



POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

HAROLD PUPKEWITZ GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Exploring the Effectiveness of Management Communication from and
within the Ministry of Education Head Office, Namibia

Frieda Ndapewa Kanime

Mini-thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Master in Leadership and Change Management in the Harold
Pupkewitz Graduate School of Business at the Polytechnic of Namibia

Supervisor: Prof. Earle Taylor

October 2014

Declaration

I, Frieda Ndapewa Kanime, hereby declare that the work contained in the mini-thesis entitled, *Exploring the Effectiveness of Management Communication from and within the Ministry of Education Head Office, Namibia*, is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university or other higher education institution for the award of a degree.

Signature

Date

Retention and Use of Thesis

I, Frieda Ndapewa Kanime, being a candidate for the degree of Master of Leadership and Change Management accept the requirements of the Polytechnic relating to the retention and use of Master's Mini-Thesis deposited in the Library.

In terms of these conditions, I agree that the original of my mini-thesis deposited in the Library will be accessible for purposes of study and research, in accordance with the normal conditions established by the Librarian for the care, loan or reproduction of mini-thesis.

Signature

Date

Acknowledgements

*“The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing
how to get along with people”*

Theodore Roosevelt

First of all, I would like to acknowledge the Heavenly Father for his inspiration and guidance and for giving me the strength and courage to pursue and complete my studies.

My sincere thanks and gratitude go to all those people who played a vital role in the realization of this Mini-Thesis. In particular, I would like to convey my deepest thanks and appreciation to:

- The respondents from the Ministry of Education Head Office and teachers from Acacia High School, for accepting and giving up their time to participate in the study. This Mini-Thesis would not have been a reality without your participation.
- Mr. Justin Ellis, who so willingly gave up his time to participate in the study and to share his expertise in educational, leadership and management matters.
- My colleagues at the Namibia National Commission for UNESCO, for their moral support, understanding and patience. In particular, I recognize Dr Marius Kudumo, for his mentorship and for influencing my thinking. Your

open door policy, preparedness to listen and to provide advice, contributed immensely to the realization of this Mini-Thesis.

- My mother, my brother Michael, my sisters Martha and Lucy, my brother-in-law Mathew, and my daughter Minah, for their moral and technical support, and for feeding me while I was doing my research.
- Prof. Grafton Whyte and his team, for their technical and professional advice, understanding and patience.
- My supervisor, Prof. Earle Taylor, for his professional guidance and advice, which encouraged me to proceed and complete my Mini-Thesis.
Thank you for believing in me!
- All my colleagues from cohort 2 of Master of Leadership and Change Management, for their excellent team spirit and teamsmanship.

Contents

Abstract	ix
Chapter 1	1
Introduction and Background of the Research	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the Problem	1
1.3 Rationale to the Study	4
1.4 Scope and Significance of the Study	5
1.5 Objective of the Study	6
1.6 Problem Statement	7
1.7 Research Questions	7
1.7.1 Sub-questions	7
1.8 Risks and Assumptions	8
1.9 Format of the Study	9
Chapter 2	11
Literature Review	11
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Role of Organizational Structure	12
2.3 Role of Leadership and Management	14
2.4 Communication Styles and Processes	20
2.5 Teamwork and Interpersonal Relations in the Workplace	25
2.6 Conclusion	29
Chapter 3	30
Research Design and Methodology	30
3.1 Introduction	30
3.2 Rationale for the Study	30
3.3 The Research Design and Methodology	32
3.4 Types of Research and Reasons for Choosing Specific Methods	34
3.5 Target Population	35
3.6 Sampling and Reason for Choosing Particular Method	36

3.7	Research Questions.....	37
3.8	The Research Instruments	38
3.9	Research Process	39
3.10	Planning for the Interviews	40
3.11	Interview Questions	40
3.12	Data Collection.....	43
3.13	Data Processes and Analysis.....	44
3.14	Conceptual Framework	44
3.15	Conclusion.....	47
CHAPTER 4	48
Findings and Analysis.....		48
4.1	Introduction	48
4.2	Participants of the Research Study	49
4.3	Finding: Research questions.....	51
	Research question 1: Efficiency of the structure of the Ministry of Education and performance of staff.....	51
	Research question 2.....	54
	Research question 3.....	57
	Research question 4.....	61
4.4	Analysis	64
	4.4.1 Efficiency of the structure of the Ministry of Education and performance of staff	64
	4.4.2 Leadership and /or Management Styles and Skills, and impact on Quality Service.....	67
	4.4.3 Communication Style, Skills of Senior Management Team, Communication Processes and Channels.	68
	4.4.4 How do the Different Layers of the Staff relate to each other in the Workplace?	69
Chapter 5	71
Discussion.....		71
5.1	Efficiency of the Structure of the Ministry of Education and Performance of Staff	71
5.2	Leadership and /or Management Styles and Skills, and impact on Quality Service	75

5.3	Communication Style, Skills of Senior Management Team, and Communication Processes and Channels.....	78
5.4	How do the Different Layers of the Staff relate to each other in the Workplace? 80	
5.5	Challenges encountered during Data Collection	83
5.6	Conclusion	84
CHAPTER 6	85
Conclusions and Recommendations	85
6.1	Introduction	85
6.2	Conclusions	85
6.3	Organizational Structure	86
6.4	Impact of Leadership and Management on Service Delivery.....	89
6.5	Effectiveness of Communication Styles and Processes.....	93
6.6	Staff Relations in the Workplace	95
6.7	Recommendations	99
6.7.1	General Recommendations	99
6.7.2	Specific Recommendations	100
References	101
Annex	106

List of Figures

Figure 1 Taylor research process model	33
Figure 2 Categories of respondents	51
Figure 3 Perceptions of respondents on the structure of the Ministry of Education	53
Figure 4 Respondents' perception on leadership and Management styles and skills.....	56
Figure 5 Respondents' perception of management communication styles and skills, processes and channels.	60
Figure 6 Respondents' perception on staff relation in the workplace.....	63

List of Tables

Table 1 Research Instruments.....	39
Table 2 Adapted from Heron (2001)	46
Table 3 Categories of respondents.....	50
Table 4 showing views of respondents on the organizational structure.....	52
Table 5 showing perception of respondents on leadership skill, styles and impact on service delivery	55
Table 6 Management Communication Styles and Skills, Communication Processes and Communication Channels	59
Table 7 showing views on how different layers of how staff relate to each other in the workplace	62

Abstract

Purpose – the purpose of this mini-thesis is to explore the Effectiveness of Management Communication from and within the Ministry of Education Head Office in Namibia.

The Ministry of Education has an important role to play in the education of the Namibian people. According to Ministry of Education (2012), the mandate is to educate and train for citizens for national development.

To this end, the study aims at identifying and examining factors that contribute to poor management communication in the Ministry of Education Head Office, and how this impact on staff performance and service delivery to the public.

Design and methodology - the study is a qualitative research, which used a narrative design. Data was collected from staff members and members of the public who have/had a relation with the Ministry of Education. Data was collected through interviews and questionnaire. A desk research was also used.

Findings – An efficient structure is indispensable for a high performance organization. The findings of the study show that the structure of the Ministry of Education is inefficient and does not enhance high performance of the staff, nor does it provide employee growth. Another significant finding of the study indicates that the communication style of the management cadre is aggressive and authoritative, and impact negatively on service delivery.

Key benefits – The study was very important for the Ministry of Education as it identified reasons why the Mandate of the Ministry of Education has not been implemented as required. Furthermore, the study identified challenges faced by the Ministry, and offered recommendations on how these challenges could be addressed.

Key words – Communication Styles, Communication Skills, Leadership Skills, Management Skills, Organizational Structure, Teamwork, Internal Communication, Interpersonal Relations.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background of the Research

1.1 Introduction

The Ministry of Education is one of the key Government institutions in the country given the high national priority on education and training and annual budget allocation. However, the Ministry is faced with numerous challenges, for example, institutional capacity, poor interpersonal relations, lack of commitment of staff members to implement the policies of the Ministry and poor communication systems, to mention but a few. These challenges impact negatively on the performance of the institution and the services that the Ministry is expected to provide to the public.

The study will address a number of issues that contribute to poor performance of staff members and the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, the study will examine how the different communication styles and processes impact the staff and institutional performance.

1.2 Background to the Problem

The Ministry of Education has undergone many changes, including its name, leadership and management since its establishment in 1990.

In 1995, the Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology (MHEVTS) was created. Shortly thereafter, in 1995, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC) was created after a clear

administration separation between basic and higher education. (National Report, 2004)

In 2005, the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation was created, and combined with the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture and renamed to the Ministry of Education. The structure was approved of by the Public Service Commission in the Office of the Prime Minister in 2006. Ministry of Education Portal. (Ministry of Education, 2004)

In addition to the above systemic changes, the Ministry has also undergone structural changes to comply with government decentralization policy approved by Cabinet and National Assembly in 2006.

The structure and organizational culture of the Ministry at the Head Office as well as at the regional level have been affected. For example, many staff members were deployed to the Ministry of Youth, National Service, and Sport and Culture as a result of these changes.

In 1998, the Ministry of Education embarked upon a Decentralization Programme, in line with broad principles approved by Cabinet and National Assembly. This required the Ministry of Education to delegate and subsequently devolve a wide range of functions, responsibilities, powers and resources to regional and local levels of Government (Ministry of Regional local Government and Housing, 1997).

According to the Education (2012) strategic plan, implementing this decision meant that many experienced staff members had to be seconded to

Regional Councils, while new staff members were appointed to fill new positions envisaged by the Ministry strategic plan. Some long-serving staff members were promoted within relevant directorates at the regional offices as well as at the Head Office.

According to Chung (2012), numerous changes that occurred at the Ministry of Education have affected the staff performance, staff management relationship, interpersonal relations and the quality and standard of services provided by the Ministry. Staff members have developed a culture specific to each directorate, and have formed groups or cliques within the Ministry of Education. Directorates and Departments function as individual entities or stand-alone silos that are not connected or related to the entire structure of the Ministry. Communication channels are not followed according to what is expected and a proper communication process is not sustained.

Senior leaders and managers are new to the Ministry or to their positions. Many directors are also new to the Ministry. As a result, new and old staff members have not yet bonded and do not work together as a team. Other challenges experienced at the Ministry of Education are lack of trust, lack of commitment and poor work ethics, duplication of responsibilities, poor leadership and management skills (Chung, 2012).

The newly introduced re-grading system has brought about additional changes and challenges into the structure of the Ministry. The Ministry had to readjust its structure accordingly in order to accommodate the new changes. For

example, the Under-Secretary positions were abolished and four positions of deputy Permanent Secretaries were created, i.e. Finance and Administration, Formal Education, Lifelong Learning, and International Relations State-Owned Enterprise Coordination (Ministry of Education Strategic plan, 2012).

1.3 Rationale to the Study

The Ministry of Education has an important role to play in the education of the Namibian people as clearly indicated in its mandate which is to educate and train for national development (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The study is very important for the Ministry of Education as it would assist in identifying the reasons why the mandate of the Ministry is not implemented according to what is expected. Furthermore, the study would help the Ministry to address and change the current situation and challenges as identified by Chung (2012) at the Team Building Workshop in December 2012. Among the challenges identified are: lack of trust, poor staff performance, lack of/or poor commitment and motivation, lack of focus, and overlap of responsibilities. These challenges are partly due to inherited structure, and partly due to the refusal of the majority of middle and senior level staff to make decisions, as well as lack of relevant knowledge and skills in educational matters, and thus detracting from the image of the Ministry of Education, which is already portrayed negatively in the Namibian media.

The Ministry of Education receives the biggest share of the National Budget in order to implement its activities in various areas. However, it is not clear why the allocation of funds to various sectors of the Ministry is not done

correctly. Are the relevant budget holders consulted with and given sufficient time to prepare themselves? Why is the Ministry returning huge amounts of money to the treasury instead of spending it on the dilapidated institutional infrastructure for example? Several concerns were also raised by an article that appeared in the Namibian a local newspaper raised concern see (The Namibian, 2013)

The study will benefit the staff as a whole in understanding why there are poor team spirit and poor interpersonal relations especially at the leadership/senior management levels. (Chung, 2012)

It is against this background that the study aims to explore the effectiveness of management communication in the Ministry of Education. The findings of the research would enhance the Ministry of Education leadership and management roles through improved communication, interpersonal relations and teamwork spirit at the managerial levels of the Ministry of Education. Working as a team will enhance openness and trust amongst the leadership and senior management team. As cited by Van Aardt, et al., (2011), teamwork creates a sense of belonging and identity; belonging brings meaning for groups, individuals, and, stakeholders; belonging elicits normative forces that compel players to live up to the values of the team and go an extra mile in search of excellence.

1.4 Scope and Significance of the Study

The Ministry of Education as mentioned earlier in the introduction is one of the biggest Government institutions in terms of budget allocation. Against this background, the study will concentrate on the senior leadership, management and directorates of the Ministry of Education at the Head Office and whether their

managerial communication is effective in implementing the policies and programmes of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education is the backbone of development of knowledge and skills, and imparting of knowledge and skills to its employees through capacity building. This will only occur with the correct managerial communication styles and good employee attitudes and behavior. Dasgupta et al, (2013) state that effective communication is the hallmark of a successful organization. It reinforces the organization's vision, connects employees to the business, fosters process improvement, facilitates change, and drives business results by changing employee behavior.

It is against this background that this study would contribute to the identification of underlying factors and barriers that impede the effectiveness of management communication in the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, this study is crucial for the Ministry of Education as it would serve as an eye-opener for the staff members to understand the importance of communication in all its forms and its impact on the performance of the staff, service delivery, teamwork and interpersonal relations in the workplace.

1.5 Objective of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the quality and influences of communications emanating from the leadership and management of the Ministry of Education and how these impact staff relations, performance and service delivery.

1.6 Problem Statement

The senior leadership and management¹ and some of the directors of the Ministry of Education are new to the Ministry or to their positions. New and old staff members have not yet bonded and do not work together as a team. There is no proper coordination of activities and roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined or practiced (for example, what are the leadership roles as compared to the management roles?).

1.7 Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

The main research questions

- Does the present organization structure of the Ministry enhance efficiency and high performance?
- How do the leadership and management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry?
- What are the main communication styles and processes used by the Senior Management Team and the Directorates in the Ministry of Education?
- How do the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace?

1.7.1 Sub-questions

- What are the roles/functions and responsibilities of the different departments and directorates?

¹ Minister, Deputy Minister and Deputy Permanent Secretaries

- Do the leadership and management of the Ministry of Education have the appropriate skills to render the required service to the public?
- How do the various communication styles and processes impact on the performance of the staff members and implementation of policies and strategies of the Ministry of Education?
- Is there a good team spirit in the Ministry of Education?

1.8 Risks and Assumptions

The study targets senior leadership and management and directors and principal officers of the Ministry of Education, which is a very sensitive level and group in the Institution. At that level, everyone has a very busy schedule that might not allow them to take on any other activity that is not part of their responsibilities. Thus the participation of the senior leadership and management and directors is very crucial for the study, as failure to have their inputs would affect the results of the study negatively. Senior leadership, management and directors are the main respondents to the envisaged questionnaire. For reasons given above, the likelihood that all questionnaires will not be completed and returned is quite high even with extra efforts on the part of the researcher.

Another risk factor is time constraint. The completion of the study depends highly on the availability of the respondents mentioned above. If responses are not obtained in time, the researcher would be faced with limited time to complete and finalize the study.

1.9 Format of the Study

The study explores the effectiveness of management communication from and within the Ministry of Education Head Office in Namibia. The research paper is organized into six chapters.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction and a background to the study. The chapter also gives an explanation of the rationale, scope and significance of the study, the objectives, problem statement, the research questions, and risks and assumptions of the study.

Chapter 2 focuses on the various literatures available and what it say about the effectiveness of managerial communication, leadership and managerial communication styles, communication processes, internal communication, communication skills, teamwork and interpersonal relations in a workplace.

Chapter 3 explains the methodology that was used in carrying out the study and the rationale for choosing this method. It also explains the approach to the interview, sample selection criteria, the data collection strategy through questionnaire and desk review and the rationale for choosing these approaches. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the procedure that was followed in collecting the data for the study.

Chapter 4 presents, in tables and charts the results, data analysis and discussion of the study, and summarizes the responses to the four research questions: Does the present organization structure of the Ministry enhance efficiency and high performance? How do the leadership and management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry? What are the main communication styles

and processes used by the Senior Management Team and the Directorates in the Ministry of Education? How do the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace?

Chapter 5 discusses the key research questions: efficiency of the structure of the Ministry of Education and performance of staff, leadership and/ or Management Styles and Skills, and impact on Quality Service, Communication Styles, Skills of Senior Management Team, and Communication Process and Channels and, how do the different layers of the Staff relate to each other in the Workplace. The chapter also discusses challenges encountered during data collection.

Chapter 6 concludes the study with some key highlights of the findings and provides recommendations based on the aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The review is organized under four sections, namely: a) Role of organizational structure, b) Role of leadership and management, c) Communication styles and processes, and d) Teamwork and interpersonal relations in the workplace. The review aims at examining how the Ministry of Education is structured and whether this structure enhances efficiency and high performance. Furthermore, the review looks at the leadership and management skills and how they impact service delivery of the Ministry, the main communication styles and processes used by the Senior Management Team and the Directorates in the Ministry of Education, and how the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace.

Mouton (2006) identifies scholarship review, as a more accurate term for *literature review*. He argues that the term *literature review* does not encapsulate all that we intend to convey by the term as it would mean a collection of texts. The term *scholarship review* refers to the body of accumulated scholarship, i.e. how other scholars have theorized and conceptualized on issues relevant to the field of a given area of interest.

The purpose of *literature review* is, amongst others, to provide a rigorous and rational review of previous research in your area of study, to identify the gaps in the existent literature and to position your research in that wider context, to ensure that important variables likely to influence your research are not left out of

study, to help develop the theoretical framework and hypothesis for testing, and to avoid reinventing the wheel, trying to rediscover what is already known (Whyte, 2013).

The study includes literature review related to the effectiveness of management communication and the performance of organizations. The discussion will focus primarily on the key themes of the research questions. The key themes of the research questions are: organizational structure, efficiency and high performance, leadership and management skills and impact on service delivery, communication styles and processes, and teamwork and interpersonal relations in the workplace.

2.2 Role of Organizational Structure

In this modern world, for any organization to function effectively and efficiently, it must have a structure with clear roles and responsibilities assigned to the different departments and key staff members. An organizational structure is important because it serves as a mechanism through which decisions are made and communicated to the entire organization for their inputs. It would however, be interesting to understand what is meant by organizational structure.

Martinez and Garcia (2011) define organizational structure as the set of all ways in which the work is divided into different tasks, achieving coordination. It is the formal allocation of work roles and the administrative mechanisms to control and integrate work activities including those which cross formal organization boundaries. The structure reflects the formal scheme of relationships,

communications, decision processes and procedures, and achievement of its objectives.

Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, and Roodt (2009) identify six key elements which managers need to address when they design their organizational structure: **work specialization** (to what degree are tasks subdivided into separate jobs?), **departmentalization** (on what basis will jobs be grouped together?), **chain of command** (to whom do individuals and groups report?), **span of control** (how many individuals can a manager direct efficiently and effectively?), **centralization and decentralization** (where does decision-making authority lie and who is finally accountable for these decisions?), and **formalization** (to what degree will there be rules and regulations to direct employees and managers?).

But how does organizational structure influence efficiency and high performance within the organization?

Atkinson and Butcher (2002) state that trust is a social glue or social lubricant that can hold diversified, global organizational structure together. Furthermore, they state that trust is characterized as a positive force facilitating cooperation and as such fairness, confidence and risk taking are considered three main constructs of trust.

If managers and directors function as a team in an open and trustworthy environment, issues of secrecy that often are barriers to effective communication will not arise. This is probably one of the barriers of effective communication at the Ministry of Education. Ertürk (2007) discusses participative management, a

management style in which the subordinates share a significant degree of decision-making power with their superiors, and the key attributes, i.e. open communication, expression of new ideas, shared vision, common direction, mutual respect and trust. For this kind of working environment to prevail, organizations should have good internal communication and managers who employ an assertive communication style.

2.3 Role of Leadership and Management

The Ministry of Education 'identified five strategic themes (*Teaching and Learning, **Leadership and Management**, Infrastructure, Regulatory Framework and Stakeholder Relation*) as pillars of excellence or key focus areas during the five years period' (MOE, 2012).

But what does the leadership concept entail? Leaders are fundamentally different from managers. Webb, Slagt, and Ewestein (2013), state that managers organize delivery using constrained resources, while leaders achieve breakthroughs in performance and change how people think about what is desirable and possible.

According to Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, and Roodt (2009), leadership is the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of a vision or set of goals. Robbins et al also state that the source of this influence may be formal, such as that provided by the possession of managerial rank in an organization. Avalio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) define authentic leadership as a pattern of transparent and ethical leader behavior that encourages openness in sharing

information needed to make decisions, while accepting followers' inputs. It is the ability to influence and develop people, teams and organizations to achieve a worthwhile purpose.

Matola (2013), CEO of Brand South Africa says that, it is the people you work with who will get you to the finish line, and the journey towards it is co-created by you and the members of your team. Matola also states that you have to be sure to "not demotivate" people, and that you have to keep their eyes focused on what needs to be done.

According to Cacioppe (2000), ethical leaders have strong personal characters and robust principles, allowing them to define a path and lead others along it. Minaar (2011), states that ethical leaders ensure good communication with all stakeholders, including the media and public, and accept responsibility if the organization is at fault.

It is hard to discuss leadership without mentioning some of the key leaders who have influenced politics in terms of their strong leadership skill and style at the national, regional and international levels. Dr. Sam Nuyoma, Former President of the Republic of Namibia and the late Mr. Nelson Mandela, former President of the Republic of South Africa are good examples of the leadership approach as defined by Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, and Roodt, (2009), Avalio, Walumbwa, and Weber, (2009), and Cacioppe, (2000).

Dr. Hage Geingob, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia in a tribute to the late Former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, described Mandela

as a unique, servant, an inspirational leader, and transformational leader (The Namibian, 2013).

Leaders need to create the climate for honest feedback, and need to be able to take it. According to Coats (2013), there are different strategies of receiving feedback within an organization. Coats says that creating a safe place for authentic feedback to be shared freely, creating forums for everyone to be able to share what they experience and talking to as many employees as possible and listen to what they say, are some of the strategies leaders could use to obtain feedback on their leadership and organizational performance.

With regards to management, a concept that is often confused with *leadership*, Burnes (2009) defines *management* as a process of planning, organizing and controlling resources and people in order to produce goods or provide services. Management is objective driven, resulting in stability grounded in rationality, bureaucratic means, and the fulfillment of contractual obligations (Day & Antonakis, 2012).

A competitive organization could prosper if the leadership and the managerial team possess the necessary leadership and managerial skills to lead the organization to greater heights. Of prime importance to the required skills are the communication styles and protocols that would enhance the performance of any organization and its human resources. Chung (2012) stated in her leadership and team building presentation to the management team of the Ministry of Education that the leadership skills required include prioritizing, communication,

delegation, decision-making, dealing with complexity and interpersonal and human interaction skills.

According to Bernhart (2013) there are seven attributes of effective leaders, whether in politics, the military or business: *clear and relevant vision, commitment, competence, decisiveness, empathy (but seldom sympathy) with those who are led, inspiration and self-confidence*. Martinez and Garcia (2011) states that in a high performance organization, people on all levels of the organization maintain trust relationships with others because loyalty is valued, smart people are treated smartly, people are shown respect, a learning attitude is fostered, individual relationships between managers and employees are created and maintained, belief and trust in others are encouraged, and people are treated fairly.

Martinez and Garcia's statement is echoed in a powerful speech delivered in memory of the late Nelson Mandela, and broadcasted live on the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), on 10 December 2013. Barak Obama, President of the United States of America stated that

*"It took a man like Madiba to free not just the prisoner, but the jailor as well; **to show that you must trust others so that they may trust you**; to teach that reconciliation is not a matter of ignoring a cruel past, but a means of confronting it with inclusion, generosity and truth. He changed laws, but also hearts."* (Obama, 2013).

Contrary to the statement above, Hogg and Terry (2013) state that within organizations, trust is something that is optional to followers: people who work in organizations generally *choose* to follow leaders and this cannot be enforced. It is further suggested that the lower the trust is between followers and their leader, the higher is the need to have to manage people and more leadership would be required. Hough et al. further state that earning trust is a function of leader-follower relationships and to build trust between a leader and their followers, the following should be noted. Trust is the foundation for human relationships within organizations. Trust can be built or destroyed by the actions of both leaders and followers. It takes faith, hope and connectedness to want to follow leaders, which would imply an element of risk for both parties. Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, and Roodt, (2009) identify five key dimensions of trust: integrity, competence, consistency, loyalty, and openness.

The citations above suggest that interpersonal relations and interpersonal skills are vital for effective leadership, and hence for efficient service delivery, because organizations are about people and happy people perform well and provide a good image for their organization.

Tilden and Kleiner (2005) state that managing state employees is similar to managing private employees, although there are some differences. They further state that effective managers will acknowledge the differences, seize them, and use them to their advantage.

Private companies or organizations are perceived as having the most skilled managers and hence well-managed employees. However, it suffices to

question, why there are so many complaints and strikes in the private sector?

The media post articles on labor issues in the private sector on a daily basis.

With regards to managing state employees, Tilden et al. also raise an important matter i.e. that of governments being led by publicly elected politicians. To this end, it makes the task of a manager very difficult, because most of the decisions are made and influenced by high political structures. Most of these decisions do not involve the employees. Some managers in the State Government have the necessary skills required to manage the activities of their organizations, but do not have the authority or power to influence decisions, which impact negatively on service delivery. Hogg and Terry (2013) underscore the issue of power in organizations when they state that organizations are internally structured groups that are located in complex networks of intergroup relations characterized by power, status and prestige differentials.

For Webb, Slagt, and Ewestein (2013) it is crucial for organizations to build practical leadership skills in order to improve performance in a sustainable way, so that leadership becomes an integral part of the organization. Webb et al. says that to make sure that leadership development achieves lasting impact, organizations must adopt three core approaches: use performance improvement opportunities within their organizations as the real-life context for learning; build deeper leadership qualities so that leaders have the resilience and self-awareness to sustain major change; and, they should shape a leadership engine that integrates capacity-building within their organization's management processes.

2.4 Communication Styles and Processes

What is meant by communication?

There are many definitions on this subject. O'Rourke (2013) for example, defined communication as the transfer of meaning; a process that involves several basic principles: *dynamic, continuous, circular, unrepeatable, irreversible, and complex*.

Holm (2006) defines the communication process and system as consisting of five essential parts: an information source, a transmitter, a signal channel, the receiver and the destination. Holm also states that the communication process is intentional; a deliberate effort is made to bring about a response each participant must fully understand the meaning of the other communication partner, or there will be no dialogue.

Bambacas and Patrickson (2006) define communication as a process by which information about policies, procedures, finances and customer feedback is conveyed to others in organizations. They also state that the process of communication includes sending messages, listening and providing feedback.

The communication style and language usage are crucial for effective communication processes in organizations. A model of communication by Downs (2013) draws attention to the processes of *encoding* (decide on what and how to communicate) and *decoding* (interpret message) while highlighting the filtering of messages which result in the interpretations of messages that are received. Downs also state that the term "*process*" conveys the general idea that many

components interact together, that the outcomes of these interactions are determined by some unspecified contingencies and that these interactions do not have finite beginnings or endings.

It is important at this stage to acknowledge the fact that managers have different styles of communicating. It depends, however, whether the style that they adopt is effective in adding value to the performance of the organization. Communication style, according to Dasgupta and Singh (2013) is the way in which one verbally, non-verbally and para-verbally interacts to signal how literally meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered or understood.

Zellman (2013) identifies four effective styles of communicating in the workplace: Controller communicator (*bossy and task-oriented*), Promoter (*sociable, appreciate humor with sensitivity*), Supporter (*calm and cool, patient, good listening skills, steady worker who comfortably explore change, who does not like conflict*) and Analyzer (*like facts; detailed –oriented*).

According to Dasgupta and Singh (2013) there are ten different types of communication styles: *dominant, dramatic, contentious, animated, impression-leaving, relaxed, attentive, open, friendly and precise*. These are grouped into three communication styles: *aggressive, passive, and assertive*.

The managerial communication style of the Ministry of Education is a combination of the styles identified by Dasgupta and Singh (2013). However, the dominant communication style especially at the top level is rather the controller style of communication. The latter allows people to be on task and to deliver. This

style of communication would function well in situations and environments where the staff members are not carrying out their responsibilities according to what is expected.

A number of directorates at the Ministry of Education apply the promoter and supporter communication style. Staff members who are led by managers who apply assertive communication style, show high level of motivation and performance. This is because this type of communication style is straight forward and accurate and employees view their manager or director as trustworthy. The directors involve their staff in various activities of their directorates.

It is crucial at this stage to discuss the aggressive communication style at the Ministry of Education, which seems to be used occasionally at gatherings especially at the leadership and top management levels. Dasgupta and Singh (2013) also state that in an aggressive communication style, managers attack or ignore employees' opinions in favor of their own. They express their feelings and opinions and advocate for their needs in a way that violates the employees' rights. It is obvious that this type of communication style is informed by the position that the person holds, coupled with power. Because of this position, very often middle managers adopt the passive communication style for fear of victimization. There is also a question of cultural differences in communication styles, which may create an obstacle to interaction (Jonasson & Luring, 2011).

Some people are aggressive by nature; others are passive, though that should not be seen as a weakness. Language usage can also create a problem

in communication style due to lack of good command of the language in use or choice of words. The aggressive communication style impacts negatively on the performance of any organization or institution, because such style is discouraging and prevents openness and social interaction amongst the leadership and management.

The aggressive communication style could also impact negatively on the communication process at different levels, but also that of the entire organization. When the message is not clear due to the communication style, it might create ambiguity and misunderstanding, and might not reach the intended receiver or might not be acted on as expected. Where effective communication is achieved, employees and their managers build strong relationships. Dasgupta and Singh (2013) state that managerial communication drives relationships and frames the attitudes and behaviors of employees in the workplace. If managers or leaders have the right attitude and behavior, the employees will also have the correct attitude and behavior and will perform their tasks well. Darling and Walker, (2001) discuss four basic behavioral styles: relater, analyzer, director and socializer. They also state that relaters are most likely to use empathy and understanding in interpersonal problem-solving and conflict situations. It is therefore crucial that managers create an atmosphere that is conducive to a healthy and appealing working environment. The study does, however, not discuss the factors that lead to the adoption of different communication styles by managers. If the aim of every manager is to ensure that the organization they work for, outperform other organizations, why do some managers fail through their communication styles?

The performance of an organization is highly dependent on the communication style of its managers and leaders and on the effectiveness of internal communication.

Mazzei (2010) discusses the issue of internal communication, which he defined as communication flow among people within the boundaries of an organization. According to Mazzei, many scholars emphasized that effective internal communication is a prerequisite for a positive external corporate image or reputation.

Image and reputation are very crucial for every organization. The image of Ministry of Education is often tarnished in the electronic and print media as the institution was perceived by the public as underperforming, be it at the Head Office or in the Region. The main culprits are lack of coordination and poor internal communication and communication processes. Managers and leaders should create an enabling environment within their organizations in order for effective communication to occur. When people are not able to communicate effectively internally, they would also not be able to communicate effectively externally. The style which the manager employs could make internal communication effective.

Mazzei (2010) touches on a crucial issue regarding communication as a social process of interaction. Mazzei, however, states that, the responsibility of effective communication does not entirely lie in the hands of managers. Effective communication is a responsibility of all, but nonetheless depends on the

management skills, communication styles and personality, attitude and behavior of managers. The latter should set good examples for their employees in that they are good communicators. When members of an organization, especially at the managerial level, interact in an open, trustworthy and relaxed atmosphere, they tend to relate to each other much better and improve internal communication and processes of the organization they lead. Effective communication is essential for managers and all professionals who are involved in organizational development. It is therefore crucial that leaders and managers work together in order to promote an environment that is conducive to good team spirit, openness and trust.

As discussed earlier the image of an organization is crucial and can only be perceived in a positive light if the internal communication, especially between the management team and the directorates, functions effectively.

2.5 Teamwork and Interpersonal Relations in the Workplace

Teamwork and interpersonal relations are crucial for effectiveness and efficiency in a workplace. To this end, it is important to ask the question: what is understood by teamwork and why is it important in the workplace?

Organizations revolve around people, and for any organization to function effectively, people that staff the organization should be able to communicate and relate to each other as members of one team. In this way they create a friendly and appealing working atmosphere for all, and therefore a competitive organization.

According to Hough, Thompson, Strickland, and Gamble (2011) a combination of traditions, habits, relationships, practices, rules, beliefs and attitudes are characteristics that contribute to the fact that the group members enjoy being around each other. To achieve this positive climate in team setting, open communication between members and leadership is essential. Hough et al. also state that it is essential to create an environment of participation and commitment where all team members are accorded the opportunity to participate, in order for an effective teammanship to prevail.

Schonberger (1994) discusses teammanship and states that it encompasses attributes necessary to achieve teamwork, which is when people work together instead of separately (...) therefore one attribute of teammanship is know-how and determination to breach boundaries. Schonberger also states that teammanship requires not only collecting and organizing information, but also sharing it widely. Schonberg touched on a very crucial aspect of effective communication, which is sharing of information. When members of an organization work as a team, and share information equally, the performance of that organization is enhanced.

According to Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, and Roodt (2009) many organizations have recently restructured work processes around teams, and managers are looking for positive synergy that will allow the organizations to increase performance. Robbins et al also state that teams can contribute to organizations by doing a variety of things: they can make products, provide services, negotiate deals, coordinate projects, offer advice, and make decisions.

Robbins et al identify the four most common types of teams that are likely to be found in organizations: *problem-solving teams*, *self-managed work teams*, *cross-functional teams*, and *virtual teams*. Obviously, these teams might not all appeal to all organizations. Among the four teams, problem-solving teams (members share ideas or offer suggestions on how work processes and methods can be improved, although they rarely have the authority to implement any of the suggestions) could be appropriate to the Ministry of Education.

Cacioppe (2000) states that self-, team and organizational development leads to the creative emergence of spirit. Self-sense or self-system is very crucial for the development of effective leadership and team spirit. You have to understand and lead yourself in order to understand and lead others. Of prime importance in this article are the four facets of reality (internal, external, collective and individual), that enhance team building and spirit in an organization.

Sometimes conflict and misunderstanding happen due to poor listening and communication skills. It does not matter whether the communication style is appropriate or communication processes or channels have been followed. Ucok (2006) brings in an important aspect of communication and states that if we could actually be present to *listen* to each other in the workplace with close attention, much misunderstanding and confusion might be minimized, and may be the amount of time and energy spent on repairing what might have been missed or misunderstood because no attention was paid. Khetarpal and Srivastava (2000), O'Rourke (2013), emphasize *listening* and speaking as crucial. Khetarpal and Srivastava (2000) also state that lack of interpersonal competence in executives

lead to an increase in conformity, trust and dependence among work group members. In turn, these reduce communication effectiveness, increase defensive interpersonal norms, and increase organization rigidity, all of which tend to reduce organizational performance. O'Rourke (2013), further states that talking and listening are the major channels of management communication. An article (*"Ecuador trip dries youth fund"*) that appeared in a local newspaper, the Namibian (2013) provides evidence on how leaders and managers do not listen to each other and do not work together as a team. It is possible that public funds could be put to good use if leaders discussed, listened and communicated effectively in order to enhance good governance.

According to Barrett (2006), managerial communication begins with emotional intelligence in interpersonal skills and an understanding of cross-cultural differences needed to interact effectively with other as individuals or groups. Barrett (2006) also states that listening is an essential skill in any rhetorical situation, but is pictured aligned more with the managerial ring because managing others effectively requires even greater attention to hearing what other say, not simply to what we think we hear them say.

Another aspect that is crucial to effective workplace communication and interpersonal relations is *humor*.

"Managers who use humor to defuse difficult situations may appear more approachable and understanding of the challenges their employees face" (Strategy Direction, 2013).

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided literature review related to the role of organizational structure, the role of leadership and management, communication styles and processes, and teamwork and interpersonal relations in a workplace. The next chapter will discuss the design and methodology that will be used for the study.

Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

What is understood by research methodology and design? According to Mouton (2006) the two notions are often confused, however they present different aspects of the research. Mouton (2006) provides a distinction between the two as follows: a research design focuses on the end product i.e. the kind of study being planned and the result that the researcher is aiming at, while the research methodology focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used.

This chapter discusses the design and methodology that will be used for the study and the reasons for choosing the design and the method. Furthermore, it explains the approach to the interview, sample data collection criteria, the data collection strategy through the questionnaire and desk review and the reasons for choosing these approaches. The chapter also highlights the procedure that will be followed in collecting the data for the study.

3.2 Rationale for the Study

The Ministry of Education has an important role to play in the education of the Namibian people as clearly stated in its mandate: “*To Educate and Train for National Development*”. Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2004).

This study is very important for the Ministry of Education as it would assist in identifying the reasons why the mandate of the Ministry is not implemented

accordingly. Furthermore, it would help the Ministry to change the current situation by enhancing effectiveness of communication among the staff members especially at the leadership and management level. The study would also assist in building capacity of teamsmanship and thus enhance the image of the Ministry of Education, the performance of the staff members and that of the entire institution.

The Ministry of Education receives the biggest budget to implement its activities in various areas. However, it is not clear why the allocation of funds to various sectors of the Ministry is not done correctly. Are the relevant budget holders consulted and given sufficient time to prepare themselves? Why is the Ministry returning huge amount of money to the treasury instead of spending it on the dilapidated institutional infrastructure for example? An article that appeared on the front page of a local newspaper raised concern:” *Education returns N\$150M ...despite pressing needs, shortages*”. (The Namibian Newspaper, 2013).

Staff members would benefit from the study in understanding why there is poor team spirit and poor interpersonal relations, especially at the leadership/senior management levels.

It is against this background that the study aims to explore the effectiveness of management communication in the Ministry of Education. Findings of the research would enhance the communication, interpersonal relations and teamwork at the managerial levels of the Ministry of Education.

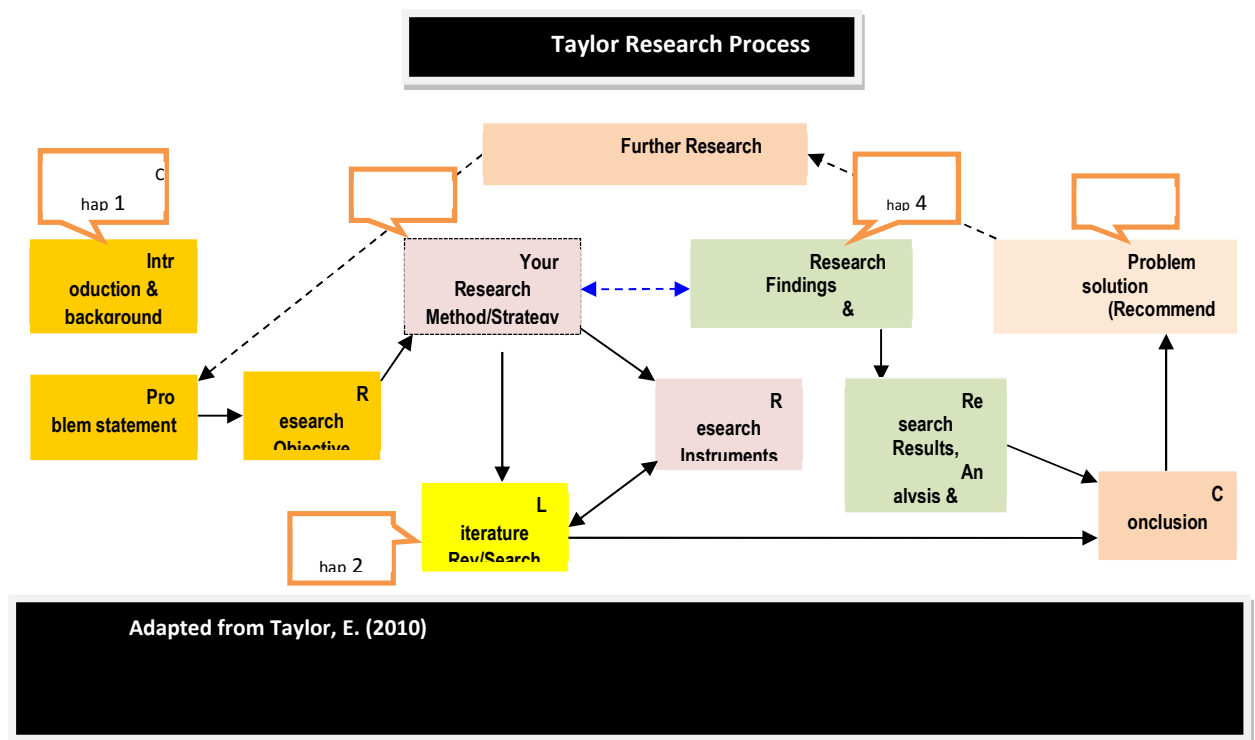
Working as a team will enhance openness and trust amongst the leadership and senior management teams. *“Business interests above self- interest; Teamwork creates a sense of belonging and identity; belonging brings meaning for groups, individuals, and stakeholders; belonging elicits normative forces that compel players to live up to the values of the team and go an extra mile in search of excellence”*. (Van Aardt, et al., 2011).

3.3 The Research Design and Methodology

The study is a qualitative research approach, and will use a narrative design. The research questions of the study were to understand whether the present organizational structure of the Ministry enhances efficiency and high performance, and how the leadership and management skills impact on the service delivery of the Ministry. Furthermore, the research questions of the study aim to uncover the main communication styles and processes used by the Senior Management team and the Directorates in the Ministry of Education, and how the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace.

According to Welman and Mitchel (2005) a qualitative approach covers a number of interpretive techniques which aims to describe, decode and translate the meaning of phenomena that occur in social settings. Therefore, qualitative research is also known as a descriptive form of research. Welman and Mitchel (2005) also state that this approach is focused on the behavioral regularities of everyday situations, for example, relationships between individuals or within groups, attitudes and rituals.

The research method used for the study is based on the Taylor Research Model (Tylor, 2010) as illustrated below:



Data will be collected from various staff members of the Ministry at different levels, i.e. the senior management, middle and operational level through interviews and literature review. Data will also be obtained from partner organizations of the Ministry, e.g. the Unions in order to solicit views outsiders have on the operations of the Ministry, and how staff members relate to each other. Interviews will be collected from individual staff members from different directorates.

3.4 Types of Research and Reasons for Choosing Specific Methods

Creswell (2009) identifies three research designs, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach. Creswell (2009) discusses the strategies used in each of the approaches and how the researcher derives meaning from the chosen design. The qualitative approach is based on the constructivist knowledge claim which argues that knowledge is socially constructed. The researcher seeks to derive meaning from a phenomenon from views of participants. This type of research approach is interactive and is based on a narrative where individuals interact with the researcher and tell their stories and experiences. Furthermore, Creswell (2009) informs that the researcher collect data by observing the behavior of participants in their activities. In a nutshell, the researcher relies on the views of the participants of the situation that is being studied.

On the contrary, the qualitative research approach according to Welman and Mitchel (2005) is based on the positivist approach which underlies the natural scientific method in human behavioral research. Welman and Mitchel (2005) state that the research should be limited to what can be *observed* and *measured* objectively. In a nutshell, the positivist approach is based on a study of observable human behavior.

Creswell (2009) describe *mixed method research* as both a methodology and a method, and it involves collecting, analyzing, and mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study or a series of studies.

This study will use the qualitative research approach based on the research questions of the study. This approach is appropriate to the study, because it is essential for understanding whether the present organizational structure of the Ministry inspires efficiency and high performance, how the leadership and management skills impact on the service delivery of the Ministry, the main communication styles and processes used by the Senior Management team and the Directorates in the Ministry of Education, and how the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace. For the understanding to prevail it is important to have an interaction with the subjects by means of interviews and questionnaires, and to learn from their experiences and narrations about their day to day activities in the organizations they serve.

3.5 Target Population

The study aims at exploring the effectiveness of management communication from and within the Ministry of Education Head Office in Namibia. Hence, the target population is the management and leadership team of the Ministry of Education. However, since the study is based on a narrative design, the target population will also involve members of the public that have relations with the Ministry of Education, as well as staff members in lower positions than the management team. The purpose of involving the latter category of staff members was to solicit a different point of view, from a different level, on their experience and how, in their views, effective communication in the Ministry could be improved. Against this background, advice was sought from some heads of directorates and long-serving members in the Ministry of Education to identify staff members of the management team, eloquent members of Unions that have

relations with the Ministry of Education and long-serving staff members below the management cadre who are *knowledgeable or experienced* (Welman & Mitchel, 2005). Because of their knowledge and experience, they could provide a clear and honest account on the issues addressed in the main questions of the study. Some long-serving staff members at the management level volunteered to be resource people for the study. Welman and Mitchel (2005) also state that a research problem relates to a specific population and the population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions.

3.6 Sampling and Reason for Choosing Particular Method

The sample will be collected from the population of the former and current leadership and management team, staff members below the management cadre of the Ministry of Education and leadership of the Unions (Teachers Union, Workers' Union) that have relations with the Ministry of Education. As stated in the research topic, the study aims at exploring the effectiveness of management communication from and within the Ministry of Education Headquarters in Namibia, hence the population from which the sample was collected was centrally based and most of them are from the Headquarters of the Ministry in Windhoek. Kudumo (2011), states that the management cadre in the Ministry of Education and the national leadership of trade unions who are mostly Windhoek-based, participated in the social dialogue in education and consultation framework.

The interview and questionnaire sample will be drawn from thirty participants from institutions as mentioned above and will be based on a mixture of quota (segmentation) and purposive sampling. Welman and Mitchel (2005) explain that using this type of sampling, the researchers rely on their experience, ingenuity and/or previous research findings to deliberately obtain units of analysis in such a manner that the sample they obtain may be regarded as being representative of the relevant population.

Against the explanation provided above, the rationale for the sampling is informed, firstly by the fact that most of the key participants for the study are all centrally based. It is assumed that all the candidates are well informed on matters related to education and have the relevant information that is required for data collection. Secondly, the former managers who served the Ministry of Education since its inception, have personal experience of the structural changes that the current Ministry of Education has undergone and are therefore better placed to provide first-hand information on the main questions of the study. The rationale for the sample size is guided by the study which aims at answering the questions based on the effectiveness of management communication at the Ministry of Education Headquarters in Windhoek. This is relatively a small unit compared to the larger regional entities.

3.7 Research Questions

- Does the present organizational structure of the Ministry inspire efficiency and high performance?

- How do leadership and management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry?
- What are the main communication styles and processes used by the senior management team and the directorates in the Ministry of Education?
- How do the different layers of the staff relate to each other in the workplace?

3.8 The Research Instruments

Table 1 Research Instruments

Research question	Research instrument	Research source
Does the present organizational structure of the Ministry inspire efficiency and high performance?	Individual interviews, literature review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will interview former and current members of the management team of the Ministry of Education; • Will interview non-staff members who have/had relations with the Ministry of Education
How do leadership and management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry?	Individual interviews, literature review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will interview former and current members of the management team of the Ministry of Education; • Will interview non-staff members who have/had relations with the Ministry

		of Education
What are the main communication styles and processes used by the senior management team and the directorates in the Ministry of Education?	Individual interviews; literature review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will interview former and current members of the management team of the Ministry of Education; • Will interview and non- staff members who have/had relations with the Ministry of Education
How do the different layers of the staff relate to each other in the workplace?	Individual interviews and literature review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will interview former and current members of the management team of the Ministry of Education; • Will interview non-staff members who have/had relations with the Ministry of Education

3.9 Research Process

For the research to be able to get off the ground it is required to identify suitable sources from whom the data will be collected. To this end, informal discussions with heads of directorates in the Ministry of Education will be held in order to seek for advice on who could be suitable candidates for the interview based on the main research questions of the study. A list of the candidates will be drawn up including contact details of the identified candidates. First contacts with the relevant candidates will be made via telephone or in person in order to explain what the study entails and to establish preparedness and availability of the candidates. The first contact could also serve as an opportunity to seek

further advice on other suitable candidates that could be interviewed. The latter is in line with the snowball sampling identified by (Welman & Mitchel, 2005).

According to Welman et al. the snowball sampling is based on approaching relevant population. These individuals then act as informants and identify other members from the same population for inclusion in the sample.

3.10 Planning for the Interviews

The next step will be to make appointments with the candidates that have accepted to be interviewed and agreed on the venue of the interviews. Official invitation letters will be sent to the candidates explaining the purpose of the research study. The letter will also include ethical guidelines (*protection of identities of subjects, treating participants with respect, seeking for cooperation of the participants, clarifying terms of the agreement, and abiding by that agreement, acknowledging sources of information, the right to be informed about the purpose of the study, the right to confidentiality, the right to withdraw*) as stated in the Polytechnic of Namibia (2011) Master Thesis Manual of the Harold Pupkewitz Graduate School of Business, the Polytechnic of Namibia and Teaching Notes and Student Resource, Whyte (2013). A pilot study will be conducted in order to ensure that the interview questions are suitable and well-structured and to determine the length of the interview per participant.

3.11 Interview Questions

The following questions will form part of the interviews (approximately 30 minutes):

1. Does the present organization structure of the Ministry inspire efficiency and high performance?

- What are the roles/functions and responsibilities of the different departments/directorates?
- Are these various roles/functions being performed as intended?
- Are the roles/functions and responsibilities of the different departments/directorates clearly defined?
- What mechanisms does the Ministry of Education have in place to ensure that the roles/functions and responsibilities are carried out in an effective and efficient manner?
- In what way does the current organizational structure influence communication processes and social interaction in the Ministry of Education?
- Briefly explain how the Ministry structure facilitates communication flow of information to the relevant departments and directorates?

2. How do the leadership/management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry?

- Does the leadership/management of the Ministry of Education have the appropriate skills to render the required service to the public?
- What mechanisms are in place to ensure that leaders and managers in the Ministry of Education apply appropriate leadership/management skills?

- How does the Ministry of Education ensure continuous capacity building of the leadership/management staff?
- Are the current leadership/management skills appropriate to render the required service delivery of the Ministry?
- Educational organizations/institutions are expected to encourage learning and impart new knowledge to its staff members? Do you agree with the statement? Does the Ministry do that?

3. What are the main communication styles and processes used by the senior management team and the directorates in the Ministry of Education?

- How do the various communication styles and processes used in the Ministry impact on the performance of the staff members and implementation of policies and strategies of the Ministry of Education?
- What are the appropriate communication styles and processes that could enhance effective communication in the Ministry of Education?
- What mechanisms are in place to ensure that proper communication processes and channels are followed?
- In your opinion, what constitutes effective leadership/management communication?

4. How do the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace?

- Is there a good team spirit in the Ministry of Education?
- How does poor team spirit impact on workplace attitude and staff output?
- What mechanisms are in place to ensure good teamsmanship in the Ministry of Education?
- How can the Ministry ensure effective interaction amongst staff members?

3.12 Data Collection

Whyte, (2013), Welman and Mitchel (2005) discuss three types of interviews that can be used to collect data: *highly structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews*. For the purpose of this study, semi- structured interviews will be used to collect data for the study. According to Welman et al., in semi-structured interviews the researcher has a list of themes and questions that will be covered during the interview; however, they may be different from one interview to another. Furthermore, Welman and Mitchel (2005) state that interview guides are used in semi-structured interviews. They involve a list of topics that have a bearing on the given theme.

This method of collecting data is appropriate for the study, because it provides a versatile way of collecting data. A semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to use probes with the view to clearing up vague responses or to ask for elaboration of incomplete answers (Welman & Mitchel, 2005).

Literature reviews addressing themes and main questions of the study will also be used as data gathering tools.

Data will be collected from a selected team of the Management cadre of the Ministry of Education, and from members of the public who have relations with the Ministry of Education. Data will also be collected from former managers of the Ministry. Interviews and questionnaires will be used. Data collection will be done by means of recording the interviews, hand-written notes and simple observation of the participants.

3.13 Data Processes and Analysis

All interviews will be recorded and transcribed. The researcher will also take hand-written notes as back-up information to the interviews. The services of a professional transcriber will be used to write up the recorded interviews. The researcher will also listen to the recorded interviews and compare them with the transcribed notes in order to ensure that the recorded texts match the written texts.

According to Welman and Mitchel (2005) in order to analyze the raw field notes, these have to be processed. This means converting the notes into write-ups which should be intelligible products that can be read, edited for accuracy, commented on, and analyzed. Data will be grouped according to themes in order to render data analysis manageable. The research questions will be used as a guide to identify the relevant themes of the interviews.

3.14 Conceptual Framework

The study focuses on the effectiveness of management communication from and within the Ministry of Education Head Office, Namibia, and its impact on the performance of the staff and the entire institution.

The objective of the study is to examine and understand the quality and influences of communications emanating from the leadership and management of the Ministry of Education and how these impact staff relations, performance and service delivery. It further aims to enhance an understanding of the challenges that management cadres are faced with in the day to day management of the Ministry, especially with regards to the implementation of strategies and policies.

Jabareen (2009) defines *conceptual framework* as a network, or a “plane”, of interlinked concepts that, together, provide a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. The concepts that constitute a conceptual framework support one another, articulate their respective phenomena, and establish a framework-specific philosophy.

The literature reviews used for the study provide relevant information and definitions of key concepts related to the study and shed light on ways and means to uncover contributing factors to the problem. For example, Heron (2001) provides a classic example of how one can gain an understanding on how to help people more effectively in organizational set-ups. The *six categories interventions* are a response to many questions regarding communication styles and improving teamsmanship. It is widely used in organizations to learn and improve management communication and interaction when helping their employees, team members, clients and customers.

But what is the *six categories interventions model*? The Heron Model below provides a better picture of the six categories and how they could help organizations achieve and enhance better to communication skills.

The following table helps you analyze or plan your communication skills for helping by indicating what you say and what you ask when using each one of the six categories of the Heron model.

Table 2 Adapted from Heron (2001)

Authoritative	Prescriptive	Give advice and guidance Tell the other person how they should behave Tell them what to do
	Informative	Give your view and experience Explain the background and principles Help the other person get a better understanding
	Confronting	Challenge the other person's thinking Play back exactly what the person has said or done Tell them what you think is holding them back Help them avoid making the same mistake again
Facilitative	Cathartic	Help the other person express their feelings or fears Empathize with them
	Catalytic	Ask questions to encourage fresh thinking Encourage the other person to generate new options and solutions Listen and summarize, and listen some more
	Supportive	Tell the other person you value them (their contribution, good intention or achievements) Praise them Show them they have your support and commitment

The model seems very easy to use, however, as easy as it looks, a lot depends on the character and personal believe or understanding on how well the organizations communicate and help others to make a meaningful contribution to

the effective performance of the institution. To achieve the latter, it is very crucial that the six categories of intervention above be used by all those people that are in leadership and managerial positions.

3.15 Conclusion

The chapter discussed the different types of research methodologies and designs and the rationale for choosing the relevant methodologies and designs. Target population, sampling, size of sample and rationale for the choice of the sampling method, the research instruments, the research process and finalized questions for the interview were also covered under this chapter. Finally, the conceptual framework of the study, which focuses on the effectiveness of management communication and its impact on staff performance, was also discussed in this chapter. The next chapter will look at the findings and data analysis and discussion of the research.

CHAPTER 4

Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the findings of the data collected through interviews with and a questionnaire completed by staff members of the different directorates and the management cadre of the Ministry of Education at the Head Office in Windhoek, from a former manager of the Ministry of Education, teachers and members of the public who have relations with the Ministry of Education. The results and findings are presented according to the research questions as presented in the research instrument (Annex 1). Data are presented in table and graph formats.

The research instrument was presented in two sections, A and B. In Section A the respondents were requested to indicate with an X, the statement that applies to them. In Section B, the respondents were requested to provide a brief explanation as to why they agreed/disagreed with the statements they chose. Thirty participants (12 females and 18 males) took part in the study through questionnaires and interviews. The interview questions and the questionnaire can be found in annexures 1 and 2 respectively.

The research objective of the study is to examine the quality and influences of communication emanating from leadership and management of the Ministry of Education and how these impact staff relations, performance and service delivery.

4.2 Participants of the Research Study

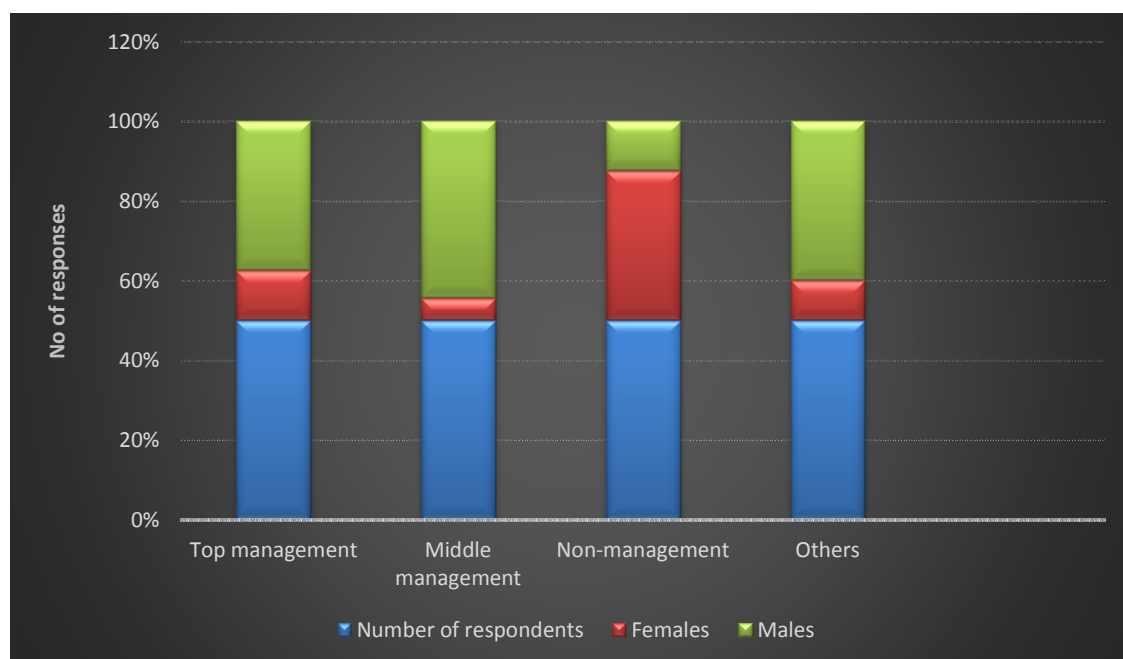
Respondents who took part in the study are presented in the table 1 and figure 1 below according to their level, gender and years of service in the Ministry of Education. The table also presents non-staff members/ members of the public who have relations with the Ministry of Education.

Respondents were asked the following questions (research questions as also shown in the annexed document):

- Does the present organization structure of the Ministry enhance efficiency and high performance?
- How do the leadership and management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry?
- What are the main communication styles and processes used by the senior management team and the directorates in the Ministry of Education?
- How do the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace?

Table 3 Categories of respondents

Level	Fre quency	Gender	Years of service
Top/Former management	4	1Female 3 Male	15 to 24
Middle management	9	8 males 1 Female	10 to 24
Staff below Management	12	9 Females 3 Males	2 to 24
Others (non- staff members)	5	4 males 1 Female	N/A 2 to 24
Total	30	12 Females, 18 Males	



2

Figure 2 Categories of respondents

Table 1 and figure 1 show that:

- 18 Males and 12 females participated in the study. Their years of service range between 2 and 24 years.

4.3 Finding: Research questions

Research question 1: Efficiency of the structure of the Ministry of Education and performance of staff.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the structure of the Ministry of Education is efficient and whether the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The findings on the research question regarding the efficiency of the present organizational structure are presented in the table 2 and figure 2 below. The findings focus on perception of efficiency of the structure, performance, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and communication.

² Others: teachers, former private secretary

Table 4 showing views of respondents on the organizational structure

Structure of the MoE	Top Management			Middle Management			Non-Management			Others		
	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
Efficient organizational structure in place		4		3	5	1		5	3		1	1
Organizational structure enhances performance		1	3	2	7		1	5	5	1	1	1
Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined	1	3		8	1							3
Structure facilitate communication			3	2	1			1			1	3
Structure provide employee growth	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	7		1	1	
Mechanisms to measure performance	1	2	1	3	5	1	2	5		1	3	1

Table 4 shows that:

- 3 respondents agree that the Ministry of Education has an efficient structure in place; 15 disagree and 5 have no opinion.
- 4 respondents agree that the organizational structure enhances performance; 14 disagree and 9 have opinion.
- 9 respondents agree that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; 4 disagree and 3 have no opinion.

- 2 respondents agree that the structure facilitates communication; 3 disagree and 6 did not express an opinion.
- 5 respondents agree that the structure provides employee growth; 13 disagree and 3 have no opinion.
- 7 respondents agree that there are mechanisms in place to measure performance; 16 disagree and 3 have no opinion.

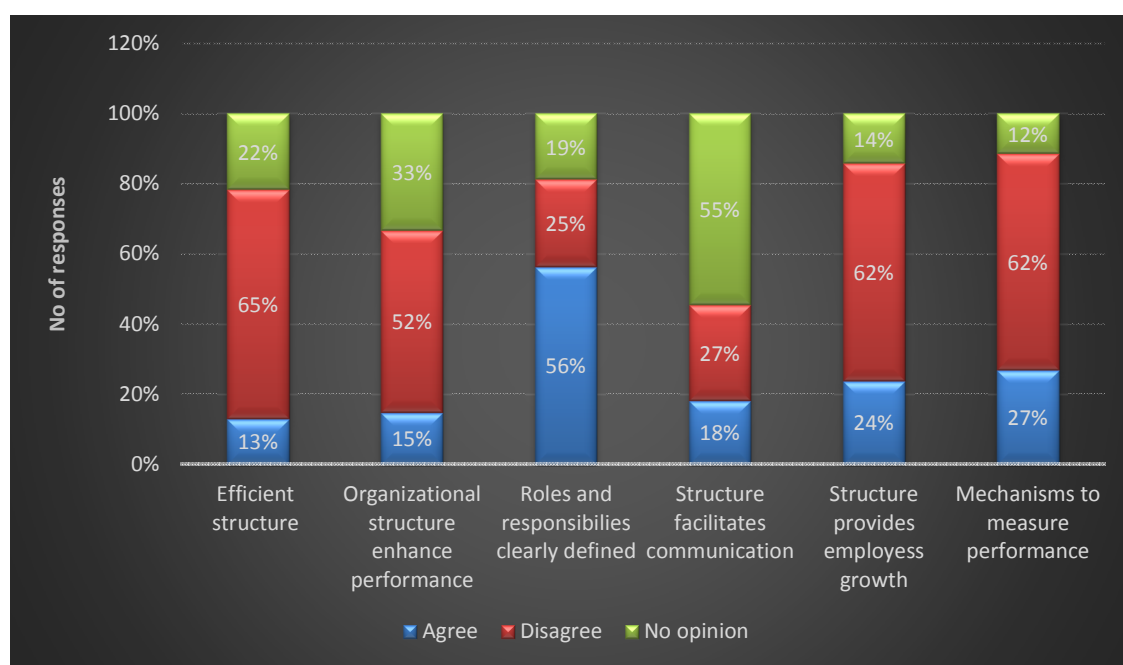


Figure 3 Perceptions of respondents on the structure of the Ministry of Education

Respondents, to the question on what are the roles and responsibilities of different department and directorates in the Ministry of Education, informed the researcher that the Ministry of Education comprised of four departments: Administration and Finance; Formal Education; Lifelong Learning; and Tertiary

and Higher Education. Each directorate/department/division has different functions, for example the department of Administration and Finance deals specifically with administration and finance related matters, and the other departments have specific functions assigned to them. Respondents stated that departments and directorates carry out their roles and responsibilities, however the level of performance differ from one department/directorate/division to another.

A further finding from the interviews regarding roles and responsibilities is that the core role of the Ministry of Education is to develop public policies in the area of Basic Education, Higher Education as well as Vocational training, supported by State Owned Enterprise (SOE), such as NQA, Council of Higher Education as well as NTA, responsible for the management of the Vocational Training Sector. The other function is looking at private higher education institutions and private schools. In terms of basic education, the Ministry of Education has delegated the function of teaching and learning and management to the Regional Governments.

To this end, there is a general perception as indicated in table 2 above, that the roles and responsibilities in the Ministry of Education are clearly defined.

Research question 2: Leadership and /or management skills, styles and impact on quality service.

Respondents were requested to indicate whether leadership and management of the Ministry of Education have appropriate skills and style to

render quality service to the public. The findings are presented in table 3 and figure 3 below.

Table 5 showing perception of respondents on leadership skills, styles and impact on service delivery

Leadership and Management skills, styles and impact on quality service	Top Management			Middle Management			Non-management			Others		
	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
Management cadre have appropriate leadership, management styles and skills	3	1		3	1	5						3
Management cadre is supportive, transparent, accessible		2	2	2	4	3	5	2	3	1	3	1
The system encourages capacity building	2	2		2	3	4				1	1	3
There are clear rules on capacity building			4		3	6						3

Table 5 above shows that:

- 6 respondents agree that the management cadre have appropriate leadership and management skills and styles; 2 disagree, and 8 have no opinion.
- 8 respondents agree that management cadre is supportive, transparent and accessible; 11 disagree and 6 have no opinion.
- 5 respondents agree that the system encourages capacity building; 6 disagree and 7 have no opinion.
- 0 agree that there are clear rules on capacity building; 3 disagree that there are clear rules on capacity building and 9 have not expressed an opinion.

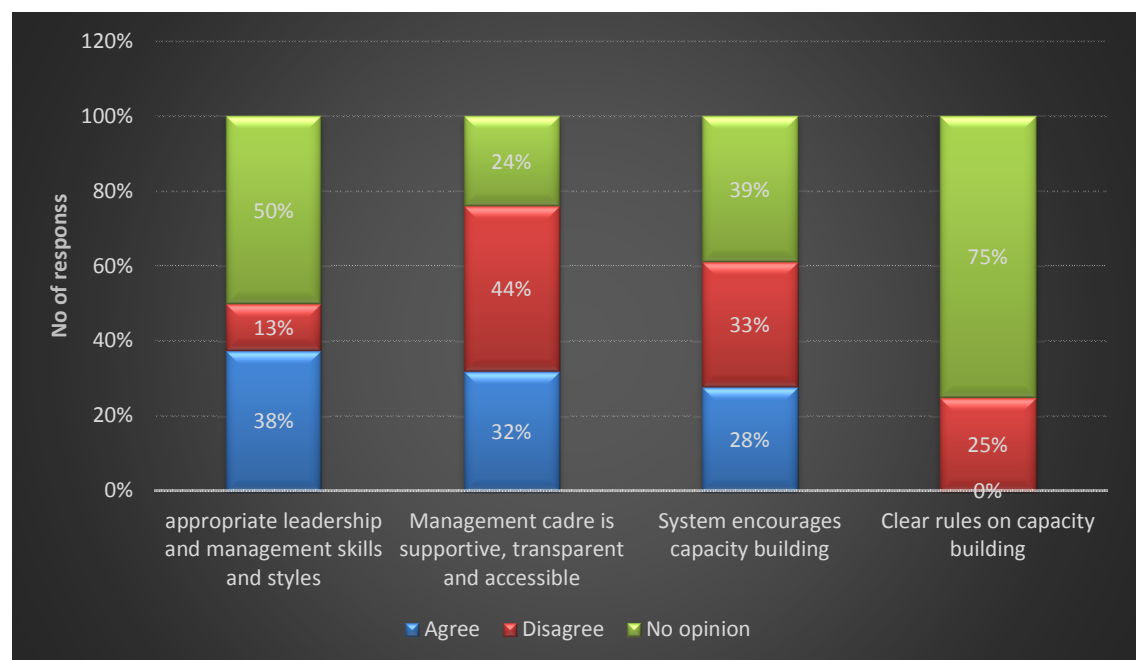


Figure 4 Respondents' perception on leadership and Management styles and skills

The answer to the question whether the leadership and management cadre of the Ministry have the appropriate skills to render the required service to the public is shown in figure 3 above.

The general perception regarding this research questions is that, *“There are people at senior management level who have the leadership skills to facilitate the Ministry carrying out its functions; however there are some who do not have the leadership skills. What is really meant by leadership skills? Leadership is about influencing people, motivating people, supporting people so that collectively, you are in a position to get the work done. There are people in the Ministry who encourage and value the contribution of individuals, but there are others who don’t. The language used and the way in which you say things are leadership skills. If you value people, your language, your interaction will be critical. The interpersonal touch is missing in the Ministry: orders are given without showing concern for the well-being of people”*. This statement was drawn from the interviews.

Research question 3: Communication Style, Skills of Senior Management Team, Communication Processes and Channels.

Table 4 shows responses from respondents on the effectiveness of communication styles of senior management, the processes and communication channels.

- 10 respondents agree that the communication style of senior management is supportive; 0 disagree and 10 have no opinion. No respondents indicate

views on transparency and accessibility. 10 agree that communication style is aggressive, 5 disagree and 12 have no opinion. 1 agrees that the communication style encourages trust and openness and 7 have no opinion.

- 0 respondents agree that leadership and management have appropriate communication skills; 4 disagree and 8 have no opinion.
- 4 respondents agree that the communication process is effective; 13 disagree and 12 have no opinion.
- 7 respondents agree that communication channels are followed; 9 disagree and 12 have no opinion.

Table 6 Management Communication Styles and Skills, Communication Processes and Communication Channels

Communication styles, processes and channels	Top Management			Middle Management			Non-management			Others		
	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
Leadership, management and communication style is:												
Supportive				3		6	5		4	3		
Transparent				3		6	2		6	2		
Accessible				5	1	6	3		6	2	3	
Authoritative							1		7			

Aggressive Encouraging trust and openness												
Leadership and management have appropriate communicatio n skills					1	8					3	
Communicatio n process is effective	1	1	2	1	5	3	1	4	6	1	3	1
Communicatio n channels are followed		2	2	2	3	4	2	2	6	3	2	

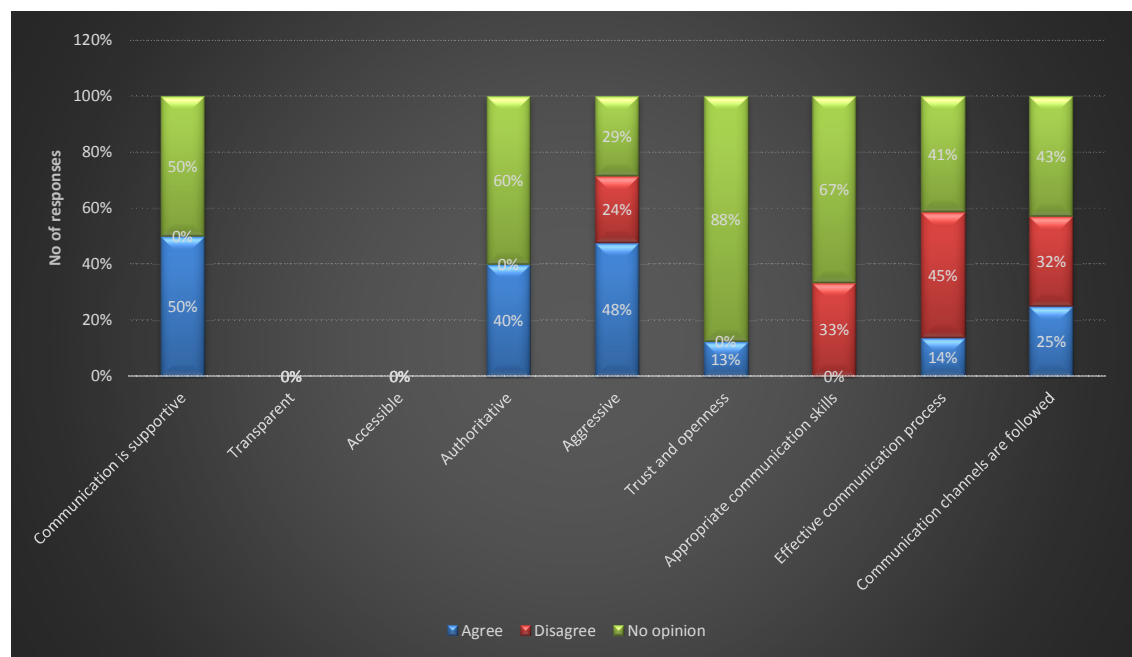


Figure 5 Respondents' perception of management communication styles and skills, processes and channels.

How do the various communication styles and processes impact on the performance of the staff members and implementation of policies and strategies of the Ministry of Education?

As indicated above, the communication style of leadership and management of the Ministry of Education is aggressive and authoritative although the study shows that 50% of supervisors apply a supportive communication style. The communication process of the Ministry is ineffective as indicated in the table above.

Quotes from data collected also revealed:

“From the top level, the style does not foster motivation in people.... It brings a lot of confusion in the system.... Staff members feel that the system, including the management system, has broken down and needs to be re-built in order to create a coherent system. Everyone is on their own doing what they need to do”.

“The issue of dual reporting creates problems! At the Head Office for example, you have top leadership who are directly involved with operations of the management issues... following up on programme implementation and giving instruction on what should be done, and that kills communication and impact performance... once the work plans are aligned to the strategic plan, it is the senior management that is supposed to provide the backstopping in guidance to the implementing authority or implementers of the program. The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education is a contested document; because of the authoritarian and bureaucratic style of management....this has negative impact on communication because people have not bought into the strategic plan of the Ministry.”

Research question 4: Team spirit and teamsmanship in the Ministry of Education

Respondents were asked to indicate how different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace. The findings focus on team spirit, teamsmanship,

interaction and interpersonal relations, cooperation and coordination of activities.

The findings are presented in the table 7 and figure 6 below.

Table 7 showing views on how different layers of how staff relate to each other in the workplace

Team spirit and teamsmanship	Top Management			Middle gement			Non- gement			Others		
	Agr	Disag	No n	Agr	Dis agr	No n	Agr	Dis- agre	No n	Agr	Dis agr	No opi
Good team spirit	1	3		7	2		7		3	2	2	1
Good teamsmanship		4		1	8			7	3	1	3	1
Good interaction and interpersonal relations	1		3	1	1	7		1			1	
Mechanisms in place to ensure good teamsmanship		3	1	1	8			8	1	2	2	1
Good Cooperation, coordination of activities		3	1	1	8			8	1	1	1	1

Table 7 shows that:

- 17 respondents agree that there is good team spirit; 7 disagree and 4 have no opinion
- 2 respondents agree that there is good teamsmanship; 22 disagree and 4 did not express an opinion.
- 2 respondents agree that there is good interaction and interpersonal relations; 4 disagree and 10 did not express an opinion.

- 5 respondents agree that there are mechanisms in place to ensure good teamsmanship; 21 disagree and 3 have no opinion.
- 2 respondents agree that there is good corporation and coordination of activities; 20 disagree, and 3 have no opinion.

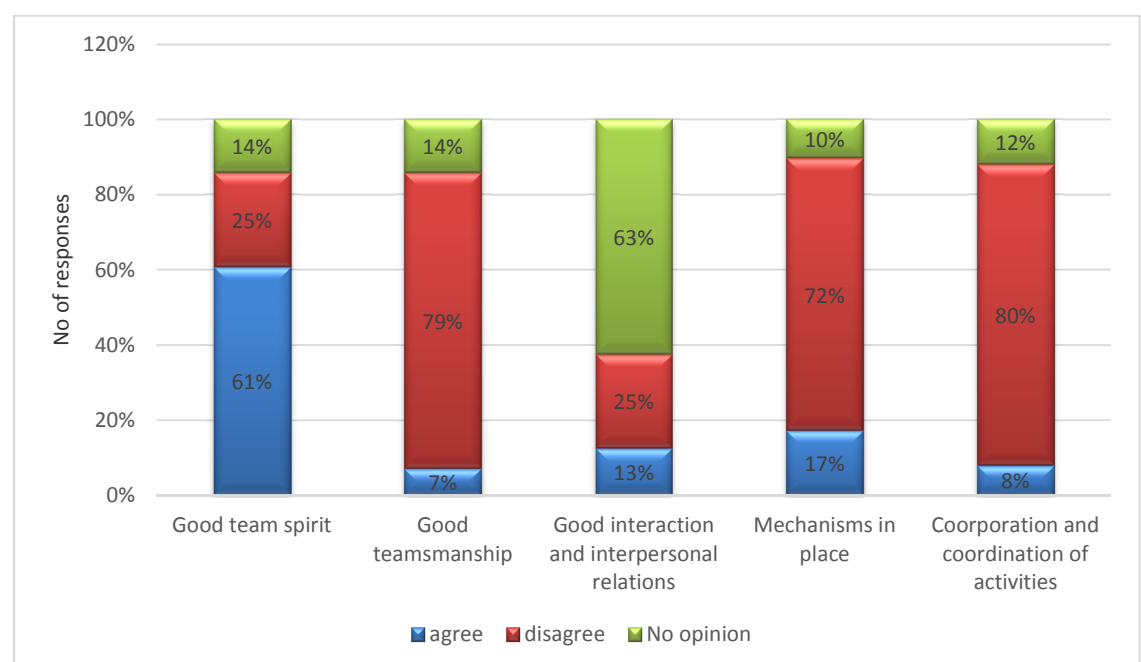


Figure 6 Respondents' perception on staff relation in the workplace

Is there good team spirit in the Ministry of Education?

There is good team spirit particularly in the different directorates and departments but not in the Ministry in general. The finding as presented in figure 5, and quotes from the interviews speak to this effect.

“There is team spirit in areas that require team work, however there is no proper consultation and it is also a demoralizing atmosphere because of how things are done.”

“Generally there is no team spirit, but there are exceptions where some leaders are able to get their people to work as a team, but it is a complex situation!”

“Collegiality does not exist. The relationship and being at the Ministry of Education is not clear. There are problems with relationships with managers; they are autocratic, bureaucratic and the reporting systems are also not there.”

“There is no good team spirit in the Ministry of Education. Issues of serious concern are not taken seriously; people have lost interest and courage to work.”

4.4 Analysis

4.4.1 Efficiency of the structure of the Ministry of Education and performance of staff

On the issue of the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education and its efficiency, the study revealed that the changes that occurred in the Ministry since its inception in 1990, affected the performance of the Ministry and the staff members in terms of quality service delivery and the way communication is managed, especially at the leadership and management levels.

The research finding on whether the present organizational structure of the Ministry of Education enhances efficiency and high performance of staff members shows that the current organizational structure is inefficient and does not

enhance high performance of staff members. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the Ministry of Education does not have mechanisms in place to measure performance as shown in figure 3.

The survey indicates that efforts made through the Office of the Prime Minister to roll out the Performance Management System for all Government Institutions couldn't have come at a better time; it is expected to address and enhance staff performance across the board. Figure 3 also shows that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined to some extent. Observations from the survey indicate that there is lack of understanding of the structure and the roles and responsibilities that are assigned to staff members due to duplication of roles.

Respondents stated that the decentralized structure have not improved the education system, because there are no clear agreement or contract that stipulate clear policies and reporting periods, and the relation between the Head Office and the Regional Office is not properly understood. Respondents also indicated that not many staff members know which structure is followed in the Ministry of Education. There is a structure that is developed by the senior management of the Ministry, and there were consultants who worked on a structure of the Ministry, the MPCC and other structures.

The survey revealed that staff members of various Departments and Directorates are not able to carry out their roles and functions adequately due to shortage of staff, availability of funds and lack of professionalisms in certain areas, and therefore the structure does not enhance efficiency and high

performance of staff in the Ministry. However, the findings also indicate that, though not sufficient, the Ministry of Education has mechanisms in place to ensure that roles/functions and responsibilities are carried out in an effective and efficient manner.

The MPCC: meetings of Regional Directors and Head Office are held quarterly to discuss matters of education, implementation and policy nature. Some Directorates have meetings; Departmental meetings which are attempts to make sure that those roles/functions are performed despite confusions in the structure.

The finding also revealed that the structure of the Ministry does not effectively facilitate communication flow of information to relevant departments and directorates, because the system does not encourage informal communication to happen.

According to a former manager of the Ministry of Education: *“if you are an education institution, the issue is not one direction of communication or giving information, the more important issue is that someone is listening, and whether that listening leads to dialogue and whether that dialogue leads to learning”*.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the structure of the Ministry of Education does not provide employee growth, and that there are no mechanisms in place to measure performance of employees in the Ministry.

4.4.2 Leadership and /or Management Styles and Skills, and impact on Quality Service

With regards to leadership and management skills and impact on service delivery in the Ministry of Education, the findings show that to some extent, the leadership and management have appropriate styles and skills to render quality service. However, the management cadre is not supportive, transparent and accessible as shown in figure 4. The latter also shows that the system does not encourage capacity building of its staff members. The finding revealed to this effect that there are no clear rules on capacity building in the Ministry of Education.

Some respondents indicated during the interviews that the Ministry has some talented, very skilled and capable people, however, lack of coordination and proper communication make it difficult for the leaders and managers to carry out their task and perform to the best of their abilities. It was stated in the interviews that: *“Because of poor communication and coordination, leaders and managers are confused and appear to be all over the place giving an impression that they lack the required skills”*. Others however, acknowledged that, *“some leaders and managers lack technical skills to carry out particular functions”*.

A manager stated that, *“some managers, especially those in the Regions, do not have basics of finance, human relations and practical knowledge to carry out their functions; courses for subordinates to acquire basic knowledge are not available”*. Another manager stated that *the process of recruitment looks at qualification and not at skills sets required and these are not clearly defined,*

however there is now an effort through the ³NIPAM to provide training in required skills to carry out required functions.

A former manager of the Ministry of Education stated in the interview that the Ministry should take a day off to share with others on the conferences staff members attend: ideas, books and presentations in order to stimulate others. The manager mentioned good ideas that the Ministry could use in order to stimulate its staff and encourage learning, for example, a concept of ***learning community***, which originated from UNESCO and was included in the Education Policy. Another idea was a concept of ***learning cities***; however characteristics of learning cities should be identified.

4.4.3 Communication Style, Skills of Senior Management Team, Communication Processes and Channels.

On the issue of how respondents view leadership and management communication style, the findings revealed that leadership and management communication style is authoritative and aggressive. It further shows that leadership and management communication style does not promote trust and openness. The communication process of the Ministry is ineffective, and communication channels are not followed: See figure 5. above.

Respondents stated that “*much of the structure of the Ministry depends on patronage*”. They also indicated that the concept of the organization is hierarchical and based on patronage and even patriarchic. “*Accepting this system is not good or enjoyable, because it allows passiveness and subversive*

³ Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management.

resistance". As a result, people find other ways of communicating through gossip groups, peer groups and gender groups through which they resist patronage. This kind of attitude affects communication, performance as well as working relations negatively.

There is a general perception that the communication style of leadership and management is supportive, however it should be understood that respondents indicated that this communication style exist at relevant directorates of the Ministry of Education and not necessarily the broader picture of the Ministry of Education. Respondents to this question also stated that, from the top level, communication style does not foster motivation in people and progress in functions and activities. Respondents stated that effective communication in the Ministry of Education could be improved through the application of methodologies that promote openness and trust and participatory leadership and management; this will allow freedom of speech and ability to agree or disagree.

4.4.4 How do the Different Layers of the Staff relate to each other in the Workplace?

The findings show that, respondents agree that there is good team spirit specifically at the directorate level; however, the general perception is that team spirit is very poor as far as the broader picture of the Ministry in this regard is concerned. Furthermore, the finding also revealed that teamsmanship in the Ministry of Education is extremely poor as indicated in figure 6 above. The latter also shows that there are no mechanisms in place to ensure good

teamsmanship. Interaction, interpersonal relations and corporation and coordination of activities in the Ministry also scored very low.

Respondents stated that the management and leadership style does not promote team spirit; it puts staff in blocks; it is too formal and not accommodative; it does not encourage people to be closer. Respondents who agree that there is good team spirit argue that there is team spirit in areas that require teamwork; however, there is a lot of room for improvement. Respondents who feel that there is poor teamsmanship in the Ministry have continuously mentioned lack of trust for each other in the Ministry. One respondent stated that: *“when an organization rates a lot of distrust, there can't be team spirit. When people don't feel trusted, valued and appreciated, they develop a negative attitude towards work, and interpersonal relationships that underpin team spirit disappear and impact negatively on performance”*.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Efficiency of the Structure of the Ministry of Education and Performance of Staff

The Ministry of Education is one of the most important Government institutions in the country, which has a very important function and a difficult mandate: *To educate and train for national development* (MoE, 2012). To this end, leaders and managers and the rest of the staff members have the responsibility to ensure that the mandate of the Ministry is implemented and upheld at all times. For this to happen, it is crucial that the structure of the Ministry is functioning properly so that staff members understand what is required from them.

It is however very worrying to learn that staff members do not know which structure is followed in the Ministry; is it the structure that the senior management developed? is it the structure of the Office of the Prime Minister? (The latter is the custodian of the structures of the Government) or is it the structure that consultants at the Ministry of Education have worked on? This could be the explanation why staff members, including those at the management level are not very clear about their functions and responsibilities. The findings of the research on the question whether the structure of the Ministry enhances efficiency and high performance have revealed that the structure is inefficient (*Figure 3.*) and does not enhance high performance. One respondent stated that, *“because of the confusion about the structure, we cannot say that the structure enhances*

efficiency and high performance in the Ministry. The purpose of the structure is to know what you are supposed to do and to whom you are reporting”.

Darling and Walker (2001) discusses the characteristics of a high performance organization (HPO), which he defines as *an organization that achieves financial results that are better than those of its peer groups over a longer period of time*. De Waal identifies eight characteristics of a HPO: organizational design, strategy, process management, technology, leadership, individual and roles, culture, and external orientation. All the characteristics identified above are relevant and very important for the performance of the Ministry of Education, however, whether the Ministry of Education is a high performance organization needs to be determined. The finding to this regards do not point to the Ministry of Education as a high performance organization. The Strategic Plan of the Ministry, according to a respondent, *“is a contested document, because of the authoritarian and bureaucratic style of management”*.

The findings have revealed that the evolution of the structure of the Ministry of Education over the years reflects the complexity of the education and training sector. The findings of the interview also revealed that the complexity is reflected in the way the Ministry of Education has structured itself. The Ministry has four Departments: Administration and Finance, Formal Education, Lifelong learning, and Tertiary and Higher Education. Over the years, certain functions belonging to Departments were outsourced, for example, the student Fund from the Administration and Finance Department; a State Owned Enterprise (Science

Commission) had been established from the Tertiary and Higher Education; and NTA that came from Lifelong Learning.

The idea and thinking of outsourcing these functions is a good one as it alleviates the burdens of some Departments that are overwhelmed with activities and are at times understaffed, and thus affect the performance of the staff and the relevant Department. However, the performance of staff members and/or the Department is not only a structure issue; it is also an issue of staff commitment and proper coordination of functions and responsibilities. Nonetheless, while the aim of outsourcing certain functions to State Owned Enterprises is to enhance the efficiency of the institution, the situation at the Ministry has not improved; some staff members including at the management level have been affected negatively due to the outsourcing of functions and restructuring exercise.

The chain of command, especially in terms of the recent restructuring, was affected and thus broken. Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, and Roodt (2009) states that a *chain of command* is an unbroken line of authority that extends from the top of the organization to the lowest echelon and clarifies who reports to whom. With the current restructuring, all Under Secretary positions were upgraded to Deputy Permanent Secretaries and four Departments headed by Deputy Permanent Secretaries were created. The Deputy Permanent Secretaries all report to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry. With the former structure, one Deputy Permanent Secretary was responsible for all the Departments. The study revealed that there are also challenges in terms of functions and roles as well as with regards to the reporting line of the Ministry, for example at the Regional

level, the Regional Directors of education are supposed to resort under the various regional structure; but the Permanent Secretary has the supervisory role of Regional Directors. One respondent stated: *"This is a challenge in terms of reporting line, because the Regional Directors report to the Permanent Secretary and also to the Chief Regional Office"*. Another respondent stated: *"Currently, the Permanent Secretary is tasked with the supervision of Regional Directors and that is the biggest flaw, because the Permanent Secretary is already overwhelmed with other responsibilities"*.

This suggests that the structure of the Ministry needs to be revisited and the roles and functions be clearly defined. The relations between the Head Office and the Regional Office need to be properly understood so that there is no duplication of responsibilities.

The study has also revealed that the structure of the Ministry is inefficient, because there are very few professionals at the functional level who have the necessary capacity to implement strategies and policy of the Ministry. This revelation is echoed by the Chung (2013) who states in her discussion paper on teacher policies and strategies that the Ministry of Education has a seriously skewed establishment, with inadequate professional staff (who are over-worked) and a large number of clerical and support staff. Jonasson and Lauring (2011) states that leaders need to be supported by a high-level team of professionals who match their standards of excellence. Handley further states that finding these professionals is not easy, and keeping them is harder. The statement holds water

and probably point directly to the Ministry of Education which is struggling to attract high-level professionals.

The Ministry, because of poor or lack of proper training rules in place, does not encourage professional growth of its employees. The study revealed (See Figure 3. above) that the system does not encourage capacity building.

The views of respondents on the question whether the Ministry has mechanisms in place to ensure that the roles/ functions and responsibilities are carried out in an effective and efficient manner is that, there are mechanisms in place, which include fixed deadlines in some Directorates; hence staff members know when to complete an activity. Different meetings are taking place, for example senior management meetings and management meetings where reports are provided. The MPCC (Management Policy Coordination Committee), which is the forum where Regional Directors and Head Office meet on a quarterly basis to discuss matters of education, implementation and policy nature, is another mechanism that the Ministry has put in place. Some Directorates and Departments have meetings as an attempt to make sure that roles/functions are performed despite confusion in the structure.

5.2 Leadership and /or Management Styles and Skills, and impact on Quality Service

One of the strategic themes that the Ministry of Education has identified and in which the Ministry must excel, is *leadership and management*, and two of the strategic objectives to this regards, namely, *improve organizational performance and strengthen management skills and competencies*, are crucial to

the question on how leadership and management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry. Will the Ministry achieve its strategic objectives in terms of improving the organizational performance and strengthening management skills and performance by 2017?

There were contradictory views on whether leadership and management lack the necessary skills to deliver service to the public. Some respondents argued that leadership and management have the necessary skills, however, because of poor communication, coordination and duplication of roles and responsibilities, the leadership and management cadre is a bit confused and appear to be all over the place giving the impression that skills are lacking. It was also argued that the Ministry has very talented, skilled and very capable people. It is expected that managers and leaders occupy given positions because of relevant skills and knowledge in their fields of competency, however, the study revealed that some management cadre of the Ministry lack required skills, which impact negatively on service delivery of the Ministry. Respondents cited lacking skills, for example, technical skills, basics of finance, human relations and practical knowledge.

One could further ask a question whether the Ministry of Education is an organization where leaders and managers can flourish. It is worth mentioning therefore that skills could be wasted if there is no organization where leaders and managers have an opportunity to improve their skills and make meaningful contributions to the organization. If this is not happening, people on the lower level of the structure will feel that leadership and management skills are lacking.

De Waal stated that a high performance organization creates a learning organization by continuously investing in training and upgrading of skills. Will the Ministry of Education be a high performance organization by 2017?

Chung (2013) states that, *one of the well-recognized weaknesses in the Ministry of Education is the shortage of professionally qualified and experienced staff combined with its lack of a detailed and planned Human Resource Development Strategy. As a result, existing staff are generally very over-worked in tasks for which they have received inadequate training and experience.*

There is a lot of effort involved in providing training to staff members in required skills in order to carry out required functions in the Ministry, which is an indication that there is lack or poor leadership and management skills to provide service to the public. The effort by the Office of the Prime Minister to provide training needs assessment is yet another indication that there is skills deficiency and therefore training assessment aims at identifying gaps and addressing these gaps by providing appropriate training to staff where the required skills are missing. According to Chung (2013), the Office of the Prime Minister has also recommended in 2012 that every Ministry must develop and implement a Human Resource Development Plan, and that a certain percentage of the Salaries Budget must be provided for such capacity building. It is very pleasing and encouraging to see that lack of skills and knowledge of staff is recognized and is being addressed. There is no excuse for this not to happen, because the Ministry of Education is privileged in terms of budget allocation.

According to the interviews, the 2005 report of the World Bank on the formulation of the ETSIP document (5 year strategic plan of ETSIP) which identified key concerns: weak leadership, weak management and leadership skills in the education sector.

Education organizations/institutions are expected to encourage learning and impart new knowledge to its staff members; however the study revealed that the Ministry of Education is not doing much in this regard. Staff members have opportunities to attend regional and international workshops and conferences as learning experiences and capacity building. Many of the workshops and conferences produce excellent outcomes, documents and papers, unfortunately such documents and information are not shared with staff members who do not get an opportunity to attend workshops and conferences.

5.3 Communication Style, Skills of Senior Management Team, and Communication Processes and Channels.

It is very important at this point to discuss the communication styles and processes used by the management cadre at the Ministry, what the study revealed and what the literature says about these concepts.

The communication process is not well managed as the finding has indicated in figure 4 above.

It is also crucial that there are mechanisms in place to ensure that proper communication processes and channels are followed. Unfortunately, the results of the study to this effect indicate the contrary. Figure 5 shows that

communication process is not effective and that communication channels are not followed.

According to Martinez and Garcia (2011) Communication is a complex process, and in order to survive in organizations you must know what the process is and how it works. It is an element that maintains and sustains relationships in organization. Your communication with your co-workers and supervisors in the organization will be your determinant of how satisfied others are with your work.

Without any doubt, communication is a very important element in everyday life whether this communication takes place in a household or at a workplace. If proper communication processes and channels are not put in place and followed, there will be a lot of misunderstanding and duplication of information and activities.

The finding on the question regarding the different communication styles and processes used by leadership and management team shows that the management communication style is authoritative and aggressive. This is a clear indication that the management communication style is ineffective and contributes to a negative workforce and work output, and therefore impacts negatively on the performance of the Ministry of Education as an institution.

When people in an organization feel that they are not part of the bigger picture in terms of discussions and decision-making, and that they come to learn about discussions and/or decisions through the media for example, then obviously there is a serious communication problem. A respondent stated that the Ministry of Education has no mechanisms in place to ensure that proper

communication channels are followed, because what is communicated is mostly through media than internal meetings where management can agree to certain positions.

Staff members, including those at the management level, are not always informed on what is happening in the Ministry. Staff members are not always consulted on important issues and often obtain information through “*grapevine*” or through other unofficial and informal communication channels, which creates a lot of uncertainty, misunderstanding and mistrust among staff members. McCroskey (2005) states that this type of a situation does not follow the chain of command and tells you who is speaking to whom and about what. McCroskey (2005) furthermore, states that people need to be informed about any changes of procedure or policy that are related to their work. Sometimes this informative function is accomplished by people at higher levels sending information to people at lower levels and the reverse. Other functions of communication in organizations that McCroskey outlines are: regulation, integration, management, persuasion and socializing.

5.4 How do the Different Layers of the Staff relate to each other in the Workplace?

There is great concern in the Ministry of Education with regards to how staff members relate to each other in the workplace. The study revealed that there is extremely poor teamsmanship in the Ministry of Education as indicated in figure 6 above. This is a rather cumbersome situation. Teamwork is one of the characteristics of promoting an excellent organization, and one of the core values identified by the Ministry of Education as indicated in the Strategic Plan (Ministry

of Education, 2012): *“teamwork will be the modus operandi for achieving strategic objectives, as this is the most important and most effective way of working. Team building will be an important tool in every institution.”*

In 2012, Dr. Fay King Chung, Special Advisor to the Minister of Education, conducted a workshop for the management cadre at the Head Office and Regional Officers on leadership and team building. This is in line with the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education indicated above, and a mechanism to improve teamsmanship in the Ministry of Education. The workshop identified poor team spirit among staff members, especially at the high echelon of the Ministry. Two years after the workshop was conducted, the situation does not seem to have improved as shown by the finding of this study. What is very interesting however, is that respondents have indicated good team spirit at the directorate levels only. Respondents who regretted this shortcoming stated that there is *“no team spirit, no sense of belonging and no organizational culture. One feels you are in a corner, always browsing the newspaper to find the next opportunity to move on or move out.”* They stated unhappiness, lack of motivation, lack of direction, no proper communication, lack of trust, lack of appreciation, no collegiality, no team spirit and no proper consultation. This is a clear indication that there is overall unhappiness within the Ministry, which impacts on workplace attitude and staff output. There are, however, some Directorates in the Ministry that have good team spirit or that try to cultivate the team spirit and communicate well with each other and with relevant Directorates and Departments.

Some respondents stated that the management style is too formal and does not promote team spirit; it does not encourage people to be closer and work together; it puts the staff in compartments. Other respondents stated that the one thing that develops team spirit is social interaction: sport activities, social events such as end of year parties and wellness programmes; unfortunately these activities are taken for granted and only staff members at the lower level get involved in social interaction activities. Even though social interaction is one of team building activities, it also depends on the culture of individual staff members. One respondent stated that staff members interact well with each other, however, *“there should be a line that shows the difference between a manager and a subordinate; there should be no social interaction even outside work. You cannot be a friend to a manager.”(Middle Manager).*

This statement is contradicting the view stated above in terms of social interaction as the one thing that develops team spirit. It is however, worth noting that the respondent is from a different cultural background that does not embrace or encourage social interaction in a workplace. As an institution with staff members from a diverse cultural background, views pertaining to cultural beliefs and practices should be embraced and accommodated. Nonetheless, the respondent did not suggest how staff members of the Ministry of Education should interact. Atwood, Mora, and Kaplan (2010) states that recent literature has shifted the focus from individual to a group of people, illustrating the importance of interactions between people in groups and the associated social aspect of learning. Social interaction and adopting a culture of a learning community as

stated by one respondent is very crucial for the Ministry of Education, given its current poor state of team spirit. According to Atwood et al. leadership is vital in creating these interactions, as leaders shape the environment in which the interaction takes place and play a critical role in both structuring and modeling the interaction.

5.5 Challenges encountered during Data Collection

The target population from which data was collected is at the top, middle management level and staff members below management which consist of education officers, secretaries, private secretaries, personal assistants and administrative officers of the Ministry. School teachers and members of the public also took part in the study. Because of the level (top management cadre) of the population from whom data was collected, it was difficult to obtain appointments for interviews and to get back the questionnaires that were sent out to relevant respondents. The timing of data collection coincided with the preparation of the budget of the Ministry which involved most of the management cadres that were targeted for the interviews and respondents of the questionnaires. Some management cadres were travelling during the week requests for interviews were sent out, others were attending workshops or were serving on a committee that was established to look into the issues of the medical school at UNAM. It was also clear that some managers were simply not interested, but would not provide an honest response on their availability, but instead sent the researcher back and forth.

Some accepted to be interviewed and to complete the questionnaire; however they never submitted the questionnaire or provided a date for the interview. As a result, fourteen questionnaires out of twenty that were sent out were received, while only seven interviews instead of the envisaged fifteen were conducted.

The researcher experienced technical challenges, especially with the first interview. The recorder, even though it was tested prior to the commencement of the interview, failed to record forcing the researcher to record the interview manually. In one of the interviews, the manager had to respond to an urgent call in the middle of the interview without alerting the researcher, which complicated matters even further.

The researcher engaged a transcriber to transcribe the recorded interviews; however, the transcriber abandoned the work due to other commitments forcing the researcher to transcribe all the interviews. This activity was a great challenge for the researcher and rather time consuming.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided the results, analysis of data and discussion on findings obtained from the questionnaires and interviews. It also dealt with the challenges and difficulties experienced in the process of data collection. The next chapter will provide a conclusion of the study and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the conclusions of the study and suggests recommendations that could assist in improving the shortcomings that have been identified through this research project. The conclusions relate to the objectives of the study and are presented according to the findings and analysis of the four research questions as presented below:

- To what extent does the present organization structure of the Ministry enhance efficiency and high performance?
- How do the leadership and management skills impact on the service delivery of the Ministry?
- What are the main communication styles and processes used by the Senior Management Team and the Directorates in the Ministry of Education?
- How do the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace?

6.2 Conclusions

The title of the research is: Exploring the effectiveness of management communication from and within the Ministry of Education Head Office, Namibia.

Objective of the *Study*

As stated earlier in Chapter 1, the objective of this research is to examine the quality and influences of communications emanating from the leadership and

management of the Ministry of Education and how these impact staff relations, operations, staff performance and service delivery.

The problem statement in chapter 1 indicates that new and old staff members have not yet bonded and do not work together as a team. This situation has led to work tension, doubts in the authenticity of management decisions and communication, and manifest in poor coordination of activities, unclear roles and responsibilities and subnormal performance of departments.

6.3 Organizational Structure

The literature review as identified in chapter 2, states that the organizational structure is the set of all ways in which the work is divided into different tasks, achieving coordination. It is the formal allocation of work roles and the administrative mechanisms to control and integrate work activities including those which cross formal organizational boundaries. The structure reflects the formal scheme of relationships, communications, decision processes, and procedures, and achieves its objectives (Martinez & Garcia 2011).

According to observations from the interview, *“Not many people know which structure we follow within the Ministry. The custodian of structures within the Government is the Office of the Prime Minister. Obviously, they have the structure which they call the structure of the Ministry. At certain times, senior management develops a structure and gives notice of implementing that structure. Then we have consultants here who worked on a structure: Ministry of Education, MPCC and other structures. Obviously, there seems to be a problem*

within the Ministry of Education, because we are not clear about which structure we are following.

Figure 2 in chapter 4 indicates that 13% of respondents agree that the structure of the Ministry is efficient, compared to 65% who disagree. 15% percent of respondents agree that the structure of the Ministry enhance efficiency, compared to 52% who disagree. 56% of respondents agree that roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined, while 25% disagree. 18% of respondents agree that the structure facilitates communication, while 27% disagree. The study further revealed that 25% of respondents agree that the structure provide employment growth while 62% disagree. 27% of respondents agree that the Ministry of Education has mechanisms in place to measure performance, compared to 62% who disagree with the statement.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the results above is that the structure of the Ministry is inefficient and does not enhance efficiency, nor does it provide employment growth.

The literature review identifies six key elements which managers need to address when they design their organizational structure. One of the elements is *chain of command (to whom do individuals and groups report?)*. This is critical in terms of what was expressed by the respondents above. The other key elements are: *work specialization, departmentalization, span of control, centralization and decentralization, and formalization* as discussed in chapter 2. (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, & Roodt, 2009).

With regards to roles and responsibilities in terms of the structure, the Ministry of Education has taken care of one of the key elements identified above, namely *departmentalization* as indicated in chapter 4. This is perfectly in agreement with the elements that the literature review has identified in terms of designing organizational structure. Each department in the Ministry of Education carries out their roles and responsibilities although the level of performance of each department differs from one department to another.

The function of the Ministry of Education as stated in the Mission Statement of the Ministry is “*To provide accessible and equitable quality education and training for a skilled, productive and competitive Nation*”. (Ministry of Education, 2012). For this function to be fulfilled, the structure should be designed in such a way that it includes leaders and managers that have the ability to communicate efficiently and effectively as well as the leadership skills to provide employment growth. According to the results provided above, the current structure does not seem to have that capacity.

The survey indicates that there is no technical staff, in the field of medicine, for example, to provide expertise in that area, especially with regards to the newly established school of medicine that would require inputs from the Ministry of Education. Most of the managers have either been teachers or principals who have knowledge and expertise in specific subjects, including curriculum development, but not necessarily in other technical areas such as medicine and engineering, for example.

The literature review states that one of the weaknesses in the Ministry of Education is its shortage of professionally qualified and experienced staff combined with its lack of a detailed and planned Human Resource Development Strategy. As a result, existing staff are generally very overworked in tasks for which they have received inadequate training and have little or no experience (Chung, 2013).

The current restructuring, including outsourcing of some functions of the Ministry of Education, affected the structure of the Ministry of Education as well as roles and responsibilities of some of the staff members, who viewed this development as a negative move. This development has/could increase inefficiency of the structure.

The functions of the department of Science and Technology, and Vocational Education and Training were very instrumental to the Ministry of Education hence, outsourcing such functions was probably not good for the Ministry in view of the fact that the two subjects are particularly very important for the Ministry, and should have remained in the Ministry. The expertise and capacities are currently not used and are wasted, because these functions are no longer part of the Ministry of Education.

6.4 Impact of Leadership and Management on Service Delivery

Leadership and management is one of the five strategic themes identified by the Ministry of Education as pillars of excellence, alongside other four pillars: teaching and learning, infrastructure, regulatory framework and stakeholder relations (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Figure 4 shows that 38% of respondents agree that leadership and management of the Ministry of Education have appropriate skills and styles to render quality service to the public compared to 13% who disagree with the statement. The study also revealed that 32% of the respondents agree that the management cadre applies the supportive management style compared to 44% who disagree. 28% agree that the system encourage capacity building, while 33% disagree. With regards to whether there are clear rules on capacity building, no results were recorded, however 25% disagree. This finding is in line with the literature review which states that managers organize delivery using constrained resources, while leaders achieve breakthroughs in performance and change how people think about what is desirable and possible. The literature review also states that leadership has the ability to influence and develop a group of people, teams and organizations towards the achievement of a vision or set of goals. The source of this influence may be formal, such as that provided by the possession of managerial rank in an organization. (Webb, Slagt, & Ewestein, 2013), (Avalio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009), (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, & Roodt, 2009). The results provided above are in contradiction with the literature review.

It should be understood that some leaders and managers are skilled in their specific fields of competencies and are able to perform to the best of their abilities.

Observations from the interviews show that there are factors that hamper performance and service delivery, for example poor communication, duplication, and lack of coordination of activities. Observations from the interviews also show

that the Ministry does not have enough qualified professionals to assist the leadership and management team who carries out required services. As a result, the leadership and management cadre is overloaded with responsibilities.

It is surprising that, while the leadership and management cadre is overworked, there are 96 vacant professional posts at the Ministry of Education Head Office. Chung (2013). This is probably where one of the problems lies in terms of delivering the required service to the public and not necessarily the lack of leadership and management skills.

Further observations from interviews show that the leadership and management cadre do not have technical skills in some areas, such as medicine and engineering, where the Ministry of Education is required to provide expertise, in order to influence, motivate, support and build the capacities of others and thus deliver the required service to the public. However, they do have appropriate leadership skills in relevant fields of their competence.

It was observed from the interviews that *“The general perception is that the leadership of the Ministry of Education lacks some skills, hence the rationale for the programme on capacity building leadership in the ETSIP document”*. To qualify this statement, the interviews revealed that the structure of the Ministry is comprised of staff members who have an educational background in specific subjects and teaching areas, and therefore there was a need for inclusion of staff members or specialists in other fields, such as health, in order to form a multi-disciplinary team.

With regards to the question of whether leadership and management cadre is supportive, transparent and accessible, figure 3, above, shows that 32% of the respondents agree that the leadership and management cadre is supportive compared to 44% who disagree with the statement.

Figure 4 also shows that 28% of the respondents agree that the system encourages capacity building compared to 33% of respondents who disagree. This is in contradiction with Webb et al. who state that, it is crucial for organizations to build practical leadership skills in order to improve performance in a sustainable way, so that leadership becomes an integral part of the organization.

Webb et al. also state that, in order to make sure that leadership development achieves lasting impact, organizations must adopt three core approaches i.e. use performance improvement opportunities within their organizations as the real-life context for learning, build deeper leadership qualities so that leaders have the resilience and self-awareness to sustain major change, and they should shape a leadership engine that integrates capacity-building within their organization's management processes.

The results shown above regarding capacity building indicate that the Ministry of Education is far from achieving the core approaches suggested by Webb, Slagt, and Ewestein (2013).

6.5 Effectiveness of Communication Styles and Processes

The literature review states that communication style is the way in which one verbally, non-verbally and para-verbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered or understood. It further states that managerial communication drives relationships and frames the attitudes and behaviors of employees in the workplace. If managers or leaders have the right attitude and behavior, the employees will also have the correct attitude and behavior and will perform their tasks well (Dasgupta & Singh, 2013).

According to literature review, there are four basic behavioral styles: relater, analyzer, director and socializer. The relaters are most likely to use empathy and understanding in interpersonal problem-solving and conflict situations (Darling & Walker, 2001).

The performance of an organization is highly dependent on the communication style of its managers and leaders and on the effectiveness of internal communication.

The literature review defines internal communication as communication flow among people within the boundaries of an organization. Effective internal communication is a prerequisite for a positive external corporate image or reputation (Mazzei, 2010).

Figure 5 above, shows that 50% of respondents agree that leadership and management communication style is *supportive*. This is the only area in the findings that is in agreement with the literature review above. However, the

general perception of leadership and management communication skills and styles is in contradiction with the literature review stated above.

48% of respondents agree that the communication style of leadership and management of the Ministry of Education is *aggressive*. 40% agree that the communication style of leadership and management is *authoritative*. Figure 5 also shows that only 14% of respondents agree that the communication process of the Ministry is ineffective compared to 45% who disagree. 25% of the respondents agree that communication channels are followed, compared to 32% who disagree. Only 13% of respondents agree that the communication style of leadership and management encourages trust and openness.

With regards to *trust and openness*, which is also an attribute of effective communication, the results revealed that, it is a great cause for concern within the Ministry of Education.

The literature review as indicated in chapter 2, states that in a high performance organizations, people on all levels of the organization maintain trust relationships with others, because loyalty is valued, smart people are treated smartly, people are shown respect, a learning attitude is fostered, individual relationships between managers and employees are created and maintained, belief and trust in others are encouraged, and people are treated fairly (Downs, 2013).

Respondents state that many staff members feel discouraged by the way communication is handled in the Ministry. The bureaucratic and autocratic management style is not appreciated by many staff members as it does not

provide opportunities for people to work in an open and collegial manner. There is no doubt that this situation impacts negatively on quality service delivery of the staff.

The survey reveals that *the Strategic Plan of the Ministry is a contested document, because it does not include the views of all staff members. It also revealed that, as the document is presented today, some directorates were not consulted and therefore their activities are not included in the Strategic Plan. Many staff members cannot claim ownership of this document.* The communication channel which you expect is one that, when there is something happening in the Ministry, communicates it through electronic tools.

The Ministry's strategic objective to improve organizational performance will not be achieved by 2017 unless serious attention is paid to effective and efficient internal communication and processes.

6.6 Staff Relations in the Workplace

Organizations revolve around people, and for any organization to function effectively, people that staff the organization should be able to communicate and relate to each other as members of one team. In this way they create a friendly and appealing working atmosphere for all, and therefore a competitive organization.

The statement above is in line with the literature review that states that self-, team and organizational development leads to the creative emergence of spirit. Self-sense or self-system is very crucial for the development of effective leadership and team spirit. You have to understand and lead yourself in order to

understand and lead others. The four facets of reality (internal, external, collective and individual), enhance team building and spirit in an organization (Cacioppe, 2000).

Ucok (2006), Khetarpal and Srivastava (2000), and O'Rourke (2013) emphasize listening and speaking as crucial and important aspects of communication in the workplace.

For any organization to perform at a high level, such an organization must ensure that its staff members have good interpersonal relations in order to work together and that the workplace is conducive to such an atmosphere. In a nutshell, good team spirit and teamsmanship are very crucial for good working relations in the workplace.

The study reveals that 61% of the respondents agree that there is good team spirit (figure 6, above), specifically in some directorates and departments compared to 25% who disagree. However, figure 6 also shows that only 7% of the respondents agree that there is good teamsmanship compared to 79% who disagree. 13% agree that there is good interaction and interpersonal relations, compared to 25% who disagree. 17% agree that the Ministry of Education has mechanisms in place to ensure good teamsmanship, compared to 72% who disagree. Only 8% agree that there is good corporation and coordination of activities, compared to 80% who disagree.

The results of the study show that the current situation at the Ministry of Education with regards to teamsmanship, interpersonal relations, and corporation

and coordination of activities is very worrying as revealed by the study (Figure 6, above).

The literature review states that Managerial communication begins with emotional intelligence or interpersonal skills and an understanding of cross-cultural differences, needed to interact effectively with others as individuals or groups. The results of the study are in contradiction with the literature review.

The literature review further states that listening is an essential skill in any rhetorical situation, but is pictured aligned more with the managerial ring because managing others effectively requires even greater attention to hearing what others say, not simply what we think we hear them say (Barrett, 2006).

Another aspect which is crucial to effective workplace communication and interpersonal relations is *humor*. “*Managers who use humor to defuse difficult situations may appear more approachable and understanding of the challenges their employees face*” (Ministry of Education, 2013). This literature review could be in agreement with the results of the study regarding good team spirit.

In a nutshell, the overall impression of the results confirms the outcome of the interview, namely that staff members at all levels are very unhappy with how people relate to each other. Very few people enjoy their work and there are people who do not want to come to work. Some report late for duty or stay away from work.

The survey reveals that:

“There is team spirit in areas that require team work, however there is no proper consultation and it is also a demoralizing atmosphere because of how things are done.”

“Generally there is no team spirit, but there are exceptions where some leaders are able to get their people to work as a team, but it is a complex situation!”

“Collegiality does not exist. The relationship and being at the Ministry of Education is not clear. There are problems with relationship with managers; they are autocratic, bureaucratic and the reporting systems are also not in place.”

“There is no good team spirit in the Ministry of Education. Issues of serious concern are not taken seriously; people have lost interest and courage to work.”

“The management style of the leadership and management does not promote team spirit and put people in compartments. Staff members, especially at the management level do not communicate well with each other and do not trust each other.”

As stated in the problem statement in chapter 1, old and new staff members have not yet bonded and do not relate to each other as members of one team. This scenario makes working relations very difficult and creates lack of trust among colleagues; it also impacts negatively on staff and organizational performance.

The situation does not seem to have improved even after an intensive training in team building which was conducted by a consultant in 2012.

Departments and directorates in the Ministry of Education still function as silos and not as one big team of the Ministry of Education. This statement is in agreement with Chung (2013) who states that the Education system fails to operate holistically, but that work units operate in silos instead, which provides a partial explanation of weak implementation of excellent policies.

6.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made on the basis of the literature review and findings of the study:

6.7.1 General Recommendations

1. Teamwork is very crucial for staff and organizational performance and the creation of long-term success. It is recommended that the Ministry build strong and confident teams at all levels and encourage collegiality.
2. Bureaucratic and autocratic management style slows down the implementation of programmes and activities. It is recommended that leadership and management adopt a flexible management style.
3. Take time to analyze where things are working: why? Why not? And determine what should be done if there are shortcomings.
4. Create and provide opportunities for all staff members, to grow in order to make a meaningful contribution to the performance of the Ministry. It is recommended that the Ministry allows time, and provides sufficient financial resources for capacity building.

6.7.2 Specific Recommendations

1. The Ministry should implement the agreed structure and ensure that it is understood by all stakeholders and that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education implement the *chain of command* in order to avoid dual reporting.
2. The key vacant professional positions in the Ministry of Education Head Office are critical for the implementation of good policies and programmes of the Ministry of Education. It is recommended that the Ministry should fill the vacancies as soon as possible.
3. For the Ministry of Education to be a high performance organization, it is recommended that an atmosphere which is conducive to a happy working environment is created, by applying methodologies that promote openness and trust, and by encouraging participation of all staff members in decision making regarding programmes and activities that affect the functions of their departments and directorates.
4. Effective communication and good interpersonal relations will improve the image of the Ministry of Education. It is recommended that the Ministry continuously engage staff members at all levels in team-building activities.
5. It is critical that staff members take ownership and internalize the documents that are developed by the Ministry of Education such as policies and strategic plans. It is recommended that the Ministry continuously involve all relevant stakeholders and consult with them on decision-making regarding policies that affect their work.

References

- Aardt, C., Van Der Bank, J., & Visser, T. (2011). *Entrepreneurship and new venture management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Atkinson, S., & Butcher, D. (2003). Senior management relationships and trust: An exploratory study. *Journal of managerial Psychology*, 571-587.
- Atwood, M. A., Mora, J. W., & Kaplan, A. W. (2010). *Learning to lead: Evaluating leadership and organisational learning*. London: London Press.
- Avalio, B., Walumbwa, F. O., & Weber, T. J. (2009). Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions. *The annual review of Psychology*, 423-433.
- Bambacas, M., & Patrickson, M. (2006). Interpersonal communication skills that enhance organisational commitment. *Journal of communication management*, 51-72.
- Barret, D. J. (2006). Strong communication skills a must for today's leaders. *Handbook of business strategy*, 385-390.
- Bernhart, D. (2013). *The dilemma of leadership*. Johannesburg: Wits Business School Journal.
- Burnes, B. (2009). *Managing change*. London: London press.
- business dictionary. (2013, September 15). *Business dictionary*. Retrieved from Business dictionary:
www.businessdictionary.com/definition/communication
- Cacioppe, R. (2000). Creating spirit at: Re-visioning organisational development and leadership. *Journal of leadership*, 110-119.
- Chung, F. (2012). *Team building workshop*. Windhoek: Ministry of Education.
- Chung, F. (2013). *Discussion Paper on teacher policies and strategies*. Windhoek: Ministry of Education.
- Coats, K. (2013). Tell me no lies but avoid the truth. *Wits Business School Journal*, 28-29.

- Creswell, J. W. (2006). How interpretive qualitative research extends mixed methods research. *Research in schools*, 1-11.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach*. London: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., Shope, R., Plano, C., & Green, D. O. (2006). How interpretive qualitative research extends mixed research methods. *Research in Schools*, 1-11.
- Darling, J. R., & Walker, W. E. (2001). Effective conflict management; Use of behavioral style model. *Leadership and Organization development*, 230-242.
- Dasgupta, S. A., & Singh, S. (2013). Impact of managerial communication styles on employees' attitudes and behaviors. *Employee relations*, 173-199.
- Day, D. V., & Antonakis, J. (2012). The nature of leadership. *Sage Publications*, 112-123.
- Downs, C. W. (2013, September 15). *Model of Communication*. Retrieved from Google books: www.books.google.com.na/books/model+communication
- Erturk, A. (2007). A trust based approach to promote employees' openness to organisational change in Turkey. *International Journal of manpower Vol. 29 No. 5*, 462-483.
- Handley, J. (2014). *Take responsibility for performance*. Chicago: Leadership Magazine.
- Heron, J. (2001). *Understanding how to help people more effectively: A creative practical guide 5th edition*. London: Sage Publication.
- Hogg, M. A., & Terry, D. J. (2013, April 11). *Jstor*. Retrieved from Academy of management review: www.jstor.org/stable/259266
- Holm, O. (2006). *Communication processes in critical systems: dialogues concerning communications*. Chicago: Adventure Works Press.
- Hough, J., Thompson, J. R., Strickland, A. A., & Gamble, E. J. (2011). *Crafting and executing strategy. Creating sustainable high performance in South Africa*. Pretoria: City Press.
- Jabareen, Y. (2009). Building a conceptual framework; Philosophy, definitions and procedure. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 51-63.

- Jonasson, C., & Luring, J. (2011). Cultural differences in use: The power to essentialise communication styles. *Journal of communication Management Vol. 16 No. 4*, 101-112.
- Khetarpal, I., & Srivastava, R. C. (2000). Management styles grounded in interpersonal roles: Focus on heads of schools in India. *The International Journal of Education Management*, 74-83.
- Kudumo, M. (2011). *The participation and influence of teacher unions on education reforms in an independent Namibia*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Martinez, L., & Garcia, M. (2011). *Organisational structure*. Chicago: Adventure Press.
- Matola, M. (2013). The nuts and bolts behind brand South Africa. *Wits Business School Journal*, 16-25.
- Mazzei, A. (2010). Promoting active communication behaviour through internal communication. *International Journal of Corporate Communication*, 55-56.
- McCroskey, J. C. (1997). *Communication in educational organisations*. Paris: Tapestry Press.
- Minaar, V. V. (2011). *Guide to organisational Ethics: Fundamentals of NGO ethics*. Windhoek: Namibia Institute for Democracy.
- Ministry of Education. (2004). *National report on the development of Education in Namibia*. Windhoek: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Regional and Local Government. (1998). *Decentralisation in Namibia policy development and implimentation*. Windhoek: Government Press.
- Ministry of Regional local Government and Housing. (1997). *A decentralisation policy for the Republic of Namibia*. Windhoek: Ministry of Regional local Government and Housing.
- MoE. (2012, August 10). *Strategic plan*. Retrieved from Ministry of Education Portal: www.moe.gov.na
- Mouton, J. (2006). *How to succeed in your Master's Doctoral Studies. A South African guide*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- National Report. (2004). *National report on development of education in Namibia*. Windhoek: Ministry of Education.

- Obama, B. (2013, December 10). *Obama speech*. Retrieved from Politico: www.politico.com/story/
- O'Rourke, J. S. (2013). *Management Communication, A case analysis approach*. Oxford: Oxford Press.
- Oxford Dictionary. (2006). *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Oxford Dictionary. (n.d.). *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*.
- Polytechnic of Namibia. (2011). *Masters thesis manual for candidates and supervisors*. Windhoek: Polytechnic of Namibia.
- Robbins, S. P., Judge, T. A., Odendaal, A., & Roodt, G. (2009). *Organisational behavior. Global and southern perspectives*. Pretoria: City Press.
- Schonberger, R. J. (1994). *Total quality: Teamsmanship over leadership. Benchmarking for quality management and technology Vol. 1 No. 1*. Chicago: City Press.
- Strategy Direction. (2013). *Have fun make money. Can humor increase workplace effectiveness? Vol. 29 No. 1*. London: London Press.
- The Namibian. (2013). *Nelson Mandela*. Windhoek: The Namibian.
- Tilden, C., & Kleiner, B. H. (2005). *Effective management of state employees*. Oxford: Management Research News.
- Tylor, E. (2010). *Enhancing the utility of research: A system thinking approach. Research methodology colloquim*. Windhoek: IUM.
- Ucok, O. (2006). Transparency communication and mindfulness. *Journal of Management Development Vol. 25* , 1024-1028.
- UNESCO. (2013). *Constitution of Namibia National Commission*. London: UNESCO.
- Van Aardt, I., Hewit, M., Bezuidenhout, S., Van Rensburg, L. J., Naidoo, P., Van Aardt, C., . . . Visser, T. (2011). *Entrepreneurship and Venture management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Webb, C., Slagt, P., & Ewestein, B. (2013). Building leadership and capabilities to improve business. *The Wits Business School Journal*, 30-31.

Welman, C., & Mitchel, B. (2005). *Research methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Whyte, G. (2013). *Research methods and business statistics: Teaching notes and student resource*. Windhoek: Namibia University of Science and Technology.

Zellman, M. (2013, June 9). *Effective communication styles at the work place*. Retrieved from Small Businesses: www.smallbusiness.chron.com

Annex

Questionnaire

Kindly check with an (X) the statement(s) in Section A that best reflect your views, and then briefly give a brief explanation as applicable in Section B below.

Section A

Question 1.

Does the present organizational structure of the Ministry enhance efficiency and high performance from staff?

	Statement	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational structure • Perception of efficiency • Evidence of efficiency • Evidence of performance 	<p>The Ministry of Education has a functional structure in place, and roles/functions and responsibilities of the different departments and directorates are clearly defined.</p> <p>a) The current organizational structure of the Ministry enhances efficiency and high performance.</p> <p>b) My directorate/department is adequately staffed and skilled; as a manager I am able to perform my tasks and carry out my functions and responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner.</p> <p>c) The tasks allocated to my directorate/department are adequate and correspond to the functions and specialization of my directorate.</p> <p>d) The workload and size of the human resources of my directorate is manageable.</p> <p>e) I have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform the tasks allocated to me as a manager and head of the department.</p> <p>f) The structure of the Ministry provides employee growth and increased knowledge in the allocated task.</p> <p>g) The structure of the Ministry provides a clear</p>	

	<p>reporting line; hence as a manager I know whom I am accountable to.</p> <p>h) As a senior manager, I know the degree of my authority, and I delegate some of my authority to my staff members.</p> <p>i) My supervisor entrusts me with tasks and responsibilities of the directorate and holds me accountable.</p> <p>j) I feel motivated by the tasks and responsibilities assigned to me.</p> <p>k) My manager executes his/her functions (planning, organizing, leading, and controlling) efficiently; I am encouraged to perform to the best of my ability.</p> <p>l) There are mechanisms in place to measure performance of the different departments and directorates.</p>	
--	---	--

Question 2.

How do the leadership and management styles impact service delivery of the Ministry?

	Statement	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership style • Management style • Perception of 	Leadership cadre in the Ministry is accessible and supportive of the staff members (builds confidence, acknowledges performance and achievement).	

<p>impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of quality of service delivered 	<p>a) Management and leadership style is transparent and encourages trust and openness in sharing and/or communicating information to staff members; this motivates me to perform and carry out my roles and responsibilities efficiently.</p> <p>b) A supportive management and leadership style enhances my confidence and increases my competency in my work.</p> <p>c) A participative management style (subordinate/superior decision-making power), enhances quality of service delivery to the public and other stakeholders. I feel encouraged when my views and inputs are acknowledged.</p> <p>d) My performance and achievement in service delivery is the result of the transparent, trust and openness of the management style in the Ministry.</p> <p>e) Accessibility and open door policy of some of the management cadres of the Ministry contribute to quality of service delivery and motivates me as a shareholder to participate in the activities and programmes of the Ministry.</p> <p>f) I apply authoritative management style and believe that my style provides advice, direction and guidance to my staff and colleagues, and thus enhances quality service delivery.</p>	
--	--	--

Question 3

What would you say are the main communication styles and processes used by the senior management team and the directorates in the

Ministry of Education? (Please indicate with an (X) the statement(s) that reflects your view.)

	Statement	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication style • Communication processes • Communication channels 	<p>Different communication styles are used in organizations and other working environments, e.g. controller communicator (bossy and task-oriented); promoter (sociable, appreciate humor with sensitivity); supporter (calm and cool, patient, good listening skills, steady worker who comfortably explores change, who does not like conflict); analyzer (like facts, is detailed-oriented). The communication styles are grouped into three: aggressive, passive and assertive.</p> <p>a) Communication style used in the Ministry is authoritative and prescriptive. It offers advice, guidance and direction, and it promotes participation, cooperation and teamwork.</p> <p>b) My supervisor is an aggressive communicator; this type of communication style enable me to be on task and deliver required service, however, I feel uncomfortable with this type of communication style.</p> <p>c) The communication style of the management cadre is aggressive and impact negatively on the performance of the organization, the communication process and communication channel.</p> <p>d) My supervisor applies the supporter communication style which motivates me to perform and increase my confidence.</p>	X

	<p>e) The communication process in the Ministry is well coordinated and does not create ambiguity and misunderstanding among staff members at different levels.</p> <p>f) The management team uses the promoter communication style. As a staff member, I feel encouraged and at ease to approach any of the management team members.</p> <p>g) The Ministry has mechanisms in place to ensure that proper communication channels are followed</p>	
--	--	--

Question 4

How do different layer of the staff relate to each other in the workplace?

	Statement	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relations • Evidence of team work • Cooperation, collaboration 	<p>Interpersonal relation between leadership and management team and other staff members of the Ministry is crucial for effectiveness and efficiency in a workplace.</p> <p>a) There is strong interpersonal relationship between the leadership and management team and the other staff members.</p> <p>b) Staff members in my directorate work as a team in a trustworthy environment and interact well with each other.</p> <p>c) I work in a friendly atmosphere; my colleagues appreciate my contribution as a team member.</p>	

	<p>d) As a manager, I experience lack of trust and interpersonal relations among my colleagues, which has a negative impact on my performance.</p> <p>e) Leaders and managers in the Ministry do not communicate effectively with each other resulting in poor teamsmanship.</p> <p>f) I use humor as a way to interact with my colleagues and other staff members at different levels, and to diffuse difficult situations that may appear.</p> <p>g) Directorates and departments in the Ministry operate as silos and do not cooperate and collaborate with each other.</p>	
--	--	--

Section B

Plases provide a brief explanation to the statements below, that you have checked in Section A above.

Question 1

- a) The current organizational structure of the Ministry enhances efficiency and high performance: why do you agree/disagree?

- f) The structure of the Ministry provides employee growth and increased knowledge in the allocated task: why do you agree/disagree?

- l) There are mechanisms in place to measure performance of the different departments and directorates: Why do you agree/disagree?

Question 2

- d) My performance and achievement in service delivery is the result of the transparent, trust and openness of the management style in the Ministry: why do you agree/disagree?

Question 3

- b) My supervisor is an aggressive communicator; this type of communication style enable me to be on task and deliver required service, however, I feel uncomfortable with this type of communication style: Why do you agree/disagree?

- c) The communication style of the management cadre is aggressive and impacts negatively on the performance of the organization, the communication process and communication channel: Why do you agree/disagree?

- e) The communication process in the Ministry is well coordinated and does not create ambiguity and misunderstanding among staff members at different levels: Why do you agree/disagree?

- g) The Ministry has mechanisms in place to ensure that proper communication channels are followed: why agree/disagree?

Question 4

- a) There is strong interpersonal relationship between the leadership and management team and the other staff members: Why do you agree/disagree?

- b) Staff members in my directorate work as a team in a trustworthy environment and interact well with each other: why do you agree/disagree?

- d) As a manager, I experience lack of trust and interpersonal relations among my colleagues, which has a negative impact on my performance: why do you agree/disagree?

- e) Leaders and managers in the Ministry do not communicate effectively with each other resulting in poor teamsmanship: why do you agree/disagree?

- g) Directorates and departments in the Ministry operate as silos and do not cooperate and collaborate with each other: why do you agree/disagree?

ANNEX: Invitation letter to participants

27 January 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

Invitation to participate in the study

My name is **Frieda Ndapewa Kanime**, a Namibian citizen employed at the Ministry of Education, Directorate Namibia National Commission for UNESCO. I am currently registered at the Polytechnic of Namibia, Harold Pupkewitz Graduate School of Business, where I am pursuing a Master in Leadership and Change Management.

I am currently conducting research as a requirement of the School to complete the degree. My research topic is: "Exploring the effectiveness of management communication from and within the Ministry of Education in Namibia".

The objective of the study is to examine the quality and influences of communications emanating from the leadership and management of the Ministry of Education and how these impact staff relations, performance and service delivery.

The main research questions

- Does the present organization structure of the Ministry enhance efficiency and high performance?
- How do the leadership /management skills impact service delivery of the Ministry?
- What are the main communication styles and processes used by the Senior Management Team and the Directorates in the Ministry of Education?
- How do the different layers of staff relate to each other in the workplace?

As one of the long serving staff members of the Ministry who has experienced the changes that the current Ministry of Education has undergone, I would like to request you for an interview, which will last for approximately 30 minutes. The interview is part of data collection and will be conducted at the venue and time of your choice for your convenience. The interview will be recorded.

The interview will be conducted in accordance with the Research Ethics and Conduct of the Polytechnic of Namibia, which are as follows:

- *Voluntary participation:* the right to decide whether they wish to participate in a research project. Researcher will respect the right of individuals to refuse to participate in research and to withdraw their participation.
- *Anonymity:* Information obtained in the course of research which may reveal the identity of a participant is confidential unless the participant and the institution agree to its release.
- *Informed consent:* Participation in research requires informed, un-coerced, consent of participants.
- *Safety of participant in research:* Researchers ensure that the safety of participants against foreseeable risk or harm.

It is against this background that I am requesting your voluntary consent to participate in the research. I undertake to adhere to the principles stipulated above.

Kindly indicate in writing your voluntary consent to participate in the research, and the appropriate date, time and venue of the interview. I am expected to submit the final result of the study by mid- March 2014; hence I intend to finalize the interviews by the end of February 2014.

My postal address:

Frieda N. Kanime

P. O. Box 98284

Pelican Square

Hochlandpark

Email: kafili2000@yahoo.com; frieda.kanime@moe.gov.na

Tel: 061-259129 (h)

Signature of applicant

Date: 28 January 2014

Frieda N. Kanime

