of the data above, however, shows a few discrepancies. While some respondents indicated that certain communication media are not applicable to the organization, that is, not being used in the organization (for example, printed newsletters, blogs, banners, employee recognition awards, training sessions, meetings with senior management, and e-newsletters), others go on to register their levels of satisfaction regardless. It appears that the only two media which are not considered by any respondents as “not applicable” are the

intranet and email. Whether this discrepancy is indeed a pointer to a much bigger issue of internal communication gaps which this research addresses, or just mere suggestions from the respondents as to what other media of communication the organization could employ, remains to be seen. A management staff, however, mentioned that “SSNIT uses memos, intranet, mail and then recently zoom because of the covid.”

#### 4.7 RESPONDENTS’ COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization to be successful		4.4	11.1	51.1	33.3
I promote this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for		2.2	15.6	44.4	37.8
I have very little loyalty to this organization	40	31.1	13.3	6.7	8.9
The work I do is very important to me		0	11.1	33.3	55.6
I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization	2.2	13.3	33.3	24.4	26.7
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization		4.4	17.8	37.8	40
My job activities are personally meaningful to me	2.2	2.2	17.8	31.1	46.7
I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar	4.4	8.9	53.3	22.	11.1
This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance		13.3	20	46.7	20

It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization	11.1	11.1	33.3	31.1	13.3
I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined	2.2	4.4	33.3	42.2	17.8
There's not much to be gained by staying with this organization indefinitely	28.9	24.4	24.4	17.8	4.4
Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees	6.7	28.9	35.6	13.3	15.6
I really care about the fate of this organization	2.2	6.7	15.6	37.8	37.8
For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work	2.2	11.1	31.1	40	15.6
Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part	44.4	15.6	24.4	11.1	4.4

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One major way to assess the effectiveness of internal communication flow within organizations is through the employees' attitudes towards their work, or general responses concerning the organization. Effective internal communication can give meaning to jobs, make people feel connected and accountable and increase productivity (Roberts, 2002). A most cited role for the internal communications function is that of developing employee commitment, involvement and engagement in support of the achievement of business goals. This is important as organizational success is dependent on employee support (Therkelsen and Fiebich, 2003) and employees who are committed to an organization identify personally with it, are concerned for its future and are loyal to it (Garbarina and Johnson, in Thomson et al, 1999). The data above thus represents respondents' commitment decisions and levels towards the organization. It is presented last because it is largely a consequence or result of the conditions already analysed in the units above.

Of the 45 respondents who participated in the study, 51.1% agreed, and 33.3% strongly agreed that they are willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help the organization achieve success. 44.4% and 37.8% respectively agreed and strongly agreed to promoting the organization to their friends as a great organization to work for, while 40% strongly disagreed that they have little loyalty for the organization which they work.

33.3% and 55.6% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the work they do is very important to them; and while 26.7% strongly agreed that they would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization, 24.4% simply agreed, 33.3% are neutral, 13.3% disagreed, and three percent strongly disagreed.

Majorities of 46% and 40% of the respondents, respectively, consider their job activities personally meaningful to them, and are proud to tell others that they are a part of the organization. A 53.3% majority are neutral to the thought of working for a different organization if the type of work was similar; while 46.7% suggested that the organization really inspires the very best in them in the way of job performance.

On the assertion that it would take very little change in present circumstances to cause the employee to leave the organization, 11.1% strongly disagreed, 11.1% disagreed, 33.3% remain neutral, 31.1% agreed, and 13.3% strongly agreed. On the feeling of joy in choosing this organization to work for, over others that any individual staff might have been considering at the time of joining, three percent strongly disagreed, five percent disagreed, 33.3% are neutral, 42.2% agreed, and 17.8% strongly agreed.

28.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed that there is not much to be gained by staying with the organization indefinitely. 24.4% disagreed, 24.4% are neutral, 17.8% agreed, and five percent strongly agreed. 35.6% of the respondents are neutral with regards to agreeing with the organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees. 28.9% of the respondents do not find it difficult to agree with the organization's policies on matters relating to its employees. Again, this may mean that the organization's policies are fair and inclusive, or that the employees feel that there is little or nothing that can be done to effect changes.

37.8% of the respondents agreed that they really cared about the fate of the organization. 37.8% strongly agreed. 15.6% are neutral, while three percent and seven percent (strongly) disagreed.

40% of the respondents agreed that SSNIT is the best possible organization to work for. 15.6% strongly agreed, 31.1% are neutral, 11.1% disagreed, and three percent strongly disagreed. However, on the assertion that deciding to work for the organization was a definite mistake, 44.4% strongly disagreed, 15.6% disagreed, 24.4% are neutral, 11.1% agreed, and five percent strongly agreed.

Responding to the question on the role of internal communications in the organization, a management staff participant observes that “internal communication plays a very critical role because management is responsible for the day-to-day activities in the organization. It takes directives by way of policy from the board so if the board wants the organization to go in a particular direction. The direction comes in various forms depending on the division you work. So, if there is a direction that comes from the board to the Director General then to the General Manager, then from the General Manager it comes to the Area Heads then the Departmental Managers then to the Branch Managers then at the branch level to the Unit Heads whom we call the Supervisors. And basically, every branch has at least four or five units so we have the compliance unit, you have the data unit, the benefits units, the accounts unit, the customer care unit, the prosecution unit, the driver’s unit and then the security unit. So, for a manager, the information must trickle down that is how it is supposed to be...”

For the other management staff participant, internal communication is “almost like the glue that brings it all together. Because from the very top to the bottom if we don't understand what's going on at the top and we don't know what's being said or planned or decided on, we at the bottom can't really work towards that goal. And in the same vein, if the top doesn't understand the processes, we are going through to make what they plan happen, they won't know how to plan tomorrow and they wouldn't know how effective their plans are, so I think it's the glue that puts it together - so they're talking to us from the top down, and they are taking our voice (sic) up as well. So, they bring down what management wants to be done, yes.”

#### **4.8 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the data received from the questionnaires administered and the interviews conducted. The data has been described and discussed in line with the objectives of the research.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter summarizes and concludes the research. The section also contains recommendations made based on the findings from this research.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY**

This study focused on the internal communication flow in organizations, using the case study of Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), Ghana. on the communication theory as its underlying framework.

To understand the nuances of internal communication within the organization (SSNIT), a systematic inquiry was made into how staff feel about their relationships with their immediate supervisors; how staff feel about the quality of information they receive in their current positions; the availability of opportunities to communicate with upper management; the reliability of information received at the organization; staff's satisfaction with the organization's chosen communication channels; and staff's commitment to the organization.

In line with the objectives of this study, the nature of communication flow within SSNIT was determined to be predominantly top-bottom and hierarchical in nature. Internal communication within SSNIT seems less effective. It is pertinent to note the level of neutrality that exists in many of the staff responses to questions posed. The number of neutral responses tends to indicate that internal communication is not as effective as should be and could therefore be read as the disillusionment of staff members. It is unclear whether the neutrality stems from a fear of punishment, satisfaction, or just an unwillingness to engage.

Again, the responses of the interviewed management staff show a gap in what constitutes an institutionally accepted and effective way of communicating with employees of the organization. What becomes evident, however, is that internal communication does indeed play a huge role in the success of an organization. The literature reviewed in this research examines abundantly how true this is. The survey also pointed to the fact that effective internal and

organizational communication does indeed influence staff satisfaction, and in so doing, constitute a positive reinforcement and motivation to pursue organizational goals.

## **5.2 CONCLUSION**

This study concludes on the confirmation that good and effective internal communication is indeed essential for organizational sustainability, as well as for the satisfaction of its employees, who constitute one of the major stakeholders. In the constantly changing world of work, today's internal communication practitioner should be focused on challenging and stimulating employees, managing change and gaining employee engagement and commitment (Smith, 2005). The aim has, indeed, moved from controlling and directing people, through providing information, making announcements and supporting industrial relations, to supporting the development of a flexible work environment which adapts to change, seeks improvement, shares knowledge and know-how, generates ideas and involves people in achieving strategic goals (Keenan and Hazelton, 2006).

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

To achieve a more effective internal communication flow, the hierarchical systems must be brought to the barest minimum. It is incumbent on the managers of the organization to ensure that they are approachable and accommodating. This does not necessarily amount to the downplaying of one's authority. Properly managed, effective communication fosters mutual respect within professional spaces.

The organization must also make effective communication a priority. This includes frequent evaluations, assessments and audit of the approaches and outcomes of communication practices, in order to determine and build an organizational culture founded on mutual respect and cooperation.

Further studies could be conducted into how internal communication impacts interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships within the organization, and by extension, the organization's output and performance.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

As part of the requirement for the award of a Masters Degree in Public Relations, I am conducting research into **the Internal Communication Flow of Organizations**, using a case study of the **Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT)**. I would therefore be very grateful if you could support this study by completing this questionnaire. Your candid response would be much appreciated. You are hereby guaranteed anonymity, as well as the confidentiality of your response.

*This questionnaire will ask you questions concerning internal communication within your organization. For the purpose of this study internal communication is defined as the exchange of information both informal and formal between management and employees.*

Kindly tick [] where appropriate and write your response where applicable.

#### **SECTION A: BIO-DATA:** *Please tick boxes that are applicable*

8. Gender: (a) Male [] (b) Female []

9. Department/role (within the organization)

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10. Age Range: 26 – 30 []  
30 – 35 []  
36 – 40 []  
40 – 45 []  
46 – 50 []  
51 & above []

11. Education/ Qualification: Diploma/HND [] First Degree [] Masters [] PhD []

If Other (please state): .....

5. Number of years in Organisation: Less than 1 year [] 1-3 years [] 4-7years []  
8-10years [] 11-13 years [] 14+ years []

**SECTION B:** Rate the following statements according to **how you feel about your relationship with your immediate superior**. Indicate your choice by placing a tick [√] under your answer choice.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Your superior makes you feel free to talk with him/her.					
Your superior really understands your job problems.					
Your superior encourages you to let him/her know when things are going wrong on the job.					
Your superior makes it easy for you to do your best work.					
Your superior expresses his/her confidence with your ability to perform the job.					
Your superior encourages you to bring new information to his/her attention, even when that new information may be bad news.					
Your superior makes you feel that things you tell him/her are really important.					
Your superior is willing to tolerate arguments and to give a fair hearing to all points of view.					
Your superior has your best interests in mind when he/she talks to his/her boss.					
Your superior is a really competent, expert manager.					
Your superior listens to you when you tell him/her about things that are bothering you.					
It is safe to say what you are really thinking to your superior.					
Your superior is frank and candid with you.					
You can communicate job frustrations to your superior.					

You can tell your superior about the way you feel he/she manages your department.					
You are free to tell your superior that you disagree with him/her.					
You think you are safe in communicating "bad news" to your superior without fear of retaliation on his/her part.					
You believe that your superior thinks he/she really understands <i>you</i> .					
You believe that your superior thinks that you understand <i>him/her</i> .					
Your superior really understands you.					
You really understand your superior.					

**SECTION C:** Rate the following statements according to **how you feel about the quality of information you receive in your current position.** Indicate your choice by placing a tick [√ ] under your answer choice.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
You think that people in this organization say what they mean and mean what they say.					
People in top management say what they mean and mean what they say.					
People in this organization are encouraged to be really open and candid with each other.					
People in this organization freely exchange information and opinions.					
You are kept informed about how well organizational goals and objectives are being met.					
Your organization succeeds in rewarding and praising good performance.					

Top management is providing you with the kinds of information you really want and need.					
You are pleased with the management's efforts to keep employees up-to-date on recent developments that relate to the organization's welfare - such as success in competition, profitability, future growth plans, etc.					
You are notified, in advance, of changes that affect your job.					
You are satisfied with explanations you get from top management about why things are done as they are.					
Your job requirements are specified in clear language.					

**SECTION D:** Rate the following statements according to **how you feel about your opportunities to communicate to upper management**. Indicate your choice by placing a tick [√] under your answer choice.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Your opinions make a difference in the day-to-day decisions that affect your job.					
You believe your views have real influence in your organization.					
You can expect that recommendations you make will be heard and seriously considered.					

**SECTION E:** Rate the following statements according to **how you feel about the reliability of information you receive at your organization.** Indicate your choice by placing a tick [√] under your answer choice.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
You think that information received from management is reliable.					
You think that information received from your colleagues (co-workers) is reliable.					

**SECTION F:** The below items refer to the specific communication channels your company may use to share general company information. **Rate your satisfaction with the communication channels your company uses by placing a tick [√] under your answer choice.** Mark an "X" under "does not apply" if your company currently does not use that channel.

*Note: The answer choices in this section are different from the previous section. Please review the new answer choices prior to making your selection.*

Communication Channels	Does not Apply	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Intranet						
Printed Newsletters						
Blogs						
Posters, Flyers, Brochures, Banners						
Emails						
Employee recognition and rewards ceremonies or presentations						
Training Sessions						
Meetings with Senior Management						
e-Newsletters						
Grapevine						

## SECTION G: Commitment to Organization

Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the company or organization.

Rate the following statements according to **how you feel about the organization for which you are working**. Indicate your choice by placing a tick [] under your answer choice.

*Note: The answer choices in this section are different from the previous section. Please review the new answer choices prior to making your selection.*

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization to be successful.					
I promote this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.					
I have very little loyalty to this organization.					
The work I do is very important to me.					
I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.					
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.					
My job activities are personally meaningful to me.					
I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar.					
This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.					
It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.					

I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.					
There's not much to be gained by staying with this organization indefinitely.					
Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees.					
I really care about the fate of this organization.					
For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.					
Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.					

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Interview Guide**

#### **TOPIC:**

#### **AN ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION FLOW OF ORGANIZATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY AND NATIONAL INSURANCE TRUST (SSNIT), GHANA**

#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MANAGEMENT OF SSNIT**

1. General Introductions
2. What is your current role in SSNIT?  
Probes:
  - 1 What department do you work in?
  - 2 How many people do you manage?
  - 3 What other departments do you interact with on a daily basis?
3. Tell me about your background and work experience.
4. How do you define Internal Communication?  
Probes:
  - 4 What is that definition based upon?
  - 5 What is your experience with internal communication?
  - 6 Who is responsible for internal communications in the organization?
5. What role does internal communication play in this organization?  
Probes:
  - 7 Where is the focal point of the organization's efforts?
  - 8 Is it focused on customers?
  - 9 Is it focused on employees?
  - 10 Is it focused on the organization's image?
6. What role do employees play in internal communication?
7. How would you describe the internal employee relations in your organization?  
Probes:
  - 11 Do you have a union in your organization? Why or why not?
  - 12 Do you have much turnover here? Why or why not?
  - 13 What is the turnover/efficiency rate here in a given year?
  - 14 What do you attribute that rate to?

8. What methods are most effective for management to communicate with employees?

Probes: Face-to-face; email; memos, etc.

9. Whose role is it to ensure that there is effective communications between the organization and employees?

Probes:

15 Each manager

16 Human resources

17 Public relations

10. How does your perception of effective communication impact your perception of your organization?

Probes:

18 Employees who are efficient?

19 Loyal employees?

20 Good retention rate?

21 Good customer relationships?

22 Positive reputation for the organization?