



**The Role of Project Communication Management in  
improving project performance of building construction  
projects: A case study of Modcon Engineering PLC**

By

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A Research Project Work Submitted for the Partial Fulfillment of Master of Art  
Degree in Project Management/MAPM/

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ECONOMICS SCHOOL OF COMMERCE**

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

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**GRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM**  
**MASTER OF ARTS IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, declare that this research paper entitled “The Role of Project communication management in improving project performance of building construction projects: A case study of Modcon Engineering PLC” is submitted to the Partial Fulfillment of Master of Art Degree in Project management (MA). And it is my original work, and this work has not been previously formed as the basis for the award of any academic Degree or Diploma Program in this or any other institution. Any materials borrowed from other sources, whether published or unpublished have been properly cited and acknowledged in accordance with appropriate academic conventions.

**Declared by:**

Name: Meron Asrat

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that this project work, “The Role of Project communication management in improving project performance of building construction projects: A case study of Modcon Engineering PLC” undertaken by Meron Asrat for the Partial fulfillment of the award of Master’s degree in Project Management at Addis Ababa University School of Commerce, is an original work and not submitted earlier for any degree either at this Company or any other Company.

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Abdurezak Mohammed (PhD)

Research Project Advisor

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

CI	Construction Industry
CMP	Communications Management Plan
Comm.	Communication
GM	General Manager
Mgt.	Management
NGO	Non -Government Organization
PED	Planning and Evaluation Department
PLC	Private Limited Company
PMBok	Project Management Body of Knowledge
PMLC	Project Management Life Cycle
PPA	Public Procurement Agency
RBM	Results Based Management
S.C	Share Company
SE	Site Engineer
SOW	Statement of Work
OE	Office Engineer
OOPP	Objective Oriented Project Planning
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
Yr	Year

## **Abstract**

*This study was intended to describe the role of project communications management in improving performance of Modcon Engineering building projects. Data were collected by semi-structured and focus group discussions from respondents and validated with document analysis and analyzed qualitatively. The researcher observed that, there is a strong appreciation of the importance of project communication and its importance within the industry. Indeed, various levels and channels of communications have been established within the clients and consultants or consultants and contractors. In spite of that, there have been many hindrances to effective communication on construction projects in the company. These includes; poor leadership, unclear communication objectives, unclear channels of communication, ineffective reporting system, ineffective communication between the parties on the project, lack of well trained personnel and lack of professionals by the clients. The study discovered that project communications planning and implementation and using tools and techniques played an important role in improving the performance of projects. In contrast to this, lack of formal communication management plan is the findings. The research also established that poor communication had resulted in project delays, project cost overrun and project abandonment. Project communications was also shown to strongly affect the performance of professionals within the construction industry. At last, further study including improving project documentation, improving the use of project communications management system are the recommendations of the study.*

***Key words: project communications management, performance improvement, planning***

## **Chapter one**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In PMBOK guide (Newtown, 2013) a project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. The temporary nature of projects indicates that a project has a definite beginning and end. The end is reached when the project's objectives have been achieved or when the project is terminated because its objectives will not or cannot be met, or when the need for the project no longer exists.

All the various stages of construction rely on professionals transferring appropriate and relevant information to develop a buildable design that meets the client's requirements (Higgin and Jessop 1965 as cited in Emmitt & Gorse 2003). As the project unfolds and the design is realized, information in the form of drawings, specifications and construction methods must be communicated from one expert to another. In other words information must be transferred and understood so that the various aspects of the project can be assembled to realise the design (Affare, 2012).

For the purposes of this research, communication is defined as the exchange and flow of information and ideas from one person to another; it involves a sender transmitting an idea, information, or feeling to a receiver (U.S. Army, 1983).

According to Dr. Chitram on his book "Project Execution", Communication during the project implementation phase is an important requirement. Communication among and within groups is required to ensure safe and successful project execution. Communication generally takes place daily on a project site via a combination of methods, and in different forums, among manageable groups. Daily communication is required in response to the daily changes taking place on a project site during the execution stage. It is extremely important that all groups share information daily about changing work activities, hazards, visitors' presence, introducing and orienting new employees, and progress updates. Communication starts at the beginning of the workday and continues throughout the day as work proceeds.

According to (Newtown, 2017), the project management processes employed to meet project objectives. Project management processes are grouped in five Project Management Process Groups:

1. Initiating Process Group. The process(es) performed to define a new project or a new phase of an existing project by obtaining authorization to start the project or phase.
2. Planning Process Group. The process(es) required to establish the scope of the project, refine the objectives, and define the course of action required to attain the objectives that the project was undertaken to achieve.
3. Executing Process Group. The process(es) performed to complete the work defined in the project management plan to satisfy the project requirements.
4. Monitoring and Controlling Process Group. The process(es) required to track, review, and regulate the progress and performance of the project; identify any areas in which changes to the plan are required; and initiate the corresponding changes.
5. Closing Process Group. The process(es) performed to formally complete or close a project, phase, or contract.

These five Process Groups are independent of the application areas, (such as marketing, information services, or accounting) or industry focus (such as construction, aerospace, telecommunications). Individual processes in the Process Groups are often iterated prior to completing a phase or a project. The number of process iterations and interactions between processes varies based on the needs of the project.

Some of the more effective and common communication approaches on the work site include the following:

1. Leadership meetings
2. Toolbox and prejob meetings
3. Town hall-type meetings
4. Notices
5. E-mail and electronic communication
6. Combinations of all communication methods

The PMI (Project Management Institute) suggest a project manager should spend 90 per cent of their time communicating. Successful project management communication is about being there for everyone, being in touch with the real challenges of the project, understanding the real issues within the team who must deliver the project as well as understanding the issues of the sponsors who the team delivers the project for. Being present, visible and engaged with everyone is important – during the good times and the challenging times. Communication is not only about speaking to and hearing from people, it's about understanding the complete message.

Effective and efficient communication can change the fate of a project even if there are substantial risks in the beginning. A project manager can mitigate the risk by ensuring that all the stakeholders are very well aware of situation in advance and the ideas are flowing freely from the team. Sometimes the solutions to a problem can be very simple and can come from the youngest team members.

In Ethiopia, most researches have continued to determine within the construction industry many projects failed to exceed the expectations of clients. As a result, most research work on the industry have focused mainly on the influence of factors such as; cost overrun, health and safety, risk management, access to credit, performance improvement, etc. Beyond these, very little or no work has been done on the „softer“ factors such as construction communication and how it affects the construction industry in Ethiopia.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

The basic goal in any industry is to achieve the completion of a project within time and stipulated budget. It is the same with construction industry. The construction industry being one of the most complex, fragmented, schedule and resource driven industry, is always facing serious problems like low productivity, low quality, delay, cost overrun etc. (Memon et al., 2011).

According to this study preliminary discussion with employees of Modcon Engineering PLC, there were communication gaps between project sites and head office and also between client, consultant and head office of Modcon Engineering PLC which has resulted in unexpected loss to the firm in addition to losing the goodwill. This is due to not writing notification letter to the consulting firm timely, carelessness to notify the consulting firm a problem which may hinder the progress of work majorly, project sites daily reports notification problem. As a result, these problems cause the construction firm delay in project handover time, encounter unscheduled cost and even termination of contract by the client although it was cancelled by tripartite meeting.

As per the annual report of Modcon, (2009 E.C),submittal time for weekly and monthly reports were not met on almost all of the reports. Concerning quality of the report, even though pre-numbered formats are prepared and distributed to the project sites its usage is much less, Engineers prefer to use their own format than using the company format.

During focused group discussion, an extension of time and cost variance requested by the contractor was deducted by half due to failure to notify the consultant during the time of problem occurrence. If a simple formal letter, for example, notifying the problem of a boarder issue and failure to meet the deadline was written, the contractor would have gained additional Thirty days, but didn't write it on time and it was taken as half by the consulting firm (Modcon, time extension 2010 E.C). Even though communication seems like a simple process it has wide range of benefits to a company. Hence, the purpose of this study is to identify the role of Projects communication management in improving project performance in building construction projects in the case of Modcon Engineering PLC.

This study deals with the role of communication in a project organization. Furthermore, it investigates how Modcon project office communicates with internal and external environments. The findings of this study helps: To provide valuable information to Modcon

project office in how to manage communication internally and externally, Give awareness about project management, communication and way of communication in project organizations. Finally, it can also serve as a spring ball for other researchers and students who want to study further in the area of project management and communication in the projects.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The following are the main research questions:

- ❖ What is the role of projects communication management in improving projects' performance?
- ❖ Which project communication management method works best in improving projects performance?
- ❖ What are the gaps created due to lack of proper projects communication management?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.4.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to investigate the role of projects communication management in improving project performance in building construction projects: In the case of Modcon Engineering PLC

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- ❖ To identify the gap created due to lack of proper communication management, which has importance on project performance in Modcon Engineering PLC;
- ❖ To discover the consequences of poor communication management gap
- ❖ To determine which communication method works best in the company and strengthen it to promote projects performance improvement in Modcon Engineering PLC;

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study can be helpful for project sites to demonstrate the contribution of effective project management processes and techniques in terms of communication management so as to improve the practice of upcoming projects to be done in the Company. That is to attain the goals of the project within planned time, under the given budget and at agreed or targeted quality required of products efficiently and effectively without communication gap benefiting all the stakeholders (Client, consultant, contractor, subcontractors, suppliers and so on).

This study may help parties involved in the construction process to identify their communication gaps and that needs improvement. Moreover, the study will also help to understand the role of practicing project management process and applying it for further development. In addition, this paper work will serve as a future reference for researchers on the subject matter.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study will focus on Modcon Engineering PLC three undergoing projects located in Addis Ababa and one project located in Arbaminch town i.e.:

- Gofa area (a G+4 Office building on a 401m<sup>2</sup> area located near 300 meters from Gabriel round about to German round about, Opposite direction of Meseret Building, the building is currently 96% completed)
- ArogeKera area (a B+G+11Mixed-use building on a 568m<sup>2</sup> area located beside commercial printing, the building is currently 21% completed)and
- Wossen area (a G+9two similar apartment buildings on a 750m<sup>2</sup> area located in front of Wossen Michael Church, the buildings are currently 11% completed)
- Arba Minch Company (Chamo Campus) (G+5 Post graduate class room and staff office buildings, currently 45% completed)

The researcher had a plan of doing the research on class I building construction (BC) firms of Ethiopia, but the time and resource limitation couldn't allow it, and as a result will focus on the above specified company as a case study. This study is only concentrated on investigation of the role of project communication practices, through the generally accepted project management knowledge areas defined by PMBOK, which will enhance the management of projects.

## **1.7 Organization of the Study**

This study is organized in five chapters. The first chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, the organization of the study and limitation of the study. The second chapter presents the literature review. Chapter three deals with research design and methodology of the research. The fourth chapter contains analysis of the results. The fifth chapter contains conclusion and recommendations. Finally, references, appendices and other important documents are attached as in the last part of the research project.

## **1.8 Limitation of the Study**

A limitation of a research study identifies potential gaps or problems in the research. Due to project managers busy schedules it was hard to collect the questionnaires and to have a proper interview. Access to important communication related documents and working manuals was also difficult to find. Some respondents were hesitant to tell the truth, about their communication skills. Some of the employees are newly joined and they have a limited knowledge about the work process of the company under study. Last but not least the busy schedules of the clients, supervisors & SE & OE on project site even to respond to the questionnaires as per the time frame discussed.

## **Chapter two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Projects and Project Management**

A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. The temporary nature of projects indicates a definite beginning and end. Temporary does not necessarily mean a project has a short duration. A project's end is reached when the objectives have been achieved or when the project is terminated because its objectives will not or cannot be met, or when the need for the project no longer exists. The decision to terminate a project requires approval and authorization by an appropriate authority (Newtown, 2017). A project is a sequence of unique, complex, and connected activities that have one goal or purpose and that must be completed by a specific time, within budget, and according to specification (Wysocki, 2018). A project is within a program as an undertaking having a scheduled beginning and end, and that normally involves some primary purpose (Kerzner, 2003).

Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements. Project management is accomplished through the appropriate application and integration of the project management processes identified for the project (Kerzner, 2003). According to (Kerzner, 2003) Project management may now be defined as the process of achieving project objectives through the traditional organizational structure and over the specialties of the individuals concerned. Project management is applicable for any ad hoc (unique, one-time, one-of-a-kind) undertaking concerned with a specific end objective.

#### **2.2 Project performance improvement**

In project management literature, the outcome of a project is frequently conceived of in terms of success or failure although identifying just what constitutes these can be problematic. (Fowler and Walsh, 1999). There have been various attempts over the history of project management to define suitable criteria against which to define and measure project performance improvement.

Perhaps the most well recognized of these is the long established and widely used “iron triangle” of time, cost and quality (Atkinson, 1999). Ikal (2009) argues that although the definition of quality is potentially very broad in relation to the iron triangle, it is often restricted to meeting scope or functional and technical specifications. Several authors have suggested that meeting time, cost and quality specifications are not only relevant criteria; for example project management efficiency and effective project team functioning are also important Ikal (2009).

Improvement of project performance can be done through monitoring and controlling which includes “the processes of tracking, reviewing, and reporting the progress to meet the performance objectives defined in the project plan.” To monitor means to “collect project performance data with respect to a plan, produce performance measures, and report and disseminate performance information.” Control means “comparing actual performance with planned performance, analyzing variances, assessing trends to effect process improvements, evaluating possible alternatives, and recommending appropriate corrective action when needed.” A variance is “a quantifiable deviation, departure, or divergence away from a known baseline or expected value.” What all of this means is that a smart project manager keeps an eye on many things that can indicate how well the project is doing and is prepared to act if necessary to get the project back on track. The most difficult part of in improving project performance through monitoring and controlling is figuring out what metrics to keep, what to measure, and how to report the results to various decision makers as necessary.

Time dimension of assessing project improvement is the most common aspect brought out in the literature review. Chan (2012) found out that project management organizations with mature time management practices produce more successful projects than project management organizations with less mature time management practices. Project time is the absolute time that is calculated as the number of days/weeks from start on site to practical completion of the project. Speed of project implementation is the relative time (Chan, 2001).

Completion of the project within budget is another dimension that is used to measure project improvement at the end project success. Chan (2001) states that cost can be computed in the form of unit cost, percentage of net variation over final cost and so on. Projects often face cost overruns during the implementation phase; hence a proactive approach is essential for

monitoring project costs and detection of potential problems (Cheng et al, 2012). Related to cost aspect of measuring project success, is technical performance.

Quality achievement by projects is also another dimension of assessing project performance improvement and as a result success. The quality of projects and project information has a significant influence on project success (Raymond & Bergeron, 2008). Closely related to the quality and technical requirement dimensions is the scope. Project completion within scope is considered as one of the success factors. The project charter or statement of work requires the implementers to develop a scope of work that was achievable in a specified period and that contained achievable objectives and milestones (Bredillet, 2009).

Another important dimension in project performance improvement includes customer satisfaction (Dvir, 2005). A project that in the final analysis leads to customer satisfaction would be said to be successful. Evaluating the performance of project is beneficial to both the stakeholders by enabling them to appraise the services received and to project manager by helping them to improve their services (Besner & Hobbs, 2008).

Successful projects also contribute to company's success in long term in terms of gaining a competitive advantage; enhancing company's reputation; increasing the market share; and reaching specified revenue and profits (Besner & Hobbs, 2008). In short project performance improvement is same as project success and it can be defined on the basis of completion within scheduled time, completion within reasonable cost and within budget, quality achievement, meeting of technical requirement; project achieving, user satisfaction and finally achievement of organizational objectives.

### **2.3 Project Communications Management**

By definition, project communication management refers to the set of activities concerned with the generation, collection, presentation, distribution, and secure storage of information within a project and its environment. Project communication management is thus the backbone to effective decision making during the lifespan of a project. Since project management is one of those areas of management that cuts across many business units in an organization, the responsibilities of a project manager necessitate coordination of tasks and

resources that may be spread across various business units - most of which the project manager may have no direct control of. Thus project communication management becomes an essential and necessary skill-set for effective coordination of any project and all involved stakeholders. Ineffective project communication management may doom a project into failure (Mephyans-Robinson, 2010).

### **2.3.1 Distribution of project information**

Getting the right information to the right people at the right time and in a useful format is just as important as developing the information in the first place. Concerning distribution of project information, the most important considerations are the tools and technologies used to distribute that information. The challenge remains in ensuring that the information gets delivered to the right decision-maker or stakeholder in the right format at the right time regardless of access method or location. In the era of internet-speed, this challenge becomes even more magnified (Mnkandla, Ernest 2018).

Managing the “grape-vine,” “rumor-mill,” and extant informal information sources becomes a key issue within project communications management. According to Hanakawa (2004), the final product of a project can be greatly compromised by the way communication is done. For example, unplanned distribution of information could lead to communication overload (Tobak, 2010), resulting in sub-par productivity or poor quality outputs. The questions that come to surface concerning dissemination of project information are: What approaches have been proven to be most effective within the context of building construction? Are these approaches different when one contrasts one project to another? Likewise, the context, or environment within which a project is undertaken will have a huge impact on the project’s life and its success.

In summary, success in projects is all about the way communication is planned and implemented (Tech Republic, 2000). A lot has been said about a good project communications plan being key to project success (Mephyans-Robinson, 2010); the plan presumably includes a good selection of project communication tools and techniques. However, the area of project communication tools and techniques is not stagnant. It is dynamically impacted both by ever newer technologies, and by the context within which the project is implemented. When project managers and their teams plan project communication

management, it is very important for them to seriously consider the most preferred and convenient tools and techniques for communication. The use of tools which are not preferred by team members and stakeholders may cause unnecessary impediments to the project (Hodgkinson, 2009).

### **2.3.2 Communication process**

Although the communications process is typically undertaken after the communications plan has been documented, communications will take place during all phases of the project. This process therefore applies to all formal communications undertaken during the life of the project (Hodgkinson, 2009).

According to Saunders (2009), there's communication, and then there's (or should be) effective communication. Communication is the simple exchange of information between two or more parties. Basically there's:

- the sender of the message,
- the receiver of the message, and
- the message itself.

A communications management process is a method by which formal messages are identified, created, reviewed and communicated within a project. Clear, accurate and timely communication is critical to the success of any project, as miscommunication can result in increased project risk. Clear project communication therefore ensures that the correct stakeholders have the right information, at the right time, with which to make well-informed decisions Saunders (2009).

Various types of formal communication may be undertaken in a project. Examples are releasing regular project status or performance reports, communicating project risks, issues and changes, and summarizing project information in weekly newsletters. Regardless of the type of communication to be undertaken, the method for undertaking the communication will always remain the same Saunders (2009),:

- Identify the message content, audience, timing and format.
- Create the message to be sent.
- Review the message prior to distribution.

- Communicate the message to the recipients.

These four processes should be applied to any type of formal communication on the project, including the distribution of:

- regular project status reports;
- results of phase review meetings;
- quality review reports documented;
- minutes of all project team meetings;
- newsletters and other general communication items.

Without a formal communications management process in place, it will be difficult to ensure that project stakeholders receive the right information at the right time Saunders (2009).

**Identify message:** Communications management begins with the identification of the message content, audience, timing and format for approval and distribution to a particular project stakeholder group Saunders (2009).

**Identify message content:** First, a need for communication is identified. Anyone in the project can identify a communications need. However the project manager must agree that the need is real and a formal message should be distributed to the relevant stakeholders. The specific message content is then documented Saunders (2009). Examples of types of message content include:

- activity status or financial status information;
- deliverables or milestones status information;
- supplier performance and procurement status;
- risks, issues and changes identified.

**Identify message audience:** Next, the target audience are identified Saunders (2009).

Examples of target audiences include:

- project administration team;
- project review group;
- entire project team;
- all project stakeholders.

**Identify message timing:** At this point, the type of content to be distributed and the audience have been clearly specified. The next step is to identify the timing or frequency of the communications message. In some cases it may be necessary to have regular communications messages, such as weekly project status reports or monthly newsletters, whereas in other cases a one-off communication event may be satisfactory, such as the notification of a change in project office premises. In each case, the project manager will need to be satisfied that the regularity of the message is suitable, based on the message content and audience Saunders (2009).

**Identify message format:** Finally, the communication format is identified. A number of different types of formats are available including verbal presentations, written reports, letters and e-mails Saunders (2009).

The challenge to the project manager is to prevent, anticipate, or overcome such circumstances in order to complete the project scope on schedule, within budget, and to the customer's satisfaction. Good planning and communication are essential to prevent problems from occurring or to minimize their impact on the achievement of the project objective when they do occur. The project manager needs to be proactive in planning and communicating and provide leadership to the project team to accomplish the project objective Saunders (2009).

Ultimately, the responsibility of the project manager is to make sure the customer is satisfied. This goes beyond just completing the project scope within budget and on schedule or asking the customer at the end of the project if he or she is satisfied. It requires ongoing communication with the customer to keep the customer informed and to determine whether expectations have changed. Regularly scheduled meetings or progress reports, frequent phone discussions, and e-mail are examples of ways to accomplish such communications Saunders (2009).

Customer satisfaction means involving the customer as a partner in the successful outcome of the project through active participation during the project. The project manager must be aware of the degree of customer satisfaction throughout the project. By maintaining regular communication with the customer, the project manager demonstrates to the customer that he or she is genuinely concerned about the expectations of the customer; it also prevents unpleasant surprises later Saunders (2009).

Because projects involve the coordinated efforts of different units from within and outside the organization, the traditional vertical chain of command for authority and communication is not very effective. To get a project done, managers and workers in different units and at different levels need to associate directly with each other. In traditional organizations, communication and authority run vertically. In project organizations, formal lines of communication and authority are frequently bypassed and a horizontal hierarchy is created that supplements the vertical hierarchy. This horizontal hierarchy enables members of the project organization from different functional areas and outside organizations to communicate and work directly with each other as needed Saunders (2009).

## **2.4 Tools and Techniques in project communications**

A basic tool to structure project communication is Communications Management Plan (CMP), which should be prepared in the planning phase of the project. This plan documents how the project manager will manage and control communications. Such a plan is especially important in complex projects or programs as well as in engagements conducted within a consortium of partners. Generally, the more possible communication channels, the more careful and structured communication plan should be. For engagements conducted within small teams, there may be no need for a formalized plan, verbal arrangements on how to communicate can be sufficient. Communication plan needs to answer to following questions (Mulcahy 2015):

- What needs to be communicated?
- Who is the target of the communication?
- What is the purpose of communication [Why?]
- When communication should be issued? [Frequency]
- What is appropriate type/mode of communication?
- Who is responsible for issuing communication?

Usually communication plan should embrace several levels of project management: management meeting plan, team meeting plans, as well as programme/Steering Committee meeting plan. Below there is a practical example of a simple communication plan from a real project (Mulcahy 2015).

Type of meeting	Frequency	Participants	Outcome	Acceptance
Steering Committee	Ones a month [or if necessary]	Steering Committee (SC) members and invited project stakeholders	SC protocols	SC members
Project Status meeting	Ones a week	Project Manager [vendor team], Project Manager [client team], Teams leaders, other invited team members	Project status reports	Project Managers [vendor/client]
Project meetings	On an ongoing basis [according to project schedule]	Implementation teams leaders and team members	Meeting minutes	Team leaders

**Table 2.1** Example of a project communication plan (based on R. Mulcahy 2015).

Source: Mulcahy (2015)

## 2.5 Empirical Review

This part of the literature will present related articles and journals which are related to the research topic. Because of the fact that project communication is not given a due attention our country Ethiopia, it is difficult to find research undertaken on the subject of communications management in Ethiopia.

In a research undertaken in Croatia by Ksenija Čulo and Vladimir Skendrović (2010) civil Engineers from J.J.S. Company, communication is an essential process in the world of project management. It is difficult to master, but essential to make a good effort in achieving. Many times on troubled projects, project team members feel that if the communication had been better, the project would have run smoother. Therefore, communication is often listed as one of the most needed areas for improvement. To ensure the success of a project much information, including expectations, goals, needs, resources, status reports, budgets and purchase requests, needs to be communicated on a regular basis to all major stakeholders.

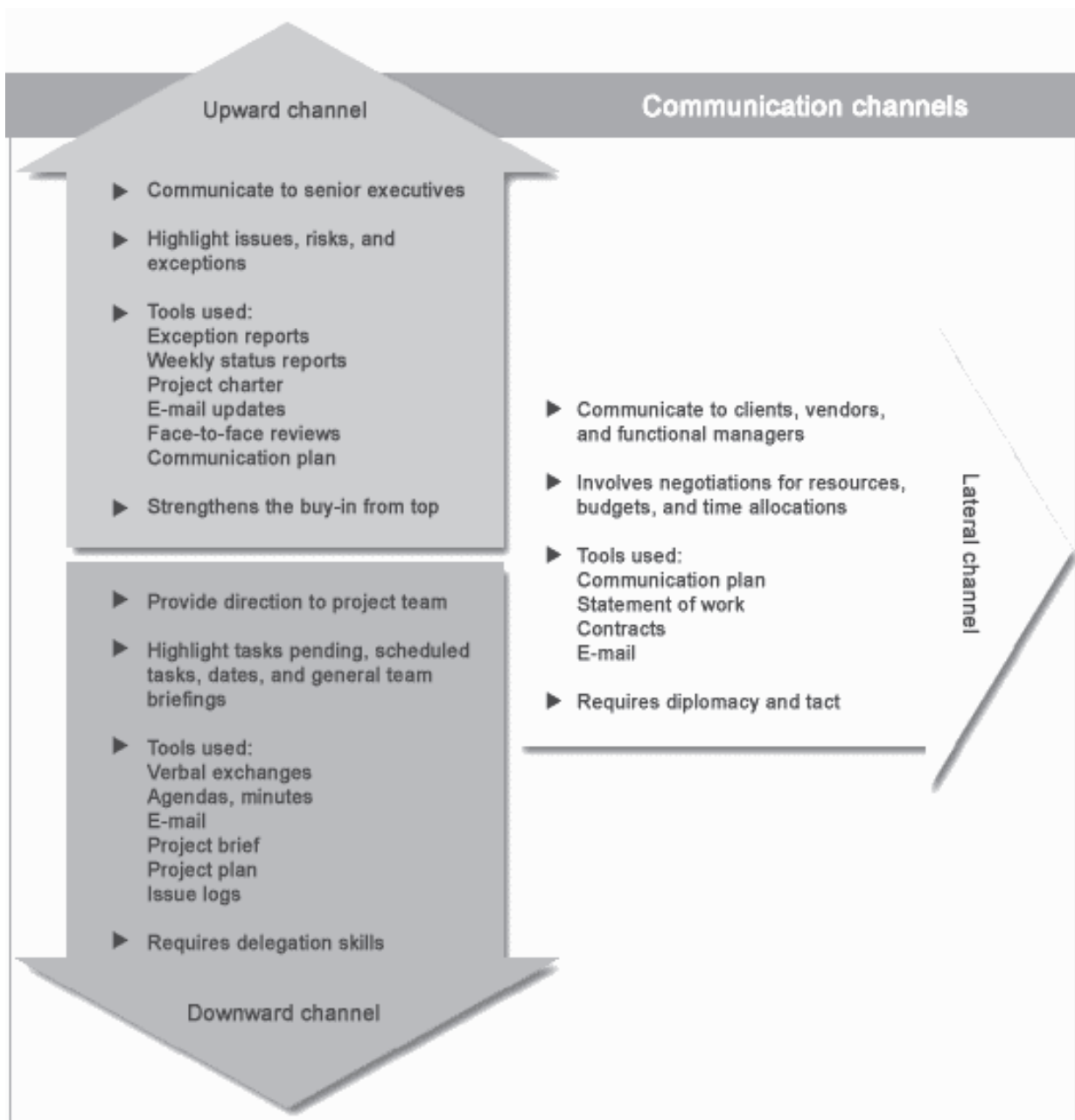
Project communication can often be more difficult due to challenges unique to project management. Many projects are short-term, and therefore project communication is temporary. It is truly critical for project managers to get the message across right the first

time to avoid failures in the communication process. Project managers communicate by using different mediums to convey a message. The important factors involve communicating how the project will be managed, including how information will flow into and out of the project. There should be also a clear and concise communication plan to address project responsibilities and the types of communication that will take place Ksenija Čulo and Vladimir Skendrović (2010).

To ensure the success of a project much information, including expectations, goals, needs, resources, status reports, budgets and purchase requests, needs to be communicated on a regular basis to all the major stakeholders. Effective project managers spend about 90% of their time communicating with team members and other project stakeholders, whether they are internal (at all organizational levels) or external to the organization (Ksenija Čulo, Vladimir Skendrović 2010).

In another study undertaken by Elsevier Ltd and IPMA (2009) in The Robert Gordon Company, UK, Department of Civil and Building Engineering considered communication as metaphorical pipeline along which information is transformed from one individual to another. Thomason (1988), defined “communication as the lifeblood of any system of human interaction as without it, no meaningful or coherent activity can take place”.

According to Ewa Sońta-Drączkowska (2015), several studies have already confirmed that communication in project management contributes to project success. In the recent study of Project Management Institute 2013 “The Essential Role of Communications” researchers concluded that more than the half of the money at risk in projects is due to poor or substandard communication. Ineffective communication was cited as the primary cause for one-third of the project failures reported as having a negative impact on the success of over the half of the respondents’ projects. The research also finds that effective communication leads to more successful projects and hence it allows organizations to become high performers (PMI 2013). Another example is a research case study of successful complex IT projects conducted by The British Computer Society in 2006. The examination of the key factors contributing to project success showed that the essential contributors to project success in complex IT project management are communication and risk management.



**Figure 2.2:** Three main communication channels

Source: KsenijaČulo, Vladimir Skendrović (2010)

**Table 2.1** Type of communication and situational context of the project (based on R. Mulcahy 2015).

Source: Mulcahy(2015)

<b>Communication</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Situation Examples</b>
Formal written	Complex problems, project management plans, project charter, communicating over long distances	* Making changes to project contract with the vendor * Updating project management plans.
Formal verbal	Presentations, speeches	* Conducting a bidder conference.
		* Presentations on project progress to company top management.
Informal written	Memos, e-mail, notes	* Making notes after a telephone conversation.
		* Scheduling a meeting.
Informal verbal	Meetings, conversations	* Informing the team member of his/her poor performance [fist notice].
		* Holding a project milestone party.

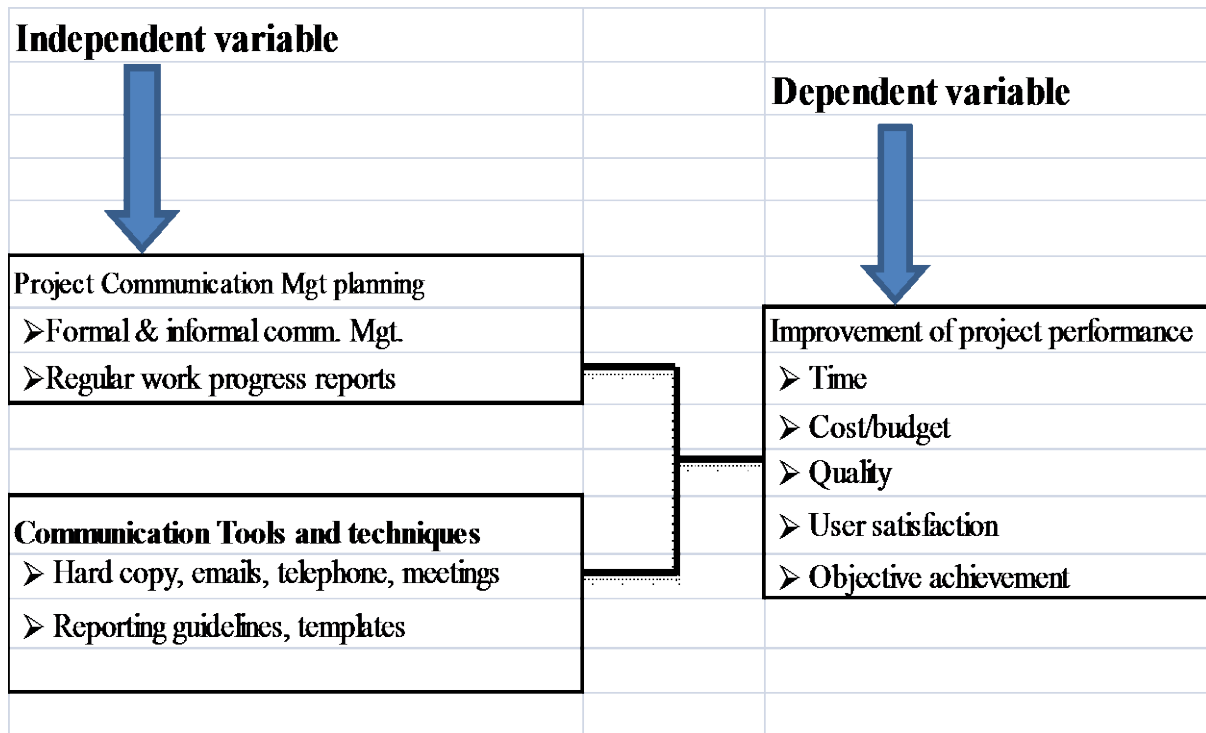
Similarly, Dvir et al. (2003) conducted a study on an empirical analysis of the relationship between project communication planning and project improvement (success). The data were collected using questionnaire and analyzed correlation methods. The result shows that there is a significant positive relationship between the amount of effort invested in defining the goals of the project and the functional requirements and technical specifications of the product on one hand, and project success on the other, especially in the eyes of the end-user.

According to the PMBOK guide (Institute, 2008), project communications management is defined as: "...the processes required to ensure timely and appropriate generation, collection, distribution, storage, retrieval, and ultimate disposition of project information."

The generation of project information is a spontaneous output of all the processes involved in carrying out the project work. Because of the tendency to focus on technical details within projects, other dimensions of information generation that are also pertinent for project success, such as economic and managerial dimensions, may be easily overlooked.

## 2.6 Conceptual framework

The figure below defines the conceptual framework of this study.



**Figure 2- 3: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Own source (2018)

The independent variables for this study were project communication management planning, communication tools and techniques. Dependent variable is factors which observed and measured to determine the effect of independent variables. The dependent variable was improvement of project performance. It is conceptualized that effective project communications planning, implementation & follow-up and tools and techniques will influence the project performance and result in project success.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines how the research was conducted. It focuses on the research design, target population, data collection tools and techniques, validity and reliability and ethical consideration used in this study.

#### **3.2 Back ground of the Organization**

Modcon Engineering PLC is a class one building construction company established to engage in the construction industry. In addition to the building construction works it has a license of water works Class III. Currently, the Company has eight major undergoing building construction projects located in Addis Ababa, Arbaminch and Debrebirhan with a total project cost of 702 million Ethiopian birr. It will upgrade to General Contractor soon to undertake road construction works as per its strategic plan (Modcon, 2018).

Modcon Engineering PLC is established in 2006 through the perpetual effort of its shareholders and staff members. The company has attained its developmental objective and is today registered and operates in Ethiopia.

Major information pertaining to legal issues is stated hereunder:

- Company Name: Modcon Engineering P.L.C.
- Location: Head Office : Bole Airport Area Around Rwanda Embassy , M&M building, 2nd Floor,
- License description: Service Giving, License No: 04/02/15105/98 Issued by: A.A City, Trade & Industry Bureau

#### **Legal licenses Description: Construction**

- Class: I
- License No: CON/4734 , Issued by: Ministry of works and Urban development
- Address Head Office Tel No.: or 251 912-184344  
251 118-60-81-59  
251 911-23-14-95
- Fax No: 251-01162-14-59 , P.O.Box 101522 , Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Email: yoniartg@gmail.com/ modcon21@gmail.com

- Website : [www.modconplc.com](http://www.modconplc.com)

**Description: Water Work Construction**

- Class: III
- License No: WWC/1967

Issued by: Ministry of water and energy

**3.3 Research Design**

Research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009).

So that an approach that is used in this research was a qualitative research approach. The core argument for qualitative research design is the problem under the study doesn't require any means of quantification or statistical procedure with small sample size. Descriptive research design is used to describe an event or phenomena as it exists at present and is appropriate when the study is concerned in specific predictions, narrative of facts and characteristics concerning individuals or situations (Kothari, 2003).

**3.4 Target Population**

Population refers to the entire group of people; event or organizations that a researcher wants to study. The target population for this study was 41. The study focused on projects located in Addis Ababa Gofa area, Sidist Kilo area, Ayat area building construction projects and Arba Minch Company project. The target population originated from the three projects participants of top management and of client, supervisor of consultant and project manager, office & site engineers of contractor. The study therefore targets on the population of 20 respondents.

**Table 3. 1: Target Population**

Sector	Position	Target population
client	Top management	3
consultant	Supervisor	3
contractor	Project manager	4
	Office & site Engineers	10
Source: Survey data, 2018		<b>Total</b>
		<b>20</b>

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques/Procedures**

According to Saunders (2009), purposeful or judgmental sampling often used when working with small samples such as in case study research and when you wish to select cases that are particularly informative. So that the sample of this research project, which are related to communication activities were selected using purposeful or judgmental sampling. Based on Saunders (2009), members sampled are key informants on the topic under investigation because people who actively involving in project management were selected. The advantage of the sampling method is that the participants have knowledge about the topic and they can give reliable information which will help to reach objectives of the study.

### **3.6 Data Collection Tools and Techniques**

Focus group discussion, questionnaire and interview will be used to collect information on communication of the building construction projects. It used for collecting the primary data from the top management of the organization, consultancy office and subcontractor office. The focus group discussion, questionnaire and interview question focused on communication planning, channels of communication and tools and techniques. The focus group discussion and interview question is open ended questions which allow collecting qualitative data.

#### **3.6.1 Interview**

Mulu(2017) describes this kind of data collection allows direct contact between interviewer and the interviewee which give better chance of understanding nonverbal explanations and also help to understand from tone of voice of the interviewee whether he/she told the reality or not. Based on Saunders et al (2009), this research conducted a semi structured interview that there were a list of questions covered based on the responsibility and role of the interviewee. Totally 15 people were respondents of the interview questions.

#### **3.6.2 Focused Group Discussion**

Saunders et al (2009), refers that focused group discussion provides information to great extent at a particular time due to the interactive discussion between participants chosen using non-probability sampling which are 'information rich' on the topic under study. Saunders also agrees on the precise number of participants depending upon the nature of the participants, the topic matter and the skill of the interviewer. Hence this research will conduct a one session focused group discussion with client, consultant and subcontractors. Totally 12 people were participants of the focus group discussion.

### **3.6.3 Document Analysis**

In addition to the primary data, documentary evidence such as policies, letters, reports, minutes of meetings, project communication means, faxes, published and unpublished documents, books, articles and other related resources will be used to supplement and triangulate the study.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability**

Creswell (2009) states that employing multiple data collection instruments help the researcher to combine strengthen and amend some of the inadequacies and for triangulation of the data.

In this study the data obtained from interview and FGD triangulated by document analysis; the key points of the interview also prepared as a word document and will be back to the interviewee for approval so that the researcher didn't misunderstand anything and finally discussed summary of the findings with key project officials.

### **3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Mulu(2017) refers qualitative data analysis allows describing a phenomena from different direction through holistic approach. The features of qualitative data indicate its diverse nature and there is no standardized procedure for analysis. Despite this, the collected data need be reduced, displayed in graphical, tabular percentage etc. and finally concluded or verified in the analysis process. Saunders, et al ( 2009) also explained the data analysis process in the form of summarizing (condensation) of meanings; categorization (grouping) of meanings; Structuring (ordering) of meanings using narrative are groups in analysis process.

The process of data collection can be conducted by semi-structured and open-ended interviews that can able to develop emergent phenomenon which is not thought before. Emergent ideas are very important in the interview process, since the communication of the project office is very wide especially the external communication of the project with its stakeholders and partners. Different data sources could be emerge during discussion with respondents (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Based on the pattern of the interviewer, the first interview increased the quality of the second interview, and so on. The quality of the collected information is also improved after the first interview takes place. The estimated time of each interview takes place on average from 20-40 minutes based on the response for

each questions. Of course, the first interview will be the base to the rest of the interviews in the aspect of quality and improvement.

Semi-structure interview is a kind of interview that involves the balance and openness of the questions. In such kind of interview, the respondents have full freedom to answer the question based on their personal understanding. In addition the same kind of question is answered by different respondents. However, semi-structured interview are time consuming since it could be analyzed. The other characteristics of semi-structured interview are flexibility of the questions, since it does not follow chronological order (Berg, 2004), this help me to raise new issues during the interview.

### **3.9 Ethical Consideration**

The researcher got an authorization from the target company (Modcon Engineering PLC) and a supporting letter received from Addis Ababa Company School of Commerce. All information obtained in this research will be strictly used for academic purposes and respondents will be assured of the confidentiality of information given where necessary.

## Chapter Four

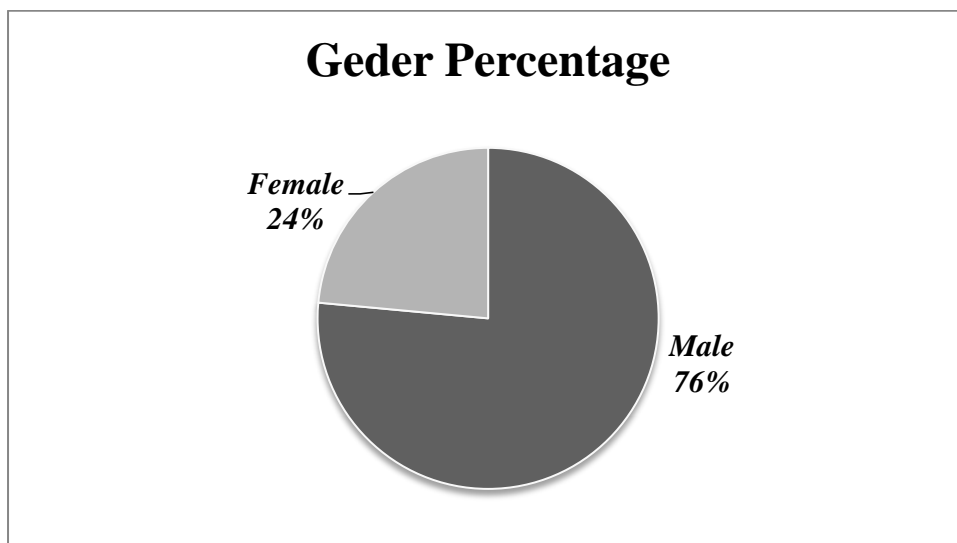
### Result and discussion

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter result and discussion are presented. The data collected were analyzed qualitatively using narrations and some results are presented using graphs and charts. The results are presented as follows.

#### 4.2 Interview Demographics

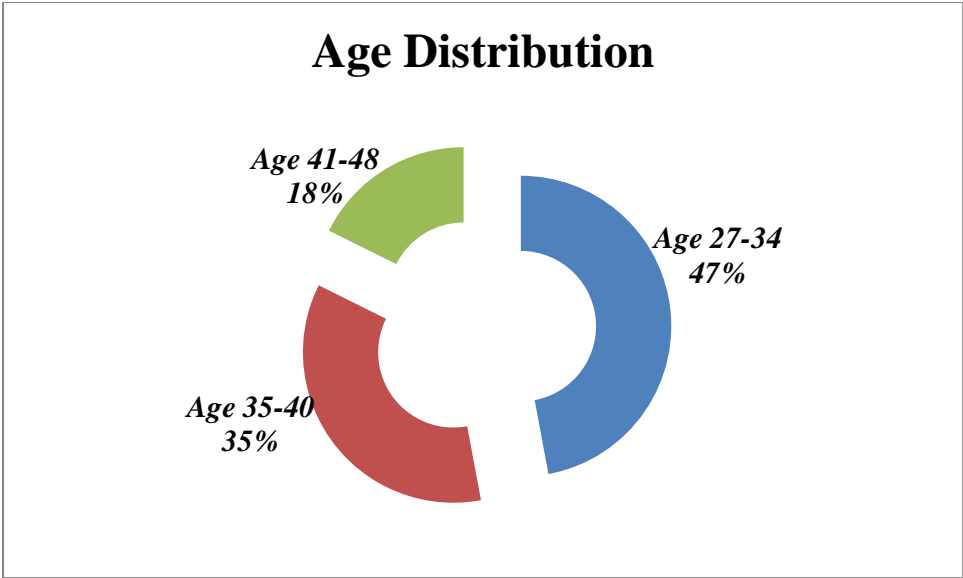
The study sought to find out the demographics of the interview participants which include gender, age, education level, and experience.



**Figure 4- 1: Interview Participant Gender Distribution**

Source: survey data, 2018

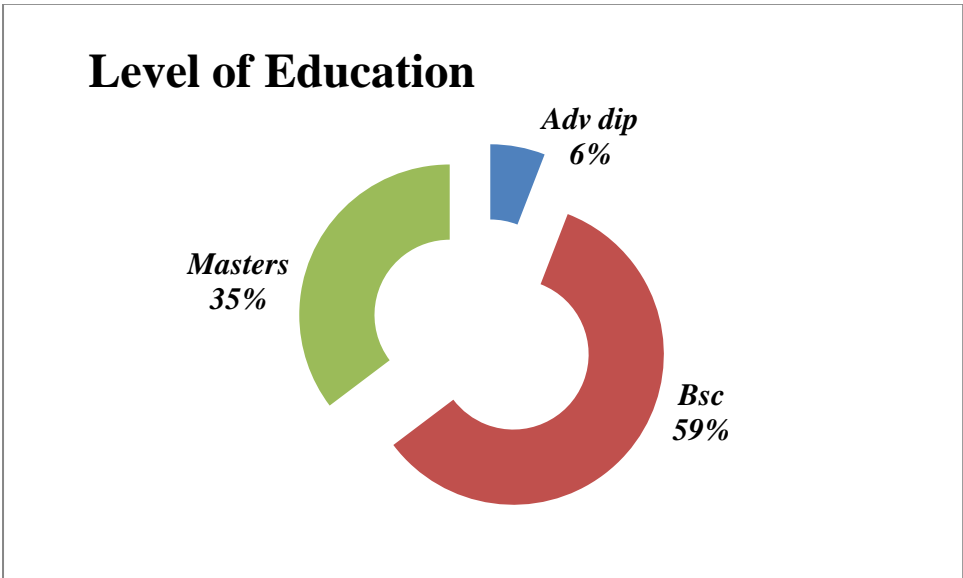
The sex distribution of interview participants were identified in order to see who involved more in the project communication works of the building construction. The finding indicates that the majority of the respondents were male (76%) and female respondents were (24%). This implies that there was more male participant than female in the project communication management activities of the project.



**Figure 4- 2: Interview Participant Age Distribution**

Source: survey data, 2018

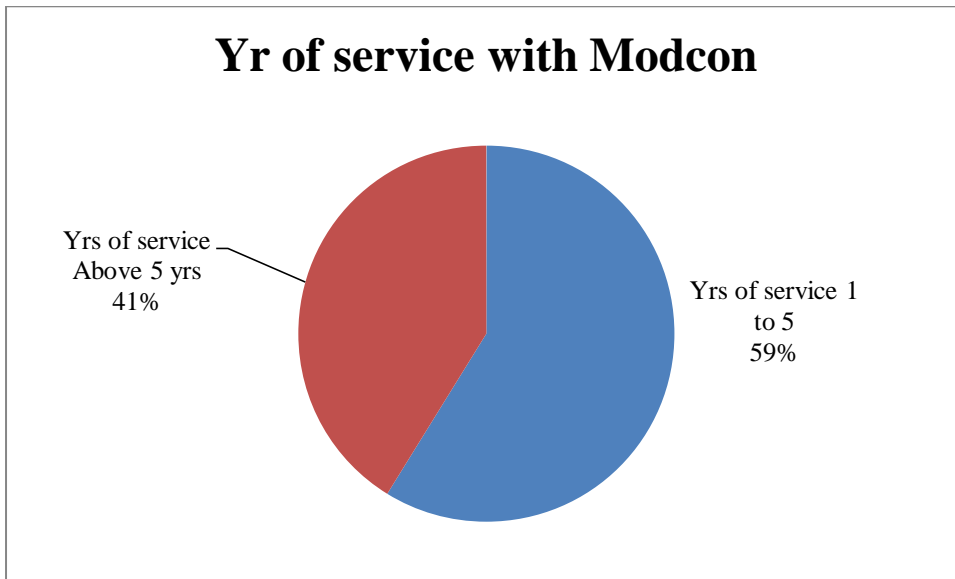
The summary of the data collected indicates that out of total respondents 47% were aged between 27-34, 35% were aged below 35-40 and 18% were aged above 41-48 years. The highest number of the respondents was within 27-34 years. These age groups have high potential for working capacity and this is an opportunity for the projects.



**Figure 4- 3: Interview Participant Education Level**

Source: survey data, 2018

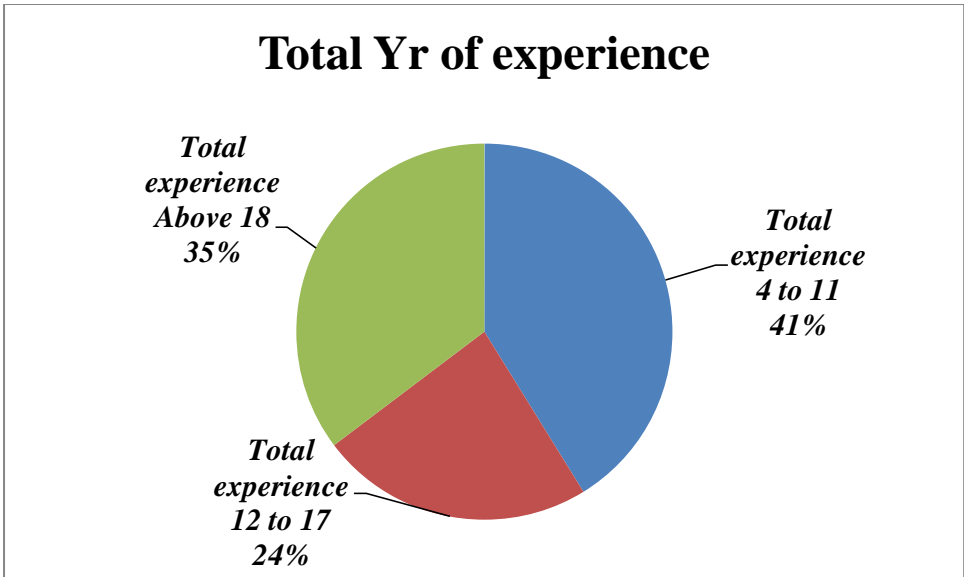
Out of total interview respondents 35% had master's degree, 59% had first degree and 6% had Advanced Diploma. Based on the respondents data 59% of the respondents education level is first degree which means the projects are organized by professionals.



**Figure 4- 4: Interview Participant Work Experience**

Source: survey data, 2018

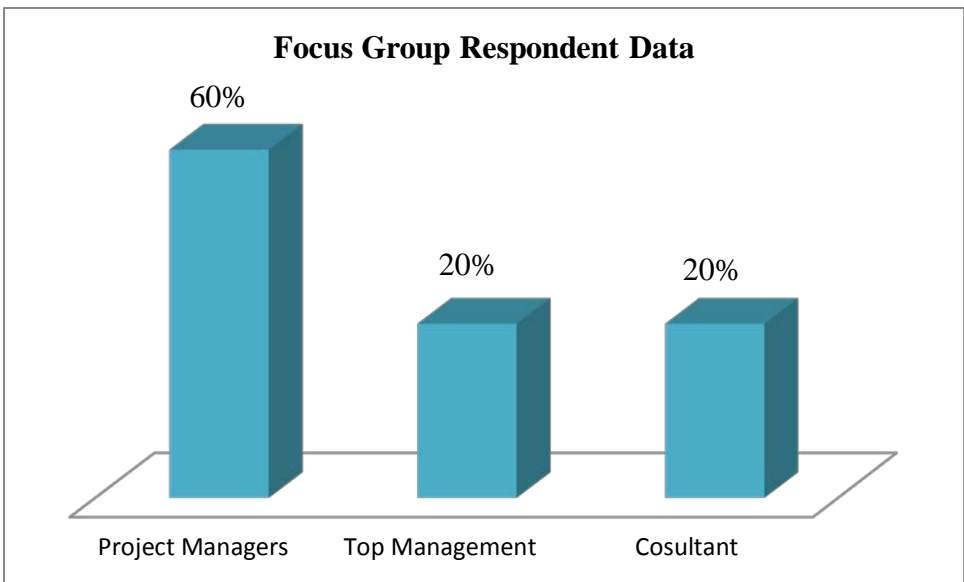
Regarding their years of work experience in/with Modcon out of total respondents 59% has below 5 years experience, 41% has above 5 years service experience. Based on the respondent data most of the respondents worked in the company below 5 years also the average year is 5.18 years. This implies that most of the workers do not know their company well compared to who worked more than 5 years. As a result, creates gap in communications management due to shortage of knowledge on how and what to communicate.



**Figure 4- 5: Interview Participant Total year of experience**

Source: survey data, 2018

As indicated in the Figure 4.5 out of the total respondents regarding their total years of work experience out of total respondents 41% has 4 to 11 years' experience, 24% has 12 to 17 years' experience and 35% has above 18 years' of experience. Based on the respondent data most of the respondents are not are highly experienced.



**Figure 4- 6: Focus Group Respondent Data**

Source: survey data, 2018

Beside the interview participant the focus group were 60% project managers, 20% top management, and 20% from consultant. During focused group discussion, an extension of time and cost variance requested by the contractor was deducted by half due to failure to notify the consultant during the time of problem occurrence. If a simple formal letter, for example, notifying the problem of a boarder issue and failure to meet the deadline was written, the contractor would have gained additional Thirty days, but didn't write it on time and it was taken as half by the consulting firm (Modcon, time extension 2010 E.C). Even though communication seems like a simple process it has wide range of benefits to a company. Hence, the purpose of this study is to identify the role of Projects communication management in improving project performance in building construction projects in the case of Modcon Engineering PLC.

#### **4.3 Project Communication Planning and implementation process**

The researcher finding from the document analysis, interview and focus group discussion respondents show that there were project communication plan in the case of the four building projects.

Construction Industry (CI) is an industry which is involved in the planning, execution and evaluation of all types of civil works. To achieve the set objectives defined by the client (i.e. delivery of product of desired quality at an acceptable price within the required time and safety), the project participants undertake planning (F.Lawrence Bennett PE, 2003).

Communication plan needs to answer to following questions R. Mulcahy (2015), as described on the literature review section of this study:

- What needs to be communicated?

As per the information gathered, all the four projects have a communication plan which is reviewed every week and monthly. The information to be communicated includes the type of meeting, frequency, and participants (please refer to figure 4.10 below).

- Who is the target of the communication?

As per the information gathered, the target of communication are all stakeholders, meaning the client (owner of the building), consulting firm and Modcon Engineering PLC site and

head office employees. Subcontractors and government bodies are also the target of the communication as deemed necessary.

- What is the purpose of communication [Why?]

As per the information gathered, the main purpose of communication is to stay in track, meaning to obtain and disseminate project information timely, to the right person at the right time.

- When communication should be issued? [Frequency]

As per the information gathered, most of the respondents replied as can be seen on the chart below.

- What is appropriate type/mode of communication?

As per the information gathered, most of the respondents replied that their means of communication majorly is hard copy(36%) followed by meetings(21%) and E-mail (18%) as can be seen on the chart below.

- Who is responsible for issuing communication?

As per the information gathered, most of the respondents replied the responsible person for issuing for communication is the Project Manager. Even though the head office takes its part concerning head office issues, concerning the project, the major responsibility is that of the Project Managers'.

## 4.4 Respondents

From the 15 respondents the 5 respondents response is presented as follows to show the result.

### Respondent 1

#### Background

Respondent one has been working in Modcon project office for three months, but I acquire very important information from the interviewee. The position of my respondent is head of communication of the project office beside office engineering works. As all the internal and external communication of the project office passes by this interviewee, it was very important to collect the communication trend of the office internally and externally.

#### Internal communication

For the questions regarding the role of internal communication in the project office and how they communicates internally, respondent one replied that ,internal communication is very important in the office in the way to coordinate and communicate with each other to keep informed each other for updating all employees in the project. In addition, she mentioned that the main focus of the communication is to coordinate activities in the office. Answering the way (channel) of communication, respondent one answered in the following:

*“We communicate by weekly meeting, telephone interview from who coordinates the communication process, meeting every Monday morning , email communication and finally we try to have from 2-3 weeks every year free from external meeting so, that we can discuss and communicate only internally”.*

And continued to explain the importance of internal communication to coordinate the activities of the project office as she said “the project office is very slim by having only 9 employees that coordinate the activities””. For the questions regarding high-tech technologies, she replied the following:

*“We use emails; to control the activities done by the project office”.*

The respondent continued to argue about the future communication of the project, she said that they have a future communication plan, but not in detail one. According to her, cooperation with another projects and partners are aimed to be long term oriented communication. As she explained, the main objective of communication in the office is to

encourage co-creation for those who want to be part of the project based on the logo of the project (heart).

For the questions regarding the communication system and focus of the communication, the respondent said that, the communication system focuses in coordination than advertising. She said “the *advertising will start next year when we start the sami eight season schedule*””. In addition, she highlight that the main focus of the communication is on external communication on project owners are the main target groups.

### **Communication plan**

In the response of how the communication plan looks like in the office, the respondent replied that, the communication plan of the office helps employees to be well informed and to know what everybody does. Moreover, she thinks that the communication structure is not based on top-bottom perspective; rather decisions are decided by dialogue followed by final consensus. She also mentioned positions of employees who work in the project to show the size of the project office. The leading group of the project organization are; the director, the head of administration, the head of communication and the artistic officer. In the questions regarding the content of the information that is forwarded to the audience, she replied that, they communicate about the project progress, finance. The communication took place every weekend continuously about the general progress of the project work, strength and weakness. Besides, she mentioned that, the artistic manger is the leader of the leading group, who held weekly meeting about the applications that comes in to the project and finally decides based on their criteria”s to be part of the program. She also mentioned that, the communication section has their own meetings that held press release, advertisement and communicating with social medias.

### **External communication**

In the reply of the question regarding the external communication, the respondent one answers that, the external communication of the project focuses on cost effective mechanisms. The communication usually goes to project owners, partners and donors. Moreover, she describes the focus and way of external communication as follows:

*“We use our money smartly, of course we conduct important meetings with stakeholders and partners, we have also weekly news letters that communicates with partners”*.

After asking about the channel of external communication, the respondent answers that, the main channels of the external communication are: website, newsletters, Facebook and finally the personal contact of the manager are the main source of communication. Regarding the

future oriented communication, she said that they have project leader that aims to promote the project in cooperating with head office of Modcon.

### **Formal and informal communication**

For the questions regarding formal and informal communication in external communication, respondent 1 suggests that, the formal communication can be expressed by reports. In her example, she mentioned that the All stakeholder has made a monetary report about the progress of the project based on the planning process to follow the process. Concerning the informal communication, she said that they had personal contact with All stakeholder of monetary policy. Moreover, they had an informal communication with a former project cities for exchange of experience and idea. On the other hand, she said that, the basic channel of formal communication is: meetings and email communication. She also confirmed that informal communication play an important role in the project by facilitating employee's part of the project. In regards to knowledge sharing, she said that knowledge sharing will be created either in formal and informal communication of the project and it contributes its role in the project communication process. She continued to interpret that every one of the project worker have to know, high knowledge what to do, ask and whom to communicate inside and outside the project

### **Verbal and in verbal communication**

Concerning the question about the role of formal and informal communication in the project, respondent one answers that, verbal communication contributes in the aspect that every member of the project can communicates both written and non-written (oral) communication in the office. In regards non-verbal communication, she said that, the pictures of the project, logos, symbol (that depicts everybody can be part of the heart). The heart by itself explains deep message that everyone can be part of the project and can communicate freely; it is very open symbol as it encourages co-creation. In the question of the size of the communication, she replied that, currently the office is using small size communication (committee meeting, telephone) for the moment, but they plans to use wide medias as of next year.

## **Respondent 2**

### **Background**

My second interviewee has been working in the project organization for one and half years, since the beginning of the project as the position of office engineer, communication officer and web manager. His duties and responsibilities include administering the communication of process of the office internally and externally along with the communication head.

### **Internal communication**

In the response of the questions regarding the role of internal communication, he replied that, the role of internal communication is very high; he replies in the following ways:

*“Internal communication can be work by different communication channels. Some of the channels that we use in the internal communication process are: email, telephone communication, daily physical communication and meeting every Monday that aims to evaluate the activities that has been done by the project”.*

Regarding the high-technologies involved in the communication process, he said that external hard disk is used to store documents to all member of the project. The objective of communication in the project office is to keep everyone informed about the work. The communication system of the project is based on different channels of communication, the main focus of the project is based on day-to day activities, besides he mentioned that they have a planned group that decides the up-coming communication strategies of the project office.

### **Communication plan**

Questions regarding the main aim of communication, as answered by the respondent that: every part of the project has responsible for the communication process. The communication process is also supported by three individuals that can advise on the overall progress of managing the project. In the reply of the questions, what kind of information that forwarded to the audience, the respondent replied that, most of the time the information are practical details, duties and responsibilities. It is also confirmed that the communication is continues not rested in a single period. In the response of the question regarding the responsible body of the communication, he replied that the responsible body is the communication head; however everyone is took place in the responsibility.

### **External communication**

In the response of questions regarding external communication, he said that the external communication of the office is based on the social networking channels of Facebook and Telegram that can communicate the external forces. Besides, the main channels of communication that are involved in the project are: phone calls, emails and meetings. For the questions regarding the future oriented communication, the respondent replied that, currently the office want to use social medias like Facebook and telegram, but for the future the importance of video (digital communication) will be very important. The future communication aims to communicate by increasing the social medias and video to highly advertising in the futures.

### **Formal and Informal communication**

For the questions regarding the role of formal and informal communication, he wants to skip the questions because he doesn't know what to say to the answer. In the response of the question if informal communication is creates common understanding among each other, the respondent's replies that, all the networks and informal meetings that can be either outside or inside the project is very important in creating common attitudes towards something. In the questions regarding knowledge sharing, he replied that, knowledge sharing will be created by communication internally and externally. He said that:

*"...Since everyone has their own views on the project of Modcon Engineering 2018 projects, these ideas are facts that everyone needs to share and experience on it. The expectation of the project office is to let people understands about the objective of the program that can be achieved by sharing ideas in different ways".*

### **Verbal and non-verbal communication**

For the questions about the role of verbal and non-verbal communication in the projects, the respondent replied that, both verbal and non-verbal communication is very important in the projects. He continually explained that, the verbal communication of the project is usually communicated by the artistic director, which is a good actor to conduct communication on the stage for his verbal skills. On the other hand, non-verbal communication can usually expressed by the welcome greeting (Body activity) for many peoples who want to know about the project. In the last questions regarding the type of medias involved in the communication process, he said that they haven't used TV or radio advertising yet except couple of days in the beginning process. Instead, they use newspaper advertising; editorial

advertising, meetings and lower level communication are the most important ways of contact so far.

### **Respondent 3**

#### **Background**

My third interview has been working in the project office since 2011. His position in the project is project coordinator of Modcon Engineering. He is the overall responsible person of the whole project. Previously, he was a site engineer in Modcon Engineering administration which was responsible for site organization of projects.

#### **Internal communication**

In the questions related to the role of project communication and how to communicate internally, respondent three replied that, the main objective of communication is to know the duties and how the responsibility of individual's feet's in the overall work. According to respondent three, the channel of communication internally and externally that is used in the project is sometimes the same. According to him, the way of internal communication is: meetings of the whole members every monday, physical meeting, email communication, text message, website updates and newsletters. In addition, the project has a database that is connected to everybody including the stakeholders that can able them to access the documents shared by the members. Regarding to the high technologies involved in the communication process, the respondent replied that: Sharepoint and different software's that facilitate the work has been utilized by the project. The objective of internal communication is to update each other in the project; on the other hand the external communication focuses on disclosing general information.

For the question regarding the content of information that forwarded from the project office, he replied that it depends based on the stakeholders; it is different to different stakeholders. It could be: budget questions to committee, financing, programs and different activities. The communication took place both on regular basis like newsletter and when needed. The responsible body for all communication process is the head of communication section, the key project of opera house has also be part of the communication section of the office.

### **External communication**

Regarding the questions about external communication, respondent three said that, the communication strategy is designed by the communication section that guides how to work with channels and contents. The means of external communication are by phone and personal meeting. Concerning questions, weather the project is long term or not? The respondent said the following statement:

*“The communication strategy and plan of Modcon Engineering 2018 project designed to take place in long term objective , because all the programs are designed in the long term thinking.. What it will happen in 2019, 2020, and 2021, is the indication of its future orientedness. Therefore we make a priority of projects”*

### **Formal and informal communication**

In the question regarding, the role of formal and informal communication, respondent three said; all informal information is part of the project by consolidating the information source of employees. The information can be shared in lunch meeting, coffee break; after work meeting played an important role in the process to updates each other. When the respondent replied about informal communication he said the following statement:

*“ We try to facilitate the flow of internal communication in the office among employees. The way we organized the office is simple for everyone can hear and part of the discussion. For example, when I talk by telephone everyone can hear and take part of the discussion, since we don’t have private rooms and vice- versa”.*

Regarding the questions, if knowledge sharing can be created by either formal or informal communication, respondent three said that, knowledge sharing could be created by either formal or informal communication, especially 90% of communication is non-verbal communication, which could be a building block for knowledge creation.

### **Verbal and non-verbal communication**

Regarding the questions about verbal and non-verbal communication, respondent three said that informal communication is normally verbal communication. Informal communication in the way you describe in formal organization be expressed as the value the oil for machinery. Generally, formal communication can combine by mail and SMS, calendar information. The non-verbal communication is part of the external or internal communication that can be sometimes expressed by body language. Regarding the question about the type of the medias that used in the office, he said that, the communication of the project looks informal inside

the organization and more formal outside the organization which can be communicated via: web, Facebook, Telegram, newsletter, mailing list are the main channels. In addition to that, the project communicates with its stakeholders by physical meeting when it is necessary.

#### **Respondent 4**

##### **Background**

My fourth respondent has been working in the project since 2006, starting from the first construction of the bid. His position in the project is Deputy general Manager, which is equivalent to GM. This employee plays an important role in the verbal communication of inside and outside the projects.

##### **Internal communication**

In the question regarding the role of internal communication in the project, respondent four replied that the difficulties of the project is to keep and maintain study course of the project because there are many values that add from outside the project, to adjust the project and informing all members of the project by using accurate information. He continued to argue that, since the project has only nine employees it is very important to maintain internal communication as the project has political dimensions and things are changed from time to time. Regarding the way of communication (channel) he said that, regular weekly based meeting, email correspondence, walking inside offices and newsletters that communicate the members are the basic ones.

In the answer of the question, if they have high-technology that facilitates the communication process, he replied that project database is used in the project that documents all files that are used in the project plan. In the answer of the questions regarding the objectives of internal communication, he mentions the following response:

*“ ..To keep up the pace and to work with the idea of co-creation and a level of participation from team members, so that everyone can communicate in the project”. We believe communication plays a key role internally and externally to speed-up our day-to-day activities.*

Answering the question about how the communication system looks like, he said that the system is based on physical meetings, small unit meeting which is based on weekly basis. He continually argued that, the internal communication of the office includes the communication of the municipality as they are part of the project. The focus of the project is based on how to create a common space for everybody; the main focus of the communication strategies of the

office is external communication since everyone inside the project has good knowledge about the project, however externally the awareness is very poor.

### **Communication plan**

In the answers of the question regarding the content of the communication, he answered that it depends based on the kind of information. He explained further that the content of information that is communicated to the public, stakeholders, municipality and administrators of the region depends based on their interests. However the main contents are resource and project. The communication is directed when it is needed and on continuous basis. In the answer of the responsible body of communication, it answered that all the communication process is directed by the project head.

### **External communication**

In the answers to the questions how the external communication looks like, he replied that the external communication will be delivered by newsletters, advertisement, glass house activities, social communication, meeting groups and social medias. The channel of communication that is used in the external communication is: different social medias, web, newsletters, national and international conferences. In the answer, regarding future communication plan, he said the following:

*“ . . . I think we have to communicate together with the municipality ,because the municipality has a section that works with communication and to have that unit united with our communication strategy will be the best source of communication for better effective communication....”.*

### **Formal and informal communication**

When respondent four answers questions about the role of formal and informal communication in the project, he explains that formal communication is very important and main source of communication. The informal communication is the regular day to day, mouth to mouth explanation of the project. He further argued that informal communication is very important for the aspect that it will be easy to carry or ambassadors that better communicate the project informally.

*“Many people externally believe that we have to solve the problems of the society when we say that, we will support all the stakeholders who wants to do a job. Informal communication*

*creates common attitude towards something, I believe the communication within the office is not big since we are very small organization”.*

The informal knowledge within the office is existing and that is the best track to communicate in the project. He also highlight that the role of formal communication might not be highly important in a small organization. Based on the argument of the respondent, verbal communication and non-verbal contributes a lot in communicating the project outside and inside the project. In is example, he mention that the verbal communication that usually applied in the project is by physical presentation about the project. Answering the final question about the tools of communication used in the project, the respondent said that most of the media that are used in the project are: regular news, newspaper and sometimes working with emails.

#### **Respondent 5**

My last respondent is chosen from the Top management from the consultant side to look what the external communication loos like among the stakeholders. The respondent is professor in the department of ethnography. Even though, it would be quite enough to look the external communication of the project from the internal employees of the project, I want to add one stakeholder of the project in order to balance the information from both parties.

Regarding the questions on the way of communication with the cultural office, he replied that the most common mean of communication is personal meetings, seminars and email communication about some issues of the project.

He further explains that *“if the company has ideas what the company could do with in the projects, we held different communication means in order to discuss the implementation process”*. According to respondent five, the main objective of the cultural office and Modcon Engineering is to establish the company as important actor in the project, specifically how to coordinate activities that focus in the company. Besides the company has the task of doing critical research culture in Modcon Engineering and to analyze the project.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

#### **5.1 Summary of the Major Findings**

*This chapter analyzes the previous presented results in compatible way with the theories in the second chapter in order to answer the research question and to look the internal and external communication of the project office. The interpretation is made based on the empirical results, the presentation has 4 important parts; communication theories, communication plan, formal and non-formal communication, knowledge sharing & verbal and non-verbal communication.*

Results from the previous chapter are interpreted with the help of the theoretical framework. In order to remind the reader I have to discuss the main parts of the theory shortly, I summarized the theories as follows. a) communication theories b) communication system c) communication plan d) formal and informal communication e) knowledge sharing f) verbal and non-verbal communication. The analysis of the interview will be presented in the aspects of the theories that have been discussed in the previous chapters. The theories are built in the way to answer the research question that is the way how the project office communicates internally and externally.

Accordingly the basic question was to identify the role of project communication in improving project performance. The study identified that the company does undertake a communication plan, clearly sets the goals and objectives, all the work of the project defined, the duration of project estimated, the financial resource estimated, the activities of the project were sequential and activities were scheduled and approved by the top managements. Upward and down ward communications undertaken but, communications concerning the policy, procedure, manuals, work instructions, strategic plan and standards lacks proper communication to the employees of the company.

In relation to project improvement, the study identified that there were close project monitoring throughout project life cycle. There were process/activity and financial monitoring. In addition to this, they frequently entertain cost and schedule deviation due to increments of material cost and clients' change requests. Additionally, the researcher also identified that, progress reports sent in a regular basis, meetings undertaken with minutes for meetings undertaken with client and supervision but minutes lack for internal meetings

(within Modcon project staff), quality of works checked in a scheduled interval, progress review meetings undertaken. However, newsletters concerning the company or the projects were not prepared.

Furthermore, the researcher identified that there was no plan regarding conflict management. If conflicts do occur they were entertained in a traditional way. The project documentations were in a well-organized manner.

## **5.2 Communication theories**

In the discussion of (Müller & Turner, 2010) communications play an important role in for the success of any projects. In any successful project where project management appeared to be done, the capabilities of communication are the main factor for the project success. In addition, communication is very important in the case of medium complexity, maintenance project and innovation process. The authors further explained communication as “lively communicator addresses others and win support, then the communication inspire staff and audience and accessibility”. From the interview, I noticed that all the respondents of the project believes that communication is an important tool for the interaction of the project with the external public and among the inside project.

All the interviewees believe that communication can fasten coordination of activities ether internal and external the project. Others mentioned that communication is very crucial since the project employees are very small in order to update each other. In the argument of (Mazzie, 2010) internal communication aims to information exchange, targeting messages, delivering communication, targeting messages and educating the workers to share information about their companies. The analysis of the interview is also support the above theory, all interviewees respond that internal communication is the basis for the effectiveness of external communication. They also argued that they have a weekly basis meeting before they start their job in the beginning of the week to develop internal communication and made things clear for the employees. Respondent one explains the role of internal communication in a way to cooperate, coordinate and to keep each other duties and responsibilities in the office.

Cromity (2011) argued, the communication that is made internally can be in the form of meetings, reports and different coordination. This argument is further bolstered by (David, 2011). He highlights, internal communication is vital for the proper functioning of the

company. The communication that is made internally can be in the form of meetings, reports and different coordination activities. The results of the interview support the argument of Cromity (2011). For the question asked about the way of internal communication (channel) in the project, the respondents believe that the main way of communication in the project is conducted by weekly meeting, daily personal meeting (physical meeting), SMS, website updates and weekly newsletter.

In addition to that, results shows that employees will be free from work to discuss and communicate internally, the project is also having 2 hours meeting every Monday that evaluate and discuss about the overall progress of the project activity. Moreover, respondent three mentioned that they have a database that can able to communicate to every internal employee by accessing the documents and files by easy accessibility. The artistic manager of the project stress that one of the way of communication is walking inside the office to deal about what is to work and how to work activities, he also argues that, even if an employee miss a meeting, he can communicate by sending the discussion protocols by email correspondence in order to keep up with the rest of employees.

The findings of the research seems confirming with the observation of (Zhao & Rosson, 2009) modern communication pattern has been influenced by the emergence of computer-mediated communication technologies (CMC). In fact, for the questions if there are modern technology to manage the project, all the respondents replied that they have project database to store the project and to communicate with all employees. Although, all of them agree that they have a database to share the documents, they express in different means.

Respondent one replied that the municipality database is used to share documents by accessing the passwords. On the other hand, respondent three answer that; shared server is the main resource to share documents in the project. It has been discussed by Müller & Turner, (2010) about mutual exchange of information for exchange and finding the right level of information for communication, the results of the interview similarly shows the same findings. When they answer question regarding the aim of communication, three of the respondents answers the aim of communication in the office is to keep everyone informed and updated themselves about what to do in the office. One of the respondents suggests the main aim is to encourage co-creation for everybody who wants to be part of the project. One of the different results for the same question was from the stakeholder (Modcon Engineering) that mentioned the main of external communication is to establish Modcon Engineering as an

important actor in the cultural office by planning and organization important events that can magnify the cultural capital project.

The communication system is viewed differently by the respondents. According to respondent one communication system of the project is not developed much until the coming year, where they expand it aggressively, whereas based on the third and fourth respondent, the communication system of the office is based on creating common space for everyone. According to the argument of (Johannessen, 2012) system of communication is a combination of management, social, economic and cultural communication (model of communication capabilities). From the empirical observation, I figure out that, all the respondents have different views on the model of communication capability. Accordingly, respondent one believed that the communication of the office focused on external communication, whereas the fourth respondent believe that the focus of information depends on the contents based on the need among stakeholders, the municipality and the public at large. The rest of the interviewees belong to the above two kind of trends.

### **5.3 Communication plan**

In my review of literature, it has been discussed that (Klein, 1996) establishing communication infrastructure is very important in any projects for the right flow of information; the most common of means of communication are progress reporting, meeting and project portal. In my results regarding the final receiver of the information during the communication, I found out that three of them said to be the sponsors (external communication). The fourth respondent said that it will depend based on the information; it could be to the stakeholders, sponsors and members of the municipality. Regarding the questions about the content of the information forwards, the empirical results confirm the theoretical part.

Respondent four and one suggest that, the contents are resources, project plans, project progress and finance issues. On the other hand, respondent three said that the content of information is practical details (Duties and responsibilities). Two of my respondents, believe that the communication of the project office is continuous and progressive. The fourth and the third respondents suggest that the communication took place both when needed and in continuous manner. In the final part of the communication plan, it has been discovered by all respondents that the responsible body of the communication process is the communication head of the project.

It was argued by (Mazzei, 2010) about the importance of integration between internal and external communication; it is impossible to isolate the flow of internal communication from external communication. The empirical analysis shows that the project office uses almost the same kind of channel internally and externally. In general the response on the role of external communication shows that, the project office has designed communication strategy that facilitates the communication process either internal or externally which led by the communication head.

The results of the interview about the way of communication (channel) also support the theoretical part. The first interviewed believes the external communication is made by the direct contact of artistic director and program group with stakeholders, the second and third interviewer believes that the way of external communication can be made social medias like Facebook, Telegram , digital phone and physical meeting are some of the main communication ways. The fifth respondent explains in more details about the external communication in detail since it is the biggest stakeholders of the project organization.

According to the interview collected from Modcon Engineering, the main aim of communication with the company is to bring new ideas the company can do in the cultural project, finally he suggest that the channel of communication between the company and the project office is by meeting, mail correspondence and personal contact when it is important.

The findings of the observation seems in collaboration with the argument of (William, 1992) which highlights, adaptive communication system comes from the vision of the organization which is linked to the mission of the organization, due to that it views as high priority. It incorporates long term communication objectives, philosophy statements, mission statements and communication policies. After asked about communication plan, respondent one replied that the project office already organized a project leader in co-operation with ice-hotel to have a tour in big cities of City to expand destination marketing which is totally future based. Respondent three also said that, all the communication process will long last up to 2021 which has to be future oriented. The fourth respondent also support the above idea, he said that the project plan has planned to work together with the municipality for better marketing efficiency. The stakeholder of Modcon Engineering also believes that the company has double role in related with the project office, bringing ideas that can further participate people and doing critical research on culture and related issue as inputs for the project.

#### **5.4 Formal and informal communication**

The findings of the observation again shows similarity with the argument of (Fischbach & Gloor, 2009) “if the formal organization is the skeleton of the company, informal communication is the nervous system that drives the process , thoughts and action in to business unit”. There are several statements that confirm the value of both formal and informal communication played crucial role in the project organization. For instance, respondent one describe the role of formal and informal communication in the project office internal and externally.

Accordingly, he said the main formal communication in the office can made by formal report about the progress of the project to All stakeholders, whereas, the informal meetings sometimes made with previous project cities as exchange of experiences.

Respondent three also supports the suggestion of respondent one, he said all informal communication is part of the project; informal communication can be exchanged at lunch meeting, coffee break and after work meeting played an important role that the team can talk and update each other freely. The fifth respondents suggest that informal communication is the day-to-day mouth communication of the employees inside and outside the project.

The analysis shows that informal communication given an important role in the project office. For instance, one of the interviews of the respondents shows that the project office built as „open“ so that employees can see each other in the office and can share ideas each other. He also argues that, the phone call of each room will be heard by the other party if they keep the offices open in order to share informal communication.

The finding of the research seems agreed with the theories of (Zhao & Rosson, 2009) regarding the benefit of informal communication model (relational benefit vs personal benefit). There are several implication that proves this, for instance, one responder suggest that „the more employees increase informal meetings the more we know each other“ for better communication. Relational theory dictates, informal communication can able to know the thinking of other, this can justify by the above observation. According to the argument of (Zhao & Rosson, 2009) informal communication from peoples outside the projects during the weak interaction of employees, can able them to build rapid feeling of mutual trust which is called“ swift trust“. The finding of the interview is also supports the theories discussed in the second chapter, for instance, respondents three suggests that 90% of communication in any organization is non-formal, so that it will be easy to share ideas, concepts and project activities. The interview of respondent two also claim to support the ideas, he said that it would be easy for him to share ideas informally than formally.

### **5.5 Knowledge sharing**

Drawing up on (Renzil, 2006) takes the argument that, the performance of firms is highly increased when individuals shared information, lessons, best practices, experiences, insights and common grounds. Although, it couldn't able to justify the above theory based on the empirical analysis, all the responders agree about the knowledge sharing process among the discussion of employees about issues. One of the examples is the interview of respondent three, he mentioned that there are always facts in the mind of the people that wants to share them with other, he suggests that informal communication is more favorable to share ideas than formal one. Considerable research conducted by (Renzil, 2006), depict that external and internal knowledge sharing is different in regards to frequency of interaction and closeness of an individual in knowledge sharing process. I couldn't confirm this theory based on the empirical analysis, however the respondents generally suggest the knowledge experience is shared by either formal or informal communication both in and outside the project. In general, all respondents believe knowledge can be shared especially in the case of informal communication inside the project team and among the stakeholders and the politicians of the municipality.

### **5.6 Verbal and non-verbal communication**

The communication model of (Beardsley et al., 2012), demonstrate that the role of verbal communication (words express ideas) whereas nonverbal expression expressed by emotions and attitude play an important role for the exchange of the message. There are many evidences that supports in the empirical analysis of respondents. One of the indications is the response of respondent two, he said that the verbal communication of the project office is led by the artistic director (project manager) of the project; he also adds that, he is very experienced and talented to conduct meetings in the stage to convince the stakeholders and the audience. In general, the verbal communication of the office can be used using mail, SMS, calendar information inside the project.

The findings of this paper seems collaborates with the argument of (Beardsley et al., 2012) regarding the contribution of non-verbal communication in organization which counts approximately from 55%-95% of the whole communication process. There are several outcomes of the analysis that confirm this data. Respondent one suggest that the "heart" symbol of the project office is open logo that communicate any kind of interested peoples informally, according to him "*putting the logo and name of company in different part of the*

*city and many other places communicate informally than speaking about the program externally*". Respondent two believes that being able to communicate by informal communication can able to reach many people as far as possible. Based on the analysis of respondent two, the project office communicates informally inside the project and formal for the external environment, he also adds that the project communicate externally by the means of social medias like Facebook, Telegram, web, newsletter, mailing list and similar digital communication. Moreover, the project conduct physical meeting to communicate with its stakeholders. Generally, the results of the analysis show that the project offices use small sized medias like newspaper and meetings.

## **5.7 Conclusions**

Thought out this research, I have examined how the project office of Modcon Engineering project communicates either internally or externally. This paper began with short introduction of Modcon Engineering, next to that I highlight with different theories that deals about project management, communication and related aspects of the industry in the way that can investigate the research question and fulfill the research purpose. This research also highlighted the potential limitation of previous researches on the industry, shortage of studies in the cultural settings leads the researcher to examine the study area to fill the research gap. The methodological part of the research is written in compatible with the review of literatures in order to link the flow of every chapter.

The purpose of the research is to explore the role of communication in managing the project and to answer the research question, the research questions are: (1) how does the project office communicates internally to communicate to direct its activities and (2) how does the project office externally communicates with its stakeholders. The research questions seems similar, however it is has different approaches and means to communicate in the project internally and externally based on different theories. Moreover, the second question is broader than the first one. As I discussed it in the first chapter, it is possible to look the external communication from the findings of the interview made to the internal employees as they are directly related to the issue.

In order to answer the research question, the study presents different previous theories of communication model, system and related studies that explain about the way of communication within and outside the project thought it also mentions the limitation of the

previous studies in this area. Moreover, the highlighted theories in related to detail empirical studies could help to investigate the communication way of Modcon Engineering 2018 project office, which also be a good contribution from this study. The theoretical framework has been tested and proved in the empirical analysis; therefore the findings of the thesis presented in the analysis part can able to show possible answers for the research questions. The draw of the empirical part is conducted by semi-structured interview to 4 of the project organization and one of the biggest stakeholders of the project ,which is Modcon Engineering that can able to look the internal and external communication mechanism.

Although, the theoretical part could indicate the probability of answers for the research questions, both of the research questions can be answered after the empirical analysis, which demanded in-depth understanding of response of respondents in related to theoretical frame work. As I discussed earlier, the empirical data are collected mainly from the employees of the project office and from one of the stakeholders to prove the flow of information. Generally, the analysis of the research indicates that the theoretical part is mostly proves by the empirical part of the study, the most significant findings that emerge from this part includes: how & in what way the project office communicates internally and externally, the role of formal and informal communication in the project office, impacts of verbal and non-verbal communication and how knowledge creation occurred during the communication process.

Findings of this research shows that, Modcon Engineering has given due emphasis on its communication capabilities. Although the project has limited employees, it organizes communication teams that facilitate the interaction internally and with external stakeholders. Based on the empirical analysis the project office internally communicates by weekly meeting, SMS, email correspondence, project website and by the help of share point; a data base where all employees can share different documents used in the project.

The results shows that the project office emphasize on external communication than internally. The common channel (means) of communication that the project applied is by the help of the artistic director, moreover weekly news letters, advertising email, social media like Facebook and Telegram, physical meeting and common database contributes in the communication with its stakeholders and municipal office. To be specific about the findings, the main ways of internal communication figured in the studies are: weekly meeting, personal contact, email correspondence, SMS, project website, shared information and informal communication outside the work environment. Whereas the main external communication

means are made by the presentation of Artistic director, meetings, weekly newsletter, social Medias, email and by the help of the glass house. The findings shows, the internal and external communication of the project office almost shares the same channel of communication as it mentioned above. It also noticed, the glass house of the city contribute significant role for the external communication with the public and stakeholders. Moreover, the employee works in an open room so that information can flow easily in the work place. The communication of the office seems also triggered by one of the elements of informal communication (Kinesics) as it discussed by (Beardsley et al., 2012, p. 30). The study also proves that knowledge can be shared in the process of communication within the project or with stakeholders.

To summarize the main contribution of this research is that, it contributes aspects of methodological, theoretical and practical practices. It also increase understanding in the communication process of managing projects. Furthermore, it provide valuable information to Modcon Engineering2018 project office in how to manage communication internally and externally, finally, it gives awareness about project management, communication and way of communication in project organizations as it is discussed in section 2. The conclusion of the study is only representative for the selective project organization.

## **5.8 Recommendations**

One my limitation while I was writing this research paper was time constraint. It would be possible to use more detail and wide range of theories if I would have enough time. Besides it could able to interview more number of stakeholders ( partners) if I could have time, but since I didn't have enough time, I forced to interview only one of the stakeholder. The other limitation of the study is absence of representative of the company during the interview period, during the interview she was in vacation, so the interview was made with her colleagues, if she would be there, more ideas could able to raise up. Generally, the biggest limitation in this paper was time it also reflected in the editing and re-writing process.

Although, the study included important actors of the project, future research is encouraged to improve this research. For instance, the collected data from both the project organization and external stakeholders are very simplified as the whole empirical study based on the outcome of the interviews. Future research is needed to expand the sample size and look the internal and external communication in a wider sample. Finally, the theories in the areas of external

communication is too limited in this paper, further studies are important in the way to include more exploration of theories in the aspects of external communication.

The unit of analysis that is included in this research includes project employees and stakeholders. In order to achieve detail understanding in the study area further individuals and institutions has to be part of the study. For instance, members of All stakeholder, municipality workers might take part in the interview process to collect rich information regarding the internal and external communication. Besides, it could able to incorporate the suggestion of some of the strategic partners of the project office and the general public as the project is designed to participate all citizen of the Modcon Engineering. In addition, to bolster the external communication means, further group of stakeholders is encouraged to be examined.

As I mentioned above, even though this study includes 5 samples sizes, future research is encouraged to use bigger sample sizes from different parties involved directly and indirectly in the project office. For instance, it could be possible to look the communication patter of the project by taking samples from the office itself, project partners, public, stakeholders, and previous capital of culture cities, municipal officials and All stakeholder members. In addition, as communication is very vast topic, further identification of theories could increase to look the research area in regards to internal and external communication in projects. Finally, the developed theoretical framework that developed in this research could be tested in other project organization since; most of project organization has inside and outside communication at the same time.

The aim of this research was to study “The Role of Project communication management in improving projects performance in building construction projects: A case study of Modcon Engineering PLC”, the research questions were:

- ❖ What is the role of projects communication management in improving projects' performance?
- ❖ Which project communication management method works best in improving projects performance?
- ❖ What are the gaps created due to lack of proper projects communication management?

Since cost overrun, time overrun, ineffectiveness & inefficiency, high personnel turnover and low moral are the symptoms of troubled projects the projects communication management shall be given a better due attention to improve performance. Suggestions for improving project communications: manage conflicts effectively, develop better communication skills, run effective meetings, use e-mail effectively, use templates for project communications (PMBOK).

- ✚ Studying the importance of projects communication management in the construction industry planning, monitoring and evaluation in a wider scope, including the benefits in improving projects performance and as a result success of projects is recommended as a direction for future research.
- ✚ Frequent use of the modern technology means such as the internet and emails to send documents fast shall be repeatedly used to speed up information transfer resulting in improved project performance.
- ✚ Knowing the importance of project documentation in project planning, monitoring and evaluation will increase the efficiency of project communications management.
- ✚ Trainings on the use of project communications management system shall be given to the staff members at the project sites as well as head office.
- ✚ New employees to the company shall be properly inducted and oriented on the company policies, manuals and strategies in order to perform well and have a clear goal about the project and Modcon Engineering PLC.

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## Appendixes

Addis Ababa  
University



# ADDIS ABABA COMPANY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

## Project Management Master's Program

My name is Meron Asrat Gebretsadik from Addis Ababa Company School of Commerce. I am carrying out a research on **The Role of Project communication in improving project performance in building construction projects: A case study of Modcon Engineering PLC** for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters of Arts (MA) in Project Management. All information collected through this interview will only be used for academic purposes.

If you need to know the final results of the study, you may contact me via E- mail or mobile.

Thank you in advance for your voluntary participation.

Kind Regards

Meron Asrat

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### Semi-structured interview questions

#### Section A: Background information

1. Gender\_\_\_\_\_
2. Age in years\_\_\_\_\_
3. Level of education\_\_\_\_\_
4. Years of service in / With Modcon\_\_\_\_\_
5. Total Experience in years\_\_\_\_\_

Theories Discussed	Interview Question (Open questions)
6. Internal communication	1) What is the role of internal communication in the project and how do you communicate internally? 2) What is the way of internal communication (channel) in the project office uses (i.e meeting, report, etc)? 3) Is there any high-tech technologies involved in the communication process? i.e. share points, project portal and wikis that can facilitate the communication effectiveness & efficiency ?, How about long-term communication plan, if any?? 5) What is the objective of the communication?
7. Communication system	6) What does the communication system looks like? 7) Where does your communication focus? i.e management, social, economic (Technical) and cultural?
8. Communication plan	8) What is the main aim of communication in the office and who is the final receiver of information during communication process?? 9) What is the content of the communication that is forwarded to the audience ( i.e. project plan, budget, resource etc? 10) When does the communication tools place (i.e. pre-planned, when needed, continuously etc)? 11) Who is responsible for the project communication process (i.e. project officer, client, project team etc)?
9. External communication	12) How does the external communication of the office looks like? 13) How do the project office communicate with externally? i.e stakeholders or general public? 14) What is the medium (channel) of communication? With who? 15) Is there any future oriented communication plan? 16) What is the role of formal and informal communication in external communication? If any?

10. Formal & Informal communication	<p>17) What are the means of formal communication that are used in the project office, if there any?</p> <p>16) How does the project office managed to use informal communication?</p> <p>17) Do you think informal communication contribute to know the thinking of others? If so?</p> <p>18) How does informal communication creates common understanding among others? If there is such thing?</p>
11. Knowledge sharing	<p>19) Do you think knowledge sharing will be created by communication (Formal or informal) inside the project?</p> <p>20) Do you think knowledge sharing will be created by communication (formal or informal) externally? i.e stakeholders or public</p>
12. Verbal and non-verbal communication	<p>21) What is the role of verbal communication in the project office? i.e words and ideas to communicate?</p> <p>22) What is the role of non-verbal communication? if any i.e body communication</p> <p>23) Do you use wide medias (Tv, radio ) or small size communication (meetings, committee, discussion, speech and lecture)?</p>

=====Thank you for your time! =====