



**“THE INFLUENCE OF GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION ON  
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT: A STUDY OF  
GIHOC DISTILLERIES, GHANA”**

**BY**

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### DECLARATION BY STUDENT – DISSERTATION

I hereby declare that this research is a result of my own original research and that, no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or any other higher education institute. I further declare that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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### CERTIFICATION BY SUPERVISOR

This Dissertation/Thesis has been prepared and presented under my supervision according to the guidelines for supervision and formatting of Dissertation/Thesis laid down by the University of Media, Arts and Communication, UniMAC.

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## ABSTRACT

Businesses thrive on effective communication to build relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. The level of effective interpersonal relationship that exists amongst employees and management in an organization can go a long way to affect productivity and performance. Informal communication, also known as grapevine plays a key role directly or indirectly to achieve effective employee engagement and commitment. Thus, the prevalence of informal communication channels significantly impacts employee engagement and organizational commitment, particularly in Ghana's public sector where formal communication often follows rigid bureaucratic patterns. The study therefore addresses this gap by examining how GIHOC's informal communication patterns impact employee engagement and commitment, particularly in an environment where traditional Ghanaian communication practices intersect with modern corporate requirements.

The study is essential because it will inform management on procedures to undertake to mitigate internal crises due to grapevine when they arise. Thus, management will use this document as a yardstick to improve flow of information in the organization to impact employee engagement and commitment. It will also serve as a means to encourage positive news to build morale and motivate employees in the best possible way to improve productivity.

Social exchange theory and social penetration theory was applied to the study to further explain the phenomena under study. The theories supported the phenomenon that relationship is built by employees over a period of time where they feel more comfortable on a personal level to share information among themselves that is outside the official channel of communication at the workplace.

Research methodology employed was that of Quantitative approach. The population of the study was GIHOC distillery located in Accra, Ghana with about 150 employees. The researcher sampled 50 respondents using the convenient sampling method and distributed structured close-ended questionnaires relevant to the research objectives and questions.

Major findings indicates that grapevine communication plays a major role on employee engagement and commitment at GIHOC Distilleries. Through spontaneous interactions, employees are engaged at different stages which improves engagement levels and commitment. Again, it was revealed that through grapevine, management hears employee' grievances. Thus, management must always be concerned and communicate in open dialogue with employees to avoid speculations. According to Argenti (1998), two-way internal communication is the most successful as it facilitates casual encounters between managers and staff, enhancing comprehension and teamwork.

The study provided recommendations based on theory, knowledge and policy where the researcher recommended that an internal communication committee should be set up to observe and communicate relevant issues that come up in the grapevine to senior management for appropriate measures to be put in place to resolve them. Finally, the researcher recommended management to provide the opportunity for employees to voice out suggestions, opinions and grievances on occasional town hall meetings to encourage open dialogue and two-way communication in the organization.

## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to God almighty who has seen me through my study at UNIMAC-IJ and to my family who have supported me tremendously in every aspect of my life.

To God be the Glory.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

GIHOC - Ghana Industrial Holding Corporation

IJ – Institute of Journalism

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UNIMAC - University of Media, Arts and Communication



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

This chapter introduces the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study and ethical considerations.

### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Communication stands as the cornerstone of organizational effectiveness, particularly in Ghana's evolving corporate landscape where traditional cultural values intersect with modern business practices. Organizations employ both formal and informal communication networks, with grapevine communication serving as an unstructured network formed on social relationships rather than organizational charts (Borkowski, 2010).

GIHOC Distilleries Company Limited, established in 1958 as West Africa's pioneering modern distillery, represents a microcosm of Ghana's complex organizational communication ecosystem. Incorporated in 1979 under Ghana's Companies Code (Act 179), GIHOC has grown from a modest state enterprise to a major industrialist operating in a rapidly digitalizing environment where 83% of the population has mobile internet access (DataReportal, 2024).

In the Ghanaian context, workplace communication inherently reflects communal patterns of information sharing. The concept of "mmɛbɔ mu abɔ" (coming together) fundamentally influences how information flows within organizations. This informal communication network has historical roots traced to the United States Civil War, where telegraph wires strung between trees resembled grapevines (Davis, 1953).

GIHOC's operational environment exemplifies this cultural-corporate intersection. As a state-owned enterprise operating in Ghana's competitive spirits market, the company navigates between traditional hierarchical structures and informal networks that characterize Ghanaian workplace dynamics. The company's workforce spans multiple generations and educational backgrounds, from university-educated managers to skilled craftspeople in production, creating a rich tapestry of communication needs and preferences.

The digital transformation of workplace communication has particularly impacted GIHOC's information ecosystem. With 8.9 million WhatsApp users in Ghana; Statista, (2024) and 45% of corporate communication in Sub-Saharan Africa occurring through instant messaging (World Bank, 2023), informal communication channels have evolved beyond traditional face-to-face interactions. As Mishra (1990) notes, grapevines have "never-ending branches," a concept amplified by today's digital platforms.

Traditional Ghanaian communication patterns, characterized by oral tradition and social consensus-building, significantly influence GIHOC's workplace dynamics. The concept of "durbar" - traditional community gatherings for information sharing - finds modern expression in informal workplace networks.

The evolution of grapevine communication at GIHOC reflects broader changes in Ghana's corporate environment. This prevalence of informal communication channels significantly impacts employee engagement and organizational commitment, particularly in Ghana's public sector where formal communication often follows rigid bureaucratic patterns.

In this context, understanding how grapevine communication influences employee engagement and commitment becomes crucial for organizational effectiveness. With public sector employment representing 46.8% of formal employment in Ghana (ILO, 2023), the dynamics at GIHOC offer

valuable insights into managing communication in state-owned enterprises while balancing traditional cultural values with modern corporate requirements.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

At GIHOC Distilleries, the intersection of traditional hierarchical communication and modern digital networks presents unique organizational challenges. Management's formal information gatekeeping often leads to delays and information gaps (World Bank, 2023). This can result to speculations and unnecessary rumours that could have been avoided. Imundo (1991) suggests it takes proactive management practices to effectively cultivate informal communication for organizational benefit.

The proliferation of social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp, has transformed workplace communication dynamics. While facilitating rapid information sharing, these platforms pose potential legal and operational risks (Reeves, McClelland & Raven, 2022). With 45% of corporate communication occurring through instant messaging in Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2023), managing informal information flow has become increasingly complex.

Michelson, Iterson and Wassington (2010) warn that grapevine communication can be dangerous if not managed well, potentially causing division and affecting productivity through the spread of unconfirmed information. This is particularly relevant in state-owned enterprises where formal communication often struggles to keep pace with informal networks. Research by Abugre and Nasere (2020) indicates that informal communication networks in Ghanaian organizations can reduce productivity by up to 25% when not properly managed.

Despite the recognized significance of grapevine communication in Ghanaian organizations (Borkowski, 2010), there is limited empirical research on its impact on employee engagement and

commitment in state-owned enterprises. With public sector employment representing 46.8% of formal employment in Ghana (ILO, 2023), understanding how these informal communication networks influence organizational dynamics becomes crucial for operational success.

This study addresses this gap by examining how GIHOC's informal communication patterns impact employee engagement and commitment, particularly in an environment where traditional Ghanaian communication practices intersect with modern corporate requirements.

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The general objective of this research is to examine the influence of grapevine communication on employee engagement and commitment in GIHOC Distilleries.

However, specific objectives are:

1. to examine the role of grapevine communication on employee engagement and commitment in GIHOC Distilleries
2. to investigate the benefits of grapevine communication in GIHOC Distilleries
3. to examine the effect of grapevine communication on management decision-making in GIHOC Distilleries

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESIS**

The research questions to examine are:

1. what is the role of grapevine communication on employee engagement and commitment in GIHOC Distilleries?
2. what are the benefits of grapevine communication to GIHOC Distilleries?

3. how does grapevine communication impact management decision-making at GIHOC Distilleries?

### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study is relevant for theory, policy, practical and further knowledge. Research on grapevine's influence on employee engagement and commitment will serve as a problem-solving tool for management in an organization as indicated by Garnett (2012). The study will inform management on procedures to undertake to mitigate internal crises due to grapevine when they arise. It will also serve as a means to encourage positive news to build morale and motivate employees in the best possible way to improve productivity.

Furthermore, the study serves as secondary source of information for other researchers who wish to conduct extensive research in similar areas. Students will also benefit from this study as a means to widen their scope of knowledge. Finally, it will also serve as a working document for governmental policies on employee wellbeing and labour issues. Policies on Employee/Employer Protection Rights with regards to communication and information usage among employees as a means of evidence in litigation issues will also be a significant application to the study.

### **1.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter highlighted the introduction of the study. It laid emphasis on the background of the topic while making historical reference to the origin of grapevine. The chapter highlighted the problem statement indicating the specific research gap and what the study intends to achieve. Specific research objectives and research questions of the study were indicated in this section.

Finally, the significance of the study in relation to theory, policy, practice and knowledge were highlighted in this chapter.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

This chapter comprises of literature review on the objectives of the study. Theoretical underpinnings of the study are discussed here. The conceptual and empirical framework relevant to the study is discussed comprehensively in this chapter to facilitate further understanding.

Literature review involves critically assessing these materials in connection with the proposed research (Hart, 1998). Reviewing of literature relevant to this study will enable the researcher have a broader perspective and understanding of the problem. According to Boote and Beile (2005), a carefully developed literature review section offers the theoretical framework necessary to substantiate the argument for the study's contribution. Hence, an in-depth and well-structured literature review forms the cornerstone of a good research project.

### **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A theoretical review explains the underlying reasons for the existence of the research problem being studied. It further defines how the theory frames the present study and the relationship between variables under study. To establish a theoretical framework, a researcher needs to define the key concepts and theories that underpin the study, connect them logically and link these concepts directly to the research being conducted (Grant & Osanlo, 2014).

Theories facilitates further understanding of different phenomenon and broadens the perspectives on what is being studied by providing clarity. According to Ayers and Olander (2013) "theory prompts the researcher to consider where the study fits in terms of contribution to knowledge or

the development and evaluation of treatments”. This implies that theories support our view points or opinions of phenomenon or situations.

### **2.2.1 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY**

The founding father of social exchange theory, Homans propounded that individuals engage in several interactions that are interdependent in nature and generates obligations among parties involved. Homans (1961) defined social exchange as a reciprocal activity among people that can be more or less rewarding. There is an exchange when one person does something of value for another person; the other person is obligated to return the exact value obligation.

According to Blau (1964) “Social exchange theory is defined as a series of mutual exchanges that strengthen the quality of the relationship between the exchange parties, which thereby produces beneficial and productive behaviours”. This implies that employees who interact together by exchanging issues of personal interest are able to establish a certain level of relationship and belongingness in the organization.

The grapevine, being an informal channel of communication enhances the social interactions of employees and provides the benefit of shared emotional support regarding workplace grievances, wellness and other relevant situations experienced among employees at the workplace. Nelson (1989) points out that quality social exchanges reduce workplace conflict. Colbert et. al., (2004) also suggests that it reduces destructive work behaviour and improves beneficial work behaviour including knowledge sharing. Sharing knowledge in the work environment improves job performance and less mistakes are made (Hansen, 1999). The well-being of employees both physically and emotionally is paramount to commitment and high performance. If employees work in a toxic environment, the likelihood of thriving and being committed to the environment will be

very low. This implies that working in an environment where there is lack of quality social interaction among employees infringes on high quality employee engagement and commitment. The psychological well-being is equally important for an employee to stay committed. Gouldner (1960) points out that interactions that are offensive in nature disrupts the balance of social exchange relations, creating inequality and damaging trust between the individuals involved. This affects relationship building and employee relations which in the long run can affect performance at the workplace.

### **2.2.2 SOCIAL PENETRATION THEORY**

Altman and Taylor (1973) explain social penetration as a process of developing a connection in a relationship where the interaction progresses from superficial exchanges to more personal levels. According to Derlega et. al. (1993) “social penetration is specifically accomplished through self-disclosure, the purposeful process of revealing information about oneself”. This encourages intimacy between people on a much deeper level and strengthens friendship. It also facilitates interactions within social groups, including work relationships, teambuilding, by creating a more casual and trusting environment.

Social Penetration Theory explains how the exchange of information influences the development and dissolution of interpersonal relationships. As relationships progress, individuals gradually reveal more personal and intimate details, deepening their connection. This is in contrast to when the level of self-disclosure decreases; it leads to emotional distance and ends in breaking of the connection (Carpenter & Green, 2016).

In their study, Carpenter & Green (2016) indicate that “The onion model is a useful metaphor for describing how social penetration theory operates, elaborating on social penetration as a process

through which people “peel back” others’ layers of personal information through interpersonal interaction to reach the core. It takes time to reach another’s “core self,” the most intimate details about another person. The public image is the outer layer of a person that is visible to many others. The private self is the innermost layers of a person that are only revealed to significant others over time through disclosure”.

This implies that relationship is built by employees over a period of time where they feel more comfortable on a personal level to share information among themselves that is outside the official channel of communication at the workplace. The penetration theory suggests that relationships develop through various layers. The outer, superficial layers consist of surface-level information such as preferences in clothing and music. The middle layers delve into aspects like political opinions and social attitudes. Inner layers reveal deeper elements such as spiritual beliefs, fears, aspirations, goals, fantasies, and secrets. At the core lies an individual's most private and intimate information (Carpenter & Green, 2016).

Taylor and Altman (1987) describe the stages of social penetration theory which include orientation, exploratory affective exchange, affective exchange, and stable exchange. The first stage is orientation, where people share less important information about themselves. This first stage, people are careful when revealing information. For instance, people tend to be restrictive with information when they meet for the first time and ask very basic questions like name, favourite colour or food. Taylor and Altman (1987) also mention that people hold on to important information until later when they become more abreast with the relationship.

The second stage of the social penetration theory, known as exploratory affective exchange, involves individuals sharing information that goes beyond surface-level details while exercising less caution in self-disclosure. Although the range of topics discussed may expand,

these topics typically pertain to the public self. At this stage, individuals share information they might comfortably disclose to casual acquaintances or friends (Taylor & Altman, 1987).

The third stage of social penetration theory, referred to as affective exchange, involves sharing information from intermediate layers and engaging in increasingly relaxed interactions (Taylor & Altman, 1987). At this stage, individuals may disclose aspects of their private self or more intimate details. Communication becomes casual and spontaneous, indicating deeper commitment and comfort. This stage often includes humor, sarcasm, inside jokes, and nicknames, reflecting the closeness of the relationship. Conflicts may also arise as part of this stage, with disclosures typically shared with close friends or romantic partners (Carpenter & Green, 2016).

The final stage, stable exchange, is marked by openness and extensive breadth and depth in conversations. At this stage, individuals freely and consistently share the most intimate details about their private selves. Taylor and Altman (1987) indicate that this stage projects a characteristic of extensive openness from parties involved, sincerity and expression of thoughts and opinions without restrictions. This fosters genuine communication and a sense of bonding between individuals.

The above signifies how the depth of information shared through grapevine communication affects trust and intimacy among employees. There must be an interaction or exchange of information between or among a group of people for a relationship to be established. Carpenter and Green (2016) point out that the norm of reciprocity is a key aspect of these interactions. Essentially, this principle means that when one person opens up and shares something personal, the other feels a natural obligation to share something equally meaningful in return. This exchange helps to create a sense of balance and fairness in the relationship, fostering deeper connection and mutual trust.

For instance, if a colleague at work, say Linda, discloses to Mary, another colleague about a toxic behaviour she has experienced from her supervisor, then Mary might share her experience too.

## **2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

An empirical literature review, often referred to as a systematic literature review, examines past empirical studies to identify solutions or insights related to a specific research question. Holosko (2006) opines that “In empirical literature, established research methodologies and procedures are systematically applied to answer the questions of interest. Objectivity, gathering “facts,” whatever they may be, drives the search for empirical evidence”.

### **2.3.1 IMPACT OF GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT**

The main focus of a business organization is to make profit. However, the communication terrain is specifically important as it sets the pace on employee engagement which promotes relationship building. Grapevine is usually associated with horizontal communication in the internal communication system of an organization. This basically involves the level of interaction among peers or functional lines of the same level. Example is all Network Application IT Officers, all heads of department.

Otoo (2015) builds upon the work of Tubbs and Moss (2008), who highlight important aspects of horizontal, or lateral, communication. Their research reveals that this form of communication enhances inter-departmental coordination, supports the effective implementation of top-level decisions, fosters conflict resolution within departments without management intervention, and encourages teamwork. Further, they suggest that informal communication, or grapevine,

flourishes in environments where participants share mutual understanding and interest in the topic being discussed. This dynamic can motivate employees by fostering a sense of belonging and increasing peer engagement. Duke (1993) also underscores the role of grapevine in cultivating meaningful interpersonal relationships among employees, further strengthening workplace connections. Ball (2003) supports this by emphasizing that horizontal communication is relevant in modern organizations since traditional communication theory usually makes use of vertical communication.

Employee engagement is described as the joint benefit provided by workers, managers, and the business through pleasant social interactions at work (Caputo, Evangelista, & Russo, 2016). It is regarded as a significant outcome of internal communication and has garnered substantial attention from both researchers and practitioners due to its strong connection to individual and organizational performance (Slack, Corlett, & Morris, 2015). Engagement may also be defined as a conscious state characterized by energy, genuineness, and enthusiasm for work (Singh, 2016; Slack, Corlett, & Morris, 2015).

Armstrong and Taylor (2014) differentiate between employee engagement and commitment, defining engagement as job-focused and commitment as loyalty and devotion to the business. Commitment reflects workers' feelings towards their company, emphasizing a stronger relational connection. Saks (2006), however, distinguishes engagement further by emphasizing its incorporation of behavior, emotions, and cognition. He critiques the dependence on Kahn's (1990) psychological conditions and instead advocates for social exchange theory as a more comprehensive framework for understanding employee engagement and commitment. It implies that employees repay the organization with their obligation and engagement when they receive remuneration, emotional and social support from the organization accordingly.

## **2.4 BENEFITS OF GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION**

### **2.4.1 MECHANISMS OF INFLUENCE; EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, INFORMATION FLOW AND SOCIAL BONDING**

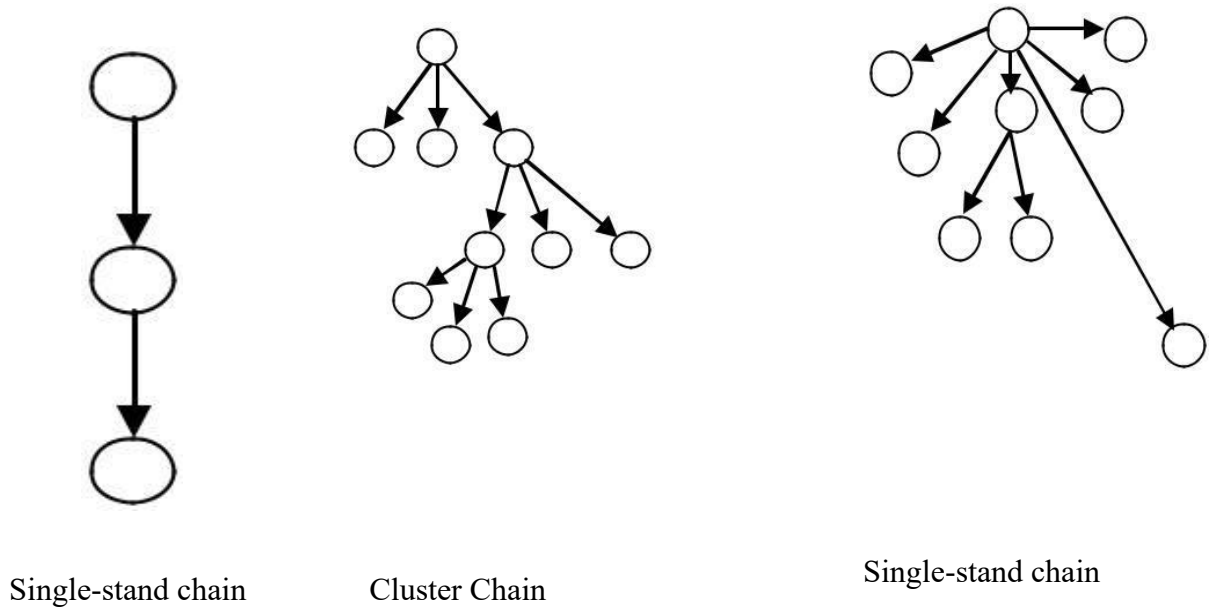
Abraham Maslow's theory of need indicates that humans look to satisfy their social needs after satisfying their physiological and safety needs. Human beings want to feel a sense of belongingness and love. This feeling is innate and even the most hardened criminal on earth would like to feel a sense of belonging because human beings are social beings.

According to Manaf et al. (2013) rumour has no starting or ending point. Rumours begin with a tiny spark that spreads endlessly with several distortions of the information as it moves around.

Gossip however usually occurs in the context of social networks and can be described as evaluative social conversations about persons that are not present at the time of discussion (DiFonzo & Bordia, 2007). Again, Michelson and Mouly (2004) indicates that while rumours are typically described as lacking a factual basis, gossip is generally assumed to contain a small amount of factual information circulating alongside exaggerations or distortions. Rumour has no proof or verification but only based on hearsay or by an account of something seen by a person. It is however necessary to mention that both rumour and gossip lack authenticity, verification or factual evidence and they remain as such until the truth of the information finally is exposed.

Figure 2.1:

Types of chains in grapevine (Source: Zainal Ariffin Ahmad et al., 2009)



There are three basic forms, also known as chains, of grapevine occurrence, as illustrated above.

The first chain of grapevine is referred to as the single-strand chain which is the initial process of all grapevine chains. The single-strand chain is a straightforward concept where person A informs person B; then person B tells person C and so on. The information is spread continuously from one person to the other. The longer the strand, the more the inaccuracy, misrepresentation, and confusion within the message that is spread. The final recipient in a single-strand chain is likely to receive a distorted version of the message (Zainal Ariffin Ahmad et al., 2009).

The cluster chain is the second type of grapevine where only particular members of a social informal group are selected to receive the information (Zainal Ariffin Ahmad et al., 2009).

According to Shaharuddin and Ahmad (2017) “when the information begins to circulate, person A, who initiated the chain, tends to contact persons B and C within the same circle of friendship. Subsequently, person C, who shares a workstation with person D, will share the same information,

and person D, upon visiting another department to meet friend person E, will also share the information. This pattern continues as long as the sender and receiver of the information are comfortable with one another”. This is usually common because people share information with those they relate to in terms of friendship or close associates at the workplace. This implies that people who usually share gossip and rumor are usually peers or share a level of friendship at the workplace.

## **2.5 INFLUENCE ON AFFECTIVE, CONTINUANCE, AND NORMATIVE COMMITMENT**

Organizations can only achieve their goals through committed and dedicated employees. It is therefore important for management of organizations to understand the concept of employee commitment and how to harness it to achieve their goals. Abdulla et. al (2017) indicates that several studies have explored organizational commitment but it is one of the most difficult fields of management and organizational behaviour.

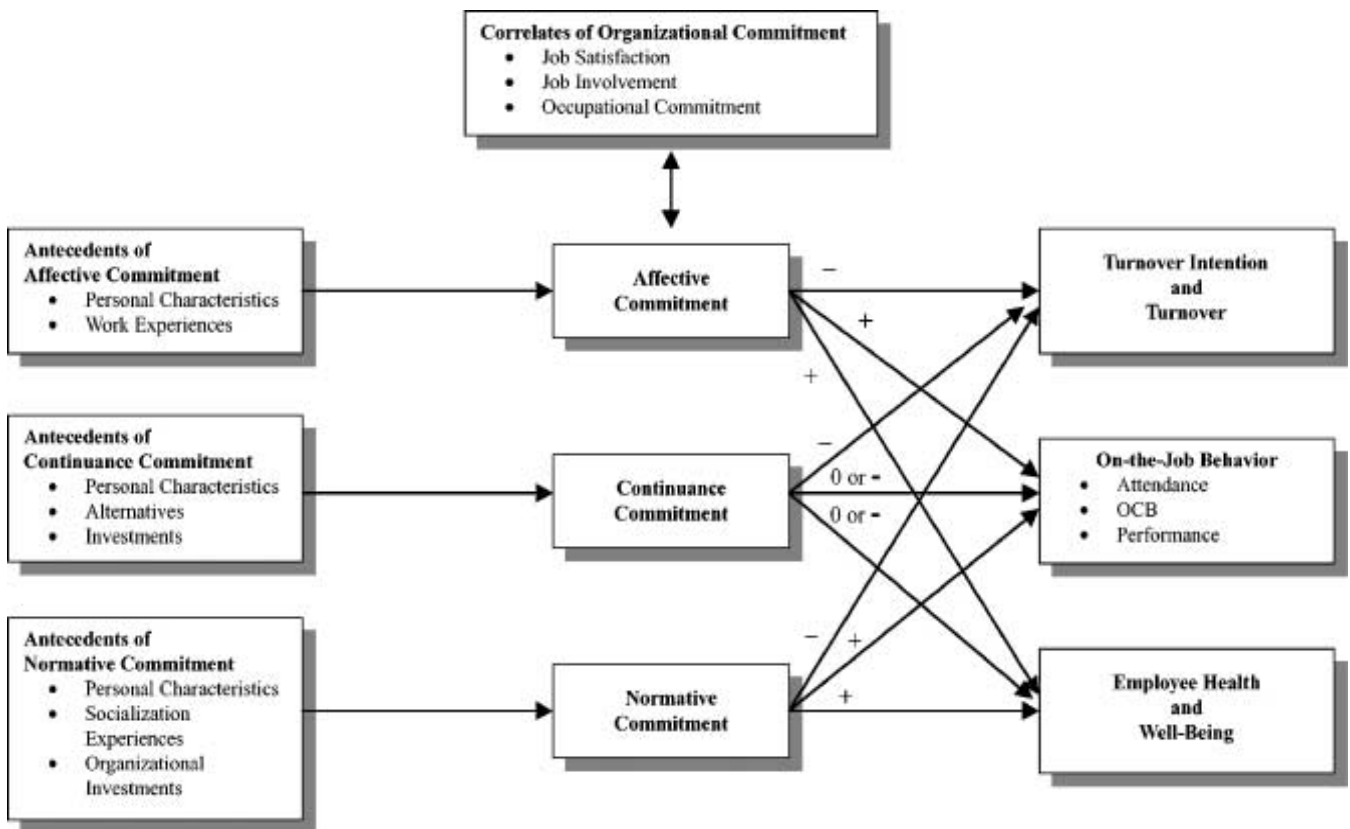
Allen and Meyer (1990) made distinct proposals between affective and continuance commitment. They indicated that “Affective commitment signifies an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization, while continuance commitment refers to the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization”. They later introduced normative commitment, which represents a perceived obligation to remain with the organization (Allen and Meyer (1990).

Begley & Czajka (1993), points out that affective commitment can help contain the negative impact of work stressors on employee health and well-being implying that these factors actually influence employee commitment levels. Other also suggest that committed employees might

experience more negative reactions to such stressors than those who are less committed (Reilly, 1994). Affective commitment has a strong positive relation to behaviors. This is followed by normative commitment. Continuance commitment is however expected to be unrelated or related negatively to these desirable work behaviors.

Figure 2.2

Meyer et. al Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment



## 2.6 GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION IN THE GHANAIAI CONTEXT

Communication forms an integral part of the Ghanaian socio-economic development. A successful business environment thrives on effective communication. In the Ghanaian context, the people

believe in communal living unlike the individualistic nature of the western world. The Ghanaian culture encourages social interaction amongst groups of people from diverse ethnic groups.

In the business environment, grapevine thrives exceedingly well due to the nature of Ghanaian culture as this form of communication encourages sharing information of common interest. The grapevine is very powerful and fast-paced, generally moving freely without restraint by word of mouth thus Davis (1973) discovered that organizational grapevine is a way to express the human need and enthusiasm to communicate. Due to its nature of being unstructured it moves freely through the entire organization. Again, Davis (1973) observes that the grapevine moves rapidly through the various forms of communication chain of command including vertical, diagonal, horizontal; between workers and management; and also with external publics of the organization. According to Armstrong (1995) an organization should incorporate all the forms of communication channels including grapevine to ensure effective communication in the organization.

The characteristics of the Ghanaian culture, including but not limited to social bonding, communal living and togetherness greatly influences grapevine in business organizations. Communication for Ghanaians from the olden days is not just about sending across information but sharing ones cultural and societal ideologies. Carey (1992) indicates “it is not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs”. Thus, a sense of belonging to a particular group is achieved through engaging in conversations.

## **2.7 ROLE OF MANAGEMENT IN GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION**

Grapevine as a result of its nature is very difficult to manage. However, leaders of business organizations have the obligation to come up with measures to curb it in order to prevent unwarranted problems for the organization as a small spark can cause bush fire if not quenched. Spreading rumours is inevitable amongst a gathering of several people as communication and social interaction bonds people whilst others use it as a means of getting what they want from other people. While some managers view grapevine as a nuisance to effective communication, it is part of the social interaction channels and cannot be overlooked. Davies (1990) is of the view that grapevine is as permanent as humanity is. Management must therefore effectively manage both structured and unstructured communication in their organization to prevent the inconveniences that comes along with grapevine.

It is suggested that grapevine usually carries bad news rather than good news. Thus, the risk of reputational damage is higher. Thill John et al (2008) emphasizes that grapevine thrives when employees do not receive requisite information from management. Speculations rise when half information is relayed to employees or when management succumb to total silence when employees are looking up to them on issues that is of common interest to staff.

Employees tend to voice out grievances through grapevine in some cases even before formal communication is sent to management. Jones (2004) mentions that employee grievance is as a result of dissatisfactory actions of management against employees. Management therefore must find appropriate measures to handle such grievances when they begin to spark in the grapevine before they get out of hands. Thus Daud (2010) indicates that handling grievances effectively is important to encouraging an atmosphere of good employer/employee relations and operating a productive organization.

## **2.8 STRATEGIES FOR LEVERAGING GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION TO ENHANCE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT.**

Effective flow of communication and information is highly requisite in today's day and age.

According to Nwalo (2009), currently information is believed to be a fifth factor of production. It is therefore imperative for management to leverage on grapevine communication to compliment the formal communication in the organization. Murdick and Ross (1971) emphasize on the fact that information is absolutely vital to the survival of an organization in this digital age.

Otike (2011) suggests that grapevine can be utilized in the following ways

### **i. Routine Communication**

In his study, he points out that messages of a personal nature should be encouraged to allow a sense of belongingness.

### **ii. Morale and Job Satisfaction**

More morale and job satisfaction can be built through a grapevine. He mentions that being a part of a grapevine can help develop strong personal relationships among employees of the business that in turn lead to higher morale, better job satisfaction, and higher levels of quality productivity.

### **iii. Reliable Feedback**

Otike (2011) emphasizes that feedback serves to "keep a finger on the pulse" of operations and the human aspect within a company. Much of this feedback can be obtained by "tuning-in" to the grapevine. Such feedback acts as a reliable barometer of the general level of morale in a business and identifies specific areas requiring attention before more serious issues arise.

iv. Tension Releaser

Management can utilise the grapevine to allow employees to release tensions. When frustrations and anger are bottled up, they often intensify and may eventually explode, leading to further complications. Conversely, when employees have an opportunity to discuss these frustrations with someone likely to be sympathetic, those tensions are usually alleviated, at least to some extent.

Finally, he indicates that grapevine can actually be healthy to an organization's climate and essentially improve productivity through availability of sufficient information, engagement levels and interaction amongst employees.

## **2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter highlighted literature review by other researchers on the objectives of the study. Theoretical underpinnings of the study were discussed here. The conceptual and empirical framework relevant to the study was also discussed in this chapter. The chapter further discussed grapevine communication in the Ghanaian context, role of management in grapevine communication and strategies utilized by management to leverage grapevine in the organization.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

This chapter describes and explains the research methodology. It covers the Research Approach; Research Design; Population, Sampling Technique and Sample; Data Analysis Techniques and Tools; Ethics and Ethical Considerations.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH**

According to Creswell (2018) “Research approach is a plan and the procedure for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation”. Quantitative approach which involves the application and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical techniques to answer questions such as who, how, what, where, when and was adopted for the study. Aliaga and Gunderson (2002), describes quantitative research methods as explaining a phenomenon through gathering data, analyzing data with the aid of mathematical methods and presenting the data using numerical format. The researcher incorporated the quantitative research approach because it is easy to quantify the outcomes and generalize results for the entire population. It is also a fast and convenient approach. The researcher cannot also interfere or be biased with the outcome of the study.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The overall strategy utilized to answer the research questions for the study is the research design. Descriptive research designs help provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where,

and how associated with a particular research problem. It is a useful tool in developing a more focused study by providing a yield of rich data that leads to important recommendations. The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables you to effectively address the research problem as unambiguously as possible (Kirshenblatt, 2006). This study uses the descriptive research design to gather data and explore the influence of grapevine communication on employee commitment and engagement at GIHOC Distilleries.

### **3.3 POPULATION, SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE**

Population refers to the set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied (Shukla, 2020). The population for the study is GIHOC Distilleries Company Limited. It is located in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. Being the first modern distillery to be established in West Africa, it was incorporated on December 19, 1979, under the Companies Code of Ghana, 1963 (Act 179) as a private limited liability company. It is currently wholly owned by the Government of Ghana.

The convenience sampling method was adopted for the study. Convenience sampling allows for easy recruitment of participants. It involves picking people who are readily accessible for the study (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). “Convenience sampling is a type of non-probability or non-random sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study” (Etikan, 2016). The convenience sampling made it easier and faster for the researcher to obtain data due to time constraint, proximity and accessibility of respondents.

Sampling refers to the technique of choosing a subset of the population to represent the whole population (Polit & Beck 2017). A selected group of some elements from a total population is known as the sample. From the population size of 150 employees, the researcher sampled 50 respondents for the study. The ease of availability and proximity to respondents as well as willingness to respond is a factor in choosing this sampling technique (Gravetter & Fazarno, 2010).

### **3.4 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS**

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in a systematic manner that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses and evaluate outcomes (Kabir, 2016.) There are two types of data which includes primary data and secondary data. Primary data is collected by the researcher mostly from the subjects of study. Primary data is firsthand information that may be gathered through survey questionnaires, interviews and observation. Secondary data, on the other hand, refers to information collected by individuals other than the researcher conducting the study. It includes sources such as books, newspapers, journals, magazines, and other published materials relevant to the topic.

For this study, the researcher employed the survey method of data collection by administering questionnaires to respondents. The questionnaires provided structured quantitative data, which is largely straightforward and can be used for comparison with similar studies. Additionally, data collected using the questionnaires can be easily converted into charts, tables, and other statistical formats for analysis. The questions were designed based on the objectives of the study and divided into two sections to cover the necessary scope. Section A comprised of demographic background of respondents whiles Section B were based questions relevant to the research objectives.

Data was collected through self-administered and close-ended questionnaires made up of 25 questions in two sections; A and B. As earlier mentioned, Section A comprised of demographic

information of respondents. Section B, on the other hand, comprised questions designed to support the objectives and research hypotheses relevant to the study, enabling the researcher to uncover the main issues at hand.

Reliability and validity are the two most crucial and fundamental features in assessing any measurement instrument or tool for good research (Mohajan, 2017). Reliability refers to the confidence one can place in the data obtained using an instrument. According to Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) “the evidence of validity and reliability are prerequisites to assure the integrity and quality of a measurement instrument”. The pre-test sample size comprised of 10 employees chosen at convenience from the sample frame. Using SPSS, the Cronbach’s Alpha was found to be 0.877 which signifies the validity and reliability of the research instruments.

### **3.5 ETHICS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethics are set of rules spelt out to serve as a guide on how to conduct an action. According to Knottnerus and Tugwell (2018), honesty in data reporting, privacy, confidentiality, and accurate presentation of findings are critical components of the research process.

Adherence to ethical norms is essential for ensuring research quality and integrity, particularly when exploring the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The researcher adhered to ethical guidelines, integrating them into all aspects of the research methodology. The researcher therefore followed the ethical guidelines by maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of respondents. Proper analysis and reporting were ensured to maintain the quality of the research.

### **3.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter focused on the overall methodology adopted for the study. It covered the research approach and research design of the study. The population of the study was defined in this section. It also detailed the sampling technique adopted and sample, data analysis technique and tools were also elaborated in this section. Finally, ethics and ethical considerations was elaborated in this chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

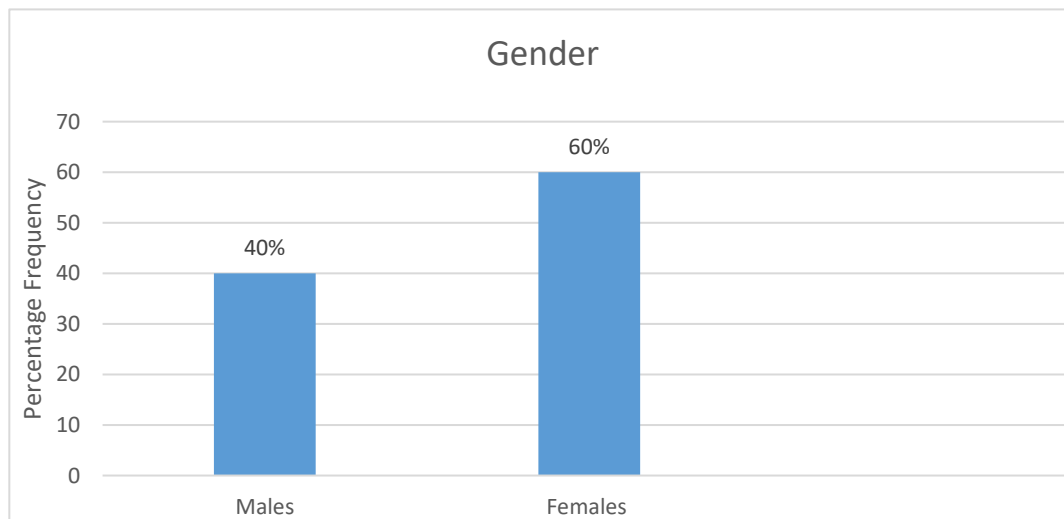
#### 4.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter consists of the analysed data and relevant discussion related to the objectives of the study. This consists of the demographic information or background of respondents sampled from the population and the research questions. The analysed data is presented on bar chart and tabular format with the relevant interpretation and discussions.

#### 4.1 BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

**Figure 4.1**

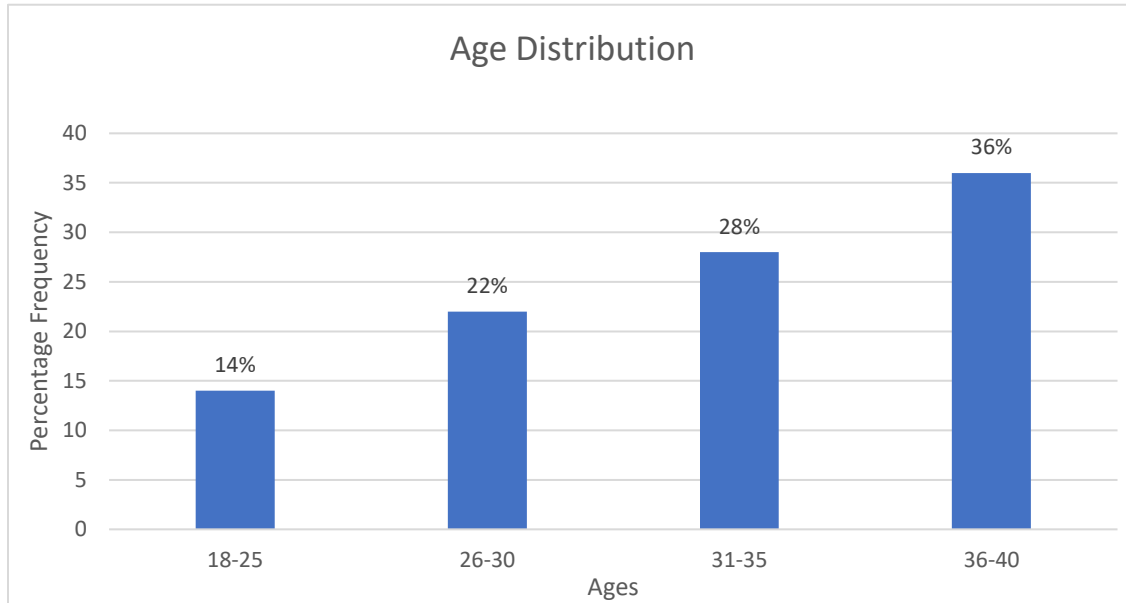
Gender of Respondents



Results from figure 4.1 above indicates that 60% of the respondents are females while 40% are males. This signifies that the females have a majority of representation compared to males.

**Figure 4.2**

Age Distribution of Respondents



The age distribution of respondents ranged from 18 to 25 years, 26 to 30 years, 31 to 35 years, 36 to 40 years and above. Results indicated that majority of respondents were within the ages of 36 to 40 years making up 36% of the sample size. The least age range was within 18 to 25 years where only 14% was recorded. This indicates a youthful group of respondents in the workforce with experience; who understand the problem the study seeks to address and can provide vital information in this regard.

**Figure 4.3**

Educational Background

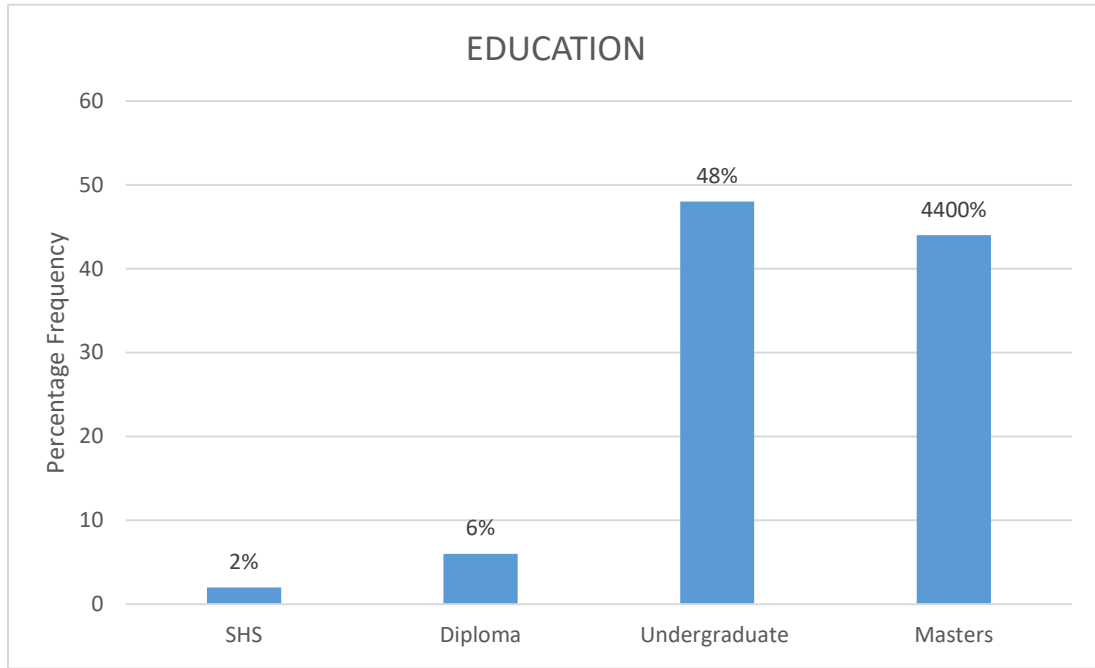


Figure 4.3 projects the educational background of respondents. A majority of 48% of the respondents are undergraduates while 44% have masters degree. This shows there is almost 100% rate of tertiary education amongst the respondents signifying that the data collection instrument will be well understood assiduously for the success of the study.

**Figure 4.4**

Religion of Respondents

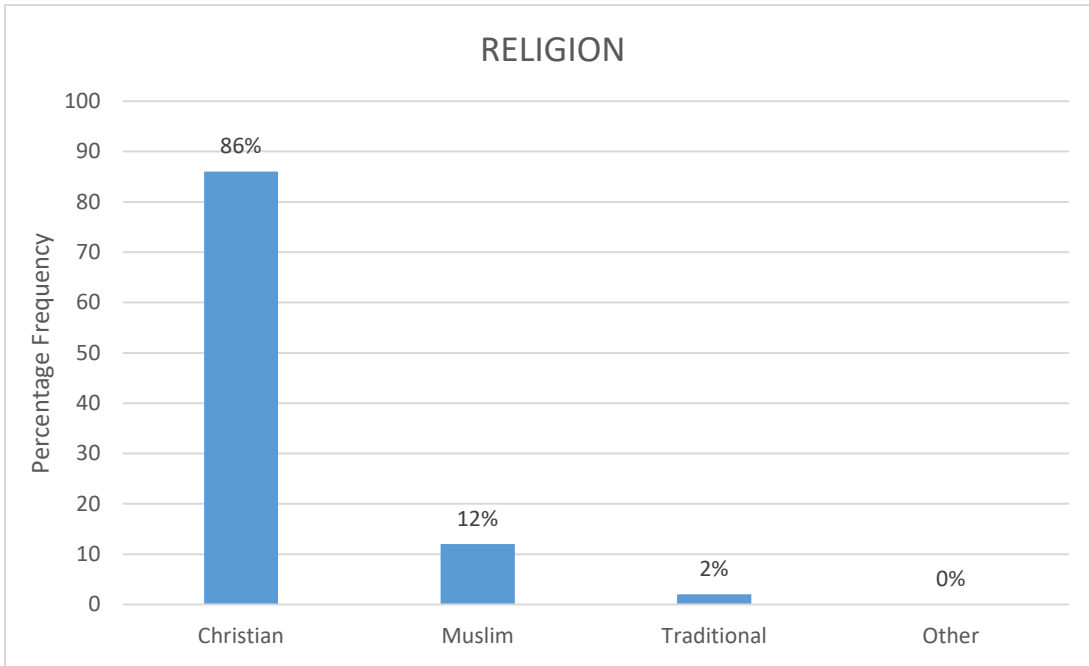


Figure 4.4 indicates a majority of 86% of respondents are Christians, 12% are Muslims while 2% is Traditional. This result suggests GIHOC Distillery, which is into the production of Alcoholic beverages, will not have a lot of Muslim employees since the religion frowns on consumption of alcohol thus the results above. Hence, the obvious result above.

**Figure 4.5**

Marital Status of Respondents

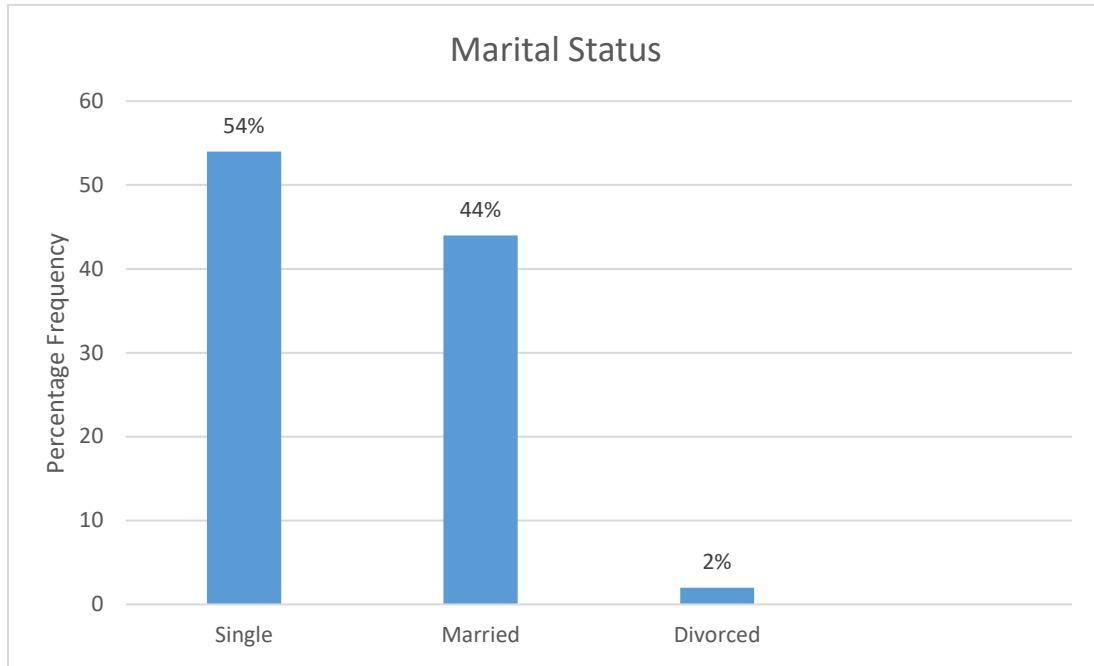


Figure 4.5 indicating responses of marital status projects a majority of 54% of respondents single, 44% married and 2% divorced.

## 4.2 IMPACT OF GRAPEVINE ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT

### 4.2.1 Employee Engagement

**Table 4.1**

Organization Encourages Feedback from Employees

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	21	42
Neutral	5	10
Strongly Disagree	2	4
Total	50	100

Table 4.1 above indicates that 44% of respondents strongly agree that management of the organization encourages feedback from employees while 42% agree with this. This implies that when employees are given the opportunity by management to voice out issues of concern or suggestions that will positively benefit the organization it enhances engagement. Employee engagement is “a positive attitude held by the employee toward the organization and its values” (Muduli, Verma, & Datta, 2016, p. 134). It is therefore imperative for management to ensure requisite measures are put in place for employees to uphold their value of engagement.

Employees develop a strong sense of belonging, which encourages active participation in organizational activities and positive contributions to performance when sufficient engagement is present. Saks (2006) suggests that employees fulfil their part of obligation when they believe management is concerned about their welfare.

**Table 4.2**

Employees share ideas with Management

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	16	32
Neutral	10	20
Strongly Disagree	2	4
Total	50	100

From table 4.2 above, 44% of respondents strongly agree that employees are able to share their ideas with management while 32% agree to this. 20% however are neutral about this and 4% disagree that they are able to share ideas with management. Most organizations with autocratic style of leadership leave no room for employee suggestions or contributions thus do not have high engagement levels with management. Kahn (1990) demonstrated that employees exhibiting

higher levels of engagement tend to possess stronger core self-evaluations, perceive greater organizational support, and experience higher levels of value alignment. These findings indicate that encouraging employees to share their ideas enhances engagement, strengthens organizational support, and boosts overall workplace effectiveness. Additionally, feedback serves a critical function by enabling decision-makers to address challenges proactively, thereby reinforcing network connections (Miller, 2009).

**Table 4.3**

Adequate Workplace Interaction

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	32	64
Agree	17	34
Neutral	1	2
Total	50	100

Majority of 64% of respondents from table 4.4 above strongly agree that adequate workplace interaction improves engagement levels. 34% agree while 2% is neutral. This implies that interaction is a necessity amongst co-workers. Muchinsky (1977) indicates that the patterns of communication incorporated by an organization has influence on employees, which is essential but an unexplored aspect of organizational culture.

Effective and adequate communication at the workplace improves interaction and engagement levels amongst employees. These fosters trust and support; builds strong relationship and establishes a sense of belongingness. The findings indicate that organizational relationships, shaped by social information processing and exchange, significantly influence member behaviours, resulting in outcomes such as heightened productivity and reduced turnover (Denison, 1996; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Saks, 2006). An engaged workforce further contributes to increased job satisfaction and organizational success.

**Table 4.4**

Availability of information for employees

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	19	38
Agree	21	42
Neutral	8	16
Disagree	1	2
Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.4 projects that a majority of 42% of total responses agree there is availability of information to perform their roles adequately. 38% strongly agree while 16% is neutral. 2% however disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Results implies that availability of information at the workplace encourages employee engagement to sufficiently play one's role. Constantin and Baias (2015) emphasise that effective internal communication enables employees to independently evaluate the information provided by management, resulting in greater job satisfaction and work engagement, particularly when the information is accurate and reliable. Adequate availability of information for employees to perform their roles is therefore essential for employees.

We1ch (2015) explored how the quality and sufficiency of information provided by a business influence employee attitudes and actions at work. The findings underscore the role of internal communication in enabling businesses to gain a comprehensive understanding of employee responses to the information shared (We1ch, 2015; Constantin & Baias, 2015). According to Bedarkar and Pandita (2014), these effects are frequently positive, leading to mutually beneficial outcomes for both employees and the organization.

## 4.2.2 Employee Commitment

**Table 4.5**

Employees' knowledge of organization's goals and objectives

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	31	62
Agree	16	38
Neutral	2	4
Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.5 above indicates a majority of 62% respondents of respondents strongly agree they have knowledge of the organization's goals and objectives. 38% of the respondents also agree. 4% are however neutral about this while only 2% disagree. Employees show commitment by putting in dedication to know everything about the organization in which they work. The goals of the organization are the yardstick which serves as a guiding principle for the operations of the business. It is obvious from the above results that knowledge of the organization shows the level of employee commitment. Porter et al. and Schultz (1974) identify three essential components of organizational commitment: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals, a readiness to exert significant effort to achieve those goals, and a distinct desire to remain a member of the organization. This implies employees that show these components are committed to the organization.

**Table 4.7**

Work aligns with organizations goals and objectives

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	31	62
Agree	17	34
Neutral	2	4
Total	50	100

Results from table 4.7 indicates that majority of 62% of respondents strongly agree that their work is in alignment with the organization’s goals and objectives. 34% agree with this while a minority of 4% are neutral. Employees find fulfilment in their work when they understand the course of the organization and are aligned with the objectives. In the words of Shahid (2013), dedicated workers want to enjoy their jobs, feel appreciated, and know they are contributing to their company's critical goals.

**Table 4.8**

Conducive environment improves employee commitment

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	22	38
Agree	25	42
Neutral	2	4
Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

A conducive work environment enables employee commitment. This is evident in the results of table 4.8 where majority of 42% responses agree 38% strongly agree respectively. 4% are however neutral about this while 2% completely disagree. Farh (2012) emphasizes that employees experience the greatest satisfaction when their physical surroundings and emotional well-being are aligned with their responsibilities. The degree to which employees feel connected to their workplace environment significantly influences their error rates, efficiency, innovation, collaboration, absenteeism, and overall retention. This implies that organizations must endeavor to improve on the conducive atmosphere at the workplace to influence positive commitment amongst employees.

Humphries (2005) observes that the office environment directly affects employee morale, productivity, and engagement, either positively or negatively. Initiatives focused on lifestyle changes, work-life balance, and health and safety, which were once viewed as secondary perks, have now become priorities for both employees and industry leaders.

**Table 4.10**

Employees Willingness to Recommend the organization to others

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	21	38
Agree	24	42
Neutral	4	26
Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.10 shows responses where majority of 42% agree they will recommend their organization to potential clients. 38% strongly agree. 26% however are neutral while 2% disagree. Eisenberger et al. (1990) reveal that workers who perceive care and support from their company and leadership demonstrate higher levels of commitment. Such employees also exhibit increased awareness of their obligations, stronger organizational commitment, and enhanced ingenuity.

Thus, employees will be willing to refer their place of work to other potential recruits and clients as a result of their level of commitment to the organization. Again, Nierhoff et al (1990) found that the degree of management culture and style is increasingly related to the level of employee commitment. Thus when workers are well-informed, they become organizational champions in front of the public, which may help the organization's image (Gronstedt, 2000).

### 4.3 Benefits of Grapevine Communication

**Table 4.11**  
Grapevine Communication Encourages a Sense of Belonging

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	18	36
Neutral	5	10
Disagree	4	8
Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Results on table 4.11 indicate that a benefit of grapevine communication is that it creates a sense of belonging to people involved in it. Majority of 44% of respondents strongly agree to this, 36% agree, 10% are neutral, 8% disagree while only 2% strongly disagree. As mentioned by Duke (1993) grapevine plays a big role in enhancing the development of cordial interpersonal relationship among employees. Communication being an essential human relations tool is paramount in establishing relationships at the workplace. Grapevine as part of internal communication fosters a feeling of belonging, raises awareness, and engages staff (Neto, Silva & Ferreira, 2018).

**Table 4.12**  
Grapevine enhances interpersonal relationship

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	20	40
Agree	21	42
Neutral	6	12
Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Table 4.12 shows majority of 42% of respondents agree grapevine enhances interpersonal relationship at the office. 40% also strongly agree while 12% are neutral. 6% however disagrees to this. Interpersonal relationship amongst employees is important to their wellbeing and productivity as earlier mentioned. Work colleagues interact on several levels including sharing ideas on the job aside issues concerning their personal well-being. This shows the level of bonding grapevine communication provides employees. Nelson (1989) points out that quality social exchanges reduce workplace conflict.

**Table 4.13**

Grapevine improves mood of employees

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	25	50
Agree	19	38
Neutral	5	10
Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.13 shows majority of 50% of respondents strongly agree that engaging in grapevine communication improves their mood at the workplace. A percentage of 38% also agrees to this. 10% however are neutral while 2% disagree. Srivastava and Purohit (2021) argue that employees who engage in open communication and discussion of their thoughts and ideas cultivate a sense of unity. They further emphasize that grapevines contribute to social cohesion and function as a system of emotional support, supplementing formal communication when required. Grapevine extends a level of emotional support which cannot be obtained in the formal internal communication system.

**Table 4.14**

Employee' grievances are heard through grapevine

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	21	42
Neutral	4	8
Disagree	1	2
Strongly Disagree	2	4
Total	50	100

Table 4.14 shows that a benefit derived from grapevine communication is that management hears employee' grievances through this channel of informal internal communication. Above result is obviously evident as majority of 44% and 42% of respondents are in affirmative as they strongly agree and agree respectively. 8% are neutral, 2% disagree while 4% strongly disagree. Through the grapevine issues such as grievances are raised amongst employees in the organization. Management can act on this to address these concerns or turn a deaf ear. Issues might escalate usually when management decides to do the latter.

**Table 4.15**

Grapevine communication compliments Formal communication

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	20	40
Neutral	5	10
Disagree	2	4
Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.15 indicates that 44% of respondents strongly agree that grapevine communication compliments formal internal communication. 40% agree to this while 10% of respondents are

neutral. 4% disagree and 2% strongly disagrees. Formal communication being the structured form of communication in the organization is mostly regulated by management. Grapevine, however interacts with the various levels of an organization’s formal communication which is difficult to ignore by management. This makes it possible for information to flow throughout the organization be it true or false. Brown (2024) in an article, mentions that informal communication through the grapevine fosters relationships among colleagues and can enhance workplace morale. It allows employees to form bonds that may not be possible through structured organizational interactions, contributing to a more cohesive work environment.

#### 4.4 Effects of Grapevine Communication on Management Decision-Making

**Table 4.16**

Employees Opinions are valued

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	12	24
Agree	21	42
Neutral	14	28
Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Results from table 4.16 above shows a majority of 42% of respondents agree that employees’ opinions are valued by management. 28% of respondents are neutral about this; however, 24% again, strongly agree with this while only 6% disagree. Management incorporates different style of leadership from one organization to another. It is important to however engage employees in decision making by encouraging feedback to prevent speculations which only encourages grapevine communication. Shahid (2013) suggest that management should encourage employee engagement through two-way communication. She further asserts that managers should promote

two-way communication, as an engaged workforce thrives on clear and consistent communication regarding expectations.

**Table 4.17**

Withholding of information by Management

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	11	22
Agree	17	34
Neutral	19	38
Disagree	2	4
Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.17 shows results from respondents projecting that majority of 38% are neutral about the management withholding information from employees. 34% agree to this whilst 22% strongly agree. 4% disagree and 2% strongly disagree. Information flow is an integral aspect of every organization. Sensitive information that especially concerns the wellbeing of employees and the state of the organization must be shared to stakeholders involved. Management sometimes decides to keep sensitive information from employees which ends up brewing more speculations. Nierhoff et al (1990) found that the “overall management culture and style driven by the top management actions are strongly related to the degree of employee commitment”. This implies that the way in which management demonstrate the organization’s leadership style deeply influences employee behaviour. Cowie (2019) explains that fostering employee engagement requires organizations to eliminate barriers to the flow of internal information and consistently provide feedback on both personal and organizational matters.

**Table 4.18**

Adoption of House-style communication

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	9	18
Agree	26	52
Neutral	11	22
Disagree	2	4
Strongly Disagree	2	4
Total	50	100

Table 4.18 indicates that majority of 52% of respondents agree that the organization has a house style of communication. 18% also strongly agree to this. 22% are however neutral whilst 4% disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Most organizations have their in-house style of disseminating information to key stakeholders. Regardless of this, grapevine still thrives spontaneously at all stages. Management must therefore find ways to manage it effectively and use it to their advantage.

**Table 4.19**

Management Decisions are aligned with Organizational Goals

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	25	38
Agree	17	42
Neutral	7	26
Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.19 indicates that majority of 42% of respondents strongly agree that managements decisions are aligned with the organizational goals. 38% agree to this. 26% are neutral whilst 2% disagree. Effective management of grapevine communication not only mitigates potential risks but also enhances organizational transparency and trust, proving essential for anyone aiming to rise to the top of their field. Decisions must not be made haphazardly due to pressuring situations or crisis

but several other factors must be put into consideration. Kalani and Hayase (2009) suggest that aligning organizational and employee goals enhances employee engagement and facilitates the setting of attainable, realistic objectives, which in turn boosts output. The competitive business climate has intensified the need for companies to establish robust communication systems that foster coordination and ensure the efficient exchange of information between employees and external stakeholders.

**Table 4.20**

Management Encourages Free and Open Communication

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	17	34
Agree	21	42
Neutral	8	16
Disagree	3	6
Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 4.20 indicate majority of 42% of respondents agree that management encourages free and open communication. Effective communication relies on the provision of sufficient and reliable information, which enhances production, productivity, and efficiency (Allen, 1992; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Anchor, 2009). Providing employees with pertinent information and encouraging effective communication helps to eliminate unnecessary speculation. As noted, well-informed staff members often act as organizational ambassadors, contributing to the enhancement of the company's reputation (Gronstedt, 2000).

## **4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this section, the results of analysed data were presented and discussed. Demographic data of respondents was presented using bar charts whiles the research questions was presented on tables.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0. CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

The purpose of the research was to investigate how staff engagement and commitment at GIHOC Distilleries were affected by grapevine communication. As a result, this chapter summarizes the key research results, conclusions, and suggestions that are pertinent to the investigation.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Grapevine communication is a major aspect of internal (informal) communication in every organization. Where it begins and ends cannot be established so far as human interaction is concerned. According to Amofa (2015), as internal communication entails the exchange of information between the organization and its audiences at work, it is also considered a crucial component of an organization's internal operations. The study explored grapevine communication's influence on employee commitment and engagement laying emphasis on the following objectives:

1. to examine the role of grapevine communication on employee engagement and commitment in GIHOC Distilleries
2. to investigate the benefits of grapevine communication in GIHOC Distilleries
3. to examine the effect of grapevine communication on management decision-making in GIHOC Distilleries

Major findings indicates that grapevine communication plays a major role on employee engagement and commitment at GIHOC Distilleries. Through spontaneous interactions, employees are engaged at different stages which improves engagement levels and commitment.

From the findings, on table 4.1, 44% and 42% of responses were in the affirmative respectively indicating that management engaged employees by encouraging feedback. This implies employees have a strong sense of belonging, motivating them to become involved in activities of the organization and contributing positively to performance through adequate engagement which also influences employee commitment.

The findings also revealed that employees enjoy interacting with their colleagues using the grapevine as compared to formal communication where everything is structured. According to Johnson et al., (1994) people actually are comfortable with the informal communication channels as compared to formal communication. This is obvious because it is spontaneous without any restrictions and enhances relationship building. Chen et al. (2013) suggest that employees are often motivated to engage in meaningful social exchanges, leading to emotional attachment and the development of close relationships with their co-workers.

Findings for benefits derived from grapevine communication indicates from Table 4.12 majority of 42% respondents agree grapevine enhances interpersonal relationship at the office; while 40% also strongly agree respectively. This can be generalized to the population as employees that have strong interpersonal relationship with their colleagues experience better mood and are also productive. Al-Jaber (2019) highlights that previous research has often underestimated the influence of co-workers in shaping peer dynamics and providing essential resources to effectively navigate the challenges of a complex work environment.

Again, it was revealed that through grapevine, management hears employee' grievances. Table 4.14 result is obviously evident as majority of 44% and 42% of respondents feedback is in the affirmative. Thus, management must always be concerned and communicate in open dialogue with employees to avoid speculations. According to Argenti (1998), two-way internal communication

is the most successful as it facilitates casual encounters between managers and staff, enhancing comprehension and teamwork.

Furthermore, grapevine communication provides management with additional information concerning sentiments and the overall nature of work atmosphere. Sometimes critical issues of change begin from the grapevine. Based on this, management must put measures in place to address these issues and control the grapevine to prevent internal crisis situations.

Effective decision making and timely communication therefore is paramount when dealing with grapevine communication. Amofa (2015) contends that effective management practices and concepts form the foundation for successful organizational communication with workers.

## **5.1 CONCLUSION**

Grapevine communication is inevitable since humans are social beings. Regardless of a well-structured communication system an organization may have in a formal setting, grapevine will thrive as people have the innate feeling to communicate amongst themselves to achieve common understanding or to address issues of related concern. It is therefore management's responsibility to manage their communication system by taking advantage of the benefits derived from grapevine communication and provide measures to curb the issues that comes along with it.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study has revealed that indeed grapevine communication can influence employee engagement and commitment through interactions and sharing of issues of common interest including workplace grievances among several others. Grapevine also has several benefits and management can use information from grapevine as a yardstick for some of their decision making. Following the objectives of the study and findings, the researcher therefore recommends an internal

communication committee to be set up to observe and communicate the relevant issues that come up in the grapevine to senior management for appropriate measures to be put in place to resolve them.

The researcher also recommends management to provide the opportunity for employees to voice out suggestions, opinions and grievances on occasional town hall meetings. This can also be done using a dedicated email address for employees to make such submissions. This will help improve employee engagement with management and facilitate two-way communication at the organization.

Finally, management should invest in third party research on the organization to find out where the organization is lacking in their style of communication and decision making to further control the damage grapevine communication is likely to cause in the future. The research document will serve as a guide for policy and decision making for the organization.

### **5.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed the major findings revealed from the analysed data. Conclusions of the study was also drawn in this chapter. Lastly, recommendations were proposed based on the major findings obtained from the study.

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**APPENDIX**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of University of Media, Arts and Communication (UNIMAC) conducting research on “THE INFLUENCE OF GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT IN GIHOC DISTILLERIES” in partial fulfilment of acquiring a Master’s Degree in Strategic Public Relations. I will be most grateful if you will answer the questions to the best of your ability. Your responses will be treated confidentially and used only for academic purposes. Thank you for your participation.

**Instructions:** the questionnaire is in two sections. Section A, which is about your personal data and Section B, which comprises of selected questions for the relevance of the study. kindly complete both sections.

**Section A**

**Personal Data – Kindly tick appropriate box**

1. What is your Gender?  
Male       Female
  
2. Which age range do you belong?  
18-24     25-30       31-35       36 – 40       41 and above
  
3. Educational Background?  
Doctorate     Masters     Undergraduate       Diploma   
SHS       Vocational       Other
  
4. What is your religion?  
Christian       Muslim       Traditional       Other
  
5. Marital Status?  
Single       Married       Divorced

**Section B**

**Role of Grapevine Communication on Employee Engagement and Commitment.**

*Kindly answer the following questions by circling appropriate indications below*

*SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, N – Neutral, D – Disagree, SD - Strongly Disagree*

<b>Employee Engagement</b>		SA	A	N	D	SD
6.	My organization encourages feedback to management					
7.	I am able to share my ideas with management					
8.	I understand every instruction given to fulfil my duties					
9.	The information I need to do my job well is readily available					
10.	I freely interact with my colleagues during work hours					
<b>Employee Commitment</b>		SA	A	N	D	SD
11.	I know my organization’s goals and objectives					
12.	My work aligns with the organizational goals and objectives					
13.	My workplace is a conducive environment					
14.	My organization inspires me to give my best at work					
15.	I will recommend my organization to potential clients					

**Benefits of Grapevine Communication at GIHOC Distilleries**

*Kindly answer the following questions by circling appropriate indications below*

*SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, N – Neutral, D – Disagree, SD - Strongly Disagree*

<b>Benefits of Grapevine Communication</b>		SA	A	N	D	SD
16.	Sharing informal communication with my peers gives me a sense of belonging at the workplace					
17.	Grapevine communication enhances my interpersonal relationship					
18.	Communicating with my colleagues improves my mood at work					
19.	Management hears about employees’ grievances through grapevine					

20.	Grapevine communication compliments my communication needs at work					
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**Effect of grapevine communication on management decision making**

*Kindly answer the following questions by circling appropriate indications below*

*SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, N – Neutral, D – Disagree, SD - Strongly Disagree*

<b>Grapevine communication and management decision making</b>		SA	A	N	D	SD
21.	Employees opinions are valued					
22.	Management does not withhold important information from employees					
23.	Organization house-style communication is in place					
24.	Management decisions are aligned with the organization's goals					
25.	Management encourages free and open communication					

**The End**