



**Addis Ababa University**

**Graduate School of Journalism and Communication**

**Internal Communication for Organizational Performance: The Case  
of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency**

**By**

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**June, 2019**

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of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency**

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**A thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University, Graduate School of Journalism  
and Communication in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
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Relations and Strategic Communication.**

**Advisor:- Getachew Dinku (PhD)**

**June, 2019**

**Addis Ababa**

# Addis Ababa University

## Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

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## **Declaration**

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Date of submission: June, 2019

Place of submission: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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## **Abstract**

*Internal communication is providing efficient, mutual flow of information between employees and management staff at all levels and every area an organization.*

*In light of this notion the current research aims at contributing to the knowledge pool by undertaking a study on the role of internal communication in enhancing organizational performance in the case of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency. More specifically the study aimed to understand the internal communication system, and, to investigate how far internal communication could improve organizational performance and to identify the roles of appropriate communication channels on organizational performance.*

*In order to achieve the set objectives, a qualitative research approach was employed and data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Twenty individual interviews and four group discussions and analyzing documents were conducted. A total of 51 people participated in the interviews and FGDs. In addition relevant documents such as reports of studies carried out by Addis Ababa mass Media Agency were analyzed. The result of data analysis shows that Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency had a problem on effectively communicating with its internal publics. There seems to be lack of clarity regarding the policy of internal communication. The communication pattern tends to be highly hierarchal, while less attention is given to informal communication channels. Despite the change of management and the attempts to bring about change with the communication among the management and staff of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency, traditional internal communication process seems to have its own impact on employees as well as organizational performance.*

# Chapter One

## 1.1 Introduction

### 1.1.1 Background of the Study

The world is facing various problems like global warming, air pollution, fast changing geopolitical feature and so on. On the other side, rapid advances in transportation, technology, education and expensive race in global businesses become the day to day features of our planet.

There has been technological development which has made the world dramatically smaller. In today's world where competition is the rule of the game whether, governmental or non-governmental organizations are struggling to win the race. The survival is not only dependent on the product or services it delivers but also the communication strategies it has so as to build and maintain its reputation among the mass public.

Organizations are the results of popular or group cooperation to accomplish shared goals through joint actions. Organizational communication, hence, focuses on how mutual cooperation is established and organizational structure is attained (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). In fact, all of us belong to one or more organizations be it intentionally or unintentionally (Pearson et al, 2011).

Communication contributes a critical part in the success of any organization. Effective communication skills increase productivity whereas poor communication skills decrease productivity (Northup, 2006). Hence, the communication systems those willingly attract and connect all the stakeholders especially within the organization become profitable, and a vice versa if not.

Internal communication is then an important process within organizations and its performance. Johansson, (2003) puts his own view that Internal Communication is what produces, maintains and reproduces the organization, in other words it keeps the organization balanced and going. Weak internal communication can result in work inefficiency, which is a

real concern for organizations Welch et al., (2007). Therefore, the internal communication is important and affects both performances and commitments in organizations (Borca et al., 2014; Welch et al., 2007).

Now a day's the media competes not only with broadcasting of first hand information but also in a different communication strategies to address the needs of their audiences so as to become a number one choice. Media institutes therefore seek an effective communication network undertakes within the organization. The world is changing in an advancement of the "digital world" which is highly visible in the Media sector. As a result, the Media market has to expand continuously in order to satisfy the demands of the growing number of information. This made the media institutes to be in the fierce competition.

Addis Ababa Mass media Agency which carried a big vision of being the best in the continent needs to monitor, motivate as well as equipped its internal engine. The essence of communication is therefore very vital and cannot be left unattended to do so; it is that kind of mechanical system, which determines the growth of an organization in all aspect during this modern age.

### **1.1.2 Statement of the problem**

Here by, the more internal communication undertakes in a given organization, the more it prevails success and efficiency on its product or service it delivered.

Quirke, 2008, states "the flow of ideas, information and knowledge around the organization will be crucial to success. The role of communication as the process is central to the management of the organization" (p 70-71).

Employee Interaction is a principal and essential endeavor in organizations as stated by Harris & Nelson (2008). They further asserted that the sustainability of an organization is based on effective communication among employees and relationships develop based on effective communication.

In the context of Addis Ababa mass media Agency, there are issues that must be undertaking regarding internal communication. The Agency has both the broadcast and print media outlets; Addis Television, FM 96.3 Addis Lisan Newspaper and Addis Metropolitan

magazine. The Agency, aged two decades, had the structure which planned to deal with the Public Relations role, but weak to compact with its publics especially with that of approximately 500 employees.

Past studies exhibit diverse activities of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency (AAMMA), which if followed with a strong vision of public relations should be able to benefit the stakeholders. Unfortunately, most of the objectives that the Agency set out to achieve have not been realized. According to a study conducted by the agency to come up with new Television and Radio format (2017), it has been established that despite the fact that the area has a lot of human resources, in case of communication, AAMMA still remains under-developed.

The study's SWOT analysis stated that the relation between the management as well as employees was weak. Putting raised complains in vast session of meetings into account, Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency is still striving to have a concrete communication chain between the managers and its employs

AAMMA even if paying among the highest salary, had a problem of labor migration which became a severe threat for the Agency. The study which was conducted by Addis Ababa University, department of Journalism & Communication (2018) states the Pyramidical shape of the organizational structure had failed to expand better communication flow.

Hence, the current study aimed to scrutinize to what extent to which the communication within the agency affects the organizational performance as a whole. The study will also try to demonstrate the effects of poor communication on employees and the organization.

### **1.1.3 Objective of the study**

#### **1.1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of the study is to explore the role of Internal Communication in bringing about collaboration and efficiency among the management and staffs of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency.

### **1.1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To evaluate the internal communication network existing between the management and the employees of the Agency.
2. To identify the impact(s) of internal communication challenges and collaborative activities of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency.
3. To show the challenges of internal communication hindering the Agency.
4. Suggest best practice internal communication competency that contribute to the success of organizational goals.

### **1.1.4 Research questions**

1. What Internal Communication system does Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency is using to achieve its mission?
2. To what extent does internal communication impact(s) on Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency's performance?
3. What are the challenges in the communication flow with in Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency?
4. What are the best internal communication competencies that contribute to the success of organizational goals?

### **1.1.5 Scope of the study**

There is numerous governmental and nongovernmental profit and nonprofit based organizations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. However, this study focused on Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency. It doesn't include other organizations. The research typically centered on the role of Internal Communication on collaborative work environment and organizational performance on Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency for the past two years.

### **1.1.6 Significance of the study**

The researcher understands that sustained Communication between a given organization and its internal publics has a power of motivating employees to stay active and loyal towards the mission and motive of their organization. It also goes a long way in promoting fit competition at the workplace. Furthermore, Internal Communication conveys all the employees on a common platform and leads them to cumulative effectiveness/ performance.

Hence, the research will provide meaningful information to the management of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency about the past two years experience of their communications policies, practices, and programs. The study will enable the managers in the Agency to get awareness regarding the influence of effective communication network and in what way ineffective network has unconstructively affected corporate activities and thus the study will suggest recommendations towards improving communication to boost up employee performance.

Besides, this study is also essential to the management of large corporate organizations because they would understand that internal communication is considered a vital tool for binding an organization, enhancing employee morale, promoting transparency and reducing risk.

Internal Communication managers and other practitioners in the government institutes will also find the results of this study interesting.

The study would be valuable to academic world, as it would provide empirical findings on communication systems and channels in Media or public organizations. It would therefore serve as a reference point for potential study besides filling the research gap.

### **1.1.7 Limitation of the study**

The main purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the impact of Internal Communication on Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency on its behavior and performance. Even though, the finding of this study will have importance it may have its own limitations.

As studies showed aspects where different organizations have their own behavior, the findings of this study could not be understandable and generalized for other institutes. And therefore this study is limited to the Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency.

The study emphasizes on assessing the impact of Internal Communication on activities and performance of the organization all the way through internal publics only.

Some people may not be willing to fill questionnaires and the responses also may be incomplete or inaccurate. Meanwhile, getting some managers as well as other concerned bodies on time for the interview may be difficult. In addition to this, lack of research findings and well-documented materials in relation to the topic as well as Agency are also the limitations of this study.

### **1.1.8 Organization of the study**

The study is organized in to five chapters. Chapter one contains a background to the study, the research problem, research objectives and questions, significance, limitations and scope of the study. Chapter two deals with a review of the literature on theories of Internal Communication, defining Internal Communication, the role of Internal Communication, Channels for Internal Communication in an Organization, Strategic internal communication, Criteria for Effective Internal Communication, Categories of Internal Communication, Constraints to Internal Communication Processes in Organizations, of Effective Communication on Organizational Performance, and so forth. The third chapter lets to describe the research methodology and design that are used in the study. Chapter four includes the results from the study, analysis and integration of theory with empirical data. And finally Chapter five deals with the conclusions from the study, a summary of the findings and recommendations.

# Chapter Two

## 2.1 Review of related literature

### 2.1.1 Introduction

Exploring and understanding the role of internal communication on organizational performance in an organization is the major focus of the study and so this chapter explores the literature that bears direct significance to the objectives and research questions outlined in Chapter One. Given that the wealth of research and information on communication theories and studies is all-around and complex, our objective here is just to make a brief review of key aspects. Constructing a conceptual framework, the research chapter will be able to define internal communication; identify and understand the different approaches to the concept; describe the concept from an organizational perspective and then highlight the impact of internal communication on organizational performance.

## 2.2 Conceptual Framework

### 2.2.1 Defining Internal Communication

In the existing literature on internal communication, there are numerous definitions of the concept trying to describe and understand the communication phenomena. Welch and Jackson (2007, pp. 177-198.) view internal communication from a stakeholder approach and define it as “the strategic management of interactions and relationships between stakeholders at all levels within organizations”.

Rogers (1976, p. 43.) presents another definition of communication and perceives it as “a process in which participants create and share information with one another to reach a mutual understanding”.

Internal communication can serve different purposes for organizations and Welch and Jackson (2007) presents four basic dimensions of internal communication in an organization:

-

- An internal line management communication,
- an internal team peer communication,
- an internal group peer communication and
- An internal corporate communication. In addition, internal communication provides a fundamental incentive in an organization that enables and strengthens employees to carry out their tasks (see Table 1 below).

Dimension	Level	Direction	Participants	Content
1. Internal line management communication	Line managers/supervisors	Predominantly two-way	Line managers-employees	Employees' roles Personal impact, e.g. appraisal discussions, team briefings
2. Internal team peer communication	Team colleagues	Two-way	Employee-employee	Team information, e.g. team task discussions
3. Internal project peer communication	Project group colleagues	Two-way	Employee-employee	Project information, e.g. project issues
4. Internal corporate communication	Strategic managers/top management	Predominantly one-way	Strategic managers-all employees	Organisational/corporate issues, e.g. goals, objectives, new developments, activities and achievements

**Table 1:** *Internal Communication Matrix (Welch & Jackson, 2007)*

### **2.2.2 The Role of Internal Communication**

Information and communication are two different concepts, but closely related to each other. When we talk about information, we talk about the process of informing people, of telling them about certain news and providing them guidance and directives. Communication is the process that puts people in relationship with other people. But, when it comes to communication in an organization, we must mention the fact that there are two types of communication: internal and external communication. External communication includes organization's relations with the external environment, namely with suppliers, business partners. Internal communication is the type of communication that develops inside an

organization, within the relations between human resources and the organization itself. It may include managerial communication and communication on personnel level that can be possible between people on the same hierarchical level or between members of different departments. (Radu, et al. 2003).

Internal communication is a key component in the process of building the image of an organization, together with the external communication. Organizations are well seen by others when its members are motivated, when they can face any problems encountered as they are properly informed, when they are credible and have a positive attitude. The main purposes of internal communication are:

- Ensuring a good circulation of internal information;
- Operating each of the managerial functions;
- As part of the motivation process, communication makes possible the identification, the knowledge and the proper use of different category of needs;
- In working groups, enhances the links between the members, developing an internal environment based on trust;
- Within the organization personnel policies, communication contributes with positive results to the development of the processes of recruitment, selection, evaluation, improvement and staff promotion;
- Communication contributes to the possibilities of improving performances through the existing feed-back in the process of communication.

After receiving the communication, employees should return to their jobs and perform better than before (Larkin & Larkin, 1994).

Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) view internal communication as being of major importance since they refer to communication and information flows as *the lifeblood of the organization*. The importance of internal communication, the exchange of information and the transmission of meaning, is also discussed by Katz (1978) who refers to internal communication as *the soul of an organization*. The importance of communication can be explained by the fact that it is a tool that can both reveal and eliminate problems in an organization so it is very essential to

have a good and clear communication so that organizations can function smoothly and effectively.

The existence of internal communication within the organization is intended to ensure effective decision making and foster positive organizational outcomes. As such, worker productivity is bound to increase when there is a stable internal communication process established within the organization thereby enabling employees to perform their tasks well, to have information about the duties they have to perform, and about the goals of the organization.

Management's lack of attention to internal communication with employees may have also been as a result of the emphasis organizations have traditionally targeted toward external publics about their products and services through marketing communications such as advertising.

Management scholars Thomas, Zolin, and Hartman (2009) indicated, however, that "when employees perceive that they are getting information from their supervisors and coworkers that is timely, accurate, and relevant, they are more likely to feel less vulnerable and more able to rely on their coworkers and supervisors" (p. 302). Several scholars have highlighted the positive influence of internal communication on employee engagement (Chong, 2007; Saks, 2006; Welch & Jackson, 2007). Thus, internal communication between managers and employees should enhance trust between them and lead to greater employee engagement with the company. Focusing on internal communication, therefore, may endow the organization with several benefits. Kennan and Hazleton (2006) highlighted the need for organizations to recognize employees as a distinct public worthy of individualized attention through internal public relations.<sup>1</sup> Kitchen and Daly (2002) argued that internal communication is crucial for both organization success and for its day-to-day existence. This maybe because internal communication can engage employees' "intellectual and creative assets to produce value" (Quirke, 2008, p. xv). The question remains, however, regarding who should be responsible for ensuring that communication occurs and evaluating its effectiveness: public relations, human resources, or the first-line supervisor.

Argentin (1996) explained that internal communication is an appropriate role of the corporate communications function (often referred to as “public relations”) to inform employees about corporate changes during times of change or crisis. More generally, Cheney (1999) suggested that values in the workplace can be evaluated by the role communication plays. Transparent organizations share information widely. Broom, Casey, and

Ritchey (2000) agreed that communication is a critical aspect of how relationships between the organization and its publics are evaluated, meaning that open communication indicates a stronger relationship.

For communication and information to circulate within an organization, there must be some underlying purposes for which that information moves and this constitutes one of the roles of internal communication. Internal communication can, according to Erikson (1992), be divided into five different functions. *Work communication* is the communication needed for each of the employees to conduct their daily tasks. *News communication* deals with informing the employees of the latest news in the company. *Control communication*, in order to steer the company towards the goals, is composed of among other things budgets, manuals for production, and policies regarding the working environment. *Change communication* is based on extraordinary events that are outside the regular news communication, such as changes in goals or strategies. Lastly, *culture communication* is more or less invisible and is shown in the way the company regards leadership, equality and similar issues.

Hence, internal communication serves many different functions in an organization. From the perspective of management, there are three functions of internal communication.

- To spread the goals, tasks, and rules of the company.
- To coordinate the activities of the company.
- To provide management with information regarding the condition of the company and the reliability of downward information flow from the management.

Scholars argue that an effective internal communication brings a feeling of belonging to the employees, which increases motivation and the desire to put in an extra productive effort hence increasing their performance.

### **2.2.3 Channels for Internal Communication in an Organization**

For an organization to facilitate its internal communication there are several media or channels to be utilized. These methods are oral communication in meetings and conversations, written communication through, internal magazines and newsletters, as well as electronic communication through Intranet and email.

In addition, information can be displayed through notice-boards and indifferent kinds of social activities. Nowadays, other ways of interactive channels are also used within organizations, such as videoconferences and phone conferences, in order to facilitate direct conversations between people located in dispersed units. Electronic communication can in many ways assist a company since it makes it possible to rapidly process information (Erikson 1992). Further, it gives the employees instant access to valuable information needed in their daily work.

A prerequisite for information technology (IT) to be of advantage is that the IT systems are easily accessible and easy to utilize. Additionally, it is necessary to have the IT systems continuously updated with relevant information. E-mail is one of the IT tools available for a company to use for its internal communication. The positive side of using e-mail is that it can save time since there is no risk of not getting hold of the receiver.

Intranet is another tool that, according to should be utilized to develop and strengthen the internal communication, ease the existence and exchange of knowledge and information, and function as a tool to support processes and work situations.

Different communication channels give the sender different possibilities for transferring information in terms of the degree of information that is received.

The channel with the highest degree of information being transferred is direct communication between two persons, due to its ability to allow immediate feedback. The channel with the lowest degree of information is a regular written letter. Communication is usually described as a flow of messages from a sender to a receiver using a channel (O'Hair, 2001).

We need to choose some adequate means of communication, so that the process of communication can take place in good conditions. This choice will be made depending on certain parameters such as the content of the message to be transmitted, the internal culture of the organization and the receiver characteristics. Each way has specific characteristics that make it more or less suitable. The internal culture represents an important point in choosing the appropriate means of communication, because it is necessary in the use of certain media. Searching for a better correspondence between the used means of communication and the receiver to whom the message is addressed puts information officers in the situation to divide the employees according to their perceptiveness to the channels of written, oral and audiovisual communication.

#### **2.2.3.1 Written Communication**

Written communication is the most important tool used in internal communication. The written messages must be clear, readable and they must contain short words known by most people. The sentences must also be short, with a simple structure, containing a single idea or information. The substance must be placed at the beginning of the sentence.

The media of written communication are: the memorandum, the report, the written instructions, the manifest, the poster or the bill poster, the company newspaper, the press magazine, the survey, the box ideas and gestures information.

#### **2.2.3.2 Oral Communication**

Oral communication presents a series of advantages that often makes it very important. It generates interactions that can be both verbal and nonverbal. This way of communication represents the main resort of information, negotiation and decision making processes within the company. Its double cognitive and affective dimension makes it a prime factor:

- Of knowledge and recognition;
- Of elaborating a common language;
- Of interaction;
- Of message distortion

Evaluation is a stage of the communication plan that aims the systematic analysis of the development of the internal communication process and its results. Through this stage one can identify the successes, but also the failures, the progresses registered in terms of information and the image of the organization. It also allows the correction of errors, at minimal cost, for similar situations that may appear in the future. The evaluation shows not only if the proposed goals were successfully fulfilled, but also if the communication plan was well designed and the strategies and tactics appropriately used.

### **2.2.3.3 Audio-Visual Communication**

A presentation made with the help of an audiovisual media will bring more clarity on what it was said, making it more interesting and easier to remember. In the audio-visual communication we meet the following media: overhead projector, slides, block notes, the information movie, e-mail, video transmission, cable television.

### **2.2.4 Strategic internal communication**

Cismaru (2010) defines strategic internal communication as being a set of actions of planned communication, with preset objectives, with the help of which information, performance and trust in the organization are maintain between the employees. The employees are the key public for the organization, although most of the times organizations neglect the internal public.

At first sight, the organization addresses to a wide public, to whom it presents the organization's services. The strategic communication has an impact on the general policy of the organization through two aspects, namely: apart from the customers, the other categories connected with the organization are also important in maintaining a favorable environment.

The second aspect is that, that these categories are not homogeneous. Moreover, the messages sent as well as the plan and the means of communication must be specific to each category. To these categories belong the mass-media, the suppliers, the distributors, the employees, the employees' families, the partner organization and the competing organizations. The internal public of an organization is homogeneous only in case of a small organization.

The internal communication activity is conducted according to some well established stages: research, planning and the implementation and evaluation of the plan. Planning is an important stage for an efficient strategic communication process. If this stage is not accomplished in the smallest details, it can amplify the negative aspects that already exist in the organization. The lack of a good communication plan can lead to:

- Failure in achieving communication goals and image;
- A poor organization of the specialized department;
- A poorly organized internal information; Prutianu (2004) proposes the following guidelines for proper communication objectives:
- The objective should express a noticeable action at the level of behavior, attitudes and opinion;
- The content of the action that will externalize the desirable behavior should be specified;
- The conditions of achievement in relation with who the performances make sense must also be specified;

Two types of strategies are most often used in internal communication, namely:

**a) Activities of disseminating the information**

This process is adopted in relation to the informational goals and has as a final purpose the distribution of representative messages for the organization, products and services offered by it. The tactics that can be used in this strategy are information, internal advertising, the speech of some personalities within the organization, the exposure of informative media in internal public reunions.

**b) Organization of events**

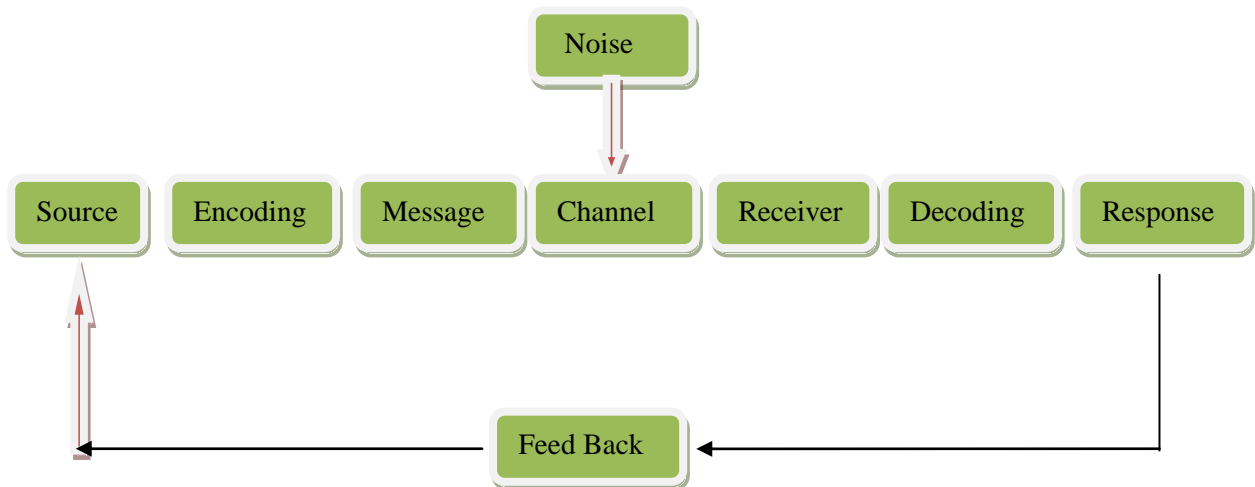
This strategy also aims at transmitting information. The tactics may be: the reaction to an unexpected event, ceremonies, and the events staged for the media, contests and competitions. From the internal communication perspective there are two types of events: events organized for the internal public and events organized for the external public.

### 2.2.5 Criteria for Effective Internal Communication

Katz (1978) argues that the number of people reached by the message, the receivers relationship to each other, the type of channel used, the type of message sent, and whether or not the receiver needs to respond to the message, are all factors that have an influence on whether the internal communication will be effective. In order to determine how effective the internal communication is in an organization, it is central to understand the criteria that determine the effectiveness. There are numerous opinions regarding how to define an effective internal communication and according to Erikson (1992), the internal communication must meet a number of different criteria in order to be effective.

Firstly, the communication has to be *concrete* in order for the receiver to understand the information. The reason for this is that the coding of the message will be affected by the receiver's culture, background, language, and frame of reference. Erikson remarks each and every one of us has our own way of transmitting and decoding messages.

The internal communication must also be *concentrated*; meaning that it is focused on the most important aspects of the information, as well as it should be *coordinated*. Coordinated communication is needed in areas where several managers need to be able to communicate a message to co-workers in an identical manner. Understanding how an organization can achieve an effective internal communication warrants as well an understanding of the communication process.



**Figure2:** *Shannon-Weaver Communication Process Model*

The illustration above explains the Shannon-Weaver communication model and the components are discussed below:

- **Source** is the person that has some kind of information that he or she wants to communicate.

The sources, as well as the receiver, are influenced by their communication skills, knowledge, social background, cultural belonging and also by their attitudes toward different things.

- **Encoding** is the process of putting the information into a symbol that can be communicated.

This symbol may take the form of words, but it is also possible to encode information into non-spoken symbols such as body language.

- **Message** is the result of the encoding process.
- **Channel** is the media through which the encoded message is being sent, such as telephone, fax or e-mail.
- **Noise** is anything that disturbs and distorts the message that is being transferred. A noise can take different forms and misunderstandings are likely to occur, for example, where there are different knowledge levels, communication skills, experiences and prejudice.
- **Receiver** is the one to whom the message is directed.
- **Decoding** is the process the receiver undertakes when allocating meaning to the symbols sent by the source.
- **Receiver response** is the resulting response from the receiver after having decoded the message and it may involve taking some kind of action or doing nothing at all.
- **Feedback** is what the source knows about the receiver's response and this is required in order for communication to be a two-way process.
- **Context** is the environment in which the communication process takes place. The context is important due to the fact that, according to Fiske (1990), communication differs considerably according to the context in which it takes place.

The model of the communication process is to a large degree occupied with finding out to what extent the message received corresponds with the message sent by the source. Consequently, communication is considered to be effective when the receiver ends up with the same message that the source intended to send, since during the communication process incidents may occur that confuse the meaning of the message being transmitted (Robock& Simmonds 1989).

Misunderstandings can occur when the message was encoded incorrectly, transmitted inaccurately, received inaccurately, or decoded incorrectly.

In addition, Erikson posits that, for communication to be effective, it has to be *consequently* and *continuously* transmitted over time. This is to say the information must be transmitted continuously in order for the employees to consider it to be trustworthy. Therefore, it is essential to communicate facts on a sustainable basis rather than sporadically.

Lastly, he further argues that information must strive to *create contacts* leading to a dialogue. However, the importance of creating a dialogue depends on the type of information. It is probably less important to create a dialogue when facts are transmitted, compared to the communication occurring between two co-workers on the operative level regarding how to solve a specific issue.

Unfortunately, it is more common that the communication is transmitted on the sender's conditions and does not take the receivers interest into account. To conclude Erikson's position, the criteria for effective internal communication can be summarized with three words: objective, trustworthy, and instilling confidence.

### **2.2.6 Categories of Internal Communication**

A popular way to categorize internal communication is by dividing it into formal and informal communication (Ludlow & Panton 1992). Formal communication is initiated from the management level, whereas informal communication simply exists without specific initiation.

Formal downward communication is set up by the organization and consists of policies and procedures, orders and requests that are passed down the hierarchy. Formal

upward communication takes the form of reports, requests, and complaints. Informal communication channels develop through common interests between members of the organization.

Another classification of internal communication is conducted by Katz (1978) who discusses four categories: downward, upward, horizontal, and lateral communication.

*Downward communication* follows the pattern of authority and descends through the hierarchical levels and is the traditional one-way communication found within a formal structure. The information that is transmitted downward is related to the employee's tasks and performances, and information about procedures and practice

*Upward communication* goes up through the hierarchical levels. An example of such communication is when the employees report on their performance. This communication is often utilized for control purposes. However, the basic problem with upward communication is the nature of the hierarchical organization. Employees are less likely to express their true feelings if it might affect them negatively.

*Horizontal communication* refers to the communication occurring among employees at the same hierarchical level. *Transverse communication* acts independently of the formal organizational structure and, thus represents informal communication. In all the discussed categories, there is a potential for barriers to appear and disrupt the effectiveness of internal communication.

### **2.2.7 Constraints to Internal Communication Processes in Organizations**

It is apparently understandable that in areas where there are groups and where human interactions occur, there is the likelihood of the presence of certain setbacks or constraints and this is quite true of every organizational structure. Insufficient or inappropriate communication creates irritation, insecurity, disintegration and the spreading of rumors. The communication process model developed by Shannon and Weaver is very useful and beneficial to enable one determine areas where potential setbacks or obstacles to effective internal communication exists or are hanging. Implicitly thus, previous studies show that there

are various potential constraints to internal communication within an organizational framework.

Concurrently, an organization might suffer from communication relationship obstacles caused by inadequate, distorted or misinterpreted communication. Following Shannon & Weaver's communication process model, the encoding and decoding processes are the main barriers for effective internal communication both between individuals and groups, as well as between different levels in the organization.

Ludlow and Panton (1992) extends this point further by presenting a number of constraints that might affect internal communication processes in an organization and hence result to low productivity and performance. They identified what is known as "*semantic problems*" i.e. problems that occur when people use the same word in different ways. This is thus bound to cause misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the information or message being communicated.

Besides, the poor structural organization or setup might constitute a huge block to smooth internal communication. Such is manifested through what is termed the *status effect*, which occurs when one person, worker or employee in the organization is considerably higher in the hierarchy than the other person involved in the communication process.

Poor choice of communication channels or the unavailability of efficient means and techniques of communication is also a great problem affecting internal communication processes in an organization. To further complement their justifications, the researchers attempted to categorize or classify certain elements identified as potential setbacks to an effective internal communication process. These problems were categorized into three distinctive groups:

- Constraints relating to reception of information/message: environmental stimuli, the receiver's attitudes and values and the receiver's needs and expectations.
- Constraints relating to interpretation and understanding: language and semantic problems, the ability of the receiver to receive and listen, the length of the communication and status effects.

- Constraints relating to acceptance and readiness: prejudices and interpersonal conflicts between sender and receiver.

It is thus obvious that constraints to effective internal communication processes are likely to be present in all sorts of organizations especially where there are a number of individuals who are dependent on information from one another. It is then likely that internal communication could have a significant impact on the overall performance of employees which directly impacts the organization. Besides, the larger and complex the organization, the larger the possibility of the existence of obstacles that can “disturb” the internal communication process in an organization, and hence limit negatively or decrease employee output to organizational success.

### **2.2.8 Organizational Performance**

Performance when compared to goals and objectives within private or public sector differs. In a private sector the three primary performance outcomes are financial performance, market performance and shareholder value performance. However, the public sector is concerned with service delivery, public opinion/satisfaction and distributive development of the economy. Importantly employees’ performance can be improved by ensuring appropriate recognition and reward for their efforts, and by improving communication, learning and working conditions. It is also a common practice in public sector performance management literature to talk about the three Es: Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness (Javier 2002; Gondal&Shahbaz, 2012). According to Beirut, (2003) Performance is referred to as being about doing the work, as well as being about the results achieved. It can be defined as the outcomes of work because they provide the strongest linkage to the strategic goals of an organization, customer satisfaction and economic contributions. Jain, Apple & Ellis (2015) defines Performance is an act or process of carrying out actions and activities to accomplish an intended outcome.

We live in a performance-based culture whether in our personal or professional lives. To achieve improvement in any given performance however, one must first know what defines a quality performance. It is therefore important to understand the factors that play a relevant role in any performance. Performance measurement is the process of collecting,

analyzing, and/or reporting information on the performance of an individual, group, organization, system, or component (Upadhya, Munir, & Blount, 2014). It can involve a review of processes, strategies, approaches, and parameters to track performance against intended targets. O'Boyle & Hassan, (2014) measured performance on bases of capabilities in carrying out obligations by personnel in an organization. Bayle & Robinson (2007) suggest there are three principles that performance depends upon: the system of governance; the quality of the organization's network (affiliations, supporting bodies); and the positioning of the organization within its particular sport. The study refers to these principles as 'The Strategic Performance.

## **2.2.9 Implications of Effective Communication on Organizational Performance**

Husain (2013) identified that the role played by communication during change in the business organizations as essential for successful change management. The employees are the key sources to bring about change in organizations. To encourage employees for desired change, organizations must address the apprehensions and issues related with them. Job insecurity should be decreased and a sense of community should be created so that employees may feel their responsibilities. The need for change and its advantages will motivate the staff to participate in change plan and execute it. According to Kibe (2014) investigated the effects of communication strategies on organizational performance.

Today organizations believe that the major source of competitive advantage is attained from an organization's human resources and to enhance organizational performance by effectively utilizing their human resources. Though, this was not always the case, as human resources were usually perceived as a cost in the past (Gondal&Shahbaz, 2012). Elving (2005) shows the implication of communication in resistance to change.

The framework leads to six propositions in which aspects of communication, such as information, feelings of belonging to a community, and feelings of uncertainty, have an influence on resistance to change, which will affect the effectiveness of the change effort. The findings reviewed that a distinction between the informative function of communication and communication as a means to create a community was made. In the suggested model

communication has an effect not only on readiness for change, but also on uncertainty. Shafique, Ahmad, Abbas & Hussain (2015).

Adegbuyi, et al (2015) the study was able to ascertain from various literatures reviewed that business strategy such as (customer orientation, employee autonomy, communication, training and development job satisfaction, corporate social responsibility, motivational factors) have major role to play in organizational performance.

Recognizing the causes of organizational performance is important especially in the perspective of the current global crises because it helps an organization to identify those factors that should be given priority attention in order to improve the organizational performance. Hence, this study recommends that business organizations should adopt appropriate strategies that would enhance adequate organizational performance. Many authors have adequately addressed effective communication and performance on organization.

## **2.3 Empirical studies framework**

### **Studies on Internal Communication and its Effect on Organizational Performance**

Organizational performance can be measured in many different ways depending on the industry of interest. Performance outcomes may include, but are not limited to; profits, retention of employees, and branding and recognition of company. The healthcare industry, like many other businesses, recognizes the need for effective communication to prevent errors and reduce costs. Building effective communication networks helps raise standards, share best practices, and develop cohesive teams (Quirke, 2005).

Only four studies were found that linked the role of internal communications to organizational performance. Studies by Arif et al (2009), Chen, (2008), Chong (2007), and Watson Wyatt Worldwide (2009, 2010), all found effective communication can enhance the performance of organizations. Three of the studies were conducted in very different settings:

Chinese corporations, Singapore Airlines and Pakistani businesses (Chen, 2008, Chong, 2007, Arif et al, 2009). The studies included both qualitative and quantitative approaches that consisted of in-depth interviews, focus groups and surveys.

Although all studies showed a correlation between internal communication and organizational performance, the definition of organizational performance was different in each case. Singapore Airlines viewed their international awards in innovation and service as outcomes in performance (Chong, 2007). The Chinese corporations measured their organizational performance on the job satisfaction and perceptions of trust between managers and employees (Chen, 2008). The Pakistani businesses measured their organizational performance by four aspects: quality of products or services, growth in sales, profitability and market share (Arif, Jan, Marwat & Ullah, 2009).

The Watson Wyatt Worldwide (2009, 2010) studies measured performance on financial indicators such as shareholder returns. They found that companies that were highly effective communicators had 47% higher shareholder returns. These studies also revealed that half of the highly effective communicators were providing management training in communication and improving engagement, which correlated to an average of 26% higher productivity. During the current challenging economic times, a focus on communication strategies can yield surprising results.

To sum up, this frame work found that internal communications practices play an important role in employee engagement as well as organizational performance. Recent studies suggest that companies can benefit from ongoing evaluations of internal communication practices, two way communication practices and timely, consistent and effective methods of communication that satisfy employees. Therefore, this research project is designed to assess internal communication practices, and create new evidence based internal communication practices, and evaluate their impact on organizational performance in Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency.

## **2.4 Background of the study area**

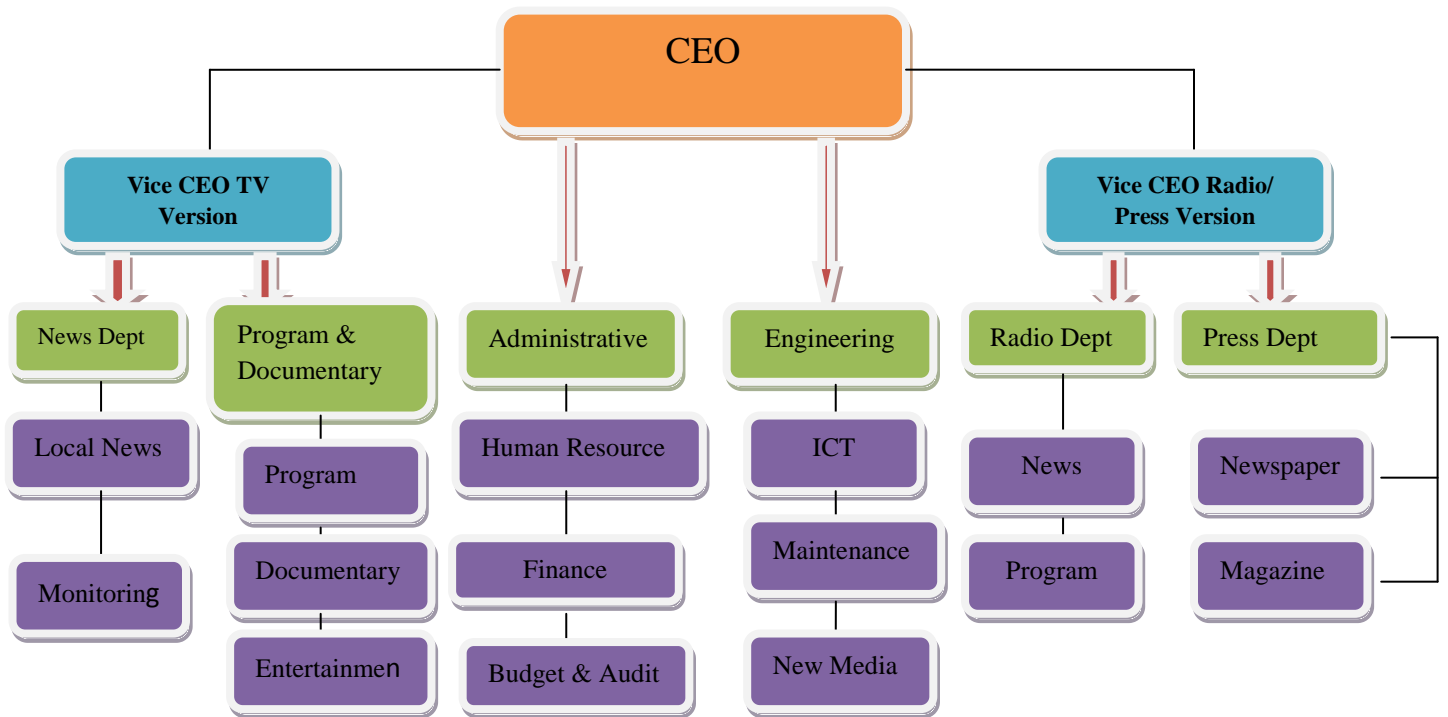
### **Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency, newly named Addis Media Network**

Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency (AAMMA) was established in the year 1985 in Ethiopian calendar. The agency was previously working under the office of the city administrations Culture and Communication Bureau till 1997.

After being as one of the independent institute as an agency, began working on the media industry having a news paper, known as *Addis Lisan*, the pocket size (A5) magazine called *Addis Metropolitan*, a radio channel named *FM 96.3* as well as the TV channel, *Addis TV*.

AAMMA is established by the proclamation no 20/2009 with the objective of working towards creating common understanding between the city government officials and the residents by transmitting accurate and current information; providing its own contribution towards creating national consensus on major national issues; encouraging the public to express and exercise freely its freedom of thought in accordance with the laws of the federal government and Addis Ababa city Government; playing supportive role in the economic, social as well as good governance building efforts of the city government and encouraging further strengthening of the democratic culture.

The Agency has both the broadcast print media outlets; named earlier. It's working towards the achievement of its vision which dreamt to put on one of the five best media in Africa by 2012E.C. Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency has such a big & vast effort seeking vision that needs to be addressed. Its vision assessment period is only a years. Addis Ababa Mass media agency has above 400 human resources who are composed into 7 core directorates & supportive sections. This makes it one of the huge institutes of the city administration. The agency has also an expanded management structure which makes it among the big media companies. (See the graph below)



*(The AAMMA management levels draw by the researcher, 2019)*

Since its foundation, the organization has recorded some achievement notably from its rented air time at Ethiopian Television (ETV 2) to its own channel covering 24 hours, now equipped with latest media technologies and so on.

It's obvious that the media industry come into a boosting revolution with tight competition among them. Technological advancement, well trained human resources, marketing, and other reputational struggles become fierce. There are studies which show that Addis Ababa Mass Media agency needs strategic solutions in order to take its own part of the media game. Especially regarding the management - employee communication, cooperation and integration, there has to be more to be done.

This research then conducted to show the role of communication between the top level leaders and the subordinate staff. With such a situation the study believed to give remarks how crucial that the organization improve on its communication resources and facilities in order to achieve higher standards of performance and productivity. This is necessary because communication is vital to human interaction and so if not properly handled, it could lead to inefficiency and hence poor performance.

## Chapter Three

### 3.1 Research methodology

This chapter focuses on the various methods and techniques employed by the current research project in the course of collecting data and analyzing the data collected with a view to finding solution to the problems already stated in the introduction of the research work so as to achieve the set objectives of the study.

#### 3.1.1 Research Design

The research design basically outlines the activities that are necessary to execute the research project. According to Cooper (2006), a discussion of the research design provides an operational frame, within which facts will be placed, processed through analyzing procedures and valuable research output is produced. The first chapter of the study states that the research work would examine the role of internal communication for organizational performance, taking Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency as a case in point.

Case study enquiry enables us to collect ‘rich’, detailed information across a wide range of dimensions about one particular case or a small number of cases. Strength of the case study approach is its ability to incorporate a variety of different types of data gathered using multiple data collection methods. A sound case study, therefore, highlights the numerous factors governing public relations and marketing communications in a particular context, portraying as appropriate something of their uniqueness or typicality while also – but not always – attempting to offer insights that have wider relevance.

Yin (1994) lists three criteria of deciding if a case study is a proper method for a study. The first criterion is the type of the research questions as case studies point to answer mainly questions such as *how* and *why*. The second criterion is that the researcher does not have nor has little chances to control the events, and the third criterion is that the studies’ topic should be an existing real-life problem.

This thesis study meets well at least two of the three criteria by Yin (1994), as the research questions are “how questions” and the study tries to understand why something is happening, and the topic is a present real-life challenge of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency.

Additionally, as this study is a single case study focused on the role of internal communication in organizational performance with a goal to develop concrete suggestions to a real practical problem, the researcher believe that a managerial as well as employee perspective with a realistic paradigm approach is the most suitable.

In order to answer the research questions sufficiently and better understand the research question, the researcher has decided to do a single case study. According to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005) qualitative research is relevant when the research subject does not have many insights from previous researches. Also, Bryman & Bell (2003) argue that to explore a subject were little is known and the goal is to understand the participants view regarding the subject matter, qualitative method is appropriate. This study follows the qualitative approach in order to gain understanding and explanation of how the employees of AAMMA internally communicate with their management, and how the strategic internal communication system could actually contribute to a better collaboration and cooperation.

This approach is suitable if you wish to investigate in depth a particular case or cases which can be clearly identified as a bounded system. To find out the importance of internal communication, describe the communication network between the organization and its staff, and examining the extent to which the impact of internal communication affects the organization are the objectives of the study, as stated earlier.

The qualitative approach is best suited to conducted studies that aim to address research questions such as the ones this study has outlines. The specific methods of data collection employed by the researcher are stated below.

## **3.2 Data Collection Techniques**

According to Yin (2003) there are six possible types of data collection tools for case studies: document analysis in depth interviews, direct observation, group discussion, and analysis of physical artifacts. For this study hence, the study uses primary data collection

through in depth interview, focus group discussion and document analysis. Both depth interviews and focus group discussions were organized to select employees and management staff members of AAMMA. The reason is that both were more likely to give accurate and honest answers since they experience the internal communication flow on a daily basis.

The key informant for data sources involves selecting and interviewing managers and leaders who were presumed to be the right body on the area of inquiry. The interview took the form of open-ended discussion in which the selected informants were encouraged to air their views on the problem or issue that is under investigation.

The questions for interviews and discussion were crafted earlier and structured in logical order so that interviews and discussions would result in good qualitative data. The first section of the question captures personal data for basic information about employees experience and their work. The second section is related to the internal communication that exists in AAMMA. The next section focuses on the relation between the internal communication and organizational performance. The last section ties to establish the relationships between these variables (internal communication and organizational performance).

### **3.2.1 In-depth Interviews**

In-depth interviews are a major source of data in qualitative research and a way of exploring informant perspectives and perceptions. Traditionally, interviews have been appropriated by positivist researchers as a ‘talking questionnaire’ (Potter and Wetherell, 1987) or ‘a pipeline for transporting knowledge’ (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004: 141). In this sense, the interviewer aims to *extract* information from respondents to suit the purposes of the investigation.

Interview allows the interviewer to have a conversation with the interviewees about something of mutual interest and can be less threatening than other techniques. Even though there are a number of qualitative interview types, in-depth individual interview is a versatile approach applied in this study. It enables the researcher to question the respondents deeply

about the research problem. The personal nature of interview provides researchers with both benefits and potential determinants in conducting survey (Frey et al, 1991).

AAMMA is administrating a large number of employees. As it is stated previously there are symptoms that the communication between the management and its subordinate employee's needs to be addressed (a study which was conducted to come up with new TV as well as Radio format, 2018).

Interviews are an appropriate method to use to understand that interviewees use as a basis for their opinions and beliefs about the communication system taken place. The researcher believes that depth interview helps to notice the step-by-step logic of a situation; And to develop an understanding of the participant's working environment so that the study might influence it, as in the case of critical or action research.

Individual interviewees were purposively selected and interviews were conducted with twenty people from eight main and supportive departments. Including all the management members will take part in the task.

### **3.2.2 Focus Group Discussion**

Focus group interviews foster an environment for participants to discuss particular topics of interest to the group and/or researcher. Focus group discussions were carried out to find out how employees actually feel about the communication process and what their experiences were like.

The focus groups gave the chance to raise the topics that were not thought of beforehand. As the majority of the personal interviews were conducted after the focus groups, some of the themes and questions that arose in the focus groups were added in the interview tool. From the beginning focus group was selected as a method to collect data with the purpose of feeding questions and information for the personal interviews.

The personal interviews gave good personal insights into the issues and during the focus groups discussions about issues among the different target audiences appeared to be quite active.

For the primary data collection personal interviews from the different management levels as well as the communication practitioners were selected. For the focus groups employees with high work experience and former employees of AAMMA who had been working till last year were included. The participants of the focus groups have very different backgrounds and ways of thinking and operating which made the focus group discussions lively and resourceful

For both, the personal interviews and the focus groups, an interview question matrix was used to guide the conversation and discussions. The interview guide includes questions that were that created with the help of the literature review before the interviews and focus groups were conducted.

### **3.2.3 Document Analysis**

Secondary sources of data were collected from relevant materials found in plans, reports, assessments, and other documents on internal communication and performance. The 2018 study of the agency which was conducted by the ‘study’ team was one of the documents referred by the research. The agency’s Budget and Audit Department had conducted brief survey to understand the level of satisfaction with the activities of the management. The researcher found that the department has been working on the organizations activities and employee engagement. The researcher will also able to get relevant material from a variety of end of course theses and unpublished works and made sufficient use of the internet.

## **3.3 Population and sampling frame**

### **3.3.1 Population**

Target population comprised of purposively selected employees of AAMMA (at all levels of service). AAMMA has 400 employees and other non permanent workers in 8 different departments. Basically for the study being conducted, the management staff as well as the most significant personnel. The targeted respondents are then from all levels of employment i.e. from low level, middle level staff and top management.

### **3.3.2 Sampling Techniques and Procedures**

As discussed earlier, the aim of the qualitative research is to understand, from within, the subjective reality of the study participants. This will not be achieved through surface knowledge about a large, representative sample of individuals. Rather we want to reach out to people within the study area who can share their unique view of reality, so that all slices together illustrate the range of variation within the study area. The researcher attempted to obtain sample that appears to him/her to be representative of the population. Hence, the study used the purposive sampling technique

Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton 2002). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011). Thus, the research which was conducted on AAMMA engaged employees of the agency that were selected purposefully.

The agency has 8 departments which encompass above 400 employees. The researcher conducted 20 personal interviews. As it's discussed previously the management staff members as well as other selected staff members participated in the FGD and individual interviews. All of the participants had actively participated in the role the involved some kind of communicative and/or coordination task

Samples are very important in research because it is not practicable for a researcher to study the whole population. In other words, samples are preferable because they are cheap and quicker. This study used purposive sampling because it gives a chance for the researcher to apply the expertise knowledge to select samples which he/she thinks represent the population.

During the preface of the study, the researcher found out that the new management of AAMMA has interest on this research to be conducted. Thus, the management permitted the researcher to conduct FGD and in-depth interviews with the managers and employees as well as document analysis towards internal communication practice of the agency.

The interviewees were chosen for the following reasons: Both the managers and employees of the agency are those who are experienced as well carrying the role of motivators and informants in their departments. Internal and external success of the agency is dependent on the motivation and active engagements of the managers and employees, who are often as mediators between management and employees of the agency.

The focus groups brought together participants working for core and support departments of the agency. This was chosen with the aim to tackle the limited time constraints and resources. According to Dymon and Holloway (2002), group of the population/sampling is an optimum for conducting interviews within limited time constraints and resources.

The above definition of the strata/group of population was applied as follow:

- Five interviewees represented the group of department managers that were employed before the re-structuring of the new management
- Three interviewees represented the group of department managers that were employed for less than two years in the agency.
- Eight interviewees represented the group of employees that have been employed before five years.
- Four interviewees represented the group of employees which had two years of experience in the agency.

A total of twenty interviewees were chosen purposefully and organized in four groups as stated above. The availability and relevance of interviewees, limited resources and time determined the researcher to limit the sample size to be twenty.

The researcher then planned to conduct four focus group discussions. Each of the group had its own homogeneous participants with about six up to ten members. One discussion group hosted News Room reporters. This group represented the majority of the journalistic staff members. The second FGD composed of Radio and Program team. Experienced employees from the Press department took part in the third FGD. The last group encompassed employees having administrative or advertorial (in media word) role.

Each of the four focused group included from six up to ten experienced participants who could speak about the internal communication patterns within the agency.

### **3.4 Research Procedures**

Based on the research objectives, the interview and FGD questions were primarily prepared. The four FGDs were conducted firstly. This helped the researcher to have an understandable view on the agency regarding the communication between the management and its employees. Then, the interviews were conducted and the responses were properly taken and organized later. During all the group discussions and interviews, the researcher relied either on taking note, and recording. On the average, each of the group discussions took about 30 minutes interviews took 15 minutes per interviewee. Documents regarding the internal communication and organizational activities and performance were addressed and analyzed having data from both primary sources. Finally, all the data was interpreted and analyzed.

### **3.5 Method of Data Analysis**

After conducting the FGD and individual interviews; the researcher analyzed the notes and prepared the full report. Both the group discussions and the interviews were analyzed using themes that emerged from the research objectives. The key statements, ideas, and attitudes were then expressed under various themes. Thematic analysis refers to category segment/strata of qualitative data into meaningful (significant) themes. It aims to understand and know the data. When data is analyzed by theme or strata, it is called thematic analysis (Braun, V. and Clarke, V., 2006).

Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research. It helps in identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2006).

Finally, the written data was translated from Amharic to English and then, analyzed by grouping similar responses together. The data has been presented in a narrative form.

## **Chapter Four**

### **4.1 Analysis and discussion**

The proposed case study aims at obtaining a clear image of the importance of internal communication within Addis Ababa mass media Agency. It also tries to identify the main means of communication used among employees and find out the employees' as well as management staffs' opinion regarding the efficiency of the communication system taking place. The research highlights the way in which the flow of information is enforced, in order to fulfill the strategic objectives of the organization.

To achieve the goals/objective set for this case study, the researcher created a depth interview, organized focus group discussions as well as document analysis through which the study tried to capture all the aspects of the way in which information is transmitted inside the company and how the lack of an well-organized internal communication system affects the decisional process and performance.

#### **4.1.1 Data analysis**

To come up with a reliable data which seek to show how internal communication plays a vital role for organizational performance, the researcher employed three basic sources: interview (depth), organized focus group discussions and documents.

All the primary data, both the personal interviews and focus groups, were recorded and transcribed to ensure that all the details will be preserved through the analysis phase. I familiarized myself with the data by reading the transcriptions and by listening to the recordings. Afterwards, I created notes and writes-ups for all the data separately and then combined all the data in relation with the study objectives and research questions. Therefore, I identified common themes, patterns and expressions and coded them accordingly. The data from the interviews and the focus groups were combined if they were similar, and compared when the data were different as stated earlier.

Interviews were conducted firstly. Focus group discussions arranged then and analyzing documents taken place lastly.

All the other secondary data from reports and briefed studies were solely analyzed by me, and after a constructive interpretation of the empirical findings the results are presented and analyzed in the next section.

The data are discussed according to the research questions which were directly derived from the research objectives.

## **4.1.2 Empirical findings**

In this subchapter, the empirical findings of the interviews and the focus groups as well as the information from the secondary data are presented. The themes of how the findings are presented are inspired by the main topics of the interview matrix in use.

### **4.1.2.1 Internal Communication system in AAMMA**

As of now Addis Ababa mass Media Agency, has its own Public Relations section physically. Previously till 2017 the head of the section was part of the management council even if had a proactive role. Referring various data sources its bodily active but dwarfed enough in doing its own task.

Every activity of the employees worked and needs to be accomplished as soon as possible. Timely News and programs seek sharp flow of information. The environment in Addis Ababa Mass Media is the replica of such type.

Every day the employees and management staff of AAMMA use multiple communication forms.

According to information obtained in house CEOs prefer traditional forms of communication, e.g., meetings of the Board or sitting of the Supervisory Board. Their agendas include comprehensive presentations on the company strategy, the current market situation and competition. However, the aim of the meetings is also to enhance the managers' involvement in the implementation of the strategy and their understanding of its crucial role in achieving common goals.

According the interviewees and group discussion participants, the current system of corporate communication is weak, although they pointed to a few shortcomings. On average

almost all of respondents felt that the existing system is not properly adjusted to the profile of the company and works perfectly. A similar distribution of responses appeared in the question about the level of satisfaction, because none of the employees who took part in the study declared satisfaction with the system of corporate communication and rated it as effective.

One of the respondents from News department which is the busiest section of the agency states he cannot taste the flavor of the communication system.

“When there are many editorials to be produced and aired, for instance campaigns, special events, live transmissions...all the heads of the department and top level management members will have a nose to nose relation. On the other day no one is around you. Even we have no idea that whether we have a meeting or other sessions. The only mechanism that we discussed about our previous works and next mission is morning brief.

A morning brief is a daily meeting between reporters/producers and editors as well as department heads some times. Evaluating the quality of editorials, the way of reporting, pointing out the next task with the better means of reporting and so forth are basic missions of the session. Reporters and producers participating in the depth interview and group discussion tip that the brief meeting has a chance to have a dialogue with their heads of staff.

Regarding the communication systems used at AAMMA, newly Addis Media Network (AMN) the responses of the top management confirmed downward, upward, horizontal and vertical communication systems are used. They also include formal and informal kinds of communication. Added to this, the respondents indicated the system of communication mostly used for official purposes is formal communications while informal communications are adopted as and when they become useful and can also change behavior.

The interviewees agree on that the agency communication system highly affiliated with formal methods. The internal communication approaches practiced in AAMMA are mostly under Erikson's (1992) categories of communication within organization: - work, news and control communications. According to employees and three top management respondents, AAMMA has less attention to so called change and culture communications. Erikson's thought argue that both communication features will give a chance to bring a

feeling of belonging to the employees, which increases motivation and the desire to put in an extra productive effort hence increasing their performance.

#### **4.1.2.2 Internal Communication Channels Used in AAMMA**

For an organization to facilitate its internal communication there are several media or channels to be utilized. AAMMA employed organizational communication methods which are categorized under oral communication in meetings and conversations, written communication through, internal magazines and newsletters, as well as electronic communication through Intranet and email.

While interviewing and discussing the top management and employees formal channels dominate decisively. It means that message is distributed mostly through officially designated channels, often representing the hierarchy of subordination. Only Three department respondents News, Program and Press mentioned face to face contact with the heads of staff and other employees while editorial councils corporate newspaper, notice board, and newsletters used tools of communication in the company. Among four group discussions three of them agree that the communication system with that of the editorial departments and advertorials is not parallel asymmetrical. Three medium departments, News, program as well as Press are that of editorial departments. Finance, Human resource, Administration, and Budget departments are known as advertorials. As the respondent argument those three bodies of the agency had many issues to connect though. Editorial concern; mostly they share same medium perspectives and the place that the three department stationed. Almost all the interviewees of Press department felt that they are lonely raising the above reasons.

Respondents felt that the most effective and preferred communication tools for their company are direct communication. Meetings (morning brief and editorial councils), reports and group discussions are frequently used channels. It has also been found that Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency rarely uses such forms of electronic communication as social media. When contacting their immediate supervisors the employees were more frequently involved in face to face conversations during conferences and meetings, which allowed them to ask questions and raise problems.

The vast majority of employees believed that instructions and messages provided by managers were sometimes clear and easy to understand (39%) or usually vague and difficult to understand (56%). Only 5% of respondents stated that they always understood these messages. Probably such a high level of message comprehension results from the fact that employees are informed in meetings, so they can directly ask questions if they need clarification.

According to the employees of the News department there is an access that information is delivered or accessed electronically. Electronic channel (Telegram) is used to transmit critical and urgent messages, especially that of daily editorials. Other instruments of internal communication that are regularly used include a telephone and face to face contact with the team leaders and casually with department heads. As the employees' statement, this works only for editorial bodies, News room, Program and radio. Other departments have no opportunities to do so. One interviewee from the marketing department said "sometimes we don't feel that we are part of the agency. Our department heads and other top management staff come to us if they do have something to say so. There is no way to give our opinions regarding many issues."

The fact that many employees' of Press and Finance are not sure concerning ideas often sent to the senior management get feedback.

#### **4.1.2.3 Communication Process and Participation**

The third theme established in the analysis of the interview is the communication with top bosses is usually at the dying minutes. This theme revealed the lack of mutual understanding between the managers, supervisors and their subordinates which is affecting employee behavior. In describing the reasons behind this behavior, the participants in the finance, administrative, and managerial department explained it to be:

Communication with top bosses is usually at the dying minutes and as such, there is no mutual understating within the communication structure of the organization. As someone in the finance department, I need to have an every time communication concerning the income and expenditure and how it is been disbursed or distributed. Sometimes I just follow instructions because there is not much I could question and I

am solely an employee who fears for the loss of my job. There is not much I could do regarding the lack of mutual understanding. As a manager, I try my best to ensure I communicate to the subordinates the little way I can.

In a clear understanding, this theme revealed the root cause of the internal communication barriers within the organization has to do with the lack of mutual understanding within the communication networks such as the (upward, downward and horizontal communication) of the organization. There is no walking relationship with top bosses and as such, if one cannot communicate with their managers and supervisors then, there is bound to be lapses in the communication patterns of an organization.

According to the data comes from the group discussion, the communication process taking place in AAMMA is more or less hierarchal type. Communication from the top management to the subordinate staff which is categorized under downward communication has the prior system.

According to Katz (1978), *downward communication* follows the pattern of authority and descends through the hierarchical levels and is the traditional one-way communication found within a formal structure. The information that is transmitted downward is related to the employee's tasks and performances, and information about procedures and practices. Hence, the communication process and participative

#### **4.1.2.4 Internal Communication Challenges**

The main theme that emerged in the interview is the communication line within the organization is thin. All the participants that were interviewed agreed and described in details about how their organization is lacking in effective communication. According to Conrad (2014), bad communication within organizations causes the majority of the work problems resulting to communication barriers. The participants believed that effective communication within organizations creates a safe working environment which makes work more productive. As one of the participants in the finance department described:

In my organization, there has not been a high level of effective communication. The communication line is thin. Information is not been clearly communicated to the people and when you are trying to figure out what to do there is a change of plan in the

message received. This is causing a lot of communication gap not only within the finance department but also around the organization.

From the above statement, it shows that effective communication is a great obstacle challenging the organization. All the participants believed that effective communication is a way of freely disseminating information among persons. In line with the research questions examined by the interview and organized focus group discussions, this final theme revealed the ultimate root cause of the internal communication barriers within the organization. The managerial participants do not speak much about this part, but much was revealed by the participants in the finance and the administrative department of the organization. The respondents believed that the leadership style, character and much more are all the root causes of the internal communication barriers within the organization.

As one respondent mentioned the management's less capability as well as effort as the root cause of poor internal communication system. On his word says "The leadership style, as well as the negative ego of the managers, is also posing as the root cause. This is attaching so much importance to self and been blindfolded to the ideas of the people."

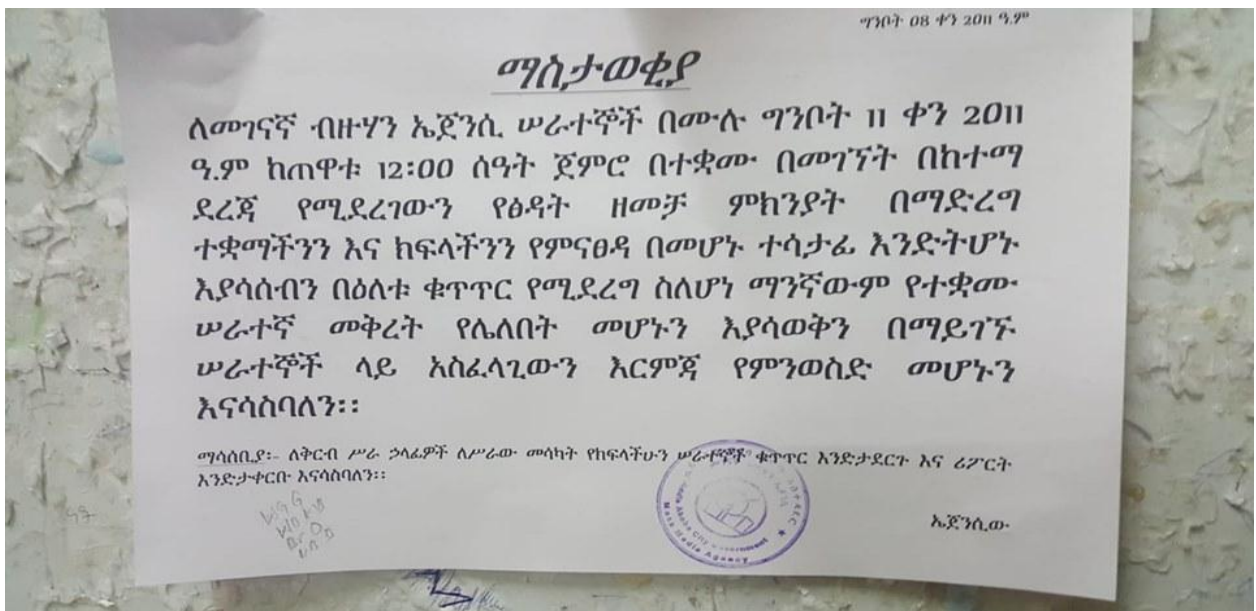
Similarly, the two participants in the finance department identified another root cause of the internal communication barriers within the organization as:

The lack of organized meetings and to share ideas is a big problem. Also, the lack of welcoming feedback to see ways to improve the organization, and not creating good enough room for the people to air their views or partake in the management decisions of the organization. There are a lot of leadership styles and different people think they could actually exercise their rights the way they can. Autocratic leader or a dictator where my final say must count poses a lot of problems. This type of leadership affects the organization from growth which is the type we are practicing.

Respondents who were unhappy with the existing situation named the following problems: domination of formal over informal communication, lack of appropriate communication tools, information overload and shortage of good team leaders.

The most valuable messages or remarks are accessible on notice boards. The respondents thought that they are easily available. Each department has its own notice board that simply transmitting the proper note. But one respondent from the Press section says some times the messages would post with irritative features and commands. Some times when I look the notes posted on the board, I became nervous that led me to be confused. I thought that some posts are written not seem to give an awareness rather to frighten the employees. In such regard I don't imagine what is needed to be addressed but what the next measure comes next if I am not agreed with that.

Regarding the communication tools, the researcher observes the contents of the pieces of written works posted on the notice board. And have got one latest post which strengthens what was felt by the respondent.



The above picture taken by the researcher shows the constraints relating to language and semantic problems. In the review part Ludlow and Panton (1992) extends this point further by presenting a number of constraints that might affect internal communication processes in an organization and hence result to low productivity and performance. They identified such a word meaning and interpretation as “*semantic problems*” i.e. problems that occur when people use the same word in different ways. This is thus bound to cause misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the information or message being communicated.

The other problems they proposed is the implementation of a training scheme in the field of communication for employees, more regular and concise meetings and forms of informal communication such as social events. Respondents felt that this could be a good way to combat ineffective communication, which so far had not been frequently organized. Three top management members agreed those are a serious and very common problem and the main reasons they indicated included: the lack of face to face contact, poor circulation of information, and structural communication problems.

In all, the respondents and group discussion participant points out the concluded root cause of the internal communication barriers within the organization can be diversified into different classes: a) the lack of not been in contact with direct bosses, b) not believing that employees can make decisive effective decisions, c) lack of staff meetings which can help point out some of these barriers, d) and the leadership style or practice within the organization.

#### **4.1.2.5 Internal Communication and Organizational Performance**

It should be noted that malfunctioning communication can weaken or invalidate the effects of measures taken in order to shape employee attitudes and interpersonal relations, trainings and professional development. Communication errors can lead to loss of mutual trust, delays in the implementation of the plans and to obtain a genuine commitment of employees to the activities undertaken by the organization (Winkler, 2008).

All the four discussion participants explained that questions about how they felt their work was going were interesting to them. The interviewees appreciated the proactive approach employed by their managers during their interaction on daily business at the morning brief which have an improvement chance. Although the interviewees had positive things to say about their work relationships with their managers, they described how miscommunication had affected AAMMA experience in the past.

They said the problems occur when managers sometimes fail to listen to their opinions and read their feelings on various issues of operational issues. The interviewees said they appreciate the opportunity to talk face-to-face with their managers like the morning brief and editorials, even if other departments couldn't fulfill on it. These employees articulated that,

the degree of openness in that face-to face discussion depended on the willingness of their managers to engage with them.

They all agreed that it was obvious which managers were truly “open” to give and take opinions and which managers were not able to handle openness as well. The interviewees described the heads of departments were in most cases were open-minded and willing to listen to their subordinates. Whenever they have an issue, they just go to talk to them and the door is always open.

As a result of communication in AAMMA, the respondents and participants also argued the opportunity to get feedback from their managers on their job performance. They believe that this absent feedback suffers, however, when the agency is under stress, such as busy staffs, under achievement etc. They also feel that smooth communication between the employees served to enhance their own experience as well as their customer’s experience. The way we interact with each other, the feeling is different when you have those colleagues that are happy when they come to work and they love what they are doing.

The interviewees agreed that the favorite part of their job is the people they interact with both their managers and peer staff members, and they believe that good communication is important for the work environment and the customer environment. The final theme the employees described was the way their actions affect their activities and performance as a whole.

Fifteen out of twenty interviewees believe the communication style or ability would influence their relationships with their work.

They also described a connection between the ways they worked with their staffs and how it affected their performance:- “We all come from different places and we all share different experiences with each other. So we think people see that and that they think it is an easy job”. The interviewees understood that their work behavior directly influenced how their reporting and production perceived by the viewers and listeners. As a result, they felt they were aware that they were highly visible in communication and activities. Overall, the employees believed that their actions on their jobs affected by the communication approach by their management and environment as well.

Finally, the interviewees and group discussion members were very aware that a positive communication experience could enhance not only their own activities, but their company's performance as well.

Having such a descriptive data from the employees, the researcher tried to check it with annual reports on performances. Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency has been working with evaluating the overall feeling and intention with a slight study. This was conducted by the Budget section annually. This is the best experience that the researcher observed. Both two of the consecutive 2009 and 2010 local calendar reports of study on employment study then shows the employees of AAMMA is less satisfied regarding the communication between their managers.

The first report was conducted questioning 263 employees of the agency. The questionnaires were about the satisfaction status of the employees on the activities of the agency. On the second section question number 12 (page 13) asked the employees how they are satisfied with the communication with their heads of staff. Among the 263 the satisfied ones were 54 or 20.5 %. 19% of the employees give a middle grade for the question and 55% of the employees gave their answer that categorized under unsatisfied.

In relations with feedback from the management 115 employees or 43.7 of them sort the feedback process as poor. Among the randomly selected employees the satisfied are only 2.7%.

Regarding the communication system and their activity and organizational performance, almost more than half of the employees thought that their efficiency and performance is directly related with the healthy or blur relation with their immediate bosses.

The same questionnaire rose for randomly selected employees in the next year 2010 Ethiopian calendar. Little difference was come in the study. Less than half employees were satisfied with the communication system with the management (47.9%).

The 2018 agency's study to come up with new Television and Radio format, tried to grasp the employees and management relations data. On the SWOT analysis part the study got the fact that the relations between them need to be addressed well. The communication gap

was among the prior constraints and threats. As the researcher stated at the problem statement chapter this point became the sprint for this study.

With respect to the view on the potential of communication to improve organizational performance in AAMMA, the management interviewees agreed effective communication can be compared to “blood throughout the veins” for the organization. In addition, they indicated employees’ performance is based on the kind of communication disseminated to them. Therefore information sent to supervisors of employees must be complete, concise, correct, clear, timely, direct to the receiver, and reliable, among others. Also, information must freely flow from all departments since they are working towards a common goal. Communication is further enhanced by instantaneous feedbacks.

The top management interviewees indicated that information delay in dissemination is a challenge to communication within sections. Communication set back within units also delay work. On the other hand, there is also a high level of communication overload caused by the presence of numerous directives coming from a single source demanding similar information. Effective communication is further hampered by poor feedback from headquarters as well as a lack of a communication policy according to the commissioners.

Finally, commissioners were asked to make suggestions to improve the situation. The commissioners stated quality communication patterns can help achieve effective employee performance. In addition, selective listening must be avoided. In other words, information from all angles must be accepted. Moreover, all messages must be clear, concrete, concise, and complete. Lastly, they suggested the adoption of other forms of communication as and when they become necessary.

Each and every activities and satisfaction level of the employee has a huge impact on the organizational performance. The study reflects such a direct linkage between communication system and organizational effectiveness. This is an affiliate argument with Beirut, (2003) statement. He states that performance is referred to as being about doing the work, as well as being about the results achieved. It can be defined as the outcomes of work because they provide the strongest linkage to the strategic goals of an organization, customer

satisfaction and economic contributions. Jain, Apple & Ellis (2015) defines Performance is an act or process of carrying out actions and activities to accomplish an intended outcome.

### **4.1.3 Summary of Findings**

This study determined the role of internal communication on organizational performance using AAMMA as a case study. Specifically, the study examined the communication systems present between the management and its subordinates. It also measured the constraints regarding communication between them. In addition, it determined the relationship between organizational communication and performance. Respondents indicated they use face-to-face, telephone, written (memos), email/internet as channels of communication. At other times, grapevines prove necessary channels of communication.

It was also generally evident that employees of AAMMA do not perform well. Moreover, it can be generally inferred from the results that different indicators of employee performance and organizational efficiency correlate with different measures of effective communication.

The study identified selective listening, distraction, time pressure, and communication overload as barriers and breakdowns in the communication systems of AAMMA. Others include information distortion, rationalization and prejudice. Information distortion is indicated by employees as the greatest barrier and breakdown in communication systems. These draw backs have put their own impact on the performance of AAMMA.

The study results showed that communication levels are low. The potential of horizontal communication to coordination in assigned tasks, solve problems, resolve conflicts (Tubbs and Moss, 2008) and generally improve information flow and commitment to duty requires open and candid opinions being shared between and among employees. Although somehow informal, communications as well as encouragements from co-workers more often than not improve worker performance and efficiency. However, they may have a negative implication of “dampening spirits”, discouraging commitment, and eventually reducing efficiency, productivity and output. Hence, even though it is necessary that open and open expressions of views and opinions exist, they must to a large extent serve as effective

communication channels that eventually increase output instead of productivity-efficiency-and-output-reducing “despair”. The implication is that horizontal communication must be improved. Doing so will ensure that systems work well and carry along the objectives and goals of the organization. A situation where one or some departments are far more efficient and effective than others does not promote overall organization output growth. Distortions and omissions in information flows between and among departments must be either eliminated or kept to the least possible.

In such regard internal communication system must be the prior task. Systems theory advocates the interdependence of the various units that make up the system (Bertalanffy, 1988; et al). This is made necessary due to the existence of groups, departments, units, among others which create hierarchies (Miller, 2009). To ensure that systems work, employees should be able to freely exchange information and opinions. This is because, trust and compatibility breeds positive behaviors, ensure smooth communication, which eventually produce positive work outcomes.

Adequacy and accuracy of information is an essential component of effective communication which eventually leads to efficiency, productivity, and output growth (Allen, 1992; et al). Moreover, effective internal communication requires completeness, conciseness, clarity, correctness, as well as concreteness of the information provided. The results showed that completeness, concreteness and consistency of communication significantly affects worker’s performance. Therefore, all needed and wanted information must be made available in downward communications. Knowing what to do and how to do it and do it well motivates commitment to duties and improves performance.

It therefore implies that for any organization to be effective it must make use of adequate, effective, efficient and understandable instrument and channels. It was noticed that in the there are many ways in which the heads of various departments and sections. For example; text messages, memos, emergence meetings, circulars, queries and face to face dialogue. Likewise it was observed that communication techniques have enhance the performance of staff in terms of their relationship with the various sections, departments, employees and the organization as a whole. This is evident in the most of the staff both so called editorials as well as compel with the innovations, rules, and goals lead down.

It is clear that the breakdown in communication is as a result of misunderstanding, lack of cooperation, wrong medium used, delayed information, information overload and personal bias.

The research identified the problem of enhancing the organizational performance through internal publics' relationship management capabilities (Customer interaction management Capability and Customer relationship upgrading Capability) in the presence of high media competition. The findings show that, internal communication management capabilities had positive relationship with organizational performance and customer interaction management capability had positive relationship with organizational performance.

The former Addis Ababa Media Agency, newly named Addis Media Network, aspires to be one of the accepted best media institutes in Africa. This ambition has less than 3 months to be evaluated. As of now Addis Media Network is striving to compete with the local competitors. The past two years study of Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority showed that the media network have not been seen among ten media institutes which are good viewers and listeners. Letting for future enquiry, the plan that was drafted to be attained within five years was something a dream not a mission indeed. The study found out that this is because Addis Media Network, the former Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency, had less attention to its employee's communication and motivation

# Chapter Five

## 5.1 Conclusion and recommendations

### 5.1.1 Introduction

The study was carried out to determine the role of internal communication on organizational performance in case of Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency. This chapter therefore presents the overall conclusions of the study after which recommendations are made.

The research has shown that effective internal communication should be highly recommended to every organization in all the sectors of the economy. Any management both government establishment and private that is desirous of ensuring the success and efficiency of its workforce, should be conscious of implementing effective communication programmes to their employees for better performances. Therefore, effective communication process should be

### 5.1.2 Conclusions

It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of a communication system in an organization, because, says Jaska and Werenowska (2010), on their study on the effectiveness of internal communications, in practice, there are no precise measurement instruments. It is worth to recall the opinion that a communication system is effective if it does not just pass the knowledge on what should be happening in the company, but by providing information that makes things happen and this is the ideal which companies should follow.

This study investigated the role of effective communication on organizational performance using AAMMA as a case study. Specifically, it examined the communication systems, measured the performance of employees, and identified the most useful channel of communication from the employees' point of view, and identified barriers and breakdowns in the communication systems of the organization. Finally, it determined the relationship between effective organizational communication and organizational performance.

From the results, the communication systems frequently used include face-to-face, telephone, written posts, with the most useful channel of communication being formal tools. Distraction, time pressure, communication overload, information distortion, and prejudice are identified as barriers and breakdowns in the communication systems. Finally, various employees' performance indicators are found to correlate with varying measures of effective organizational communication. The results proved the significance of communicating with consistency, concreteness and completeness on the performance of employees in Addis Media Network.

The study shows that in Addis Media Network the dominant forms of communication and transmission of information rely on traditional channels. This confirms the research assumption that contemporary contacts have been dehumanized as indirect communication to a large extent dominated direct, face to face contact. Unsustainable and limited direct contact was also recognized as the major cause of conflicts and disagreements (EwaJaska, Agnieszka Werenowska, 2010)

The communication process in a company like Addis Ababa mass media agency is therefore an essential management tool, a particular complexity of the management system. The role of internal communication as a management tool is to facilitate relationships between people, to establish an environment beneficial to the internal development and efficiency of the organization. Managers must be aware that perseverance in learning how to communicate should be a top priority for them, being the main skill which they must acquire or refine to obtain the expected results set in the company's objectives.

### **5.1.3 Recommendations**

The correlation found between measure of effective internal communication and organizational performance implies there should be improved efforts at ensuring information provided by management.

Therefore,

- It would be worthwhile to consider establishing the strategic internal communication system, the code and rule regulating the use of communication channels, which would

result in more frequent face - to - face contacts, both among employees and between top management and subordinates.

- Another recommendation would be to consider organizing team building or social events, as well as training schemes to strengthen employees' identification with the organization, their understanding of the company's mission and vision as well as their cooperative skills and ability to communicate effectively.
- The Management of AAMMA, newly Addis Media Network, should also take into account the possibility of carrying out a communication audit to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system of communication and recognize the preferences of workers in this area (Tworzydło, 2013).
- Finally, it is important for an organization to use communication tools in a consistent and coordinated manner to provide its employees with basic knowledge about the company and the market in a simple and effective way and help senior management and employees communicate without difficulties and barriers.
- Organizational performance can be further enhanced if bottlenecks in the communication systems are either removed or kept at their least. Particularly, information distortions caused by omissions and exaggerations must be addressed by both management and employees. There should be fewer distractions during communications in order to reduce or remove selective learning. Added to this, management must avoid communication overload because it reduces clarity in communication. Even though open and candid communication is encouraged, it is recommended that such communications come with courtesy and consideration, and without malice or prejudice.
- Timely delivery of information will also reduce time pressure on employees which more often than not reduce efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, and output. When information is delivered on time, it gives room for clarity to be sought to ensure concreteness and correctness.

- Feedback must be encouraged. Information flow should not only be downward but must be upwards too. This will result in understanding, compatibility, display of positive behaviors, and smoothness of communication, produce positive outcomes, elicit positive non-verbal communication, and ensure employees adapt to messages communicated.
- Consequently, all staff members should key into the communication, training and retraining system to increase their performance in their responsibility. A result driven-communication is also recommended since it gives room to measure results and performance as the communication process within the organization and this in turn impacts on decision making, problem solving as some of the issues undergo a bureaucratic process and this slows down the dispute
- Another strategy that was recommended by the researcher for changes in the communication practices of the organization is the creating of the habit of welcoming feedback. In a recent literature (Kang & Sung, 2016) said any organization, manager or boss who is a good listener and entertains feedback will be more likely to have employees who can identify and solve work-related problems. The entertaining of feedback provides employees with an avenue to express their opinions or ideas concerning their needs and challenges which in turn can boost their work morale. This type of attitude shows that the management takes and value their ideas or opinions very seriously.
- The researcher also recommended the approach of being transparent or open to communication. Employees are one of the most internal stakeholders and a strong critic of organizational internal policies. According to (Bekele, 2017; Besterci and Hazel, 2014; Odine, 2015) the focus of any internal communication is the assurance employees have the support of actively participating in organizational decisions and how they understand it can impact on their work. Bharadwaj (2014) strategy on employee participation in the decision-making planning of organizations shows those employees who participate in the decision-making process of organizations creates room for information exchange and show more communication satisfaction.

- Leaders should embrace the practice of transparent communication as Jiang & Linjuan (2017) literature strongly emphasizes on openness and participation. The literature postulates that any transparent or transformational leaders will be open to different ideas/opinions of the people and encourage employees to participate in the decision-making process of the organization.
- Finally, an open communication environment is one in which all members of the organization feel free to share feedback, ideas and even criticism at every level, thereby encouraging staff to freely give their views without being victimized by the management. Therefore, follow up of information encouraged for organizational performance.

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# **APPENDIX**

## **QUESTIONS FOR FGDs & INTERVEWs**

This study is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Masters of Journalism and Communications (**Public Relations and Strategic Communications**). The research is conducted in the Internal Communications of Addis Media Network.

Thank you for agreeing to provide feedback on your organization's internal communication. This research will help improve internal communication to the organization. All information received would be used for academic purposes only and treated in the strictest of confidence.

**Interview Guide:** for Management Staff members and employees

1. By what systems or forms do you communicate to staff? How would you describe the communication systems in Addis Media Network?
2. What are the channels by which you communicate to staff under you on the job and which of them are useful to you?
3. Briefly explain how communication improves employee performance in the Agency.
4. What should be done to improve organizational performance in the Agency through organizational communication?

### **Discussion questions for Focus group Discussions:**

1. How you feel about the quality of communication you receive in your current position?
2. What channels do you frequently use?
3. By what channels do you communicate with direct supervisor and? Or Immediate Boss?
4. What are the barriers that hinder the communication flow in your organization?
5. To what extent do barriers and breakdowns in communication systems of Addis Media Network are affecting the performance?
6. What should be done to improve employee performance in the agency through organizational communication?