

**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM  
FACULTY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, MARKETING AND  
ADVERTISING.**

**PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILL AMONG ADOLESCENTS: A CASE STUDY  
USING VICTORY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH YOUTH.**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I do hereby declare that except for references to other secondary materials, which have been duly acknowledged, this project work is the result of my personal research and it has not been previously presented either in whole or in part to any other institution for the award of another degree.

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**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION**

I do hereby declare that the presentation of this project supervised by me is in accordance with guidelines on supervision of project work laid down by the School of Graduate Studies and Research, Ghana Institute of Journalism.

**DR. MODESTUS FOSU** .....

**(SUPERVISOR)**

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to the Almighty God for all the strength, knowledge and wisdom He granted me during this period. I also dedicate it to my amazing mother Muriel Awusi Gavor and my uncle Frederick Kwabena Gavor for all their support, prayers and guidance throughout the period. This research is dedicated to all adolescents out there.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Glossophobia which is popularly known as the fear of public speaking has become one of the common fears among human beings across nations, gender and age. On a daily basis we all participate in public speaking. This what a lot of individuals usually refer to as “standing in front of a crowd to speak.” While that is true, public speaking takes place even between two people and hence we unconsciously engage in public speaking anytime we communicate. This skill has now become one which determines the success of individuals in their career, academic and social life. Applying the survey method of data collection with the use of questionnaires via google forms, the study focuses on identifying the challenges adolescents encounter and how they can overcome it. Using the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Victory Congregation Adenta-Fafraha as a case study, this research with the use of a sample population of fifty (50) sought to identify what public speaking is, the challenges encountered by adolescents, how they can overcome the challenges and the benefit they can reap from having an effective the public speaking skill in the long term.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Public speaking is the process of giving a speech or presentation before an audience. It could be ceremonial, demonstrative, informative or persuasive. Dom (2018) states that, “The study of public speaking began about 2500 years ago in Athens when men were required to give speeches as part of their civic duties which included speaking in the legislative assembly and sometimes in court to defend themselves since there were no lawyers for the average Athenian.” Dom goes on to talk about the three pillars identified with public speaking which are *Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos*.

Coleman and Hendry (1999) in their research state that “adolescence is often conceptualized as a transition between childhood and adulthood.” This transition is growth in physique and intellect. During this period adolescents go through a series of physical, emotional and psychological change. They gain confidence of themselves during this stage and would usually like to express themselves. Based on this, adolescents unconsciously tend to exhibit some public speaking skill during this stage. This does not over rule the fact that during this stage some may also exhibit shyness, timid and introverted characteristics.

Victory Congregation, which belongs to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and was birthed out of Mission and Evangelism and it is located Adenta-Fafraha. Victory Presbyterian Church is ideal as a case study because it has segregated its youth into two main parts namely the Junior Youth and the Young People’s Guild. Out of these two categories, the study would focus entirely on the Junior Youth because it comprises individuals between the ages of twelve and seventeen, thus focusing on the adolescents.

Adolescents cannot exempt themselves from public speaking because of the environment they find themselves in. They are directly or indirectly involved in public speaking at home, school, church, community and other social gatherings. It is important for adolescents to harness and exhibit excellent public speaking skill because as part of their psychological and intellectual growth they participate in public speaking which takes a number of forms such as debates, delivery of speech and presentations. Merriam-Webster defines Public speaking as the “act or process of making speeches in public,” or “the art of effective oral communication with others.”

Adolescents do not live in an isolated world. They encounter each other every day, right from the family unit, school, church, and the very society they live in. In all these units, they find themselves addressing the public one way or the other. To buttress this, Decastro (2020) states that “from school, to work, to religious and social functions, even in our dreams we talk, which happens to be called something else, dreaming.”

Making inference to the definition of public speaking, it will not be out of place to say that public speaking occurs even as adolescents engage themselves. If a teacher is to ask his pupils a question while teaching them, he is engaging in public speaking and his pupils then become his audience. In the same way, if any of his pupils gets up to ask or answer a question, both the teacher and the other pupils become the audience of the one asking or answering the question. Either ways we can say public speaking occurs. It is the same with the family, religious bodies and church.

Majority of people believe that public speaking is for a certain caliber of elderly individuals who take particular career paths such as teaching, pastoring, mastering of ceremonies, engaging in politics to name a few whom whilst discharging their duties find themselves addressing groups of people regularly. Professions like these definitely fall within the enclave of public speaking but then again it is not a skill restricted for use by only these professional individuals.

Everyone, both young people and the elderly, need public speaking skill for either professional, formal or informal use. Hoyland (2017) states that: “the need for everyone to have the skill of public speaking regardless of the field they belong to.” In acquiring this skill, one thing that inhibits effective and efficient public speaking is the fear factor. “Public speaking has become crucial to the success of one’s career, it is a great way of building personal development. It is considered one of the prerequisites for one to obtain a leadership position, land a dream job or deliver a moving speech at a social function.” Unfortunately, public speaking is one of the greatest fears that exist today for a lot of adolescents.

Public speaking may be largely associated with professionals and the elderly but it is not solely reserved for them: adolescents can be introduced to public speaking considering the inhibiting factors such as fear and anxiety that come with it, there are lot benefits they can gain by having an effective public speaking skill.

## **1.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESEARCH**

Considering the fact that Public Speaking is inevitable, even by adolescents and all people, it has become very expedient to analyse the problems of youth public speaking and provide possible solutions to these problems. Adolescents are usually shy or scared to stand in front of a crowd to speak. Brown (2017) mentions that “even though many people routinely give speeches or presentations for work or school, they may still experience fear at the idea of having to stand in front of others and talk.” She further elaborates on some problems of public speaking. Key amongst the list of identified problems are lack of confidence, lack of attention to audience, lack of preparedness, and lack of time management. This is not an issue that just emerged out of nowhere. Some educational facilities especially the public schools in Ghana are unable to or designate little amount of attention to public speaking in their school’s curriculum as compared to other subjects.

Hoyland (2017) states that “public speaking should be elevated to the same level as reading and writing. According to his research, individuals who excel at all of these three tend to advance faster than one who excels at just reading and writing.” Amos (2017) also states that, “Unfortunately, a lot of people do not see the importance of training in public speaking.” She goes on to say that, “taking a public speaking course not only helps you socially but academically as well which means that being comfortable speaking in front of crowds helps you get more involved in your other classes too and rather than not being able to ask for clarifications on certain misunderstandings due anxiety of public speaking”.

Due to this, many people come out of school not well prepared to enter the professional world. Hoyland (2017) states that “individuals pass out of school ready to enter into the professional world and struggle from the onset since they are unable to adequately express themselves not exempting their performance during interview sessions.” Juxtaposing the attention given to students when they are learning to read and write during their formation ages against speaking, this issue of fear with public speaking will not exist should same be done with the latter.

Gallo (2019) concludes based on a research done by Mckloskey, “persuasion or jobs that involve persuasion is responsible for generating one quarter of America’s total national income which is expected to rise in the next twenty (20) years. Unfortunately, the masses are not well skilled when it comes to public speaking and thus a handful of people are able to travel the path of excellence and success.” This obviously is a challenge that we need to find permanent solutions to. When young people at the stage of adolescence are equipped with the art and skill of public speaking it will solve the problem of having only a handful of people engaging in effective public speaking in the long term. The good old Book; the Holy Scriptures says that “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old, he will not depart from it”.

### **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The importance of this study cannot be overlooked. Public speaking is undeniably a skill that contributes to the growth of young people's self-confidence, better research skills and ability to advocate for a cause. Many people as stated in Zeoli (2019) ask, "Are great speakers made, or are they just born that way? Zeoli responds that, while it is true that some individuals are born with this gift, many also put in a lot of training into themselves to be effective speakers." Mercer et al 2014, note that alumni of British "Public Schools" still control politics and many top professions due to the fact that they are commonly very confident and fluent public speakers.

Pointing out that majority of adolescents have their public speaking skill developed through their school experience of debating, discussion groups and engaging in dialogues with their teachers. This makes our study significant in that it will help young people identify what public speaking is, encourage them to acquire the skill of same or participate in public speaking rather than shy away from it. It will also contribute greatly to academic research on the subject of public speaking since not many studies have done this topic in Ghana and beyond. More so, these adolescents will be introduced to the benefits of being able to demonstrate excellent public speaking skill in their adolescent stage and beyond into adulthood.

### **1.4 ORGANIZATION OF STUDY**

This work has been categorized into five main chapters. The first chapter covers the background, justification of the study, significance of study. The second chapter will cover the review of relevant literature and the theoretical underpinnings of the study. Chapter three will focus on methodology and data collection. Chapter four seeks to discuss the challenges and solutions of youth public speaking, focusing on the youth of the Victory Presbyterian Church. In the final chapter, a summary, conclusion and recommendation will be made based on the study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Arguably, there is actually nothing new under the sun. This chapter will present the theoretical basis for this study and discuss some relevant literature by other scholars from their articles, dissertations or research and how they fit into this study. It will also review previous studies which are relevant to the public speaking skill of adolescents after which some agreements and critique will be made as to the strengths and weaknesses of their work and identify the gap in the literature. For the purposes of further study and also to avoid plagiarism, appropriate references shall be cited.

#### **2.2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE STUDY**

##### **2.2.1 Theories of Persuasion**

One of the characteristics of an excellent public speaker is the ability to persuade an audience. Several researchers have coined theories under persuasion and adolescents when taught, would benefit from them greatly. We shall look at the Social Judgment Theory and Cognitive Dissonance Theory.

The Social Judgment Theory was propounded by Muzafer Sherif and Carl Iver Hovland in their quest to determine the various forms of public speaking and how they would stir up a change in behaviour of audience by comparing it with their current attitudes. Sherif and Hovland (1980) theorized that “persuasion was a matter of knowing how great the discrepancy or difference was between the speaker’s viewpoint and that of the audience.

If the speaker's point of view was similar to that of the audience, then persuasion was more likely. If the discrepancy between the idea proposed by the speaker and the audience's viewpoint is too great, then the likelihood of persuasion decreases dramatically."

This presupposes that for persuasion to take place during public speaking, the speaker must have done some prior background check of the kind of audience to be addressed. Knowing one's audience beforehand could help with persuasion.

The Cognitive Dissonance Theory was also propounded by Leon Festinger. Cognitive dissonance theory by Festinger (1957) is an "aversive motivational state that occurs when an individual entertains two or more contradictory attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors simultaneously." Frymier and Nadler (2013) also noted that for cognitive dissonance theory to work effectively attention must be paid to some necessary conditions which are; aversive consequences, freedom of choice, and insufficient external justification.

With the aversive consequences for instance, the audience would have to be persuaded enough by taking into cognizance the severe repercussion of not changing one's attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviour. In an attempt to persuade the audience however, they should in no circumstance feel coerced into doing something against their will. Coercion may cause a temporary change but definitely make the audience rescind their decision to change.

### **Significance of Theories of Persuasion to the Study**

For one to be an excellent public speaker, it is of great importance to be able to grab the attention of the audience. As we have seen in the theories of persuasion, one of the ways to grab their attention is to persuade them. If some messages are mediated and designed to get people to purchase specific products or vote for specific candidates in an election, then an audience could

also be persuaded to buy into an idea a presentation projects. This makes the theories of persuasion significant to our study, in that adolescents must also be introduced to the art of persuasion in order to apply it whenever the need arises in their public speaking.

Every audience is different, and every audience member has a different opinion. With the theories of persuasion in use, the young public speaker could persuade the majority of the audience to agree with his or her claim, although not every audience member can be won over.

### **2.2.2 Theories of Humour**

For Wooten (1996), “humor is deemed by many as useful in public speaking because by integrating humor people can reduce the amount of anxiety they feel by relieving distress and change negative thinking patterns.” Xu (2014) coined three dimensions of humour in public speaking which are “physical, temporal and experiential.”

With the Physical dimension, Xu (2014) tells us “it is important to point out that it is not just limited to the tangible factors around the speaker, but also of those of/within the speaker.” That is to say it involves the seen or touchable environment where public speaking occurs. For instance a public speaker could deliberately decide to pick on him/herself just to make the audience laugh.

The Temporal dimension as rightly put by Xu (2014), “describes factors which are affected by the sequence in time of the occurrence of the associated events.” DeVito (2009) adds his voice to this particular dimension and emphasizes that “it has to do not only with the time of day and moment in history but also with where a particular message fits into the sequence of communication events.”

The Experiential dimension by Xu (2015) states that “it encompasses all factors related to the intangible memory of the mind that is stored over the lifetime of individuals through collective

and private experiences.” The experiential dimension of context can be explored to induce humour in a speech.

### **Significance of Theories of Humour to the Study**

In the previous chapter, it was identified that effective public speaking among adolescents is usually inhibited by fear and anxiety. Miller (2011) opines that “public speaking is considered one of the greatest sources of fear and the highest causes of stress for most people, yet it is practically unavoidable over the course of one’s lifetime.”

Analysing the theories of humour carefully, it can be deduced that applying them to public speaking help to diffuse a tensed atmosphere of fear and anxiety. In effect, they create a friendly atmosphere for an effective and efficient delivery. Anyone, I believe, who masters the art of inculcating or embedding theories of humour in his or her public speaking is an excellent one. With this in mind, the adolescents could also be taught some these theories to later apply in their public presentations whenever they feel anxious about the subject matter or the audience.

### **2.3 REVIEW AND CRITIQUE OF RELATED STUDIES**

Generally, little research work has been done in the area of public speaking and the essence of adolescents acquiring this skill. The few will be reviewed below;

Raja (2017) gives a comprehensive analysis of the reasons behind the anxiety level in undergraduate students of a public speaking class, thus it answers the question “what factors are responsible for the fear of public speaking among the undergraduate students of a private sector business school?” and also proposes some profound ways for those who find themselves in this situation can adopt and enable them overcome this fear.

The research was performed on students of a public speaking class and from the study the findings showed that out of fifty (50) students who made up the sample for the study, 75% of the participants admitted their fear of public speaking while 95% of the participants agreed that factors such as proper counselling, instruction and coaching being easily accessible or provided for would help them in their bid to become effective public speakers. Considering the results are from undergraduate students a public speaking class to be precise, my curiosity is piqued as to what the results will be from students whom have not been exposed to a public speaking course.

One thing I find amazing about Raja's work is his hard work of reviewing other literature on similar studies and referencing all. Raja goes on to state that, per a research done by Akin and Kunzman (1974) in their study, participants were taught to control their anxiety by enabling them to gradually face an anxious situation. Consequently, those who prepare well prior to speaking in public are more likely to be confident and deliver a good presentation.

In a nutshell, Raja states that his research proves the existence of anxiety and fear with respect to public speaking and outlines some practices that may be employed to control it. Public Speaking is a learned skill and anxiety can be overcome by practicing and rehearsing before presentations or speeches. People who experience public speaking anxiety can perform as well as those who have a good command over public speaking.

Decastro (2020) states that it is a dire need to teach children public speaking since it will be a lifelong advantage for them; such as boosting their self-esteem, helping them to think critically and creatively, helps one to influence and persuade others more effectively and in addition it gives them the platform to inspire others and subsequently change the world.

He believes that the world has evolved and, in this era, opinions are formed about students and employees alike based on their communication skill. Many students leave school with impressive qualifications yet should they be tasked to do a spoken word, will fumble all over. He goes on to say that life is a 24-hour 365 day a year conversation because from school, to work, religious and social functions, even in our dreams we talk, which happens to be called something else, dreaming.

In his paper he expresses his amazement at the number of people who tend to ask questions during the Q&A segment of a presentation which is unfortunately a hand full out of a room full of people.

What could be responsible for this outcome? Is it that the audience did not understand what the speaker said or they do not have a response to a question posed by the speaker? He concludes in his paper that the audience are shy or are not well equipped with the public speaking skill that will push them to be more vocal. Taking into account that much of our success, happiness and even peace of mind at home, at work, at school stem from our engagement with others via spoken word.

Nonetheless, he goes on to say that the schools alone will not be able to handle all that is required to be done to ensure our children turn out as effective public speakers when they are older. Decastro (2020) asserts that the assistance of guardians and parents is very much needed as well, considering the fact that they spend more time with them on a regular day. He suggests that if the term 'public speaking' scares a child the guardian or parent find an alternative name to substitute with public speaking to ease the stress that comes along with the concept example the use self-confidence. He also admonishes them to make time to enquire about the events that took place during the child's day which is one of the many ways through which you can help them find, value and develop their voice such that they do not dread having to speak up in front of people.

Decastro (2020) also touches on the importance of one's ability to listen. He says, "Learning how to speak with confidence and impact will not be of any use to them at all unless they can listen

equally well”. Being able to listen effectively reflects greatly on your relationship with others because it helps you obtain information, influence, persuade and also negotiate. Listening is one skill a lot of people underrate because they feel it requires no effort to do and this is where they have the propensity to get it wrong since they may end up hearing the words the speaker is saying but the message that is being communicated will be lost on them. This research by Decastro is a good one in that not only does he identify problems with young people, but also suggests alternative ways in which their parents and teachers could help them with.

Hoyland (2017) in her paper titled ‘*Why Public Speaking should be taught in schools*’ presents the need for which everyone should have the skill of public speaking despite the field they belong to. More because, public speaking undeniably has become a skill greatly sought after. She says it should not be left to teachers and politicians alone to have and improve upon their public speaking but to every single person.

In her paper, Hoyland (2017) also indicates that Public speaking over the years has been a less focused area right from the foundations of the academic growth of children who grow into adults, which might be the source of the challenge most people experience in their bid to speak in public. Individuals pass out of school ready to enter into the professional world and struggle from the onset since they are unable to adequately express themselves not exempting their performance when they attend interview sessions.

She believes that public speaking should be elevated to the same level as reading and writing owing to her research, individuals who excel at all of these three tend to advance faster than one who excels at just reading and writing.

Hoyland concludes that public speaking should be taught to children when they are at their most responsive stages in their life because then they are more susceptible to developing this skill. This is vital in view of the fact that public speaking skill is one thing that they will need for life. A strength identified in Hoyland's write up is her stance on not limiting public speaking to only professionals, but advocating for it to be taught in schools for the youth to imbibe.

Another research conducted by Mercer N. et al (2014) talks about alumni of British "public schools" still controlling politics and many top professions. According to the authors, this is happening not only because these crops of people are well connected but oftentimes are very confident and fluent public speakers. Majority of these students had their skill developed through their school experience of debating societies, discussion groups and engaging in dialogues with their teachers.

The authors in their paper requests "on the basis of social equality, that all children be taught in school the spoken language skill that they need for educational progress, work and to enable them participate in democracy." According Mercer N. et al (2014, children who are taught these skills (oracy), perform better in math, science and reasoning tests. Yet skills in oracy will be more important for most people once they leave school than, for example, skills in long division. The government seems to be that "talk" does not need to be taught and that if children are talking they are not learning but there is little or no relationship with reality because employers are in search of people who are effective public communicators and team workers but a lot of applicants do not have this skill because they have not been taught. This depicts that introducing public speaking into the academic curriculum for young people will help shape them for same.

Martin (2015) in her article points out that Public speaking is an important life skill for both the youth and adults. Even if not on professional basis, everyone at a point in time gets to address a

group of people and therefore mastering the art of public speaking is of great importance and benefit to every individual. Considering going to a function and the one to give the vote of thanks has an emergency thus is unable to show up you are called upon impromptu to step in.

In her write up, Martin states some tips to consider when working with the youth to develop public speaking skill amongst which she talks about being in control of the nerves, making notes instead of scripting out which may result in reading and practicing speaking regularly.

Although not too wordy, Martin's work is precise. The youth are drawn into the picture and made aware through an example that they could be even called upon impromptu to address a group of people. Hence the need to acquire the skill of public speaking.

## **2.4 CONCLUSION ON HOW PREVIOUS LITERATURE WILL INFLUENCE THE RESEARCH**

Majority of the study was conducted in Europe hence limiting the generalisation of the context to the cultural context of Ghana. With this gap, the study will look outside Europe and concentrate mostly on Ghana. The existing literature also did not focus much on the problems adolescents face with public speaking and ways to overcome them. To close this gap, the study will focus mainly on adolescents, the problems they encounter with public speaking and proffer solutions.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter outlines the research method that was used in collecting and analysing data for the study. It gives details on population, sampling techniques, sample, data collection and data

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The descriptive quantitative approach was used for this study. Muijs (2010) mentions that “Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques.” That is to say, descriptive quantitative approach helps to collect quantifiable information for statistical analysis of the population sample.

This approach was chosen because of its numerous benefits. Some of these benefits as identified by Miller (2019) are; it eliminates the potential for bias within the data, researchers are able to ask open-ended questions whenever they feel it is expedient to collect some more information from the individuals involved in the study, it focuses on the purpose of a decision instead of the details and last but not the least, it allows for a broader study, involving a greater number of subjects, and enhancing the generalization of the results.

Questionnaires were used in acquiring information from the various participants for the quantitative part of the study. Questionnaires were administered via google forms because at the start of the study COVID-19 had restricted a lot of movements and that was the safest way get access to the youth and teachers of Victory Presbyterian Church and School.

### **3.2 RESEARCH POPULATION**

The population for this study was made up of all the youth of the Victory Presbyterian Church.

### **3.3 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

The study population concentrated on the Junior Youth of Victory Presbyterian Church because they fall within the age bracket of adolescents. Out of the population, ten (10) members of each sub group were sampled for the research. Therefore, the total participants to participate in this study were fifty (50). PCG (2019) informs us that “No sooner had they started the Youth Service than the Youth Service spread to other congregations and other parts of the country and was eventually accepted by Synod when the Youth Policy was adopted in 1983. The age limit was then changed from the prevailing fourteen to twenty-five years (14-25years) to twelve to eighteen years (12-18years).”

The researcher employed the purposive sampling technique to select the sample of students, with the premise that a purposive sampling being a non-probability means of sampling provides an opportunity to create generalizations from the data and also helps the researcher to target niche demographics to obtain specific data points. Lavrakas (2008) identifies the main objective of purposive sampling as “producing a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population. This is often accomplished by applying expert knowledge of the population to select in a nonrandom manner a sample of elements that represents a cross-section of the population.”

### **3.4 SOURCE OF DATA AND INSTRUMENTS**

Two main sources of data were used. These are;

**Primary data:** In collecting primary data, the youth of the Victory Presbyterian Church were given questionnaires via google forms to fill and submit. This they did and their responses were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

**Secondary data:** This focused on scholarly works and articles on related literature with the sources duly referenced. Content Analysis and Social Network Analysis played key roles here as they paid attention to the themes and audience from the information gathered respectively.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

In view of the ethics in conducting researches, the researcher sought the written consent of the authorities of the Victory Presbyterian Church to carry out this study, indicating the number of participants (youth) to be used as sample in the collection of the relevant data and methods to be used. When given the go ahead, the researcher administered the questionnaires to a selected few. This was to ensure that the instruments (questionnaires) were able to measure what they deemed to measure from the sampling population.

The sample of youth of the Victory Presbyterian Church on which the questionnaires were administered, provided answers on their general knowledge on public speaking, the hurdles encompassing public speaking, et al.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

Durcevic (2020) defines data analysis as “a process that relies on methods and techniques to taking raw data, mining for insights that are relevant to the business’s primary goals, and drilling down into this information to transform metrics, facts, and figures into initiatives for improvement.” This means that the purpose of Data Analysis is to extract useful information from data and taking the

decision based on it. Durcevic (2020) also mentions that two core methods for data analysis are; quantitative data analysis methods and data analysis methods in qualitative research.

The quantitative data gathered from the respondents via google forms were coded and analyzed using the version 20.0 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software programme. Descriptive statistics such as percentages and means were the main statistical instruments used for the analysis. The results were presented in the form of tables, graphs and charts.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers data presentation and analysis of the results of the study. The data analysis software used for this was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results have been presented in tables using the frequencies and percentages of the responses given by the respondents to the questions on the questionnaire. The demographic background of the respondents is presented first, followed by their responses to the questions on the questionnaire.

#### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF THE YOUTH OF VICTORY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Table 1. Gender of Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	23	46%
Female	27	54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2020

Critically observing Table 1 above, it can be seen that 54% which represents more than half of the total number of respondents are female whereas 46% which represents less than half of the total number of respondents are male. This means that majority of the respondents are female and the male constitute the minority.

**Table 2. Age Distribution of respondents**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
12	7	14%
13	5	10%
14	7	14%
15	10	20%
16	10	20%
17	8	16%
18	3	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2020

The data in Table 2 depicts that out of the 50 respondents, most of the youth are of either the age 15 or 16. Together they form 40% (that is, 20% each) of the various ages of the respondents followed closely by age 17 with 16%. The 12 and 14 age also had a fair share as they together clocked 28% of the total number of respondents. Lastly ages 18 and 13 which represent the minority as the table shows, had 6% and 10% respectively.

## 4.2 PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILL

**Table 3. Knowledge and participation in Public Speaking**

	Have you been involved in a public speaking before					
Have you heard of the term public speaking	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	30	78.95%	8	21.05%	38	76%
No	0	0 %	12	16%	12	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>78.95%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21.05%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2020

It is observed from Table 3 above that majority of the respondents constituting 76% have heard of the term public speaking whereas the minority which constitutes 24% of the total number of respondents have not heard of the term public speaking. Out of the total number of respondents who answered in the affirmative, a greater percentage of 78.95% have also been involved in public speaking before while a lesser percentage of 21.05% have not been involved in public speaking before.

**Table 4. Have you been involved in a public speaking before? Would you like to address a large group of people?**

Have you been involved in a public speaking before	Would you like to address a large group of people					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	20	40%	10	20%	30	60%
No	7	14%	13	26%	20	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researcher’s Field Study, 2020

The results in Table 4 show that out of the total number of respondents, a majority of 60% have been involved in public speaking before. On the other hand, a minority of 40% have never been involved in public speaking. Also, a greater percentage of 54% of these respondents would like to address a large group of people as compared to the lesser percentage of 46% who would not like to address a large group of people. This means that some respondents who have been involved in public speaking before would not like to address a large group of people and some respondents who have never been involved in public speaking would also like to address a large group of people.

**Table 5. Have you been involved in a public speaking before? Which group did you address?**

Have you been involved in a public speaking before	Which group did you address						<b>Total</b>	
	Church		School		Church and School			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	6	20%	18	60%	6	20%	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researcher’s Field Study, 2020

It is seen from Table 5 above that out of the total number of respondents who have been involved in public speaking, a greater percentage had their practical experience in School. This majority, constitutes 60%. The remainder of 40% is also even distributed between Church and School. This means that both the school and church create an opportunity for adolescents to learn and practice public speaking.

**Table 6. Would you like to address a large group of people? If No why?**

Would you like to address a large group of people	If No why						<b>Total</b>	
	Fear		Shyness		Mockery by friends			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	9	39.13%	12	52.17%	2	8.70%	<b>23</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>39.13%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>52.17%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8.70%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researcher’s Field Study, 2020

From Table 6 above, it is observed that the reasons for the total number of respondents who would not like to address a large group of people are fear, shyness and mockery by friends. Out of these three reasons, shyness took the greater part of 52.17% followed by fear which took 39.13%. The

least reason which is mockery by friends took 8.70%. This means that if these reasons are managed well, the respondents could have a change of mind to address a large group of people.

**Table 7. Have you been involved in a public speaking before? How would you rate yourself as a public speaker?**

Have you been involved in a public speaking before?	How would you rate yourself as a public speaker?						Total	
	Fair		Good		Excellent			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	15	50%	11	36.67%	4	13.33%	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2020

Critically observing Table 7 above, it is observed that the total number of respondents who have been involved in a public speaking before rated themselves fair, good and excellent. Out of these, the majority of 50% were rated as Fair, followed by 36.67% as Good and the least as Excellent at 13.33%. This means that we need to find out what accounts for the respondents' difficulty or challenge with public speaking and help them better it.

**Table 8. What makes public speaking difficult or challenging for the respondents**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Not taught as a subject in school	2	4%
Lack of vocabulary	3	6%
Fear	7	14%
Shyness	10	20%
Mockery by friends	2	4%
Anxiety	3	6%
Tension	6	12%
Stage fright	3	6%
No idea	14	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2020

It is observed from Table 8 above that the total number of respondents stated some factors that make public speaking difficult or challenging for them. These factors are; public speaking not being taught as a subject in school, lack of vocabulary, fear, shyness, mockery by friends, anxiety, tension and stage fright. The majority of respondents had no idea as to what makes public speaking difficult or challenging for them as they scored 28%. Quite a good number of these respondents also stated Shyness which follows at 20%. Next to Shyness is Fear at 14% and Tension also clocking a good percentage at 12%. The rest of the factors fall below 10%.

What this means is, the problems associated with public speaking among the adolescents are not hidden.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and also states the limitation of the study. Recommendations are also made for future research into areas which study was unable look at due to time constraints and resources.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The broad aim of the study was to identify the rate of effective public speaking skill among adolescents. The first objective of the study was to identify what public speaking is and the contributing factors to the lack of effective public speaking skill among adolescents. The second objective was to point out how majority of adolescents can acquire the skill of public speaking and participate in public speaking rather than shy away from it. The third objective was to outline the benefits of being able to demonstrate excellent public speaking skill in all facets of an adolescent's life and beyond the adolescent stage into adulthood.

Based on the study, it was revealed that the problems associated with public speaking among the adolescents are not unknown. They were spelt out and solutions must be provided. Fear, tension, shyness and anxiety were stated by some of the respondents as their difficulty. In addressing these difficulties, Gershman (2019) states that "One of the biggest mistakes we make is speaking to people as a group. We scan the room, trying to look at everyone at once and end up connecting with nobody." Gershman opines that while you speaking, it is best to make a sustained eye contact with one person. This is because it is less burdensome and more effective to have a series of

conversations with an individual than it is to speak to everyone at once. This in effect takes away fear, tension and anxiety.

Nordquist (2020) also gives a few tips on how manage fear and anxiety in public speaking. He categorises it in two main parts namely; managing before speaking and managing anxiety while speaking. In managing anxiety before speaking, Nordquist (2020) gives some useful tips and these are;

- Start planning and preparing your speech early.
- Choose a topic you care about.
- Become an expert on your topic.
- Research your audience.
- Practice your speech.
- Know your introduction and conclusion well

In managing anxiety while speaking, Nordquist (2020) again gives some useful tips and these are;

- Anticipate questions and objections, and develop solid responses.
- Use breathing techniques and tension-relieving exercises to reduce stress.
- Stop thinking about yourself and how you appear to the audience. Switch your thoughts to the audience and how your presentation can help them.
- Accept nervousness as natural, and do not try to counteract it with food, caffeine, drugs, or alcohol prior to the presentation.
- If all else fails and you start getting the shakes, pick out a friendly face in the audience and talk to that person.

Some respondents also mentioned that public speaking not being taught as a subject in school makes it difficult for them. With this challenge, adolescents are already presented with public

speaking opportunities in disguise. For example, debates in school and bible reading opportunities at church all enhance public speaking. Perhaps, schools could organize more debates and drama and Churches could also give more bible reading opportunities to these young ones.

### **5.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

A major limitation of the study was the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic which hit the entire world in diverse ways thereby restricting access to a larger population of the youth due to the protocols put in place to help prevent the spread. The study had to be focused on a little fraction of the youth of Victory Presbyterian Church which makes it difficult to generalize to other adolescents in Ghana. Additionally, a sample size of fifty (50) adolescents is not much to enable the research be rendered any form of external validity.

In addition to this, the mode of collecting data which was done with creation of a questionnaire via google forms made room for respondents to give responses that in their opinion is what I require also the researcher was unable to interview the youth which would have yielded more objective responses.

### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

During the study, it was realized that research on public speaking is not a lot as said earlier thus with respect to this, it is recommended that future research work looks at Public speaking on a gender basis and also the need for Public Speaking to be included in school's curriculum at the basic level of education.

### **5.5 CONCLUSION**

Public Speaking is without a doubt an essential skill for every adolescent. Despite the fact that it may be largely associated with professionals and the elderly, it is not solely reserved for them:

adolescents can be introduced to public speaking considering the inhibiting factors such as fear and anxiety that come with it, there are lot benefits they can gain by having an effective public speaking skill. There are a lot of people globally who are unable to effectively communicate as public speakers. In today's world where knowledge is on a rapid surge, everyone wants to be heard. Some take to social media such as YouTube and traditional media such as Television stations to address issues. This quest simply makes public speaking inevitable. Public speaking then, is undeniably a skill that contributes to the growth of people's self-confidence, better research skills and ability to advocate for a cause. If we cannot combat the ill effects that are associated with the low levels of public speaking skill among adolescents then we will continue to have young people emerging from school and yet struggling to enter or excel in the corporate setting because they are not well equipped with the required public speaking skill.

The study has shown that the challenges of public speaking such as fear and anxiety which adolescents face or are confronted with are surmountable. This means that adolescents need not shy away from public speaking, but rather embrace it with its benefits such as; boosting of confidence, critical thinking, improvement of communication skills both verbal and written, building of leadership skills, development of vocabulary and fluency, making one a better listener and creation of a career path.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear respondent, I am a Master of Arts student of the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) currently reading Public Relations. In partial fulfilment of the requirement of this degree, I am undertaking a study on “Public speaking skills among Adolescents”, using Victory Presbyterian Church School Youth as a case study. I would appreciate it if you could fill out this questionnaire.

Please note that all responses provided will be treated as confidential and solely used for academic purposes, under no circumstance will your identity, or responses be given out. Please note that, there are no right or wrong answers so kindly be candid about them and please do well to read the questions carefully.

Thank you.

1. Age .....
2. Gender
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
3. Have you heard of the term “public speaking”?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
4. If yes, what is public speaking? .....

(If No continue from Q7)

5. Have you had an opportunity to be involved in public speaking before?

- a. Yes
  - b. No
6. Which group did you address? .....
7. Would you like to address a large group of people?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
8. If Yes, why? .....
9. If No, why?
- a. Shyness
  - b. Fear
  - c. Mockery by friends
  - d. No reason
10. What do you think can be done to curb your response in Q 9? .....
11. Do you think there is a need for adolescents to acquire public speaking skills?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
12. How would you rate yourself as a public speaker?
- a. Excellent
  - b. Good
  - c. Fair
  - d. Poor
  - e. Very Poor
13. What are some of the things that account for your response in Q12?

.....  
14. What makes public speaking difficult or a challenge for you?  
.....

God bless you for participating in this survey.

Thank you.

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