EXPLORING THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM

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EXPLORING THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (GCIS)

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"I can do all things through Christ who Strengthen Me"

ABSTRACT

EXPLORING THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (GCIS)

The fundamental nature of the research question for this study was centred on the functions of internal communication. It was within this context that functionalism as theoretical approach was selected for the study of internal communication within the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in South Africa. Functionalism's interest in the structure and function of communication is evident in its major assumption, namely that the phenomenon of mass communication is a system that is a whole consisting of several interrelated and interdependent parts. In addition two related theories, systems theory and classical management theory, were employed as departure for the study.

Related literature on internal communication bears evidence that the flow of internal communication differs from one environment to the other. This depends on the type of information that has been communicated and the type of organisation in which the internal communication occurs. Managing employees effectively requires communication and the quality of communication amongst the people that comprise an organisation is a crucial variable in determining organisational success. This requires a common understanding of the role and structure of communication and its functions.

Internal communication is the strength of any organisation. Communication scholars such as Verwey and Du Plooy (2003), Kitchen and Daly (2002), Gibson and Hodgetts (1991), Murabe (1990) and numerous others already demonstrated the overwhelming importance of internal communication in today's business environment. Internal communication creates a platform for participative decision making, employees' interaction, information sharing, creativity and innovation, as well as an environment that fosters productivity and creates a sense of organisational ownership.

A comprehensive internal communication system is required to unambiguously translate the vision, mission and strategic objectives of any organisation into reality. Furthermore effective internal communication has a potential to build and sustain social interaction within the organisation and most importantly to drive a service delivery message to all employees. Effective communication and service delivery have recently become issue of exceptional importance in government departments in South Africa, particularly in government agencies.

Factors such as organisational culture and leadership style have an influence on internal communication. Organisational culture defines and describes what the organisation stands for. Leadership is very critical for internal communication as it informs the organisation's vision. If the leadership is negatively inclined, there is no way in which the internal communication will thrive. It is always advisable to strike a balance between organisational culture, leadership and internal communication.

The findings of this study indicate that management and employees of the GCIS perceive the function of internal communication differently; that both management and employees have inadequate general understanding of the communication channels and communication structure within the GCIS and reveal that though there are numerous communication channels available, only few are used and preferred within the GCIS.

The selection and the understanding of communication channels within the organisation are critical elements for internal communication. Therefore, the communication department or division should ensure broader consultation with all key stakeholders within the organisation. It is regrettable to have communication channels within the organisation that are not understood by the majority of employees and to discover that out of the twenty that are implemented, only five are mainly used and two preferred by most of the management and the employees.

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Chapter 1

Orientation and background

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

In May 1994, the Government of National Unity led in a new spirit of freedom of expression. The government of South Africa was embraced by an information-hungry society. The Communication Task Team that was set up by the Cabinet in 1995 to investigate and make recommendations about government communication revealed, as part of its findings that 'government lack central coordination of messaging and adequate planning of information campaigns' (Communicators' handbook, 2001:6). As such, the government operated under ineffective communication and information systems. The new political dispensation has posed numerous challenges and opportunities to the government communication system and government communicators (Communicators' handbook, 2001:2).

In addition, the South African government had an inadequate understanding of the role of communication and its functions within the government (Communications, 2000:1). In an attempt to overcome this challenge the Government Communication and Information System referred to as GCIS was officially launched in May 1998. As part of its mandate the GCIS is expected to play an important role in terms of providing an indispensable and widely valued contribution to a society working with government towards better life, by meeting both government communication needs and that of the public.

The GCIS has thus accepted the responsibility above and as part of its challenges, the GCIS has to ensure that government communicates interactively with the public and it has to be at the forefront of any communication initiatives within the government and the various government departments. For the GCIS to ensure that government communicates effectively, firstly it has to ensure that its employees within the organisation communicate effectively.

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Therefore, one key area in achieving this is to establish a common understanding of the functions and structure, as well as the roles of communication between management and employees within the GCIS. The GCIS should therefore develop a common understanding between management and employees about the functions of internal communication. This must serve as a point of departure in meeting the communication needs of the government as well as ensuring that government communicates effectively.

Internal communication is such a fundamental part of managing today's organisations - according to Kitchen and Daly (2002: 49) as organisations become more focussed on retaining a happy workforce with changing values, organisations have necessarily had to think more now than in the past about how they communicate with employees through what is also often called internal communication.

Massie and Anderson (2003: 224) view internal communication as having a positive effect on employees by motivating them to work harder. They further maintain that the internal communication is a matter of creating trust, developing a climate in which "open" communication can take place. They view internal communication as a two-way process, which is most valuable in organisations of less hierarchical and more flexible structure. By implication, the above authors are of the opinion that internal communication is meant to create a working environment conducive to allowing social dialogue within the workplace.

Internal communication is considered as a vital tool for binding an organisation, enhancing employee morale, promoting transparency and reducing confusion (Mumbai, 2001: 1). In agreement to this point, Massie and Anderson (2003: 225) state that it is almost impossible to promote good external public relations if good internal public relations are not in place. They further maintain, "If employees are not on management's side, it's doubtful that an organisation's external publics will be". In essence Mumbai, Massie and Anderson reinforce the fact that internal communication is a unifying force between the employees and the organisation. And this advocates for the interaction between subordinates and supervisors within the organisation.

During periods of change, it is even more vital that employees are fully and honestly informed about what is happening or is about to happen within the organisation. While the pace of the change is often externally driven and outside the control of the senior management, its impact can be lessened by ensuring that employees are informed as soon as possible about what changes will occur, when, and what the implications are likely to be. The assumption is that this will make the employees alert and possibly they would put more effort into their work performance (Dennis and Owen, 1998: 177).

In addition, McNamara (1999: 22) argues that the most common communication problem is managements' (leaders' and managers') assumption that if a manager is aware of it, then everyone should be informed. Usually, employees are not aware unless management makes a deliberate attempt to carefully convey information. It is critical at this stage to note that organisations exist because goals can only be achieved through the coordinated activity of individuals. Thus it is very important that the employees and management within GCIS have a common understanding of communication and its functions. This will eliminate possible assumptions (i.e. if a manager knows it, then everyone must know it) that might exist within GCIS.

Robbins and De Cenzo (1998: 3) define an organisation as a structured system of relationships that coordinates the effort of a group of people toward the achievement of specific objectives, or to accomplish some specific purpose, and the same principle applies to GCIS. It is a structured system of relationships that coordinates the effort to shape the integration, coordination and improvement of government communication. The above scholars further maintain that the organisation's success depends largely on its ability to process information with appropriate richness to reduce uncertainty and clarify ambiguity that occurs in an environment of constant change (Spicer, 1998: 39). Thus, the internal communication system, like in any other organisation, is a major constituent within GCIS, and it can actually be seen as its lifeblood.

It follows from the above argument that it is essential that organisations, be it government departments, corporate organisations, and private sector as well as non-profit organisations have a common and precise understanding of the structure and functions of internal communication.

As reflected previously it is through effective internal communication that developmental messages, service delivery information, work-related instructions and transformation messages can be developed and understood within the organisation before it is spread to the larger community. Since GICS has to provide a leadership in government communications, the key question is: "do the employees and management of GCIS have a common understanding regarding the functions of communication?"

The importance of internal communication is highlighted by previous and current research. According to Robson and Tourish (2005: 213), substantial literature exists that suggests that internal communication helps to improve the likelihood of an organisation being successful. However, there is little research conducted to explore the functions of internal communication, especially within GCIS. Myers and Myers (in Baker, 2002: 100) have identified three primary functions of internal communication, which relates to production, socialisation and innovation, thus the key question is: "does GCIS address these variables as part of the functions of their internal communication?"

1.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The central question to be addressed by this study can be articulated as: "What do management and employees of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) perceive as the functions of internal communication?" For GCIS to coordinate the efforts of its employees and management toward the achievement of specific objectives, or to accomplish some specific purpose, strictly requires a common understanding of the functions of internal communication by both management and employees.

However, Communications (2000: 4) suggests that there is a poor understanding of the role of communication and its functions in South African government. Yet, there is little effort made to explore what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication.

There are six interrelated sub-questions that need to be addressed in the process of determining what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication. These sub-questions include:

- What do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the production function of internal communication?

- What do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the socialisation function of internal communication?

- What do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication?

- What is the general understanding of management and employees about the flow and structure of communication within GCIS?

- Which communication channels are mainly used within GCIS according to the management and employees' experience?

- What are the most preferred communication channels within GCIS according to management and employee's experience?

Since GCIS is expected to provide leadership in government communication and to ensure better performance through communication systems, answers to these questions could provide a broader understanding of the importance and functions of internal communication within and outside of South African government departments.

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1.3 GENERAL AIM AND SPECIFIC RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 The general aim of this study

The general aim of this study is to determine what management and subordinates of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication.

1.3.2 Specific research objectives

- To determine what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the production function of internal communication.

- To determine what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication.

- To determine what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the socialisation function of internal communication.

- To determine what is the general understanding of the management and employees about the structure and flow of communication within GCIS.

- To determine which communication channels are mainly used within GCIS according to the observation of the management and employees.

- To determine what are the most preferred communication within GCIS according to the management and employees' experience.

1.3.3 The link between the specific objectives and research question and sub-questions

As indicate earlier, seven interrelated sub-questions will be addressed in the process of determining what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication. The relationship between the central research questions, seven sub-questions and twelve objectives are illustrated by means of a table (table 1.1) on the next page.

Central research question:

What do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication?

Table 1.1 Link between research objectives and questions

The link between objectives and research questions (sub – questions)	
Research questions	**Objective(s)**
What do the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the (production, innovation and socialisation) function of internal communication?	One
What do the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the socialisation function of internal communication?	Two
What do the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication?	Three
What is the general understanding of the management and employees about the flow of communication within GCIS?	Four
Which communication channels are mainly used within GCIS according to the management and employees' experiences?	Five
What are the most preferred communication channels within GCIS according to the management and employees' experience?	Six

1.4 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Attempts have been made through a literature study to establish if there is any study that focussed on the functions of internal communication within South African context in the past. This study is one of the first to focus specifically on the functions of internal communication within GCIS. The title of this study seeks to explore what do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication. According to Communications (2000: 4) there is a poor understanding of the role of communication and its functions in South African government.

Through addressing this research question GCIS will be able to sensitise its employees and management to realise the value of the functions of internal communication, the relevancy of communication channels and communication flow and the benefits of internal communication to working conditions.

As indicated previously the core mandate of GCIS amongst other include providing leadership in government communication. Thus, the research results could lead to a better understanding of role and functions of internal communication within different government departments. The results of this study will provide specific insights that could be used when developing and implementing internal communication programs.

In addition, specific themes that could be used for future research have been identified. They are in areas related to how internal communication relates to other organisational variables, factors that influence the choice of internal communication channels, how to establish a common understanding of internal communication and its functions, organisational climate through communication, and communication satisfaction. These are discussed in Chapter 7.

1.5 CONCEPTUALISATION OF KEY TERMS

According to Babbie and Mouton (2003: 111) conceptualisation is the process through which we specify what we mean when we use particular terms. Therefore four key terms need clarification within the context of this study, i.e. internal communication, production communication, innovation communication and socialisation communication.

1.5.1 Internal communication

Communication scholars have raised a consistent concern regarding the way people view internal communication and Gower is one of those who have articulated this concern. According to him, people think of internal communication as media-based support for an organisation's top managers in passing messages down to other employees (Gower, 1999: xviii).

According to Gower (1999: xviii) internal communication should be viewed on a broader scope as the professional management of interaction between all those with an interest or stake in a particular organisation. His justification is that the "professional management" element of that definition signifies a more rigorous and performance-related approach to internal communication, setting it within business and financial context. He further continues by pointing out that internal communication should be viewed as a strategic function and a genuine participator in the organisation rather than a producer of media deliverables.

Gower (1999: xviii) has indicated that many different scholars define internal communication with a limited scope. For the purpose of this study internal communication is described as an umbrella term for all the communication processes that occur within the organisation; it is that process wherein mutually interdependent human beings create and exchange messages, and interpret and negotiate meanings, while striving to articulate and realise mutually held visions, purposes and goals of the organisation (Andrews, 1996: 45).

1.5.2 Production function of internal communication

Each organisation has a primary task, namely, to offer a product or service to the client thereof and this is referred to as the production function. Thus, production communication refers to the flow of information in the organisation that is directed toward the achievement of the organisation's output or production and it directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities of the employees within the organisation in such a way as to bring about the desired end results (Verwey and Du Plooy, 2003: 158). Production communication includes:

- **Work content information**

  This is information concerned with the performance of specific tasks, for example the organisation's scope of work and job descriptions of individuals.

- **Process information**

  This can include aspects such as the required procedures and processes to be followed and requirements with regard to quality and safety, for example procurement and fleet management process.

- **Decision making information**

  This is needed in order for employees to be able to make meaningful contributions in terms of decision-making for example annual operational plan, budget and strategy plans.

- **Control information**

  This is needed in order to establish whether or not the right person is executing the organisation's activities in the right way and at the right moment, for example standard operation procedures.

- **Policy information**

  This includes aspects such as production policies, conditions of employment, organisational culture, and safety procedures.

1.5.3 Innovation function of internal communication

According to Martins and Terblanche (2003: 67) definitions of innovation vary according to the level of analysis, which is used. Some definitions are general and broad while others focus on specific innovation, like implementation of an idea for new products or services.

For the purpose of this study innovation is defined as the implementation of a new and possible problem-solving idea, practice or material artifact (e.g. product), which is regarded as new by the relevant unit of adoption and through which change, is brought about (Martins and Terblanche, 2003: 67).

Burnett and McMurray (2003: 3) argue that innovation within the organisation is viewed as a psychological concept that may be conceptualised and measured as a process experienced at the organisational, climate, individual, and teams levels of an organisation.

Thus innovation communication refers to the development of new ideas and behaviours for the development and improvement of the organisation and it involves exploration, creation and diffusion as well as the exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of organisational approaches (Verwey and Du Plooy, 2003: 159).

1.5.4 Socialisation function of internal communication

Organisational socialisation is defined as "the fashion in which an individual is taught what behaviours and perspectives are customary and desirable within the working environment as well as the ongoing interaction amongst employees of all different organisational levels" (Kelly, 2000: 95). Socialisation communication therefore, refers to that function of communication, which stresses the human relation perspectives of the organisation (Baker, 2002: 10).

1.6 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study followed the quantitative research design and methods of data collection. The selection of this approach was influenced by the nature of the research question and size of the research population. The quantitative research design includes experiments, surveys and contents analysis (AS de Vos, H Strydom, CB Fouche & CSL Delport, 2011: 144). There are two main classes into which quantitative research designs can be classified, namely experimental designs and non – experimental designs.

According to Maree and Pietersen (2007: 152) non – experimental designs are mainly used in descriptive studies in which the units that have been selected to take part in the research are measured on all the relevant variables at a specific time.

No manipulation of variables takes place and it does not include an experimental or a control group. Surveys are the most widely used non – experimental design in social science research. Thus, this study used the non – experimental design, with a specific focus on a survey to gain understanding of how does the management and employees of GCIS perceive the function of internal communication.

1.7 DELIMITATION OF STUDY

The focus of the study is to explore the function of internal communication within the GCIS. Therefore no attempt will be made to study and analyse the entire internal communication system of GCIS.

This study acknowledges that there are different functions of internal communication presented by different scholars within this domain. However, this study explored the functions of internal communication within the GCIS that relate only to production, innovation and socialisation.

GCIS is one of the South African based government departments, thus the results and recommendations may not be generalised to a wider context outside South Africa.

As a way of collecting data, 128 questionnaires were mailed to the head office of GCIS in Pretoria. A realisation of 28% was achieved.

1.8 DEMARCATION OF CHAPTERS

This study is made up of eight chapters, including chapter 1. Theoretical exploration and background are covered under chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 whereas chapters 6, 7 and 8 cover the research methodology, interpretation of results and conclusions.

The function of internal communication is the central theme in this study and therefore appears in all theoretical chapters with specific emphasis to production, innovation and socialisation function. Table 1.2 visually represents the structure of this study.

Table 1.2: Structure of the study

Chapter One: Orientation and background
Chapter Two   Theoretical Framework
Chapter Three   Background of GCIS
Chapter Four   Functions of Internal Communication
Chapter Five   Organisational Variable that affect Internal Communication
Chapter Six   Research Methodology
Chapter Seven   Findings, Result and Interpretations
Chapter Eight   Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

In Chapter 2, theoretical framework is provided in which to explore the functions of internal communication. This theoretical framework is used to conceptualise the function of internal communication. Functionalism, classical management and systems theory are described as part of the theoretical framework. The emphasis on this chapter is on the application of both functionalism and system theory to the study of communication.

Like any other organisation, GCIS consists of interrelated and interdependent subsystems. Through the theoretical framework it will be easy to conceptualise the function of internal communication within GCIS.

Chapter 3: Background information of GCIS

In Chapter 3, the focus is on the background of GCIS, which include its structure, vision, mission, strategic objectives and how its internal communication functions.

Chapter 4: Functions of internal communication

In Chapter 4, the focus is on the functions of internal communication. It is in this chapter that an in depth definition of internal communication and the debate around it is presented. Different types of communication channels have also been discussed at length in this chapter since they are interrelated to the function of internal communication. Production, innovation and socialisation function of internal communication are described as they form the core of this study. The importance of internal communication is also highlighted.

Chapter 5: Organisational variables that affect internal communication

Internal communication is part of the subsystems within the organisation, which include human resources, public relation and others, thus it interacts with these subsystems. In Chapter 5, organisational variables that affect internal communication have been discussed. They include amongst others organisational structure, organisational culture and leadership approached within the organisation. The extent to which these variables affect internal communication has been discussed as well.

Chapter 6: Research methodology

In Chapter 6, the method of investigation is discussed in detail. The rationale behind the use of qualitative exploratory approach, research design and methods of data collection within this study is discussed as well. Also challenges experienced during the data collection process are highlighted in this chapter.

Chapter 7: Findings, results and interpretation

Chapter 7 is dedicated to the reporting and interpretation of evidence in relation to each of the research objectives as presented in Chapter 1. The results of the study are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendation

Chapter 8, which is the last chapter of this study focuses on the conclusion and recommendations about the findings. The conclusion is in relation to the research questions and sub-questions as spelled out in Chapter 1, section 1.2. As a point of departure, recommendations for further research in the themes related to this study, is presented in this chapter.

1.9 CONCLUSION

Managing employees successfully requires communication and the quality of communication between the people who make up an organisation is a crucial variable in determining organisational success. This requires a common understanding of the role of communication and its functions. Current competitive business, political and social environment demand a collective efforts to achieve positive results. To achieve positive result requires a creation of links between small particles that form an organisation to transport message horizontally and vertically within the organisation. This can only be achieved through effective communication flow.

The purpose of Chapter 1 was to contextualise the rationale behind this study and its purpose. Furthermore the research problem outlined the focus and the backbone of this study. In this chapter key concepts of this study were specified as well. The next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework of this study.

Chapter 2

Theoretical and conceptual framework

2. 1 INTRODUCTION

In the recent years organisations all over the world including the GCIS have had to cope with many dramatic changes, ranging from fundamental restructuring to revolutionary shifts in traditional values. This has subsequently led to a relative interest among organisational communication theorists who need to develop a strong workforce to cope with these changes. This climate of change offers internal communicators unique opportunities to affect short-term success, as well as long-term survival and growth of the organisation in which they operate. The elementary recipe to unlock these unique opportunities lies in a better understanding of the function of internal communication in relation to production, innovation and maintenance.

Some of the earliest research demonstrates that the function of communication, with specific reference to internal communication, was devalued, long before many organisations were confronted by dramatic changes. Since then major paradigm shifts were necessary which resulted in the opinion that internal communication today is viewed as being essential in terms of controlling and coordinating the activities within the organisation. Organisational efficiency which includes that of GCIS, depends on coordination of the employees' activities because of the degree of interdependence at both structural and functional organisational levels (Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers, 2003: 3). GCIS also needs to control its members' interpersonal relationships, both in terms of the individuals with whom they form working relationships and the way in which they communicate within those relationships.

It is evident that communication was previously devalued by many different organisations, which include government departments and private institutions and/or companies. The low status of communication that was observed within South African government confirms this. There was a poor recognition of the need for a professional government communication and information services in South Africa. In addition there was a poor understanding of the role of communication and its function in government (Comtask Report; 2000: 4).

The organisational communication theorists also confirmed this and Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers (2003) are also advocates in this area. They have demonstrated how theories regarding organisational communication have changed and developed over time. They also demonstrated how these theories are related to the function of communication within the organisation.

The emphasis on the early approaches to organisational communication therefore illustrates that the poor recognition of the need for a professional government communication institute and poor understanding of the role and the function of communication was not a unique situation for South Africa but it was a global phenomenon.

Figure 2.1 on the next page summarises the early approaches to organisational communication. In order to conceptualise the function of internal communication within GCIS, it is important to reflect on the paradigm shift that took place. The early organisational communication theorists focussed on communication as a tool for issuing work related instructions and orders. Less emphasis was placed on the social and innovation function of communication. However, there have been significant changes to date. There are three approaches that reveal how organisational communication functioned before and they include the era of classicist, humanist and human resources approaches.

Figure 2.1 Early approaches to organisational communication

The era of the classicist approach

- **Productivity through division of labour**
- **Communication used for orders and instructions**
- **Communication viewed as one-way process**
- **Communication not important**

The era of the humanist approach

- **Workers are a valuable asset**
- **Empowerment of people**
- **Productivity increases if workers' needs are met**
- **False sense of democracy created**

Human resource approach

- **People should be allowed to take more responsibility**
- **People are more willing to make a contribution**
- **Open communication was encouraged**
- **Informal and horizontal communication emphasised**
- **Workers' ideas and creativity used constructively**
- **Important function of communication recognised**

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* Figure 2.1 is compiled from Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers (2003)

- **The era of the classicist approach**

In terms of this era, horizontal communication, that is communication between people on the same level, was often seen as a waste of time and money, and as having negative effect on productivity. People were therefore not encouraged to engage in small talk or to socialise during working hours. Thus the social and innovation function of communication was completely discouraged (Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers, 2003: 26). This linked to the issue that was raised by the Comtask Report (2000: 4) that there is a poor understanding of the role and the function of communication. This was not only experienced in South Africa but globally.

An important proposition derived from the era of the classicist is that they valued the function communication, but it was only limited to the production function as opposed to the innovation and social function. Though the focus was on the production function it was on a very limited scope; such as the issuing of orders and work related instructions. This undermined the value and the importance of communication within the organisation. The Era of the Classicist approach was more concerned about productivity as opposed to the actual employees who were expected to deliver the services.

As a result of the poor understanding of the role and the function of communication in South African government departments and the private sector in general, the symptoms of the Classicist Era are still visible in many organisations (Comtask Report, 2000: 4). Thus it is important for GCIS to have a broader understanding of the function of internal communication in order to ensure that the functioning of communication in South Africa is done in the post-Classicist Era.

▪ **The era of the humanist approach**

In terms of this the human element was important to the extent that it contributed to productivity. The implication of this is that workers' needs were met because it was felt that a happy work force leads to improved productivity. However, there was a sense that the management who followed this approach was creating a false sense of democracy (Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers; 2003: 27). This was in line with what happened in South Africa in 1994 in which the Government of National Unity ushered in a new spirit of freedom of expression whilst recognising the need for a modern system of communication and information delivery, which led to the establishment of the GCIS (Comtask Report, 2000: 1).

Although the core focus during this era was productivity there was a paradigm shift, which resulted in the focus on the human being, based on the assumption that productivity would increase if more attention were given to the needs of the workers. Reality however, taught us that productivity does not increase by merely making people happy, but that underlying factors like effective internal communication, clear articulation of one's job description, a sense of self-worth, a conducive working environment and many more factors that played a critical role.

As it was the case with the Classicist Management era, communication was still basically formal, although informal systems of communication were recognised as inevitable and important to the creation of interaction between employees. The employees' morale and well-being was considered to a certain extent. Even though communication for direction and control was still basically downward from managers to employees, upward mechanisms such as suggestion boxes and complaint systems were operationalised, proving that management demonstrated a willingness to listen to the employees (Gibson and Hodgetts, 1991: 35).

The Humanist Era introduced the social function of communication. It was during this era that communication was expanded from that of providing specific work instructions to also making employees feel needed which resulted in the development of a sense of belonging to the organisation. Employees were interviewed from time to time and this was seen as a mechanism to promote open communication between employees and management. It was during this period that a gradual paradigm shift was observed. Communication was more valued than in the case of the Classicist Era. Internal communication which was commonly known as organisational communication, started to be perceived as not just a means for management to talk to the employees, but for management to listen to what the workers were saying (Gibson and Hodgetts, 1991: 36).

- **The human resource approach**

This approach introduced a new dimension. It placed emphasis on informal and horizontal communication. An effective organisation was one where upward, downward and horizontal communication could flow freely. It was also interesting to note that the free flow of information allowed management to use the ideas and creativity of workers in a constructive way. As a result of this management had the courage to ask employees for their input. (Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers, 2003: 26). In essence, the human resource approach introduced the innovation function of communication.

A new dimension emerged during this era - open communication between and within groups was encouraged. An effective organisation was therefore linked with upward, downward as well as horizontal communication, and by implication employees became part of the decision making process within the organisation. An important result that derived from this approach was that the function of communication in enhancing innovation within the organisation was acknowledged.

Communication was also used for more than just control purposes - it further supported participative planning, organising and directing efforts. Informal communication was furthermore identified as an important part of organisational life, and management encouraged its support and assistance.

The early approaches to organisational communication reflected on the paradigm shift with regard to organisational communication, revealing how each function of communication was born. During the Classicist Era more emphasis was on productivity, thus communication was used as a tool to ensure that workers received appropriate work related instructions and orders. During the Humanist Era however, it was discovered that productivity would not be possible if attention was not paid to the needs of the workers. As such, the social function of communication was introduced to cater for the social needs of the employees.

The human resource approach was the highlight of the early approaches to organisational communication. An important proposition derived from this approach was that the function of communication in enhancing innovation within the organisation was acknowledged, introducing the innovation function of communication.

The early approaches to organisational communication form a very important part of this study. They clearly illustrate the process that unfolded in order to formulate the three main functions of communication, namely production, socialisation and innovation. In addition the early approaches to organisational communication remain a measure for many organisations in terms of the era that dominates the current internal communication. It puts many organisations in the spotlight regarding the functions of internal communication.

2.3 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The nature of the research problem necessitates a brief explanation of the interrelatedness of the domain within which this study resorts, as well as the different theories that govern the study. In addition key concepts are described in order to ensure the correct interpretation thereof within the study. Table 2.2 on the next page summarises all these aspects.

This study examines the functions of communication within the GCIS. It therefore deals with internal communication with a specific emphasis on the three functions of internal communication namely production, socialisation and innovation functions. Communication is one of the strategic elements of service delivery within GCIS. Thus GCIS communicates both internally and externally in order to fulfil its goals. Internal communication mainly ensures that the key stakeholders within the GCIS work together, share their thoughts regarding the organisation, cooperate with each other and most importantly, communicate ideas.

Internal communication is therefore a sub-domain within a broader domain of corporate communication management and human resources management which serves as an umbrella term for all the communication processes that occur within GCIS. It is seen as that process wherein mutually interdependent human beings create and exchange messages, and interpret and negotiate meanings, while striving to articulate and realise mutually held visions, purposes and goals of the organisation (Andrews, 1996: 45).

Figure 2.2: Theoretical and conceptual framework

Research question	What do management and employees of Government Communication and Information System perceive as the function of internal communication?

Domains and theories

Domains	Corporate communication management	Human Resources management
Sub – fields within domains	❑ Internal communication	❑ Organisational development
Theory	Functionalist	
Related theories	❑ Systems theory	❑ Classical management theory
Key concept	Functions of internal communication	
Constructs	Production	Innovation	Socialization
Key terms	❑ Organisation's output ❑ Activities regulation ❑ Work content ❑ Work flow ❑ Work instructions	❑ New ideas ❑ Suggestion ❑ Creativity ❑ New plans	❑ Work flow ❑ Staff relations ❑ Personal growth ❑ Employee interaction ❑ Socio -emotional support
Empirical methods	❑ Questionnaire (Literature)	❑ Questionnaire (Literature)	❑ Questionnaire (Literature)
Measurement items	❑ 13 questions (questionnaire)	❑ 14 questions (questionnaire)	❑ 9 questions (questionnaire)

2.3.1 Domains and sub-fields

Although some of the objectives, especially objective 2 (socialisation, a function of internal communication) of this study reflects on some elements of human resource management; the fundamental nature of the research question falls within the domain of the Corporate Communication Management. Internal communication is a part of the overall corporate communication strategy.

All the other aspects of this study including the objectives and the research sub-questions provide a clear picture regarding the domain of this study. There are however some aspects of this study that would reflect on other sub-fields of human resource indirectly for instance, the human relations perspective, which is being discussed at length under the socialisation function of internal communication. Above all this study remains to fall within the Corporate Communication domain.

2.3.2 Functionalist theory

The fundamental nature of the research question for this study is about the functions of internal communication. It is within this context that functionalist is the theory that governs this study. Functionalist is one the prominent theories regarding the manner in which society and organisations function.

Functionalist's interest in the structure of communication is evident in its major assumption, namely that the phenomenon of mass communication is a system that is a whole consisting of several interrelated and interdependent parts (Jansen and Steinberg; 1991: 17). According to the two scholars, functionalists distinguish between various individual parts of communication such as communicators, messages, media organisations and recipients. It should be noted however, that the significance of each part derives, not from its own peculiar characteristics, but from its position in relation to the other parts of the systems.

From the functionalist's perspective each part of the system fulfils a function that contributes to the smooth functioning and maintenance of the entire system. Supposedly internal communication as one of the subsystems within GCIS fulfils certain functions. This should be in accordance with other subsystems within GCIS that include amongst others, human resources, corporate services, policy and research, to maintain a balanced system that is in line with Jansen and Steinberg's principle of equilibrium. According to these two scholars the system is in balance (equilibrium) when all the individual parts fulfil their functions. The system can only accommodate minor changes, such as minor deviations from the proper fulfilment of a prescribed function, while drastic or fundamental change constitutes a threat to the survival of the system (Jansen and Steinberg; 1991: 17).

Functionalist thinkers argue that the ultimate goal of a system is self-preservation and all system functions are geared to this overall purpose. As reflected previously, internal communication within GCIS should function in accordance with other subsystems to ensure that it achieves its overall goal. Within this context internal communication becomes one of those subsystems within GCIS that fulfils a key function. However, it does not function or exist in isolation; there are other subsystems that potentially have impact on it. Those other subsystems include organisational culture, structure and leadership. They are addressed in Chapter 4.

In addition, the functionalist scholars argue that the whole is made possible through a complex interaction between the different interdependent subsystems of the organisation. Though internal communication is one of the key subsystems within GCIS it does not necessarily imply that it is greater than the entire GCIS. The functionalist scholars consistently maintain that the whole is greater than the sum of its subsystems.

In terms of the functionalist thinking it is important to note that the GCIS operates within a specific environment with the result that the function of internal communication is that of a facilitating role. The facilitation process enables the level of interaction amongst different subsystems within the organisation.

In addition the interaction is defined in terms of the interrelation and interdependence between different subsystems that form the organisation.

2.3.3 Related theories

As reflected under table 2.2 (Meta theoretical and conceptual framework) both systems theory and classical management theory form part of the theoretical framework of this study. The application and relevancy of these two the will be discussed in the next section.

- ▪ **Systems theory**

    It is indicated from table 2.2 that the study will be done within the parameters of the Systems theory. Sy*stems theory* is useful in explaining the interrelationships among different components, internally as well as externally. It emphasises the interface between organisations and their environment, as well as between subsystems within the organisational system and between subsystems and the organisational whole. In this case the subsystems refer to internal communication, production, innovation and socialisation, for they are interrelated and interdependent.

    The application of systems theory to the study of the internal communication is credited with shifting the focus of internal communication from the one that focused on the top management of the organisation to the one that focuses on the interdependence of the organisation and its key stakeholders. The systems theory states that mechanical, organic and social systems (including organisations) can be defined by their interactions with their internal and external interactions.

    Communication scholars like Jansen and Steinberg argue that the systems approach describes a system as a whole, which consists of several interrelated subsystems. The system has characteristics of its own which do not derive from the characteristics of any of its constituent parts (Jansen and Steinberg; 1991: 41).

They further maintain that a system may be clearly distinguished from its environment, but maintains important relationships with it in that it receives inputs from the environment and provides output to the environment. This view presents communication as a circular rather than linear and shows that the system is open rather than closed.

In addition Jansen and Steinberg maintain that systems are goal-oriented, self-maintaining and operate through feedback within margins which set the norms for their proper functioning. With regard to human communication Jansen and Steinberg (1991: 42) argue that a general systems theory has been applied to settings such as organisational and small groups. It is something used for studying interpersonal communication in dyads. Particularly in the first two settings, information concerning the task at hand and/or the human relationships involved to accomplish the task, is essential to efficient performance.

Verwey and Du Plooy (2002: 29) are in support of Jansen and Steinberg's views. They argue that systems approach was the first approach that represented an organisation as a dynamic process. According to them this approach gives insight into the functioning of an organisation as a whole, as well as the influence of the environment on organisational functioning. This approach to GCIS's functioning is based on several principles about systems. The first is that every system consists of the hierarchy, followed by the directors, middle management, supervisors, white collar and blue-collar workers.

This theory suggests that systems include processes that emerge from interaction of the subsystems. The application of the systems theory to the function of internal communication within GCIS is therefore very relevant. For example, instead of studying internal communication in isolation the system theory focuses our attention to consider the relationship interaction involved with other subsystems within GCIS or subsystems of internal communication that include communication flow and channels.

This further implies that if there is a change in one of the subsystems, it will have an influence on all the other subsystems and on the system as a whole. System theory is important to the study of internal communication because it serves as a useful tool in helping us to conceptualise the overwhelming complexities or interdependencies that exist within GCIS. As it is, the function of internal communication is part of the interaction within the organisation.

To a certain extent, internal communication within GCIS influences on other subsystems within the organisation, for instance organisational culture, leadership and structure within the organisation and equally so it is influenced by the very same organisational factors. Thus this demonstrates the level of interaction that takes place within the organisation. It is critical to further explore the interaction that takes places between internal organisation and other subsystems within the organisation.

Furthermore this theory argues that if the organisation is the system, then the departments and directorates form the subsystems. Therefore communication is also one of these subsystems and all its subsystems are thus dependent on communication to function effectively. However the theory essentially states that communication influences all subsystems within the organisation. These subsystems amongst others include production and service delivery within the organisation, innovation, and socialization of employees within the organisation.

The systems theory remains to be one of the relevant theories within the study of GCIS's internal communication. It provides a theoretical framework to explore the function of internal communication and its interaction with other subsystems within GCIS. The theory observed the interdependence and interaction that occurs between the subsystems. Equally so GCIS exists within a specific environment which is made up of economic, socio-cultural, technological and political-legal subsystems.

The interaction between these subsystems is identified in terms of the flow of information, inputs and communication. Thus the core focus of internal communication is to facilitate such processes as a way of activating the interaction amongst different subsystems.

The central principle of this approach is that the whole is bigger than the sum of its parts and this means the whole is made possible through a complex interaction between the different interdependent subsystems of the organisation (Verwey and Du Plooy – Cilliers; 2002: 29). The relationship of the subsystems is reciprocal in that everything that happens within the organisation will influence internal communication.

- **Classical management theory**

It was reflected under table 2.2 that to a certain extent human resource management is one of the sub-domains of this study. Thus Classical management is a theory that represents this sub-domain. Classical management theory advocates vertical hierarchical structures within which the head of the organisation, positioned at the top of the structure delegates authority to carry out specified operational tasks to subordinates, who in turn delegate further. This process continues downwards through the hierarchy (Parkinson, Short, et al: 2000).

2.3.4 Key concept

The key concept for this study is derived from the research questions. It is therefore "Internal communication", with specific focus on three functions namely production, socialisation and innovation. Chapter 3 of this study provides an in-depth discussion of this major concept.

2.3.5 Constructs

As illustrated in table 2.2 there are three key constructs of this study which include production, socialisation and innovation functions of internal communication.

Though these constructs have been clarified in Chapter 1, it is important to clarify them again within the context of the study to make it easier for the reader.

- **Production function of internal communication**

  Each organisation has a primary task, namely to offer a product or services to the client thereof and this is referred to as the production function. Thus production function of internal communication refers to the flow of information in the organisation that is directed toward the achievement of the organisation's output or production and it directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities of the employees within the organisation in such a way as to bring about the desired end results (Verwey and Du Plooy; 2003: 158).

- **Innovation function of internal communication**

  It is common knowledge that ideas are the lifeblood of any organisation - without them nothing will ever change or improve. Thus innovation communication refers to the development of new ideas and behaviours for the development and improvement of the organisation. It involves exploration, creation, diffusion and exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of the organisational approaches (Verwey and Du Plooy; 2003: 159).

- **Socialisation function of internal communication**

  Organisational socialisation is defined as the "the fashion in which an individual is taught what behaviours and perspectives are customary and desirable within the working environment as well as the ongoing interaction amongst employees of all different organisational levels" (Kelly; 2000: 95). Thus socialisation communication refers to that function of communication, which stresses the human relation perspectives of the organisation, (Baker; 2002: 10).

2.4 CONCLUSION

Lastly, these theories made it clear that the flow of internal communication differs from one pattern to the other. This depends on the type of information that has been communicated, for instance the function of internal communication that relates to production will normally follow the downward communication channel in which the supervisor issues work-related instructions. The communication that carries feedback messages uses another channel of communication.

In addition each subsystem is meant to fulfill a specific role that will enable the organisation to remain balanced at all times. The function of internal communication in this case is to issue work-related instructions, to maintain and encourage innovation within the organisation and, most importantly, to maintain social interaction amongst employees.

Through the meta-theoretical framework it was possible to conceptualise the function of internal communication within GCIS, committing the energy to the function of internal communication. The next section will focus on the background of South Africa's Government Communication and Information System (GCIS).

Chapter 3

Background to South Africa's Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)

3.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF GCIS

The GCIS is a service department within the Republic of South Africa. Its core functions amongst others include providing leadership in government communication and ensuring that the public is informed of government's implementation of its mandate. This is achieved through ensuring that the voice of government is heard, fostering a more positive communication environment, having a clear understanding of the public's information needs and government's communication as well as setting high standards for government communication (GCIS Manual, 2003: 2). In addition, GCIS strives to enhance the government communication system and its operation in ways that contribute to the process of consolidating democracy in South Africa and taking the country onto a higher growth and development path (Communications, 2000: 1).

Before 1994, the National Party government had a culture of secrecy, disinformation and restrictions on press freedom. Media restrictions caused limited exposure of government mismanagement and disinformation (Comtask report, 1996: 13). This changed from May 1994, when the Government of National Unity brought in a new spirit of freedom of expression. The introduction of constitutional guarantees for freedom of the media and the public's right to information promised a new, open and accountable style of government. Government was also exposed to the full force of a free an independent media.

At that time government has recognised freedom of expression as an integral part of our new democratic society, but this was "within a context of a society with an inheritance of severe deprivation in regard to information and dialogue with government. It also had to operate within an organisational culture and structural framework that was not geared to modern systems of communication and information delivery" (Comtask report, 1996: 13).

Comtask was appointed in 1995 by the then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki. The brief of the task group was to review government communications at the local, provincial, national and international level. It had to make recommendations on how government communication should be structured in line with constitutional principles of freedom of expression and transparency and openness of government. Recommendations had to address new policies, structures and budgets. Comtask also had to examine training and affirmative action policies, the way in which ownership of the media affects government communication, and South Africa's international information dissemination.

Comtask consulted with a broad range of stakeholders including academics, the media, civil society organisations and advertisers. It also did a study of international best practice to learn from other countries about ways of communication between government and its citizens. The Comtask team delivered their final report to Mr Mbeki in October 1996. The report included 83 recommendations dealing with the structure of government communication, media diversity and access to information legislation. The report had foreseen the following:

- A secretariat in The Presidency responsible for determining communication strategy, advising and acting on behalf of the President and Cabinet, as well as co-ordinating between different communication structures
- The development of a professional communications unit within each Ministry and the different spheres of government responsible for delivering the communication strategy
- A centralised Communications Service Agency (CSA) responsible for, among other things, co-ordinating bulk-buying of media and research into media needs and trends as well as assisting in developing content
- A conscious focus on development communication aimed at communication to empower citizens
- Direct and unmediated communication with South Africans
- The development and co-ordination of ongoing training in government communication (Comtask, 1996: 56-91).

The birth of GCIS can be traced to the day when Dr Essop Pahap, the then Deputy Minister in the Office of the Deputy President took floor in parliament for the communication budget vote and formally declared the official opening of Government Communication and Information System's books (Bua – the right to know, 2008). The Implementation Committee (IC) was set up to oversee the transformation of the South African Communication Service (SACS) into the GCIS (Bua – the right to know, 2008).

In a cabinet memorandum adopted in October 1997, the Implementation Committee proposed the development of a professional and effective corps of government communicators who would professionalise and streamline government's communication.

The proposal included amongst others:

- The establishment of the Government and Communication Information System Secretariat to plan and co – ordinate government communication and information in close collaboration with the Cabinet and Presidency.
- The transformation of the existing South African Communication Service (SACS) to fulfil the requirements of the new constitutional framework.
- The restructuring of the existing communication arrangements in Ministries and departments.

Furthermore there were two Government Communicators Consultative Conferences. The first conference was held in May 06, 1998 and the second one in October 23, 1998. These conferences were attended by role players in the field of communication within the public sector. The main aim of these conferences was to map the way forward regarding the transformation of SACS into GCIS.

GCIS was established in terms of Section 7 (subsection 2 and 3) of the Public Service Act, 1994 as amended. It was officially launched on the 18th May 1998. GCIS is located in the Presidency and is responsible for setting up the new Government Communication System and transforming the communication functions of government.

GCIS is primarily responsible for communication between government and the people. A high premium is placed on development communication that emphasises direct dialogue, especially with people in disadvantaged areas. It is also involved in drafting communication strategies and programmes for the entire government at national level, and integration of the communication operations of all government departments.

3.2 VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF GCIS

GCIS' vision is helping to meet the communication and information needs of government and the public, to ensure a better life for all. GCIS' mission is to provide leadership in government communication and to ensure that the public is informed of government's implementation of its mandate.

The overarching strategic objective of GCIS is to enhance the government communication system and its operations in ways that contribute to the process of further consolidating our democracy and taking the country onto a higher growth and development path. GCIS' strategic objective will be achieved by including the following elements in our strategic approach:

- Providing leadership in government communications and ensuring better performance by the communication system
- Building a framework of communication partnerships informed by an encompassing vision around common development objectives
- Promoting awareness of the opportunities that democracy has brought and how to access them
- Promoting awareness of the institutions and programmes of continental and regional integration and development
- Promoting communication research and information.

3.3 FUNCTIONS OF GCIS'S COMPONENTS

GCIS is structured strategically to fulfil its mandate. It comprises of eleven (11) divisions commonly known as chief directorates and these includes

3.3.1   Corporate Services (CS)

CS aims to provide an efficient and effective support service to the entire GCIS. It comprises two directorates namely; Human Resources (HR) and Human Resource Development (HRD). The HR directorate is responsible for the human resource management (HRM), internal communication, and information centre. The HRD Directorate is responsible for the Employee Health and Wellness Programme.

3.3.2   Policy and Research (P&R)

This unit aims to render policy and research services and manage information resources. This section keeps GCIS informed of the environment within which the government is communicating, by keeping abreast of the developments relating to communication, information, media, and contributing to policy development. P&R conducts communication research to provide advice on communication in support of government's programme of action and monitors the development and implementation of government programmes from a communication perspective.

The section also provides institutional support to the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA). It comprises of two directorates which include Policy and Research.

3.3.3   Provincial Co-ordination and Programme Support (PC&PS)

PC&PS supports the provision of development communication and extends government's information structure through partnership with provincial and local governments. It facilitates the establishment of Thusong Service Centres to make services and information more accessible to the public, particularly the poor. It comprises of provincial coordination and liaison.

3.3.4   Communication Service Agency (CSA)

It acts as a centre for excellence for government communication. It liaises closely with the Presidency and other government departments to pursue government's Programme of Action. The purpose of the CSA is to provide core communication services to the GCIS and other government departments, both in-house and through outsourcing. It produces and distributes information through appropriate platforms and mechanisms to reach the intended public. It comprises three directorates which include Product and Content Development, Marketing, Advertising and Distribution. The CSA provides a range of communication services targeted at the South African public for government. These include:

- Bulk media buying on behalf of government
- Conceptualising, designing and producing information products that meet the communication needs of government
- Producing video and radio programmes, graphic design as well as the providing official photographs
- Distributing information products
- Managing the corporate identity of government

3.3.5   Government and Media Liaison (G&ML)

G&ML promotes the co-ordination and integration of communication across government, and provides a professional service to the media. It ensures that departments, clusters and provinces develop their own communication strategies within the framework of the national communication strategy, and that domestic and foreign media receive timely government information. It comprises four directorates which include International and Media Liaison, News Service, National Liaison and Parliament Office.

3.3.6   Information Management and Technology (I&MT);

Information Management and Technology is responsible for the efficient and effective use of information and communications technology as strategic resources in the execution by GCIS of its functions. The section is made up of the sub – programmes which include Network and Server Support, Regional Support and Training, Systems Development, and Electronic Information Resources.

3.3.7   Vuk'uzenzele

Vuk'uzenzele primarily focuses on producing a free government magazine that highlights economic and other opportunities created by our new democracy and how to access these opportunities.

3.3.8   Internal Audit

Internal Audit helps the GCIS to accomplish its objectives by implementing a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

3.3.9   Finance, Supply Chain Management and Auxiliary Services

Finance, Supply Chain Management and Auxiliary Services provides overall financial management in GCIS and oversees the implementation of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999). The directorate comprises of sub programmes which include Auxiliary Services, Provisioning Administration, Budget Office, and Financial Administration.

3.3.10 Project Desk

Project Desk provides professional project management and co-ordination solutions to help GCIS meet the communication and information needs of government and the public, to ensure a better life for all.

[1]Figure 3.1 Organisational Structures of GCIS

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                        ┌─────────────────────────┐
                        │ Chief Executive Officer │
                        └─────────────────────────┘
                                   │
     ┌──────────────────┬──────────────────┬──────────────────┐
┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
│ DCEO:        │ │ DCEO:        │ │ DCEO:        │ │ CD: 2010     │
│ Strategy &   │ │ Centralised  │ │ Provincial   │ │ Communication│
│ Content      │ │ Services     │ │ and Local    │ │ Project      │
│ Management   │ │              │ │ Liaison      │ │ Management   │
│              │ │              │ │              │ │ Unit         │
└──────────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘
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- DCEO: Strategy & Content Management
  - Chief Director: Government & Media Liaison
  - Chief Director: Communication Service Agency
  - Chief Director: Policy & Research
  - Chief Director Vuk'uzenzele
  - Chief Information Officer: Information Management & Technology

- DCEO: Centralised Services
  - Chief Director Corporate Services
  - Chief Finance officer: Finance, Supply Chain Management & Auxiliary Services
  - Chief Director: Project Desk
  - Chief Accountant Executive: Internal Audit

- DCEO: Provincial and Local Liaison
  - Chief Director Provincial Coordination & Program Support

- CD: 2010 Communication Project Management Unit

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[1] Figure 1.1 is adapted from GCIS Manual 2003

Figure 3.1 in Chapter demonstrates the vertical hierarchical structure of GCIS. Through this figure it is clear that the head of GICS is the chief executive officer (CEO) who delegates authority to various subordinates. This relates to the production function of internal communication in which the subordinates are fully informed about their respective responsibilities and roles. The assumption is that the CEO within GCIS makes use of downward communication as the vehicle to deliver information regarding delegation of operational tasks. The same principle applies after completion of a specific task or activity order to deliver such messages.

As reflected by figure 3.1 internal communication follows the lines of authority with delegation flowing downwards and accountability upwards. The assumption is that the vertical communication flow has been designed into the organisational structure of GCIS. It is also important to note that division of labour which is a fundamental concept within this theory also applies within GCIS. Employees specialise within particular functional areas. This theory demonstrates the pattern followed by internal communication when delivering different messages within GCIS. The function of internal communication is interrelated to the communication channels. Thus this theory is important in describing the interaction that takes place between the functions of internal communication, communication flow and channels.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a brief overview of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) and its internal communication. The new dispensation in a way demanded a new approach to government communication that would embrace democratic principles. To effectively address the communication needs of the government and its people is an overwhelming task.

The success of GCIS therefore relies on the commitment of its internal key stakeholders, which are its employees to satisfy the needs of its clients which include various government departments, the Presidency and the general South African population. Thus a common understanding of internal communication and its functions within GCIS by its staff members remains one of the important aspects in ensuring that GCIS carries its mandate as expected.

The next chapter will focus on the functions of internal communication. The first part chapter 4 will present a broader literature review relevant to the functions of internal communication. This will include communication channels, definition and functions of internal communication. The last part of chapter 4 will focus on internal communication within GCIS. Furthermore attention will be paid on the general importance of internal communication.

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Chapter 4

Functions of Internal communication

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4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the functions of internal communication. The first part of this chapter will present a broader literature review relevant to the functions of internal communication and that will include communication channels, definition and functions of internal communication. In the last part of this chapter internal communication within Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) will be discussed, as well as the importance of internal communication in general.

In the recent years organisations all over the world, including GCIS, have had to cope with many dramatic changes, ranging from fundamental restructuring to revolutionary shifts in traditional values. This has led to a new area of interest among organisational scientists that seek to understand a better way to develop a strong workforce to cope with these changes. This climate of change offers internal communicators unique opportunities to affect short-term success, as well as long-term survival and growth of the organisation in which they operate. The elementary recipe to these unique opportunities is simply a better understanding of internal communication and its functions.

According to the classicist approach, internal communication was devalued. For instance horizontal communication, that is communication between people on the same level, was often seen as a waste of time and money, and as having negative effect on productivity. People were therefore not encouraged to engage in small talk or to socialise during working hours. Since then there has been a major paradigm shift, however it seems like some of the organisations in South Africa are still left behind. To date internal communication or employee communication is viewed as being essential in terms of controlling and coordinating the activities within the organisation. The level of intellectual capacity, morale and productivity in such an organisation reflects this.

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Organisational efficiency depends on the coordination of the employees' activities because of the degree of interdependence at both structural and functional organisational levels (Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers, 2003: 3). Organisations also need to control their members' interaction within working environment, both in terms of the individuals with whom they form working relationships and the way in which they communicate within those relationships.

Blundel (2004: 2) is of the view that humans are social beings. He further maintains that in a complex technological society, their quality of life, even basic survival depends on countless successful interactions with other people mediated through markets, networks and various kinds of organisations. He essentially pointed out that without these complicated and largely unseen networks of communication, our economic prosperity, social welfare and cultural life would be undermined. Blundel (2004: 2) further pointed out that communication can be difficult in organisation and often seems to be a more demanding and time-consuming option. According to him the rationale behind this is that communication requires each party to make some efforts to understand the other. Despite the fact that communication can be difficult it does reward. For example, it can help an organisation to achieve satisfied customers, well motivated employees rather than an expensive industrial dispute, a positive reputation in the wider community, innovative and creative strategies rather than inefficiency, indecision and resistance to change (Blundel, 2004: 2)

4.2 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: DEFINITION

Many communication scholars have raised consistent concerns regarding the way people view internal communication. Gower is one of those who have been articulate about this concern. According to him, people think of internal communication as media-based support for an organisation's top managers in passing messages down to other employees (Gower, 1999: xviii).

The researcher is in support of Gower's view because some of the South African organisations limit internal communication to maintenance of intranet, internal publications and notice board messages only.

According to him, internal communication should be viewed on a broader scope as the professional management of interaction between all those with an interest or stake in a particular organisation. His justification is that the "professional management" element of that definition signifies a more rigorous and performance-related approach to internal communication, setting it within business and financial context. He continues by pointing out that internal communication should be viewed as a strategic function and a genuine participator in business rather than a producer of media deliverables. Hanna (2005: 304) offers a closely related definition. He views internal communication as integrated communication which includes all formal and informal communication taking place at all levels of the organisation.

To a certain extent Massie and Anderson (2003: 224) share the same sentiments with Gower and Hanna's view in that they view internal communication as a matter of creating trust, developing a climate in which open communication can take place and most importantly, they view it as a two-way process which is most valuable in organisation of less hierarchical and more flexible structure.

Gower has indicated that many different scholars define internal communication with a limited scope and this is influenced by differing perceptions regarding internal communication and its functions. For the purpose of this study internal communication is described as an umbrella term for all the communication processes that occur within the organisation; it is that process wherein mutually interdependent human beings create and exchange messages and interpret and negotiate meanings, while striving to articulate and realise mutually held visions, purposes and goals (Andrews, 1996: 45).

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The above argument simply indicates that internal communication is more concerned about the social processes and interactions amongst all internal key stakeholders within the organisation. Essentially internal communication focuses on the information exchange and flow within the organisation and between various departments or / and directorates. Fundamentally, internal communication communicates work related instructions, positive messages to enhance creativity and innovative ways of dealing with organisational challenges.

4.3 COMMUNICATION FLOW IN ORGANISATIONS

Internal communication as a subsystem within the organisation depends solely on other subsystems like communication channels and the flow thereof. The communication channels and flow are concerned with the patterns of interaction among employees within the organisation. In most of the cases the communication channels and flow outline the manner in which information flows within the organisation. Masie and Anderson (2003) are some of communication scholars who view this as the direction in which messages travel in the organisation.

Gibson and Hodgetts (1991: 212) were some of the earlier communication scholars who identified communication flow within organisations and the purposes thereof. Recent studies regarding communication flow such as (Verwey & Du Plooy Cilliers, 2003) are based on their line of thinking. According to them, formal internal communication flow includes downward, upward and horizontal communication flow.

4.3.1 Downward communication flow

According to Baker (2002: 7) downward communication is most effective if top managers communicate directly with immediate supervisors and immediate supervisors communicate with their staff. Downward communication is therefore used as a tool for transmitting orders from superiors to subordinates. Baker suggests that one way to empower supervisors is to communicate directly with them and to have them provide input to decisions.

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Gibson and Hodgetts (1991: 212) identified five (5) purposes of downward communication channels. According to them it is used for the following.

- It is used to issue job instructions. This suggests that it is through downward communication channels that employees are provided with the scope of their work and how to carry out their tasks.

- Downward communication flow is used to provide employees with information relating to their job rationale. Job rationale defines the role of every individual employee and how that role fits into the overall roles of the other employees within the organisation.

- Each and every organisation does have procedures, policies and rules. In order for the employees to comply they need to be informed about this. In essence, a downward communication channel is used to translate such information. Policies, procedures and rules are developed at the higher level of the organisation by top management and thereafter channelled down to employees.

- Employees need to know how they are doing in terms of their work performance and in most of the cases superiors or supervisors provide the feedback. The downward communication channel therefore becomes a vehicle to deliver such feedback.

- Finally, downward communication is used to inform employees about the mission and goals of the organisation. It is critical that employees are informed about the mission and goals of the organisation as this will shape and govern their performance and level of commitment.

4.3.2 Upward communication flow

According to Dulye and Warwick (2003: 1), upward communication is extremely important in organisational success.

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According to these authors, when upward communication flows are shut down or omitted from day-to-day workplace practices, employees are likely to be overcome by frustration, apathy and poor morale. This is the only means in which employees can communicate effectively with top management, making it a matter of importance for employees.

Employees want to share their ideas, express their feelings, and provide inputs and feedback to top management.

In addition, Gibson and Hodgetts (1991: 219) identified four (4) purposes of upward communication channels that fit within the scope of this study and they include the following:

- Feedback regarding employee attitudes and feelings is important for any organisation. It is through upward communication channels that top management can know how employees feel about their working environment, the mission of the organisation and the kind of support they receive from the supervisors.

- Policies and procedures are normally developed at the higher level of the organisation (i.e. top management) and implemented at the lower level of the organisation (employees). Employees are in a better position to provide accurate feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy and procedures within the organisations. Thus, the upward communication channel is important to convey such feedback to top management as well as suggestions as to how to improve such policies and procedures.

- A wealth of evidence shows that top management use downward communication to inform and instruct employees regarding a variety of issues within the organisation. However, what is lacking is feedback regarding what is being communicated to the employees. In this case the upward communication channel becomes a tool to provide top management with feedback regarding the effectiveness of the downward communication channel.

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Functions of internal Communication

- Employees' involvement can be viewed in many different ways - this can range from inputs employees make to service delivery. As most of the decisions are made at the higher level of the organisation, employees can only make and submit their inputs, suggestions and recommendation by using upward communication.

4.3.3 Horizontal communication flow

Horizontal communication channels refer to the lateral exchange of messages among people on the same organisational level of authority. In most cases messages at this level tend to be functional and related to a task or for use of human purposes. More emphasis is on teamwork and knowledge sharing (Verwey & Du Plooy – Cilliers, 2003: 166).

The system theory suggests that an organisation is made up of interrelated and interdependent departments. Following this, the purpose of horizontal communication is to facilitate the exchange of messages between different departments. In addition, organisations are made of people with social needs. The horizontal communication channel builds the social support system of the organization. Horizontal communication flow allows for continuous information sharing amongst the employees (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991: 227).

It follows from the above argument that, proper communication flow within the organisation is necessary for effective internal communication. Thus a firm understanding of the purpose of internal communication flow is the key components of effective internal communication. The above argument also presents a strong revelation that it is only through a proper communication flow that the relevant messages and information will be delivered to the right people, at the right time within the organisation.

4.4 THE FUNCTIONS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

The literature on this subject suggests that many communication scholars such as Smythe (199: 42), Kitchen and Daly (2002: 49) view the function of internal communication differently.

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This confirms Gower's (In Handbook of Communication: 1999) view that, at times, internal communication and its functions are viewed within a limited scope whereas some generalise this function. Communication scholars like Smythe view the function of internal communication as being three-folded. According to him, internal communication provides the instruments to measure relationship style, to facilitate debate among leaders of the organisation on the kind of relationship styles that will be most useful and to work with others to refine the development processes, which will modify relationship styles (Smythe; 1996: 42). As Gower (1999: xviii) has already indicated, this is a very limited view of internal communication and its functions. Smythe suggests that internal communication facilitates social interaction within the organisation. In terms of this, internal communication becomes a yardstick to weigh the kind of relationship style adopted by the organisation.

Furthermore Kitchen and Daly (2002: 49) maintain that the function of internal communication is widely discussed under the headings of employee communication, organisational communication and corporate or business communication. However, the main thrust remains the same in terms of the value and importance of internal communication. Kitchen and Daly (2002: 49) further argue that internal communication can also increase understanding of the commitment of change as well as reduce confusion and resistance to it. In addition to this, they view internal communication as the catalyst to organisational excellence and effectiveness. To a certain extent, Kitchen and Daly share the same line of thinking with Smythe.

Murabe (1990: 45) presented another dimension regarding the function of internal communication. According to him, Japanese companies carry out their internal communication activities in the belief that public relations should start within the organisation. In addition he maintains that well-informed employees are good employees, therefore organisations should supply information to their own employees before supplying it to the outside world. He further maintains that when employees are better informed about their organisation they have a stronger feeling of loyalty and greater pride in their position and work.

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According to Murabe (1990: 45) this is a basic reason that internal communication is important. Murabe's argument carries weight; however internal communication is more than just a means of conveying information but more a component of strategic thinking of the organisation.

 Kathryn (1990: 31) is in support of Murabe's views. He argues that communicators expect to continue their efforts to inform employees and bolster employee morale as well as to exert more influence on employee performance. According to him attention should be focussed on corporate goals and objectives.

It is critical at this stage to note that organisations exist because goals can only be achieved through the coordinated activity of individuals. Robbins and De Cenzo (1998: 3) define an organisation as a structured system of relationships that coordinates the effort of a group of people towards the achievement of specific objectives, or to accomplish some specific purpose. They further maintain that the organisation's success depends largely on its ability to process information with appropriate value to reduce uncertainty and to clarify ambiguity that occurs in an environment of constant change (Spicer; 1998: 39). Thus, internal communication is a major constituent in any organisation, and it can actually be seen as the lifeblood of the organisation.

The literature on communication generally acknowledges that the basic function of communication is to affect recipient knowledge or behaviour by informing, directing, regulating, socializing and persuading. According to Baker (2002: 10), Myers and Myers combined similar functions into a higher level of common function and provide a particular concise and a clear version of the functions of internal communication. They see internal communication as having three primary functions; which relate to production, socialisation and innovation.

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4.4.1 Production function of internal communication

According to Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers (2003: 158) each organisation has a primary task, which is to offer a product or a service to the client thereof and this is referred to as the production function of an organisation. They further maintain that in order to form part of this process the participating employees need to have different types of information at their disposal. An important function of communication in organisations is to provide information to ensure that the organisation operates efficiently. This function thus relates to the desired outputs of the organisation (Verwey & Du Plooy, 2003: 158).

It is implied that all members of the organisation require information on how to achieve organisational and individual goals - not only the employees but also management. Within this particular context, instructions related to work is probably the most important information required. The production function of internal communication includes work content, process, commercial aspects, decision-making as well as control and policy information.
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 Figure 4.1 Graphic representation of the function of internal communication

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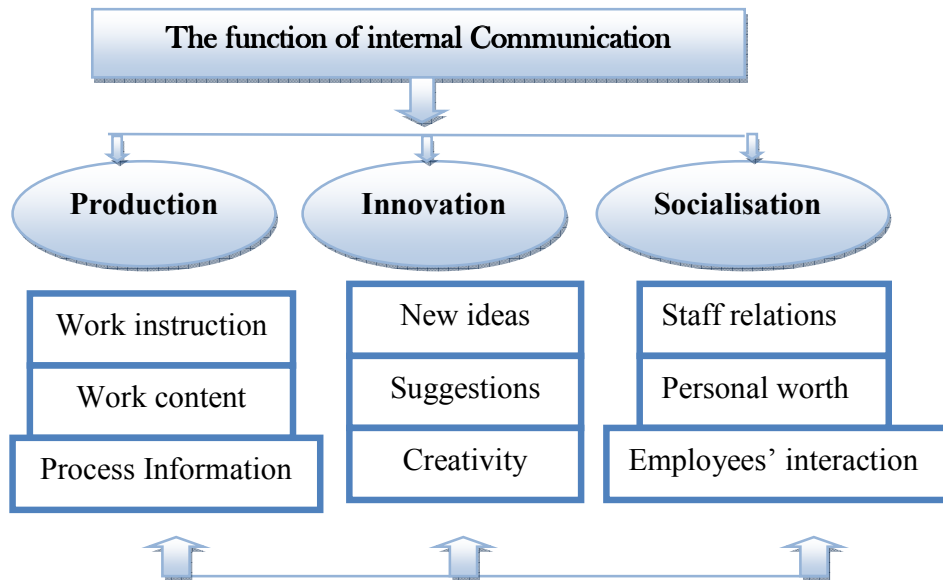
* Figure 4.1 adapted from Verwey and Du Plooy - Cilliers

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In addition, Spinks and Wells (1995: 17) have identified different levels of leadership communication that are geared towards the production function of internal communication. This includes upper, middle, and lower level leadership communication.

- **Upper level leadership communication**

  According to Spinks and Wells (1995: 18), the first communication imperative for upper level leadership is to develop sound policies, describe and carry out plans and make decisions. They further argue that the second imperative is to make sure that quality communication networks are functioning properly. According to them, an effective leader uses this input to communicate the message, policy or directive of doing what was planned.

- **Middle level leadership communication**

  According to Spinks and Wells (1995: 18) middle level fulfils a dual role in that it should represent upper level administration by instituting, communicating, and carrying out policies while keeping the best interests of the lower employees in mind. Furthermore, middle level leaders gather information from lower level leaders and communicate this information upward. Employees are in a better position to provide accurate feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy and procedures within the organisations. Thus, the upward communication channel is important to transport such feedback to top management.

- **Lower level leadership communication**

  Spinks and Wells (1995: 18) maintain that lower level leaders also have a duty to carry out policies, strategies, orders and instructions from above. Meanwhile, they have responsibilities to work for the best interest of the employees beneath them. The production function of internal communication at this level, however, consists more of giving instructions and issuing orders than that at upper levels.

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In most of the cases the lower level implements tactical plans (Spinks & Wells, 1995: 18). According to these two scholars a unique feature of lower level leaders is that they truly comprise the front lines of management in creating an effective workplace. They deal with workers and clients. They even deal with the public on a day-to-day basis with the result that quality communication at this level is crucial since employees need accurate and clear information regarding their roles.

4.4.2 Socialisation function of internal communication

According to Owusu (1999: 108) communication and trust between management and employees are prerequisites to turning a company into a world-class organisation. Owusu's view that many managers of different organisations have realised the danger of solely considering people (workers) as a mere extension of production machines or as an expendable commodity, should be viewed as the great relief of the millennium. Also for the fact that they have realised that respecting people, (i.e. considering their capability to think and not just to perform physical work), is the foundation of any durable organisation and the improvement of the organisation's performance and management style should be noted as a paradigm shift of the highest degree. Capturing the hearts and minds of the employees is necessary to effectively coordinate organisational goals. According to Owusu (1999: 109) employee involvement is very important.

In addition Splitter and Swindler (2003: 70) maintain that internal communication encompasses a multidimensional set of elements that represent the core of management / employee relationships. This is a very positive revelation in that internal communication maintains staff relations and it creates a platform for employee interaction. Considering the notion of the systems theory that an organisation consists of interrelated and interdependent departments, management / employee relationships are very crucial. It is through this kind of relationship that both management and employees have a shared meaning of and vision for the organisation.

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Equally so, Baker (2002: 10) maintains that the socialisation function of communication is stressed in the human relations perspective of an organisation, which asserts that capturing the hearts and minds of organisational members is necessary to effectively coordinate organisational action in the pursuit of collective organisational goals. Baker's views are housed within a very basic principle of creating a sense of belonging. Employees need to be acknowledged and feel that they are part of the organisation. Furthermore Hopkins (1995) have identified three categories and specific events that could direct managers to effectively motivate and increase their employees' morale, including social gathering, employee recognition and employee meetings.

- **Social gathering**

  Activities such as picnics, family days and / or organised recreation can create an atmosphere of caring and support that will give employees a sense of belonging that will carry over in their work (Hopkins, 1995: 26). In the process this creates a conducive working environment for interaction among employees (i.e. supervisors and subordinates) and a platform for informal communication flow, which is used to convey important information. According to Hopkins, it is through this sense of belonging that employees will start to take ownership and responsibility that will ultimately lead to higher morale. In addition, Sanchez (2004: 12) argues that having an effective employee communication plan, employers can avoid rumours and speculation that can be true productivity killers. Furthermore, he maintains that when people on both sides enter into the communication process in the spirit of goodwill, good things tend to happen and the employees are able to feel more part of the organisation, while simultaneously developing a sense of ownership thereof. It is reported that informal meetings with staff fuel employee morale.

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- **Employee recognition**

According to Hopkins this is probably the most important category and is sometimes called "thank you" for a job well done. Unfortunately, many managers seem to be too busy to recognize the positive contributions of their employees (Hopkins, 1995: 26). He further maintains that it is imperative to recognise your employees' positive contributions and achievements, no matter how small they may be.

Talking to the employees during lunchtime is one the ways of recognising their existence and importance within the organisation. Hopkins's argument relates to the whole notion of providing feedback regarding employees' performance. It serves as a motivation to direct credit where it is due.

- **Employee meetings**

This is a very good way of showing support to the employees' ideas, concerns and endeavours as they relate to organisations' needs (Hopkins, 1995: 27). Hopkins argues that these meetings can be complaint sessions, discussion forums, or informal "bull" sessions - either way they will be effective in helping one's organisation to develop a system of communication stemming from employees upward to the management. Equally so, it is important that managers attend these meetings and listen to their employees, allowing them regular input in decision making and serving as a sounding board for new ideas. Hopkins presents a very empowering statement by arguing that managers should serve as a resource for employees' thoughts, concerns and ideas through the forum of employee meetings. Martins and Terblanche (2003: 73) are in support of Hopkins' views since they argue that teaching employees that disagreement is acceptable, can promote openness in communication. They further argue that employee must feel emotionally safe to be able to act creatively and innovatively and should therefore be able to trust one another, which in turn is promoted by open communication.

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4.4.3 Innovation function of internal communication

Gower (1998) laid a solid foundation with regard to innovation function of internal communication. According to him innovation depends on a culture that is conducive not only to managed risk taking, but to an open communicative style of management. He further maintains that communication is one of the main factors contributing to innovation. According to him the best organisations have a clear sense of mission and purpose, and they have communicated that throughout the organisation.

According to Martins and Terblanche (2003: 67) definitions of innovation vary according to the level of analysis that is used. Some definitions are general and broad, while others focus on specific innovation like implementation of an idea for new products or services. For the purpose of this study innovation is defined as the implementation of a new problem – solving ideas, practices or material artifacts (for example products) that are regarded as new by the relevant unit of adoption and through which change is brought about (Martins & Terblanche, 2003: 67).

Burnett and McMurray (2003: 3) argue that innovation within the organisation is viewed as a psychological concept that may be conceptualised and measured as a process experienced at the organisational, climate, individual, and teams levels of an organisation. They further maintain that innovation within an organisation is perceived as a multidimensional concept, for it may affect either a product, process or an amalgamation of both.

Figure 4.2 Graphic representation of innovation function of internal communication
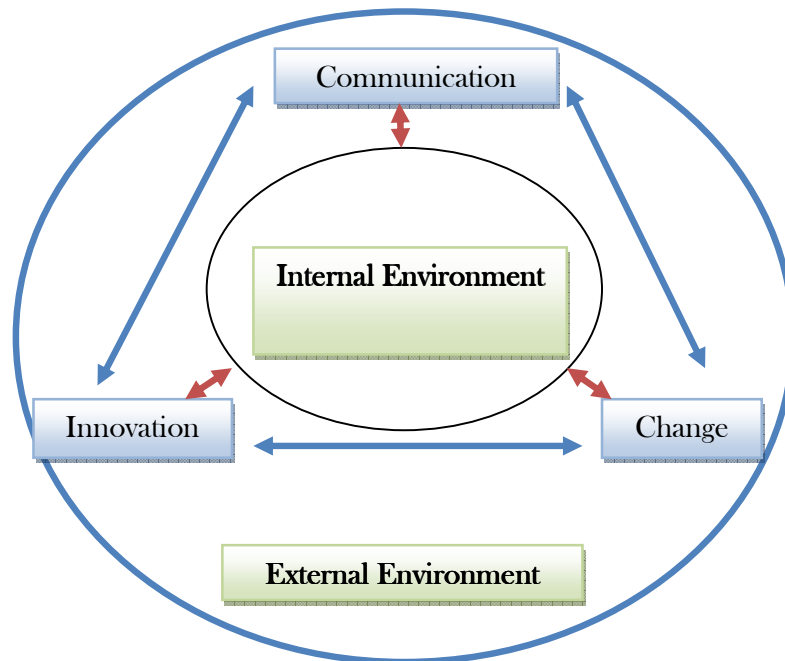
It follows from the graphic representation (Figure 4.2) that communication needed to promote innovation is associated with strong internal and external communication. What happens within the organisation is a result of the external forces and pressures from the organisation's external environment. Equally so, the external environment has a very strong influence on the organisation's level of innovation. Changes take place within the internal or external organisational environment and as such, the organisation is forced to adjust to that. Internal communication is therefore critical in generating information and creative ways that will strengthen the organisation.

In addition, Burnett and McMurray present an intellectually appealing argument. According to them not spending enough time to communicate vision to employees has not only a negative effect on their capacity for innovativeness but also on business growth and hence on the overall success of the organisation.

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In addition they argue that innovative thinking in the workplace together with a readiness for change and communicating this to employees form the characteristics of a successfully growing business (Burnett & McMurray, 2003: 3).

Verwey and Du Plooy (2003: 159) are in support of Burnett and McMurray's views. According to them organisations need information that will allow them to adapt to changes in the environment, by creating innovations that will ensure sustainability. They further maintain that innovation is a special type of change that is not haphazard. Innovation is planned and directed change that is designed to improve organisations and organisational life.

There is of course a recurring need for innovative ideas to adapt the behaviours of employees to meet continually emerging constraints and challenges in the accomplishment of organisational goals. The systems theory is of the view that organisations must continually adopt new input, by processing strategies to accomplish an advantageous output and enable the systems to survive (Verwey & Du Plooy, 2003: 159). According to Verwey and Du Plooy (2003: 159) communication provides members with information to exchange views on organisational activities, experiences, change and plans. This can be achieved during regular meetings during which employees exchange information about every area of the organisation with the view to direct and coordinate behaviour in order to maintain the *status quo* or to implement organisational changes.

Furthermore Burnett and McMurray (2003: 4) maintain that interpersonal communication and collective understanding influences levels of innovation. According to them a number of different communication channels are available to an organisation when it comes to innovation, including face - to - face interaction, formal and informal group meetings in the workplace, social gatherings outside the workplace, networking, the writing of letters and emails, the use of phone, teleconferencing and magazines.

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As their point of departure Burnett and McMurray argue that, choosing the right channel at the right time is not only of importance for the building of relationships with staff and setting of the scene for innovation and change in the workplace, but also of importance for the building of a customer base.

4.5 BENEFITS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Through the previous discussion it is very clear that internal communication benefits organisations in many different ways. This section discusses the general benefits of internal communication. Although the researcher acknowledges other benefits of internal communication, however, for the purpose of this study the focus is only on the following five benefits. The benefits of internal communication, amongst others include: communication culture, communication climate, communication satisfaction, organisational justice and organisational climate.

4.5.1 Improvement of communication culture

Communication culture which is generated through shared experiences and learning is a critical indicator of effective internal communication (Tukiainen, 2001: 47). Tukiainen further maintains that communication culture operates as the unifier of functions of the organisation and sub-culture groups as well as the transmitter of valuations and this applies within the organisation. It is therefore expected out of any effective internal communication system to create a platform for a culture of openness and the free flow of two-way communication. Organisations with strong communication culture always strive to listen to the views of its employees and provide appropriate feedback.

4.5.2 Enhancement of communication climate

Equally so, communication climate is a positive reflection of good internal communication. Communication climate is viewed as the subjective views, interpretation and satisfaction of the members of an organisation with the communication phenomena in a certain context.

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It is manifested in meanings and valuations (Tukiainen, 2001: 47). Tukiainen argue that communication climate is the aggregation of observations, feelings and valuations of individuals and the result of the working process of communication systems. Internal communication should be in such a way that it fosters the environment that will create a platform for communication climate.

4.5.3 Enhancement of communication satisfaction

In today's competitive business environment, the emotional being of the employees is very essential. It should be maintained and sustained. Through communication satisfaction employees can be kept happy. Gray and Laidlaw (2002: 214) view communication satisfaction as a 'summing up' of an individual's satisfaction with a flow of information and relationship variables. According to them it includes the extent to which informal communication is accurate and free flowing; the extent to which meetings are well organised and written directives are short and clear; information about the organisation as a whole which includes notifications about changes, overall policies, and goals of the organisation; the degree to which individuals receive information about their immediate work environment; the extent to which communication in the organisation motivates and stimulates workers to meet organisational goals; and most importantly information concerning how workers are being judged and how their performance is being appraised as well as the upward and downward aspects of communicating with superiors.

4.5.4 Cultivation of organisational justice

Susanna Baldwin (2006: 1) defines organisational justice as the extent to which employees perceive workplace procedures, interactions and outcome to be fair in nature. These perceptions can influence attitudes and behaviour for good or ill, in turn having a positive or a negative impact on employee performance and organisation's success. Transparency is one of the outcomes of organisational justice.

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Campbell and Finch (2004: 179) define organisational justice as the employees' perception of the fairness with which they have been treated by an organisation or organisations. Organisational justice includes among others interactional justice, which is concerned with the sensitivity with which information is communicated. It is critical to note that organisational justice is not possible without a free flow of two-way symmetrical communication. Thus internal communication is a key facilitator of this process. It is through effective internal communication that the organisation can achieve organisational justice.

4.6 CONCLUSION

Against the above background there is no doubt that internal communication is the strength of any organisation. Effective internal communication is a facilitating force that supports the overall functioning of the organisation. Many communication scholars such as Verwey and Du Plooy (2003), Kitchen and Daly (2002), Gibson and Hodgetts (1991) and Murabe (1990) have demonstrated the overwhelming importance of internal communication in today's competitive business environment. Internal communication creates a platform for participative decision making, employees interaction, information sharing that stimulates creativity and innovation, a conducive environment that fosters productivity and most importantly, creates a sense of organisational ownership.

Thus, it is important for organisations to invest money and energy in creating an effective internal communication system that will facilitate the transformation process that will provide leadership in communication, which will promote awareness of the opportunity that democracy has brought and how to access it and, most importantly, internal communication that will translate vision, mission and objectives of the organisation to its employees.

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According Splitter and Swindler (2003: 70), interpersonal relationships in the workplace, technology, and external networking are equally important. Direct and frequent one-to-one communication touches on all aspects of the management of an organisation, specifically the three main functions of organisation. Internal communication is central to the establishment of organisational vision and it maintains a climate in which innovation and change is fostered and new innovative products and services can be implemented.

Since internal communication does not exist in isolation within the organisation, the next chapter will focus on other organisational subsystems that potentially affect and impact on it. While the researcher acknowledges many different organisational factors and subsystems that affect or impact on internal communication and its functions, the focus of the next chapter will only be on organisational culture, organisational structure and leadership approaches. These variables will be discussed in relation to the function of internal communication.

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Chapter 5

Organisational variables that affect internal communication
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5.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided explanation of the functions of internal communication. According to the systems theory, instead of studying internal communication in isolation, the focus should be on the relationships and interactions involved. Since the function of internal communication is interrelated and interdependent to other subsystems within the organisation, it is imperative to touch on those aspects. This chapter will therefore focus on the variables of the organisation, which affect or impact on internal communication. For the purpose of this study the focus will only be on three aspects which include organisational structure, organisational culture and leadership approaches within the organisation. Attempts will be made to describe the nature of the interaction between these aspects and internal communication.

According to Clegg, Kornberger and Pitsis (2005: 153) organisations have formal and informal rules that coordinate actions of different people. Within this context formal rules refer to the policy and the procedures that govern employees' behaviours within the organisation. Informal rules further refer to the manner and the way in which employees interact with each other day to day within the working environment. For instance, greeting each other on a daily basis is one way of exercising informal rules. Equally so, organisations exist because goals can be achieved only through the coordinated activity of individuals. In addition organisations are structured in accordance with its vision, mission, objectives and its overall goals. However, a critical question is how organisations can determine that people who have diverse backgrounds, particular interests and a different understanding of matters, comply with these rules?

It is healthy to argue that compliance go hand in hand with knowledge, information and understanding within the organisation. Thus, in order to ensure that people within the organisation comply with the rules firstly, they need to know and understand such rules and secondly such rules need to be communicated effectively to the people. These requirements could be met through internal communication for it is an internally coordinating mechanism.

It is equally important to ensure that internal communication is aligned with the organisational structure. Quirke and Lamb (2000: 24) maintain that, where internal communication is not aligned with the organisational structure, organisations will not experience any value added to the organisation. According to them, organisations need internal communication that matches their structure and fits their overall corporate strategy. This is very true since internal communication depends extensively on how the organisation and communication in it is being structured. Organisational structure guides the flow of communication within the organisation.

In addition Clegg, Kornberger and Pitsis (2005: 120) argue that the organisational structure is one of the most important issues because it holds the whole organisation together, keeps it afloat, and separates the inside from the outside. According to these authors the mechanism that regulates organisations is seen to be an interactive effect between the structure of the organisation and the organisation's function (what it does). As indicated in Chapter 2, the structural functionalist approach maintains that organisations whose structures are best adapted to their functioning are those that have a good fit between their organisational design and the contingencies that they have to deal with.

Clegg, Kornberger and Pitsis further request that those organisations whose structures are not aligned with the contingencies that they currently deal with, have to undertake structural adjustments to align with those contingencies. According to Clegg, Kornberger and Pitsis (2005: 120) those contingencies refer to the environment in which the organisation operates, the technology it uses and the size of the organisation.

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As indicated in Chapter 2, the theoretical framework of this study made it clear that internal communication cannot be studied in isolation for it interacts with other subsystems within the organisation. The focus of the next section will be on organisational aspects that have impact on internal communication. These organisational aspects including organisational structure, organisational culture and leadership approaches within the organisation.

5.2 ORGANISATION VARIABLES THAT AFFECT INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

The researcher acknowledges various organisational variables that affect internal communication. As reflected previously in the interest of this study, the focus of this chapter will be on three organisational variables that affect internal communication, namely on organisational structure, secondly on organisational culture and thirdly on leadership approaches.

5.2.1 Organisational structure

The manner in which the communication was managed traditionally depended upon the organisational structure, especially on internal communication. Whenever the organisation shifts its balance the communication needs to be adjusted accordingly otherwise it will act as a deterrent to the organisation. According to Quirke and Lamb (2000: 25) in more centralised organisations the corporate centre had a claim on the brain space of employees and in more decentralised organisations, the local barons ran their own communication show. Organisational structure determines task allocation, reporting lines, and formal coordination mechanisms and interaction patterns (Holtzhausen, 2002: 323)

These scholars' argument is accurate because the organisational structure gives directives in terms of what the organisation does.

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Different scholars define organisational structure in many different ways. According to Marquis and Huston (1996: 2) people spend most of their lives in social, personal and professional organisations, thus they need to understand how they are structured. They therefore view organisational structure as the way in which the group is formed, its relation to communication and its means of channelling authority and making decisions. They define a structure as the sum total of the ways in which an organisation divides its labour into distinct tasks and then coordinates them. According to them there are two key elements to this definition. These elements include differentiation, which refers to the breaking up of work into an array of tasks and integration, and coordination among various tasks to ensure that the overall goals of the organisations are achieved. They further maintain that the official structure of the organisation is made up of officially designated roles and relationships that exist independently of those who occupy the role and this includes the authority of relationships, the formal communication channels, and the formal lines of accountability.

In the same breath, Tidd, Bessant and Pavitt (1997: 18) argue that the term structure refers to the delineation of job and reporting relationships in an organisation. Its principal function is to influence and coordinate the work behaviour of the organisation's members in order to accomplish the organisation's goals. In terms of this there are distinct approaches to organisational structure that include mechanistic and organic management. A tight highly structured approach is associated with mechanistic management while a loose flexible organisation is typically associated with an organic free flowing management approach.

The following table summarises the main features of the two approaches to organisational structure.

Table 5.1 Summary of approaches to organisational structure

Organisational Outcomes	Mechanistic Approach 1960 – 1970's	Organic Approach 1980's – 1990's
Contextual variable: Environment Technology Size Goal Culture	 Certain Routine Larger Efficiency Employee taken for granted	 Uncertain, chaotic Non – routine Small Effectiveness Employee – centred teams
Internal Outcomes Structure Communication Innovation Decision making	Functional, centralised Formal information system Infrequent Rational analysis	Uncertain, decentralised Face to face Frequent Trial and error

As indicated in table 5.1, centralisation is found in the m*echanistic approach* to organisational structure. It refers to the hierarchical level that has the authority to make a decision. On the other hand decentralisation is found in the *organic approach* to organisational structure and decisions are delegated to lower organisational levels. In the functionally theory background discussion in Chapter 2 it is revealed that by making use of the organic approach, high employee participation with regard to the decision - making process is made possible, as opposed to the mechanistic approach.

The organisational structure affects internal communication in many different ways including the following:

Adapted from Tidd, Bessant and Pavitt (1997)

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A centralised organisation is characterised by close, central control of decision - making. As a result, internal communication is run on the "Roman Empire model". This suggests that within a centralised organisation, there is limited two-way flow of internal communication. In most of the cases the organisation employs downward communication flow as a way of issuing work related instructions to employees at the lower level of the organisation. As such, there is no feedback mechanism within the organisation and this reduces accessibility of information. Within this context internal communication will be structured in such a way that it embraces the principles of this organisational structure.

On the other hand, in a centrally - coordinated organisation, internal communication is coordinated more strongly from one department or a centre, and common standards, structured frameworks and measurements are adopted across business units. The central communication department aims to ensure that employees in the units are fully aware of corporate messages (Quirke and Lamb, 2000: 25).

Communication scholars such as Jansen and Steinberg (1991) seem to be in favour of a decentralised organisational structure. It is argued that decentralised organisational structures increase employees' commitment and participation. As a result this yields a two-way flow of very short and flexible communication. It further creates an enabling environment for the flow of internal communication between employees and their superiors. As such, internal communication is used to foster strong identification with the business unit and the entire organisation.

5.2.2 Organisational culture

As with many concepts within the sphere of organisational literature, the definition of organisational culture remains a constant topic for debate. This is for the simple reason that researchers and theorists have approached this concept in many different ways. It can be seen as the result of the changing of definition over the years (McAleese and Hargie, 2004: 156).

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Martins and Terblanche (2003: 65) are in support of these views for they maintain that organisational culture is defined in many different ways in the literature. Perhaps the most commonly known definition is "the way we do things around here". According to them organisational culture is defined as deeply - seated values and beliefs shared by employees in an organisation. It is manifested in the typical characteristics of the organisation. It therefore refers to a set of basic assumptions that worked so well in the past that they are accepted as valid assumptions within the organisation.

For the purpose of this study organisational culture is viewed as the set of values, guiding beliefs, understanding and ways of thinking that is shared by members of an organisation and it is taught to new members as correct. It provides members with a sense of organisational identity. In simple terms it refers to the way things are done in a particular organisation (Marquis and Huston, 1996: 5). It is a shared system of meaning and it dictates the way the organisation operated.

Chen (2004: 432) identified three types of organisational culture, namely: bureaucratic, innovative and supportive. These can further be described as follows:

- **Bureaucratic organisational culture**
  This type of organisational culture is hierarchical and compartmentalised. There are clear lines of responsibility and authority. In this case the internal flow of communication is influenced by the lines of responsibility as dictated by organisational culture in practice.

- **Innovative organisational culture**
  The innovative organisational culture refers to a creative, result-oriented and challenging working environment. The organisation with innovative organisational culture is always reflected through strong emphasis on the innovation function of internal communication. In addition, the internal communication flow is shaped in such a way that it stimulates creativity amongst the employees.

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- **Supportive organisational culture**

  A supportive organisational culture exhibits teamwork and a people-oriented, friendly, encouraging, trusting working environment. This type of culture is normally highlighted through the strong emphasis on the socialisation function of internal communication. It promotes ongoing interaction amongst all the stakeholders within the organisation, irrespective of the position, department or directorate.

In addition, several models have been developed to describe organisational culture and its relationships with other subsystems within the organisation. Martins and Terblanche (2003: 66) have developed a very intellectually appealing model that describes organisational culture within a typical ideal organisation. The model is based on the interaction between the organisational subsystems and the dimensions of culture. According to Martins and Terblanche (2003: 66), the dimensions of organisational culture encompass the following:

- *Mission and vision* which determines employees' understanding of vision, mission and values of the organisation and how these can be transformed into measurable individual and team goals and objectives.
- *External environment* that determines the degree of focus on external and internal customers and also employees' perception of the effectiveness of community involvement.
- *Means to achieve objectives* determine the way in which organisational structure and support mechanisms contribute to the effectiveness of the organisation.
- *Image of the organisation* refers to the manner in which the outside world views the organisation.
- *Management processes* which focus on the way in which management processes take place in the organisation. It includes aspects such as decision making, formulating goals, innovation processes, control processes and communication.

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- *Employee needs and objectives* which focus on the integration of employees'
  needs and objectives with those of the organisation, as perceived by
  employees/personnel.

- *Interpersonal relationships* focus on the relationship between managers and
  personnel and on the management of conflict.

- *Leadership* focuses on specific areas that strengthen the way the organisation is
  managed and led.

According to these scholars, this is a comprehensive model which encompasses all
aspects of an organisation upon which organisational culture can have an influence. The
organisational culture affects internal communication in many different ways. For the
purpose of this study the focus will be on the following:

Organisational culture refracts communication. According to Wood (1999: 137) if one
does not know how employees listen, then it is difficult to control ones' internal
communication. She further maintains that, without some knowledge of the
organisational culture it is impossible to create an effective internal communication
strategy.

In addition, organisational culture that supports openness and transparency will have a
positive influence on promoting effective internal communication (Martins and
Terblanche, 2003: 72). If the organisation encourages openness and transparency, it will
commit time and resource to develop internal communication programmes that allow a
two-way flow of communication.

Organisational culture shape the way people think and behave within the organisation and
when people from dissimilar organisational culture get together, they can encounter
powerful barriers, limiting their capacity to communicate (Blundel, 2004: 39). Some
organisations adopt what Blundel (2004: 27) calls "individualism/collective
organisational culture". This dimension is reflected in the ways that managers
communicate.

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In collective cultures, there is a stronger emphasis on reaching consensus but there may be less room for individual initiative. Whereas a culture of individualism appears more argumentative but, arguably, may be more likely to generate creative solutions. In addition, Blundel (2004: 27) has identified what he calls "Power distance culture". According to him this dimension relates to inequality between senior managers and subordinates. Power, distance and status affect the way communication flows up and down within the organisation and the levels at which decisions are made.

5.3 CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that, in order for an organisation to continue to thrive and grow in future it needs a very comprehensive internal communication system that will unambiguously translate its vision, mission and strategic objectives into reality. Furthermore effective internal communication has a potential to build and sustain social interaction within the organisation and most importantly to drive a service delivery messages to all employees. However, it would be an academic crime to study the function of internal communication in isolation.

Internal communication is one of the subsystems within the organisation. Thus there is a high need to recognise and acknowledge the ongoing interaction that takes place within the organisation. As a result of the interrelation and interdependency that takes place within the organisation, the subsystems influence each other. Internal communication does not exist in a vacuum, thus it should be developed in such a way that it fits and matches the organisational structure. The functions of internal communication should be in line with the strategic objectives of the organisation. By striking a balance between the two, the organisation is likely to deliver on its mandate and at the same time create a working environment conducive to continuous social interaction.

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Equally so, organisational culture is one of the factors that have a serious bearing on internal communication. Organisational culture defines and describes what the organisation stands for, what the organisation believes in and most importantly, it provides an organisation with identity. In the same breath, internal communication is developed to translate and transmit the organisational identity to all its employees. Thus it is important for the internal communicators to understand the dynamics of the culture within the organisation in order to develop an internal communication strategy that is relevant and useful for the organisation.

In addition, leadership is one of the most complicated factors within the organisation - the success of any internal communication starts with organisational leadership or management. If the organisational leadership has a negative attitude, or if they are not willing to support the accepted style of communication, there is no way in which the internal communication programmes will thrive. Thus it is important to note such factors when developing internal communication strategy, programmes and/or plans. Much consideration should be placed on leadership for their support, input, advice and most importantly, the endorsement of the programmes.

It should also be noted that to a certain extent, the four organisational factors that are internal communication, organisational culture, organisational structure and organisational leadership are inter-linked and interrelated for they form part of the subsystems within the organisation. Their interaction is reciprocal. Therefore, for internal communication to function properly in relation to productivity, service delivery, innovation and socialisation of employees, there is a need for a better understanding of the other subsystems, namely organisational structure, organisational culture and leadership approaches within the organisation.

The next chapter will focus on the research methodology employed in this study. A special focus is paid on the rationale for the qualitative exploratory approach, research design and methods of data collection within this study.

Chapter 6
Research Methodology

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the rationale for the quantitative research design and methods of data collection within this study. The quantitative research design includes experiments, surveys and contents analysis (AS de Vos, H Strydom, CB Fouche & CSL Delport, 2011: 144). There are two main classes into which quantitative research designs can be classified, namely experimental designs and non – experimental designs. The basic idea of an experiment in social science research is that two comparison groups are set up. Then researchers will administer an intervention or manipulate an independent variable to one of the groups, namely the experimental group.

According to Maree and Pietersen (2007: 152) non – experimental designs are mainly used in descriptive studies in which the units that have been selected to take part in the research are measured on all the relevant variables at a specific time. No manipulation of variables takes place and it does not include an experimental or a control group. Surveys are the most widely used non – experimental design in social science research. Thus, this study used the non – experimental design, with a specific focus on a survey to gain understanding of how does the management and employees of GCIS perceive the function of internal communication.

Kumar (2005: 84) defines a research design as a plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived to obtain answers to research questions. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 72) offer a closely related definition however, they emphasise the fact that it is not just a planning process but a scientific inquiry. This chapter will provide a clear plan, structure and strategy followed to obtain answers to the research questions of this study.
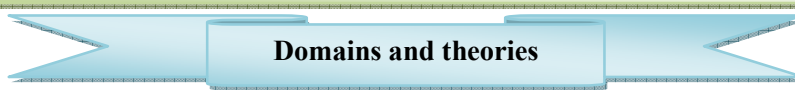
6.2 CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH APPROACH

According to AS de Vos, H Strydom, CB Fouche & CSL Delport (2011: 156), surveys collect data from large samples of people and present participants with a series of questions to be answered. In order to address the research questions of the study, the researched deemed it fit to use quantitative research method, particularly the survey method. A mailed questionnaire was used to get answers to "What do management and employees of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) perceive as the functions of internal communication. The study is designed to provide a better understanding of the function of internal communication within GCIS.

6.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The nature of the research problem necessitates a brief explanation of the interrelatedness of the domain within which this study resorts. In addition key concepts are described in order to ensure the correct interpretation thereof within the study (See table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Conceptual Framework

Research question	What do management and employees of Government Communication and Information System perceive as the function of internal communication?	
Domains and theories		
Domains	Corporate Communication Management	Human Resources Management
Sub – Fields within	Internal Communication	Organisational Development
Theory	Functionalist	
Related theories	Systems Theory	Classical Management Theory
Major Concept	Functions of Internal Communication	
Constructs	Production	Innovation	Socialisation

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Key Terms	Organisation's output Activities regulation Work content Work flow Work instructions	New ideas Suggestion Creativity New plans	Work flow Staff relations Personal growth Employee interaction Socio -emotional support
Empirical Methods	Questionnaire (Literature)	Questionnaire (Literature)	Questionnaire (Literature)
Measurements Items	13 questions (questionnaire	14 questions (questionnaire)	9 questions (Questionnaire)

This study examines the functions of communication within the GCIS. It therefore deals with internal communication with a specific emphasis on the three functions of internal communication namely production, socialisation and innovation functions. Communication is one of the strategic elements of service delivery within GCIS. Thus GCIS communicates both internally and externally in order to fulfil its goals.

Internal communication mainly ensures that the key stakeholders within the GCIS work together, share their thoughts regarding the organisation, cooperate with each other and most importantly, communicate ideas. Internal communication is therefore a sub-domain within a broader domain of corporate communication management and human resources management which serves as an umbrella term for all the communication processes that occur within GCIS. It is seen as that process wherein mutually interdependent human beings create and exchange messages, and interpret and negotiate meanings, while striving to articulate and realise mutually held visions, purposes and goals of the organisation (Andrews, 1996: 45).

6.3.1 Domains and sub-fields

Although some of the objectives, especially objective 2 (socialization, a function of internal communication) of this study reflects on some elements of human resource management; the fundamental nature of the research question falls within the domain of the Corporate Communication Management. Internal communication is a part of the overall corporate communication strategy.

All the other aspects of this study including the objectives and the research sub-questions provide a clear picture regarding the domain of this study. There are however some aspects of this study that would reflect on other sub-fields of human resource indirectly for instance, the human relations perspective, which is being discussed at length under the socialisation function of internal communication. Above all this study remains to fall within the Corporate Communication domain.

6.3.2 Units of analysis

The units of analysis refer to the object, phenomenon, entity, process or event under investigation (Babbie and Mounton, 2001: 84). In this case the employees of GCIS from the head office form the unit of analysis. This unit of analysis is further subdivided into the management and employees.

6.4 SAMPLING

It is usually not practically and economically feasible to involve all the members of a specific population in a survey, therefore sampling becomes appropriate. Sampling is the process of selecting units (such as people and organizations) from a population of interest so that, by studying the sample, it is possible to generalize the results to the population from which the units were chosen (Trochim, 2001: 41).

According to Bhattacharyya (2003: 77 – 78) the process of sampling involves seven steps. The researcher considered only five steps for purpose of this study. The researcher's decision was influenced by the size of the population. The five steps include:

- Define the population
- Identify the sampling frame
- Specify the sampling method

6.4.1 The population

As indicated earlier, it is usually not practically and economically feasible to involve all the members of a specific population in a survey. It is believed that the population may be completely defined if at least the elements, sampling units, extent and time are specified. Therefore the population for this study can be defined as the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) whereas the sampling unit is the management and employees from the head office only. The size of the target population is 413.

6.4.2 The sampling frame

In order to be able to study the accessible population it is necessary to select a sample frame. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 174), a sampling frame is the actual list of the sampling units from which the sample or some stage of the sample is selected. For instance, if a sample of students is selected from a student roster, the roster is the sampling frame. In this case the sample was selected from the list of the various departments within GCIS. Therefore the sampling frame is the list of different departments within GCIS, including different positions within GCIS.

6.4.3 Sampling method

The sampling method indicates how the sample units are selected. The most important decision in this regard is to determine which of the two probable or non – probable samples is to be taken. The units of analysis for this study consists of two distinct subgroups namely the management and the employees of GCIS. Firstly the subgroups were identified and the random sample was drawn from each subpopulation to ensure a representative sample from the population under investigation.

Stratified random sampling is a useful type of sampling procedure. In this procedure the members of the population are first assigned to strata or groups on the basis of some characteristics and a simple random sample is drawn from each stratum; as such the different segments of the population are represented in the sample. (Bhattacharyya, 2003: 83). With the stratified random sample we are ensured full representation irrespective of the sample size (Neuman, 1997: 212).

The researcher created two sampling frames to stratify the employees in the management and employees list according to their various positions. The same percentage was selected from each of the sampling frames to maintain the same percentage across the board and to be able to generalise the findings to the population under investigation.

6.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

There are five types of questionnaires, which include mail, telephonic, personal, group administered, and questionnaires delivered by hand. The researcher decided to use the mailed questionnaire because the costs are relatively low and the extension of the geographical area to be covered does not increase the costs. This also provides the respondent a high degree of freedom in completing the questionnaire.

Grinnell and Williams (in Strydom and Fouche, 2002: 172) describe the mailed questionnaire as the questionnaire that is sent off by mail in the hope that the respondent will complete and return it. However this does not always happen; it therefore follows that a response rate of 50% is considered adequate, 60% as good and 70% as excellent. The researcher is in agreement with Grinnell and Williams in terms of the response rate of the mailed questionnaire. Out of 128 questionnaires that were mailed to the research population only 36 were returned which scored 28%.

6.5.1 Pilot-testing the questionnaire

Bhattacharyya (2003: 61), Strydom and Fouche (2002: 177) and Babbie and Mouton (2001: 244) strongly contend that before a questionnaire is ready for the field it needs to be tested under field conditions. This is because of the notion that no researcher can prepare a questionnaire perfectly in the first attempt; there is likelihood of mistakes. The researcher is fully in support of the ideas raised by the above scholars. Thus in order to ensure quality, eliminate ambiguities and allocate appropriate time for the completion of the questionnaire a pre-test was used. Through the help of GCIS eight intership employees of GCIS were identified. They were requested to complete the question and give feedback. After completion of the questions, a debriefing session was held with them at GCIS offices. A number of mistakes and errors were identified and fixed.

Ten (10) elements of the study population which include two different strata, namely the employees and the management were randomly selected to test the questionnaire (i.e. 7 ordinary employees and 3 elements from management). It is important to note that few gaps were identified. The researcher discovered that the time allocated for completion of the questionnaire was not adequate and instructions were, to a certain extent, not clear. The researcher made appropriate changes as a way of responding to the gaps identified.

6.5.2 Response systems

A variety of response systems or types of questions exist from which the researcher must select in a goal directed manner in order to obtain the desired information. The types of questions include open, closed, dichotomous, multiple-choice, ordinal, completion, scaled, statements, matrix and follow-up questions (Strydom and Fouche, 2002: 179). In this study the researcher decided to use two types of questions namely multiple-choice and ordinal scaling.

- **Multiple-choice questions**

  The researcher agrees with Strydom and Fouche (2002: 180) that it is usually better to use multiple-choice questions from the beginning. This type of question is normally utilized to obtain information that can logically be divided into hard and fast categories. Since the researcher is in favour of this type of questioning it was employed under Section A (Demographic information) of the questionnaire used in this study (See Table 6.1)

Table 6.2 Multiple - choice questions

Please indicate the **directorate** you work in at GCIS

Corporate Services	1
Policy and Research	2
Provincial and local liaison	3
Communication Services	4
Agency and Media liaison	5
Other specify:	6

- **Ordinal questions**

  This type of question is used to assign values to a series of aspect by placing them in a certain order, which is in order of importance, urgency or seriousness. The researcher employed this type of questioning in Section B and C (that is Functions of internal communication and internal communication flow and channel) of the questionnaire used in this study (See Table 6.2)

Table 6.3 Ordinal questions

The functions of internal communication within GCIS mainly help
to_____

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Educate employees about the GCIS's policy	3	2	1
Monitor progress within different departments	3	2	1
Control the activities within GCIS	3	2	1
Inform employees about the strategic objectives of GCIS	3	2	1
Give the employees feedback regarding their performance	3	2	1
Coordinate the activities within GCIS	3	2	1
Maintain socialisation amongst the employees	3	2	1
Encourage openness between employees and management	3	2	1
Encourage free flow of two – way communication	3	2	1
Promote fairness within GCIS	3	2	1
Promote transparency within GCIS	3	2	1
Improve communication satisfaction	3	2	1
Encourage interaction amongst employees	3	2	1
Encourage employees to attend information sharing sessions	3	2	1

In addition to the ordinal questions, the researcher used an ordinal scale (i.e. ranking scale). Bhattacharyya (2003: 108) contends that the ordinal scale possesses the attribute of magnitude which means various categories of items can be compared with each other, only in order of rank assigned to these categories. As illustrated in table 6.2;

Agree   = 3

Unsure   = 2

Disagree   = 1

By implication, the ranking of 3 means the respondent is in agreement with the statement or the question posed. The same principle applies respectively to 1 and 2.

6.5.3 Considerations regarding measuring instrument

A measuring instrument is designed with a sole purpose of collecting data and it consists of a set of measurement scales as outlined in the above section which organises the information and transforms it into meaningful data. For the purpose of this study the researcher highly considered the following factors:

- **Definition of the constructs to be measured**

  According to Faul (in Strydom and Fouche, 2002: 193) the construct to be measured should be defined in a clear and unambiguous way. The researcher made efforts to ensure compliance to this principle. Three constructs were identified in this study which includes production, innovation and socialisation (See Chapter 2 of this study, table 2.2). These constructs were clearly defined within the context of this study.

- **Scale the items**

  Strydom and Fouche (2002: 194) describe scaling the items as the process of assigning numbers or symbols to the various levels of the particular concept that one wishes to measure. One would mostly assign numbers, but different values of a concept may occasionally be designated by symbols such as A or B. The researcher decided to use a 3-point scale to measure the constructs in this study to avoid any possible confusion and for time considerations.

- **Instructions for respondent**

One of the key tasks in the developmental phase of scale construction is the writing of clear instructions and introductory comments for the completion of the measuring instrument. This avoids misinterpretation on the part of the respondent. As indicated previously in this chapter, a few gaps were identified during the 'pilot-testing' of the questionnaire.

The researcher discovered that the time allocated for completion of the questionnaire was not adequate and instructions were, to a certain extent, not clear. These gaps were brought to the attention of the knowledgeable people including the study leader of this study. The researcher was assisted to revise the questionnaire to keep it simple by explaining what is measured, where to put responses and how to respond.

▪ **The cover letter of the questionnaire**

Since the respondents are not in any way obliged to participate in this study a cover letter of the questionnaire was used to request them to cooperate and they were guaranteed confidentiality. It explained the purpose of the study and the importance of the information requested from them. In addition to this, the researcher identified himself by providing personal information, which included names, contact details and residential address.

6.6.4 Composition of the measurement instrument

The measurement instrument (mail Questionnaire) used in this study was organised in accordance with the three main constructs (i.e. production, innovation and socialisation communication) on which the research questions were built as well as related concepts to the three constructs, including the flow of information and communication channels. The measurement instrument was divided into three sections namely A, B and C (See Appendix One: Questionnaire).

Section A addresses the demographic information. It consists of five sub-sections, namely respondent number, respondents' directorate, department, current position and the duration of the services at GCIS. As indicated previously, the researcher used multiple - choice questions as a way of collecting data in this section.

Section B of the measurement instrument focuses on the three constructs of this study namely production, socialization and innovation communication. It is coded on the ordinal scale.

Firstly, it consists of the questions to determine what the management and subordinates of GCIS perceive as the production function of internal communication, linked to the first construct, namely production communication which consists of 20 variables (i.e. V6 – V15 and V22 – V32 see appendix one).

Secondly, it consists of the questions to determine what the management and subordinates of GCIS perceive as the socialization function of internal communication, linked to the second construct of this study which is socialization communication. It consists of 18 variables (i.e. V13 – V21 and V33 – V43) see appendix one).

Section B also consists of the questions to determine what management and subordinates of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication, linked to the third construct. It consists of 8 variables (i.e. V44 – V51).

Section C of the measurement instrument of this study consists of four questions and 21 variables (i.e. V58 – V84, see appendix one). These questions include:

- To determine how the management and employees of GCIS rank the information they receive from their internal communication.
- To determine what is the general understanding of the management and employees about the flow of communication within GCIS.
- To determine which communication channels are mainly used within GCIS according to the observation of the management and employees.
- To determine the most preferred communication channels within GCIS according to the management and employees' experience.

- **Measuring instrument problems identified**

Although "**Pilot-testing the questionnaire"** was done, respondents reported certain problems they encountered while completing the questionnaire, which included the length of the questionnaire, lack of understanding of some of the concepts and the time, allocated to complete the questionnaire. In terms of the length of the questionnaire some of the respondents felt that it was too long.

It was felt that some of the concepts were too technical and more relevant to communication practitioners. Some of the respondents felt that the time allocated to complete the questionnaire was misleading. The researcher indicated that it should take approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. However, it was reported that the questionnaire took between 25 to 35 minutes to complete.

 In addition the researcher received incomplete questionnaires and some were completed incorrectly after which it was decided to discard them. This had a negative bearing on the response rate as about eight questionnaires (i.e. 6.25%) were destroyed for being incomplete or completed incorrectly.

6.7 RESPONSE RATE

It was previously indicated that a mailed questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The researcher distributed 128 questionnaires (i.e. 99 questionnaires to subordinates and 29 to management). A total number of 46 questionnaires were returned of which 10 were either incomplete or completed incorrectly. 36 questionnaires were received and this scored a response rate of 28%. While acknowledging the benefits of mailed questionnaires namely cost effectiveness and the high degree of freedom enjoyed by the respondents, (Strydom and Fouche, 2002: 172) warn the researchers about the limitations thereof.

According to them the lack of response may be very high, especially with regard to long questionnaires and unclear or open questions.

In addition, complex questionnaires requiring in-depth thought will also show a low response rate. Some questionnaires are often left unanswered or are wrongly interpreted, and this is difficult to deal with. Strydom and Fouche explain what the researcher experienced in this study. As indicated earlier, some of the questionnaires were incomplete and completed incorrectly, which made the researcher's task difficult. The low response rate potentially can affect the overall result of the study.

6.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher is grateful for the technical support provided by the Department of Information Technology (i.e. Statistical Support Services) of the University of Pretoria. The data analysis for this study was done with their assistance.

 Mouton (1996: 161) contends that data analysis involves two steps that include the reduction of manageable proportions from wealth of data that one has collected or the availability and identification of patterns and themes in the data. Strydom and Fouche (2002: 223) are in support of Mouton's views.

According to them data analysis entails that the analyst breaks data down into constituent parts to obtain answers to the research questions. The analysis of research data however does not in itself provide the answers to the research question; therefore interpretation of the data is necessary. Kerlinger (in Strydom and Fouche 2002: 223) has noted that it is impossible to explain raw data; one must first describe and analyze the data and then interpret the results of the analysis.

6.8.1 Frequency tables

The research did frequency tables in all the research questions. General frequency tables are simple devices for arraying data. They are used to better describe and clarify findings and make it more comprehensive. Relative frequency distribution was employed to calculate the data into percentages.

It clarifies the presentation of data in that it indicates the proportion of the total number of cases. Royer (in Strydom and Fouche, 2002: 229) is in favour of relative frequency distribution because it is useful when comparing the frequency of a variable between two or more groups of unequal size.

6.8.2 Cronbach's coefficient alpha

The research could not do factor analysis because of the sample size; instead Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used. Cronbach's coefficient alpha estimates the reliability of the type of scale by determining the internal consistency of the test or the average correlation of items within the test. When a value is recorded the observed value contains some degree of measurement error.

Two sets of measurements on the same variable for the same individual may not have identical values. However, repeated measurements for a series of individuals will show some consistency. Reliability measures internal consistency from one set of the measurements to another. The researcher used Cronbach's coefficient alpha to check how consistent the answers were and the test scored 80%. The test confirmed the reliability of the type of the scale the research used. A high value of alpha is evidence that the items measured an original construct. This confirms the internal consistency of the measuring instrument employed.

6.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 119), Neuman (1997: 138), Strydom and Fouche (2002: 169) describe reliability as being a matter of whether a particular technique is applied repeatedly to the same object, it would yield the same result and/or maintain the same accuracy. It refers to the accuracy or precision of an instrument; as the degree of consistency or agreement between two independently derived sets of scores; and as the extent to which independent administration of the same instrument yields the same result under comparable conditions. According to Neuman (1997: 138) there are three types of reliabilities, namely stability, representative and equivalence reliability.

Jordaan (2000: 121) warns that, when considering the development of a measurement instrument, internal consistency is the most important consideration. Items in a measurement instrument can be inconsistent and may lead to unreliable measurement when they are vague, ambiguous, or irrelevant to the concept that has been measured. In addition, the respondents can contribute to unreliable measurement when they are tired, careless, experiencing problems or are not familiar with the measurement instrument.

There are various methods to determine the reliability of measurement. As indicated earlier, the researcher used Cronbach's coefficient alpha to check how consistent the answers and the test scored 80%.

The test confirmed the reliability of the type of measurement used by the researcher. This was an attempt to eliminate potential sample mistakes that might have occurred. Du Plooy (1996: 72) maintains that a reliability coefficient of 0.9 or high is excellent; 0.80 – 0.89 is good and 0.70 – 0.79 is reasonable. Based on Du Plooy's above argument the researcher can confidently pronounce that the measurement instrument used for this study was good since it scored a reliability coefficient of 80%. According to Babbie (2001: 122) in conventional usage, the term validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration.

Neuman (1997: 140) contends that validity is an overused term and is often confused with related ideas. Sometimes it is used to mean true or correct. According to him, when a researcher maintains that a measure is valid, it is valid for a particular purpose and definition; it refers to how well the conceptual and operational definitions mesh with each other. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 122), Neuman (1997: 143), Strydom and Fouche (2002: 166) reflect that there are various types of validity namely face, content, criterion, construct, and concurrent validity. In this study the researcher used content validity to ensure the validity of the constructs.

Content validity is concerned with the representativeness or sampling satisfactoriness of the content (e.g. topics or items) of an instrument. In order to determine content validity two questions are asked: Is this instrument really measuring the concept we are assuming that it is? Does the instrument provide an adequate sample of items that represent that concept? For instance, do the items describing production function really describe production function? Are the items contained by a scale claiming to measure production function, contain an adequate sample of indicators measuring production function (Strydom and Fouche, 2002: 167)?

The researcher used the literature on this topic to decide on the constructs and the items to measure these constructs. Through the literature review three constructs, namely production, innovation and socialization functions were identified. In addition, the researcher used the literature review to identify items that measure individual construct mentioned in the above sentence. Subsequently, research questions based on the literature review and the objectives of the study were formulated. The measuring instrument was developed from the items obtained through the literature review.

Through this process the researcher is confident that the instrument used in this study measured the correct concept and that the items really described the relevant constructs.

6.10 CONCLUSION

Qualitative approach employs various techniques and the researcher focused only on the techniques that are applicable and relevant to this study. In this chapter the researcher managed to reflect on the method of data collection employed, the unit of analysis for this study, the sampling method followed and how the data was analysed.

As reflected earlier a mail questionnaire was distributed to the 128 research elements (i.e. 99 to subordinates and 29 to management). This study scored the response rate of 28%. The researcher, through the assistance of the Department of Information Technology (i.e. Statistical Support Services) of the University of Pretoria, used the statistics package to analyze the data.

Relative frequency distribution was employed to calculate the data into percentages and Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the type of scale by determining the internal consistency of the test or the average correlation of items within the test.

The next chapter (Chapter 7) will focus on the results and interpretation of evidence in relation to the research objectives of this study.

Chapter 7
Findings, Results and Recommendations

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is devoted to the results and interpretation of evidence in relation to the research objectives of this study. The results and findings of this study are based on the data gathered by means of the measurement instrument used by the researcher. The researcher decided to use graphs to present the results and findings of this study in order to make them more visible, comprehensive and organised.

The objectives of this study are once again presented below under item 7.2 with the aim of allowing the reader to relate to the findings of each objective. The results are presented according to the specific objectives of this study.

7.2 GENERAL AIM AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study as reflected in Chapter 1 was to determine what the management and employees of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) perceive as the functions of internal communication. In order to achieve this general aim the following objectives were set:

- **Objective 1**

    To determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the production function of internal communication.

- **Objective 2**

    To determine what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication.

- **Objective 3**

    To determine what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the socialisation function of internal communication.

_____

- **Objective 5**

   To determine the general understanding of the management and employees about the flow of communication within GCIS.

- **Objective 6**

   To determine which communication channels are mainly used within GCIS according to the observation of the management and employees.

- **Objective 7**

   To determine the most preferred method of communication within GCIS according to the management and employees' experience.

7.3 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

As indicated earlier in Chapter 6 the population in this study consists of 413 elements made up of two different strata including 336 employees and 77 elements from management (i.e. Chief Directors, directors and deputy directors) of GCIS. The relation between the management and the employees is 4.4% yielding a ratio of 4:1. Table 5.1 in Chapter 5 indicated that a sample size of 64 is sufficient for the research population of 200 elements. Therefore a sample of 128 is adequate for a research population of 413 elements. The researcher was guided by the tabular guide for the random sample of 99 employees and 29 elements in the management position to ensure that a better response rate is guaranteed and representativeness is maintained.

As a way of collecting data 128 questionnaires were distributed to the head quarters of GCIS in Pretoria (i.e. 99 questionnaires for employees and 29 for the management). A total number of 36 questionnaires were received back, scoring the response rate of 28%. It is preferable to score a response rate of 10 to 50% in a mail survey.

The results in this study are in line with general response rates in the case of mail questionnaires (Huysamen, 1994: 149).

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The results are presented according to the specific objectives of this study and the findings are described according to the statistical data as gathered from the different sections in the questionnaire (See Appendix One for the questionnaire).

7.3.1 Results of the demographic variables – Section A

It was reflected in Chapter 5 that **Section A** addresses the demographic information of this study. It consists of four sub-sections namely respondents' directorates, departments, current position and the duration of the services at GCIS. As reflected in Chapter 1 the general aim of this study is to determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the function of internal communication. Thus Demographic information is necessary to capture such distinctions.

Demographic variable V2: Directorate

Figure 7.1 (Demographic variable - Directorate) illustrates the results of demographic information that relate to the directorates within GCIS.

Figure 7.1: Demographic variable – Directorate

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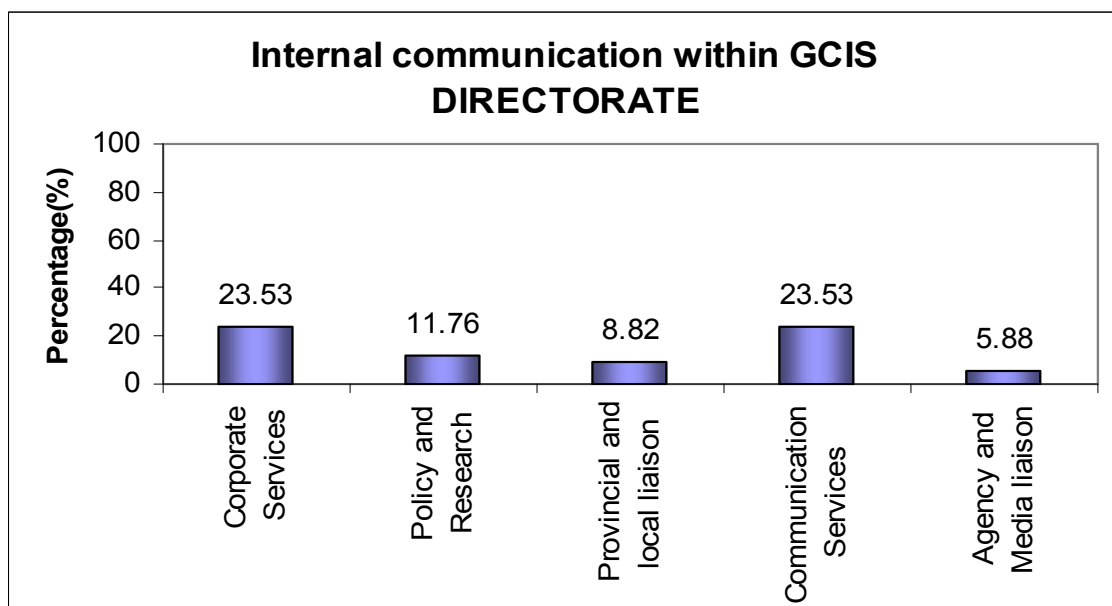
The demographic variable **directorate** (i.e. V2 of the questionnaire) within GCIS was divided into five categories namely Corporate Services, Policy Research, Provincial and Local liaison, Communication Services, Agency and Media liaison and others.

It follows from the above figure that out of the total number of respondents (i.e. N = 36) who completed and returned the questionnaire, 24 % (i.e. 8) were from the Corporate Services directorate, 12% (i.e. 4) from Policy and research, 9% (i.e. 3) from Provincial and Local Liaison, 24% (i.e. 8) Communication Services, and 6% (i.e. 2) for Agency and Media liaison and 31% (11) from other directorates that were not specified in the questionnaire.

Demographic variable V3: Department

Figure 7.2 (Demographic variable - Department) illustrates the results of demographic information that relates to the Department within GCIS.

Figure 7.2: Demographic variable – Department
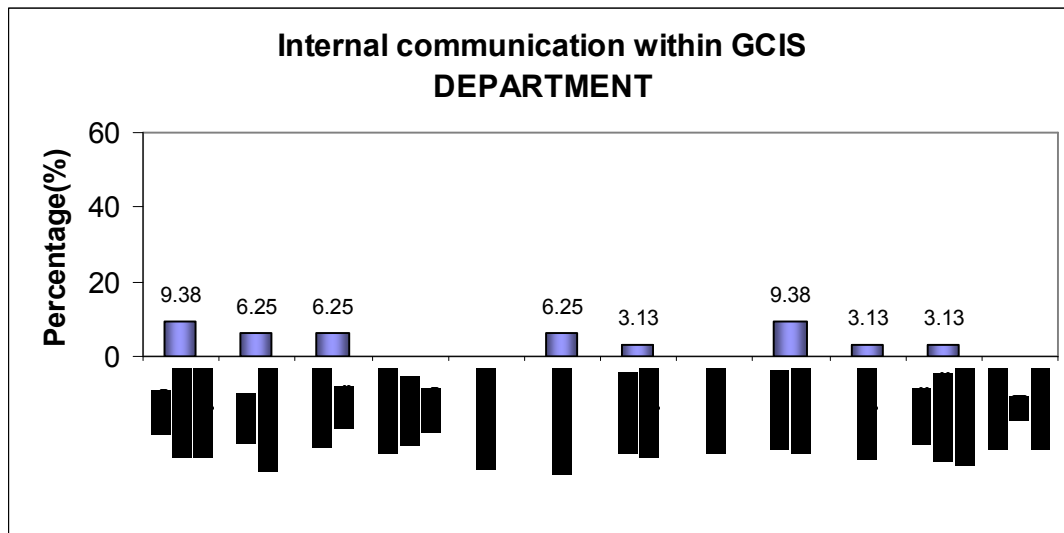
The above Figure reflects that the total number of the respondents (i.e. N = 36) who completed and returned the questionnaire were from eight departments within GCIS.

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GCIS is made up of 12 departments. Four departments did not respond which represents a 66 % response rate collectively. The eight departments include Human resource and development with a 9% response rate, Internal Communication with a 6% response rate, Information Centre with a 6% response rate, National liaison with a 6% response rate, while Institutional Development had a 3% response rate, Information Management a 9% response rate, Development a 3% response rate and Content development and Marketing with a 3% response rate.

Demographic variable V4: Position

Figure 7.3 (Demographic variable - Position) illustrates the results of demographic information that relates to the Position of the respondents within GCIS. This variable was divided into two main categories namely management and employees. However, in the questionnaire specific positions were outlined which fit into either of the two categories.

Figure 7.3: Demographic variable – Position
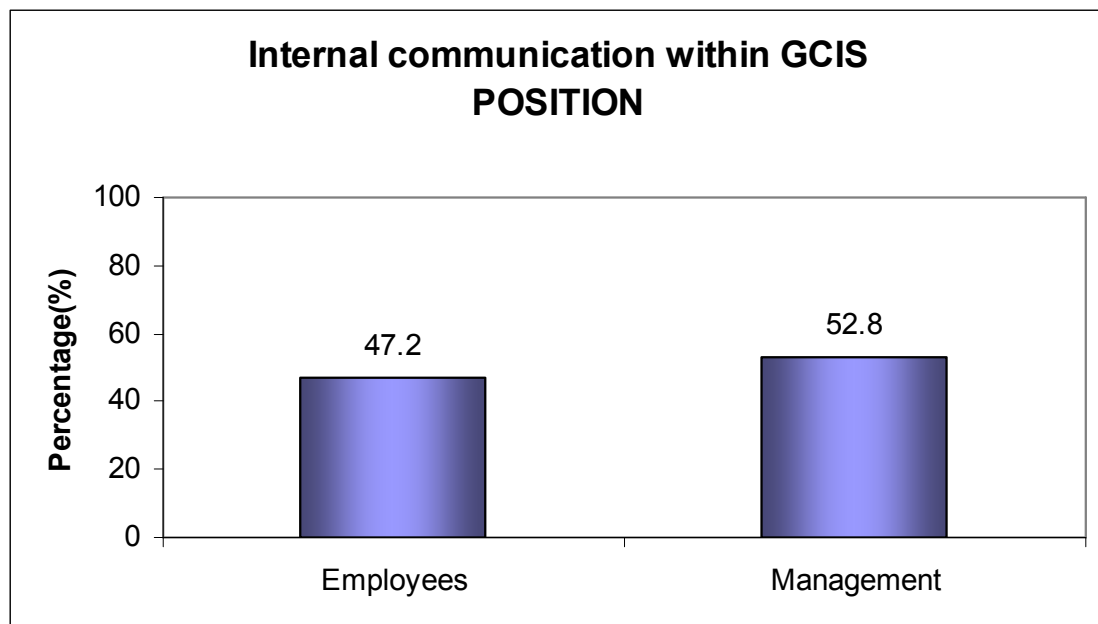
The initial number of the questionnaires that were completed and returned was forty-six (46).

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The researcher decided to destroy ten of them because they were incomplete and incorrectly completed. Unfortunately these questionnaires were mainly from the employees. In the light of all these, the above Figure (Figure 7.3) illustrates that 53 % of the respondents who completed and returned the questionnaire were from the management stratum and 47% were from the employees' stratum.

The researcher decided to leave V5 that deals with the duration of the services at GCIS. Through the pilot testing of the questionnaire the researcher realized that this question was causing unnecessary confusion because of the fact that only months and years were stated in the questionnaire. The question did not take into consideration that some of the employees have just been recruited.

Summary of demographic information

The result of the demographic variables V2 and V4 has drawn the attention of the researcher. Demographic variable V2 refers to the directorates within GCIS and it follows from Figure 6.1 that a high percentage of response rate was received from both the Corporate and the Communication services. Demographic variable V4 refers to the position within GCIS that was classified into two strata namely management and employees and it is reflected from Figure 6.3 that 53% of the respondents were from the management stratum.

In general terms the results suggested that both the Corporate Services division and/or Management within GCIS, had a special interest in this study or enough time to complete the questionnaire. However, from a research point of view these results suggested a relationship between the Corporate Services division and internal communication within GCIS which could be explored further at another level. The same principle applies to the Management within GCIS and internal communication; namely that a relationship may exist which requires further investigation.

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7.3.2 Results of questionnaire data – Section B

The aim of the questions in Section B of the questionnaire of this study is firstly to determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the production function of internal communication, consisting of 18 variables.

In addition, the questions in Section B is to determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the socialization function of internal communication and this measures the second construct of this study which is the socialization function. It consists of 18 variables. Thirdly Section B of this questionnaire consists of questions to determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication, made up of 8 variables.

As reflected in Chapter 6 the researcher used the literature on this topic to decide on the constructs and the items to measure these constructs. Through the literature review three constructs, namely production, innovation and socialization functions were identified. Subsequently research questions based on the literature review and the objectives of the study were formulated. The measuring instrument was developed from the items obtained through a literature review.

Section B: variables; V6 – V15 and V22 – V32

These variables measure the first construct of this study, namely the production function of internal communication. Through these variables the researcher wanted to determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the production function of internal communication. As indicated earlier the researcher decided to use the graphs to present the result of this study. Therefore the figure below (i.e. Figure 7.4: Production function) illustrates the results of the production function of internal communication within GCIS.

Figure 7.4 illustrates that 5% of the management stratum disagrees that the production function of internal communication within GCIS is the flow of information which is directed toward the achievement of the GCIS's output or production and direct coordinates, and in fact, regulates the activities of the employees within the organization in such a way as to bring about the desired end results.

Figure 7.4: Production function
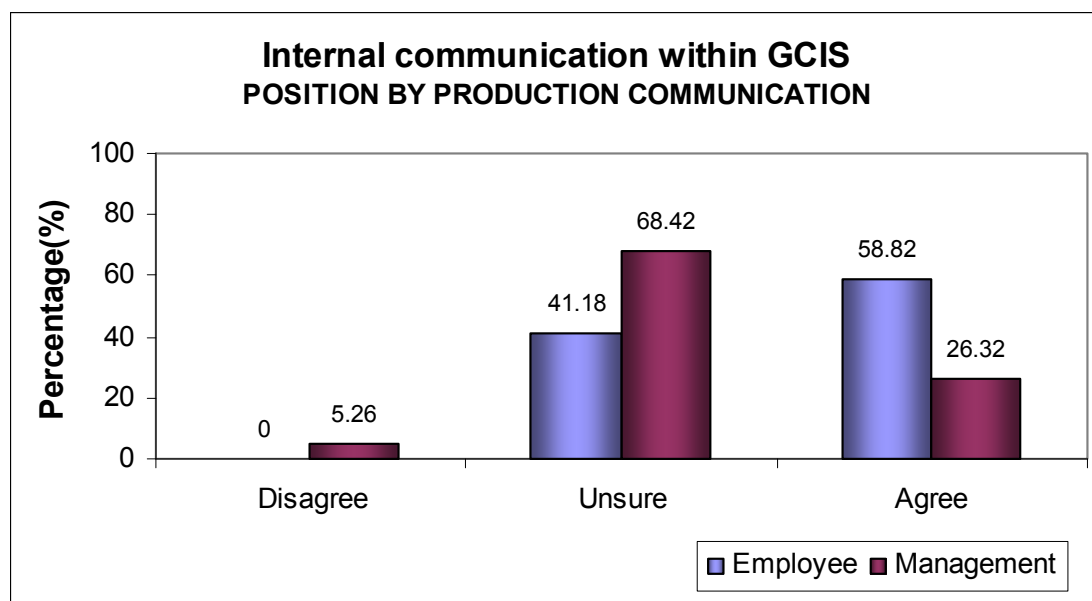
Furthermore Figure 7.4 illustrates that 41% of the employees and 68% of the management strata are not sure about the production function of internal communication within the GCIS.

Figure 7.4 also illustrates that 59% of the employees strata agrees that the production function of internal communication within GCIS is the flow of information which is directed toward the achievement of the GCIS's output or production and it directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities of the employees within the organization in such a way as to bring about the desired end results.

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From the total percentage of the management stratum 26% also agreed that the production function of internal communication within GCIS is the flow of information which is directed toward the achievement of the GCIS's output or production and directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities of the employees within the organization in such a way as to bring about the desired end results.

Section B: variables; V13 – V21 and V33 – V43

These variables measure the second construct of this study namely, socialization function. Through these variables the researcher wanted to determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the socialization function of internal communication. Figure 7.5 (i.e. Socialisation function of internal communication) illustrates the results of socialization function of internal communication within GCIS.

Figure 7.5: Socialisation Function

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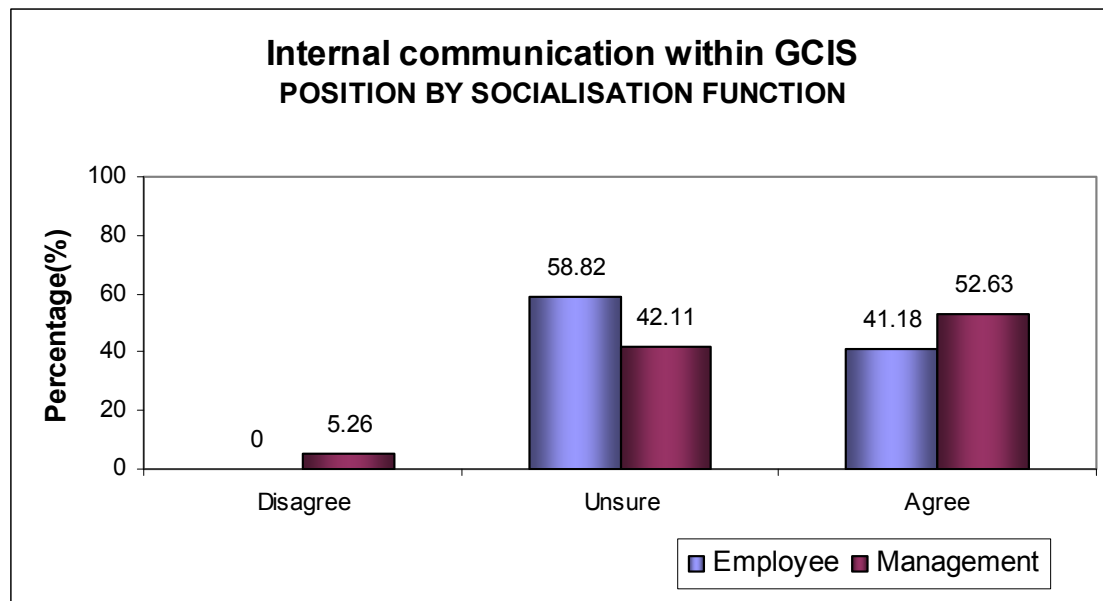
According to Figure 7.5, 5% of the management stratum disagreed that the socialisation function of internal communication within GCIS is the fashion in which an individual is taught what behaviours and perspectives are customary and desirable within the working environment, as well as the ongoing interaction amongst employees of all different organisational levels.

Figure 7.5 reflected that 59% of the employees and 42% of the management strata are not sure of the socialization function of internal communication within GCIS.

It follows from Figure 7.5 that 41% of the employees and 53% of the management strata agree that the socialization function of internal communication within GCIS is the fashion in which an individual is taught what behaviors and perspectives are customary and desirable within the working environment as well as the ongoing interaction amongst employees of all different organizational levels.

Section B: variables; V44 – V51

These variables measure the third construct of this study, namely the innovation function of internal communication. Through these variables the researcher wanted to determine what the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication. Figure 7.6 (i.e. Innovation function of internal communication) illustrates the results the of innovation function of internal communication within GCIS.
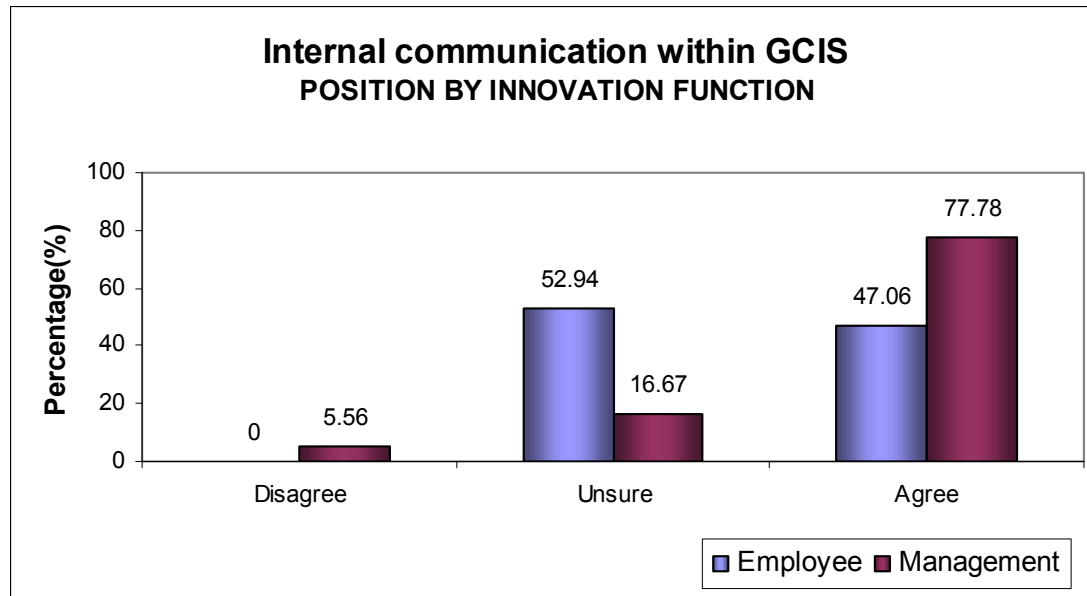
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Figure 7.6: Innovation function

Figure 7.6 indicates that 5% of the management stratum disagree that the innovation function of internal communication within GCIS is the development of new ideas and behaviours for the improvement of the organisation such as exploration, creation, diffusion and exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of the organisational approaches. Figure 7.5 reflects that 53% of the employees and 17% of the management strata are not sure of the innovation function of internal communication within GCIS.

In addition Figure 7.5 indicates that 47% of the employees and 78% of the management agreed that the innovation function of internal communication within GCIS is the development of new ideas and behavioural patterns for the improvement of the organization, involving exploration, creation, diffusion and exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of the organisational approaches.

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Findings of Section B questionnaire data

It follows from Figure 7.4 which represent the results of the production function of internal communication within GCIS, that a high percentage (i.e. 59%) of the employees stratum as opposed to 26% of the management perceive the production function of internal communication within GCIS as the flow of information which is directed toward the achievement of the GCIS's output or production and directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities of the employees within the organization in such a way as to bring about the desired end results.

It is interesting to note the gap between the employees and management strata. However, the researcher is not surprised by this variation between the employees and management in terms of the percentage since the production function of internal communication in general, entails work contents, instructions, process, decision making, control and policy information (Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers, 2003: 158). In most of the cases this is communicated to the employees.

According to Figure 7.5 which represents the result of socialisation function of internal communication within GCIS, 53% of the management and 41% of the employee strata perceive the socialization function of internal communication as the fashion in which an individual is taught what behaviors and perspectives are customary and desirable within the working environment, as well as the ongoing interaction amongst employees of all different organizational levels. As compared to the results of the production function, this marks a slight difference between the management and employees strata.

Figure 7.6 represents the result of the innovation function of internal communication within GCIS. It reflects that a high percentage (i.e. 78%) of the management stratum as compared to 47% of the employees' stratum perceives the innovation function of internal communication within GCIS as the development of new ideas and behaviours for the improvement of the organisation, involving exploration, creation, diffusion and the exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of the organisational approaches.

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This result suggests the relationship between the innovation function of internal communication and the management within GCIS.

7.3.3 Results of questionnaire data – Section C

The results of Section C of the questionnaire data focus primarily on the channels of communication within GCIS. The communication channels are concerned with the patterns of interaction among employees within the organisation; in most cases the communication channels outline the manner in which information flows within the organization. Section C therefore addresses the last three objectives of the study.

Section C: variable; V58 – V61

Through these variables the researcher wants to determine the general understanding of the management and employees about the flow of communication within GCIS.

According to figure 7.7 below 29% of both the management and the employees' strata disagree that vertical downward communication is used to transmit orders from the supervisors to the employees.

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Figure 7.7: Vertical downward communication
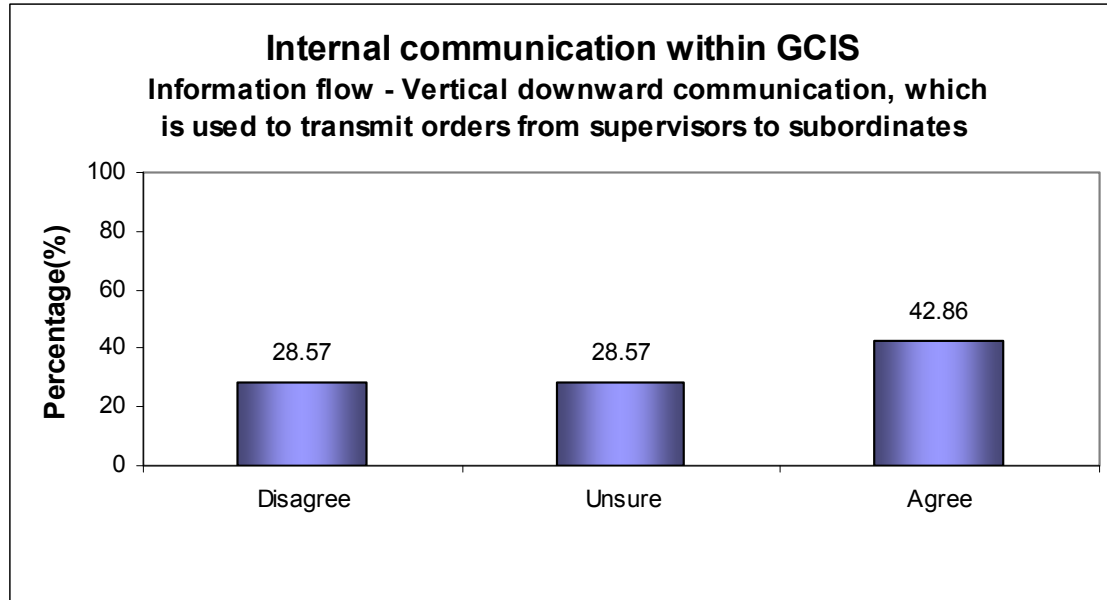
Figure 7.7 illustrates that 29% of both the management and the employees' strata are not sure about the purpose of the vertical downward communication within GCIS.
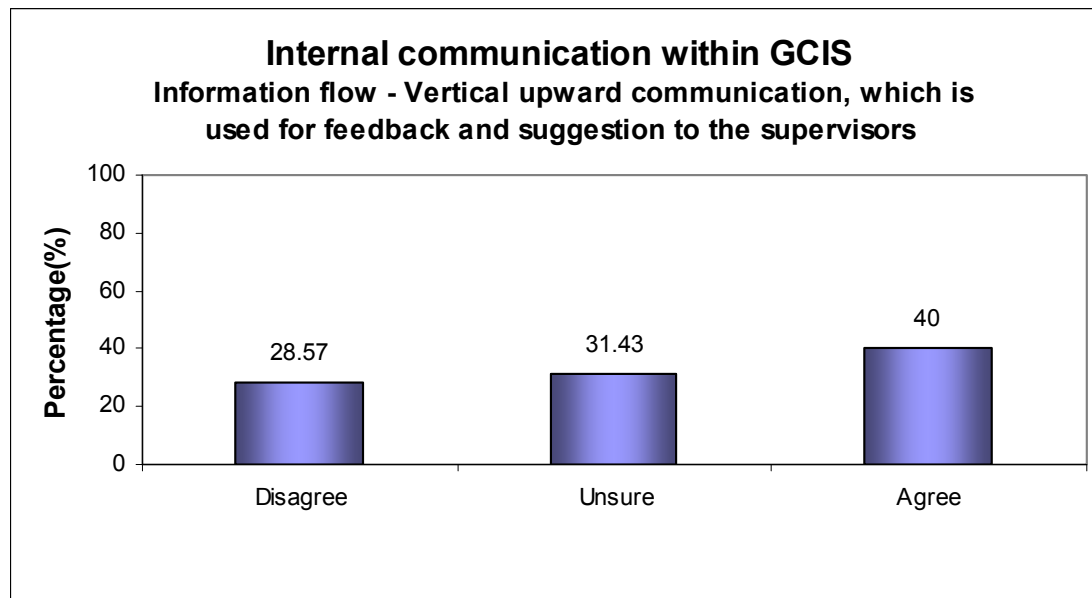
Figure 7.7 also indicates that 43% of both the management and the employees' strata agree that vertical downward communication within GCIS is used to transmit orders from the supervisors to the employees.

Section C: variable; V59

According to figure 7.8 below 29% of both the management and the employees' strata disagree that vertical upward communication is used for feedback and suggestions to the supervisors.

Figure 7.8 below indicates that 31% of both the management and the employees are not sure that vertical upward communication is used for feedback and suggestions to the supervisors.

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Figure 7.8: Vertical upward communication

Figure 7.8 also indicates that 40% of both the management and the employees' strata agree that vertical upward communication within GCIS is used to transmit orders from the supervisors to the employees.

Section C: variable; V60

It follows from figure 7.9 below that 17% of both the management and the employees' strata disagree that horizontal communication is used for exchange of messages and social interaction within GCIS.

Figure 7.9 also reflects that 33% of both the management and employees strata are not sure that horizontal communication is used for the exchange of messages and social interaction within GCIS.

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Figure 6.9: Horizontal communication
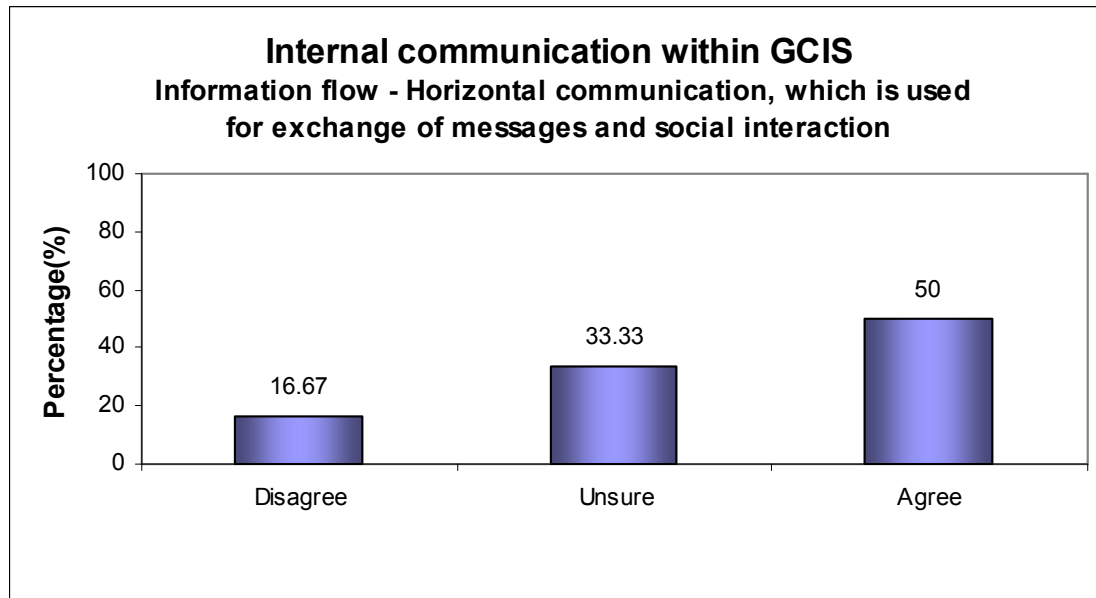
Figure 7.9 further indicates that 50% of both the management and employees agree that horizontal communication is used to exchange messages and social interaction.
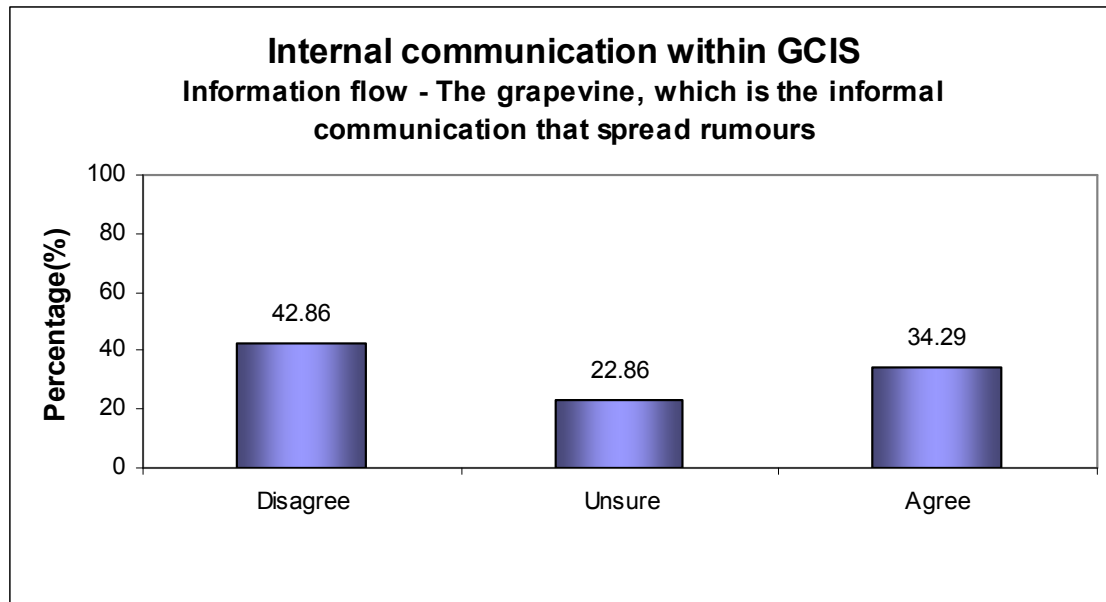
Section C: variable; V61

It follows from figure 7.10 below that 43% of both the management and the employees' strata disagree that grapevine or informal communication is used to spread rumours within GCIS.

Figure 7.10 also reflects that 23% of both the management and the employees' strata are not sure that grapevine or informal communication is used to spread rumours within GCIS.

Furthermore figure 7.10 indicates that 34% of both the management and the employees' strata agree that grapevine or informal communication is used to spread rumours within GCIS.

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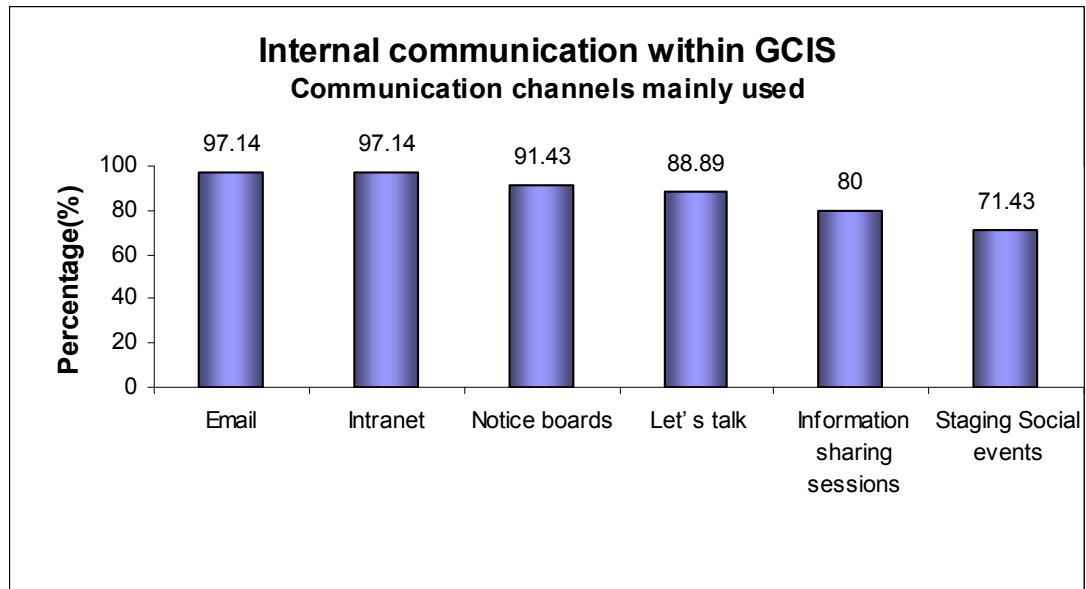**Figure 7.10: The grapevine (informal) communication**

Section C: variable; V62 – V67

Through these variables the researcher aims to determine which communication channels are mainly used within GCIS according to the observation of the management and the employees.

According to figure 7.11 GCIS mainly use three communication channels namely email, intranet and notice boards.

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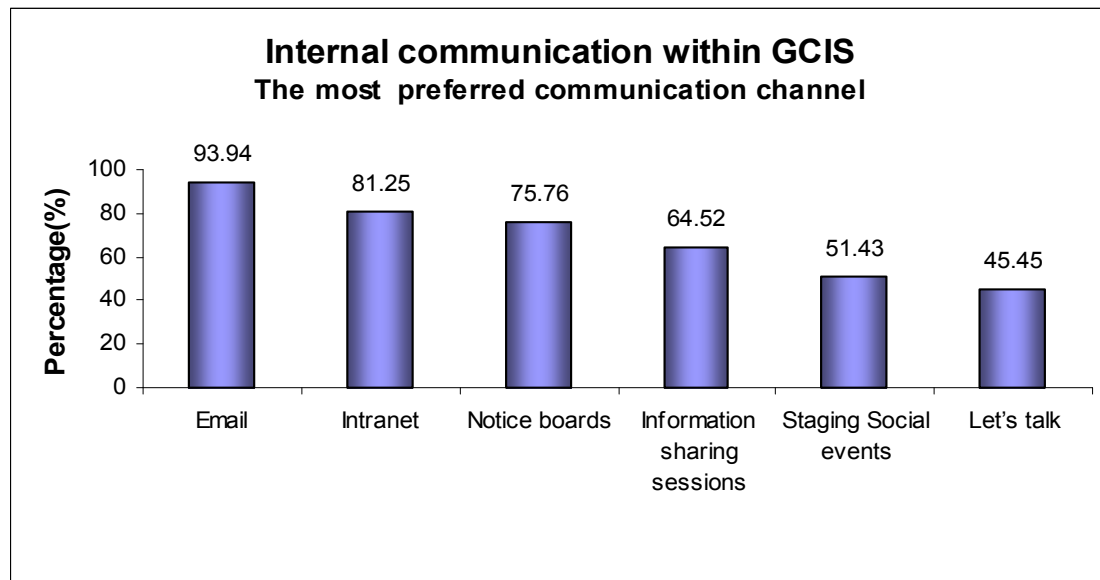**Figure 7.11: Communication Channels**

Section C: variable; V69 – V74

Through these variables the researcher wants to determine what the most preferred communication channels within GCIS are as experienced by the management and employees.

Figure 7.12 reflects that the most preferred communication channels within GCIS include email, intranet and notice boards. The other three which include information sharing sessions, staging social events and 'let's talk' are used within GICS but not preferred.

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Figure 7.12: Preferred Communication Channels

Summary of Section C questionnaire data

The communication channels are the core of any organization's internal communication for it concerns the patterns of interaction among employees within the organization. It further outlines the manner in which information flows within the organization.

Figures 7.7, 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10 respectively illustrates that a lower percentage of the respondents agree that vertical downward communication within GCIS is used to transmit orders from the supervisors to the employees; that grapevine or informal communication is used to spread rumours within GCIS, that vertical upward communication within GCIS is used to transmit orders from the supervisors to the employees and that horizontal communication is used to exchange message and social interaction within GCIS. The result reflects the management and employees' level of understanding about the flow of information within GCIS, which is minimal.

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In general terms, figure 7.11 creates an impression that all the communication channels within GCIS are mainly used, however, the percentage scored per individual communication channel clearly reflects that there are four communication channels within GCIS which are mainly used namely email, intranet, notice boards and 'let's talk'.

Though there are four communication channels that are mainly used within GCIS it does not necessarily mean that they are preferred by the respondents. According to figure 7.12 there are three preferred communication channels including email, intranet and notice board. 'Let's talk,' which is one of the communication channels mainly used by GCIS is one of the least preferred by the respondents.

7.4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The primary purpose of this section is to summary the findings of this study. The summary includes the following findings.

- There is a differing perception between the management and the employees about the functions of internal communication within GCIS.

- Comtask Report (2000:4) indicates that prior to the 2004 election; there was a poor understanding of the role of communication and its function within government. Through the results of this study it has become clear that both the management and the employees of GCIS understand the functions of communication

- According to the findings of this study there is a fragile general understanding of the communication flow within GCIS.

- The findings of this study reveal that out of eight communication channels within GCIS, only four are mainly used.

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- ▪ Furthermore the findings of this study reveal that the management and employees of GCIS do not necessarily prefer the four communication channels that are mainly used within GCIS; instead only three communication channels are preferred which include email, intranet and notice board.

7.5 CONCLUSION

The principal goal of this chapter was to present the results of this study and interpret them with an overall aim of providing an accurate answer to what the management and employees of Government Communication and Information System perceive as the functions of internal communication. Internal communication helps to improve the likelihood of an organisation since it addresses the information and communication needs of its internal clients, the employees. Thus, it is important for organisations to establish a common understanding of what the functions and importance of internal communication are amongst the management and employees.

Internal communication should be viewed as a tool to motivate, persuade, and inform. Organisations should therefore use the socialisation function of internal communication to its advantage to motivate its employees, the production function to persuade its employees to deliver on the mandate of the organization and the innovation function of internal communication to inform and develop creative ways of dealing with day-to-day challenges that confront the organisation. The results of this study present interesting revelations. The overall results of Section B suggest differing perceptions between the management and the employees about the functions of internal communication.

For instance, 59% of the employees' stratum perceives the production function of internal communication as the flow of information which is directed toward the achievement of the GCIS's output or production and it directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities of the employees within the organisation in such a way as to bring about the desired end results and only 26% of the management stratum share the same perception.

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On the same note, 79% of the management stratum perceives the innovation function of internal communication as the development of new ideas and behaviors for the improvement of the organization, such as exploration, creation, diffusion and exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of the organisational approaches and only 47% of the employees' stratum share the same perception. The same applies to the socialisation function of internal communication.

As reflected previously, the communication channels are concerned with the patterns of interaction among employees within the organization and outline the manner in which communication flows within the organization. In addition, the functions of internal communication, communication channels and communication flow are always interrelated and interdependent. For instance, the production function of internal communication is interrelated to the vertical upward and vertical downward communication flow. However the results of this study suggest a fragile general understanding of the communication channels and communication flow within GCIS.

The primary focus of Chapter 8 is to present the conclusions of the study. This Chapter will also presents recommendations for future research and specific recommendations for the attention of GCIS, particularly internal communication directorate.

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Chapter 8

Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter of this study is aimed at presenting the conclusions of the study. In addition the research objectives of this study and the findings are integrated with the literature. This chapter also presents the recommendations which include the general ones, the one for future research and specific ones for GCIS.

As a way of recapping, the researcher decided to present a synopsis of the previous six chapters under this section. In order to make it easier and user friendly for the reader the synopsis of these chapters mainly consists of the key points.

Chapter 1 focused on the orientation and background of this study. In addition the research question that underpins this study was outlined and it is articulated as: "*What do the management and employees of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication*". The background information of the research population for this study is also included in this chapter. Furthermore the general aim and specific research objectives of this study are outlined in this chapter. Lastly the importance of the study, conceptualization of key terms, general description of the research method and design, delimitation of the study and demarcation of chapters are presented in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 presented the theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. The theoretical and conceptual framework include the domains such as Corporate Communication and Human Resources Management, the subfields within domains which include internal communication and organisational development, the theory which is the functionalist perspective and the synthesis of related theories which include systems theory and classical management theory.

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In addition the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study included the major concept of this study namely the functions of internal communication and the constructs of the study such as production, innovation and socialization functions. Chapter 2 also outlined the early approaches to communication.

Chapter 3 focused on the background of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS). Firstly it presented the structure of GCIS which included Corporate services, Policy and research, Government and media liaison, Provincial and local liaison and Communication service agency. In addition the History of GCIS was outlined in this chapter including the vision, mission and the strategic objectives. Since the primary purpose of this study is to explore the internal communication within GCIS much effort were made to discuss internal communication within GCIS.

Chapter 4 focused on the functions of internal communication. Firstly it presented a broader literature review relevant to this study. This was followed by a brief overview of internal communication within the Government Communication and Information System; that is the research population of this study. Chapter 4 also outlined the importance of internal communication in general.

According to the systems theory, instead of studying internal communication in isolation the focus should be on the relationship and interaction involved. Thus the function of internal communication is interrelated and interdependent to other subsystems within the organization. **Chapter 5** therefore focused on other organizational variables that are interrelated to internal communication but potentially affect or impact on it. For the purpose of this study this chapter focused only on three organizational variables that include organizational structure, culture and leadership style.

Chapter 6 focused on the research method for this study. In addition it highlighted the rationale for the quantitative exploratory approach, research design and methods of data collection within this study. Thus it provided a clear plan, structure and strategy followed to obtain answers to the research questions posed in this study.

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Chapter 7 was devoted to the results and interpretations of evidence in relation to the research objectives of this study. The results and findings of this study are presented in this chapter.

Thus **Chapter 8** integrates both the empirical and the literature study and presents a holistic conclusion of this study. In addition it provides recommendations specifically to address the gaps identified through the empirical study to benefit the research population of this study and the recommendations for future research to benefit the potential scholars in this field.

8.2 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Organisations are what they are because of the employees and management that work for it. Thus the essence of the functions of internal communication is to ensure that employees know what they are suppose to be doing, know what is expected of them, know the policy, mission and vision of the organisation and equally so, they should be able to clearly express their expectations and that which they do not appreciate. In addition, the functions of internal communication become instrumental if it creates a conducive working environment based on trust, transparency, honesty, freedom of expression and an ongoing social interaction amongst all the key stakeholders who form the organisation, irrespective of position. Today's competitive business environment demands a great deal of intellectual capacity. Through internal communication, the organisation should have a pool and wealth of information and knowledge to develop new ideas and strategies to survive and innovate.

Above all, it is important for organisations to have a common understanding of what the functions and the importance of internal communication are. This plays a critical role in ensuring that internal communication fulfils its functions which are; to persuade and to lead by means of the production function, to motivate through use of the socialization function and to inform through the innovation function.

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The first major finding of this study, is that there is a disparity amongst the management and employees in terms of percentage regarding functions of internal communication (See figures; 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 respectively). This suggests differing perceptions between the management and the employees about the functions of internal communication within GCIS. From the literature Gower argues that some people view the function of internal communication within a limited scope whereas some generalise its function (Gower, 1999: xviii), which might be the case within GCIS.

The second major finding of this study is the paradigm shift that has taken place within GCIS and the government in general. Comtask Report (2000:4) indicates that prior to the 2004 election; there was a poor understanding of the role of communication and its function within government. Through the results of this study it has become clear that both the management and the employees of GCIS understand the functions of communication. This is proven by their perceptions of the functions of internal communication within GCIS.

The overall results of Section B fully support the literature in Chapter 4. The literature on communication generally acknowledges that the basic function of communication is to affect receiver knowledge or behaviour by informing, directing, regulating, socializing and persuading. Meyers and Myers (in Baker, 2002:10) combined similar functions into a common function on a higher level and provide a particular concise and a clear understanding of the functions of internal communication, which includes production, socialisation and innovation. The first three objectives of this study were to determine what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the production, socialisation and innovation function of internal communication.

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As reflected in Chapter 7 both the management and the employees perceive the production function of internal communication as the flow of information which is directed toward the achievement of the GCIS's output or production and directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities of the employees within the organisation in such

a way as to bring about the desired end results; the socialisation function of internal communication as the fashion in which an individual is taught what behaviors and perspectives are customary and desirable within the working, setting as well as the ongoing interaction amongst employees of all different organisational levels and the innovation function of internal communication within GCIS as the development of new ideas and behaviors for the improvement of the organisation involving exploration, creation, diffusion and exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of the organisational approaches.

The results of this study introduced another dimension about the functions of internal communication within GCIS. They suggest that management is more concerned about the socialisation and innovation functions of internal communication. This could be attributed to Owusu (1999:109)'s thoughts. He maintains that capturing the hearts and minds of the employees is necessary to effectively coordinate organisational goals. In general terms, management are more concerned about the sustainability of the organisations and sustainability depends solely on the intellectual capacity of the organisation. Thus it makes sense that management might be more interested in the innovation function of internal communication.

As reflected previously, the communication channels are concerned with the patterns of interaction among employees within the organisation and outline the manner in which communication flows within the organisation. In addition, the functions of internal communication, communication channels and communication flow, supposedly are always interrelated and interdependent.

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The third major finding of this study is a weak understanding of the communication flow within GCIS. It follows from figures 7.7, 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10 respectively, that a lower percentage of the respondents agree that vertical downward communication within GCIS is used to transmit orders from the supervisors to the employees; that grapevine or informal communication is used to spread rumours within

GCIS, that vertical upward communication within GCIS is used to transmit orders from the supervisors to the employees and that horizontal communication is used to exchange messages and social interaction within GCIS. The result reflects the management and employees' level of understanding about the flow of information within GCIS, which is minimal.

The fourth major finding of this is the fact that out of eight communication channels, only four are mainly used. As previously reflected in Chapter 4, there are eight commonly used communication channels within GCIS, which include email, intranet and notice boards, information sharing sessions, staging social events and 'Let's talk'. According to the results of this study, out of eight communication channels there are only that are mainly used which include email, intranet, notice board and 'Let's talk'.

The last major finding of this study is that the management and employees do not necessarily prefer the four communication channels that are mainly used within GCIS. According to the results of this there are only three preferred communication channels within GCIS which include email, intranet and notice board; 'Let's talk' which is one of the communication channel mainly used by GCIS, is one of the least preferred by the respondents.

Though organisational variables that include organisational structure, culture and leadership were not part of the overall objectives of this study, the literature in chapter 4 reveals that potentially these variables have effects and impact on the functions of internal communication. The systems theory further maintains that, instead of studying internal communication in isolation, the focus should be on the relationship and the interaction involved.

The function of internal communication is interrelated and interdependent on these variables. Therefore, a further research on the interrelations amongst these variables and internal communication within GCIS, might introduce another dimension that will be of benefit.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are geared towards the specific gaps identified through the research findings of this study.

It follows from the literature that internal communication is a fundamental part of managing today's organisations. This is housed within Kitchen and Daly's (2002:49) sentiments that, as an organisation becomes more focused on retaining a happy workforce with changing values, the organization has necessarily had to think more in the present than in the past, about how they should communicate with employees. Thus, for an organisation to attain this, it is important that both the management and the employees have a common understanding of what the functions and importance of internal communication are.

It was previously indicated in the literature that internal communication does not function in isolation. There are other organisational variables that potentially impact on or affect it. Thus, for the functions of internal communication to be effective, it is important to consider these variables and, most importantly to establish a compatible interrelation and interdependence.

Communication channels are critical components of internal communication, since it is concerned with the patterns of interaction among employees within the organisation. In most of the cases the communication channels outline the manner in which information flows within the organisation. Therefore, for internal communication to function effectively, both the employees and management must have a clear understanding of the communication channels and flow within the organisation. In addition the purpose of each communication channel should be clear to everyone in the organisation.

_____

The findings of this study revealed that there are eight communication channels within GCIS and only four are mainly used. It is therefore important to ensure that the employees and management are not overwhelmed by a number of communication channels, which are not necessarily of great benefit to the organisation.

The findings of this study also revealed that the management and employees do not necessarily prefer the four communication channels that are mainly used within GCIS. According to the results of this, there are only three preferred communication channels within GCIS which include email, intranet and notice board. 'Let's talk', which is one of the communication channels mainly used by GCIS is one of the least preferred by the respondents. Thus, it is important to keep a constant check on the communication channels and to review them where necessary; taking into account the fact that the organisation must keep up with changes.

To a certain extent the functions of internal communication depends on communication channels and the communication flow; as such they should always be interrelated and interdependent. For internal communication to function effectively its functions, channels and flow should always be complementary and compatible. It is therefore recommended that everyone within the organisation should be sensitized to realize the value of the functions of internal communication, the relevancy of the communication channels and communication flow and the benefits of internal communication to every individual's working conditions.

8.3.1 Research sub –questions and answers

As reflected in Chapter 1 of this study, six interrelated sub-questions that need to be addressed in the process of determining what management and employees of GCIS perceive as the functions of internal communication were identified. This section presents a detailed feedback under sub – question of this study.

- What do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the production function of internal communication?

_____

According to the findings of the this study, 26% of the management and 59% of the employees perceive the production function of internal communication within GCIS as the flow of information which is directed toward the achievement of the GCIS's output or production and it directs, coordinates, and regulates the activities this links directly to Verwey and Du Plooy Cilliers (2003: 158) prepositions regarding

- What do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the socialisation function of internal communication?

According to the findings of this study 59% of the employees and 42% of the management strata are not sure of the socialization function of internal communication within GCIS. Whatever they perceive as the socialisation function of internal communication does not speak to what is perceived as the function of internal communication by communication scholars such as Baker (2002:10), Hopkins (1995), Splitter and Swindle (2003:70).

- What do management and employees of GCIS perceive as the innovation function of internal communication?

It is interesting to note a huge gap between the perceptions of managements and that of employees regarding the function of internal communication. Small percentage of employees (i.e.47%) and high percentage (i.e.78%) of the management perceive the innovation function of internal communication within GCIS as the development of new ideas and behavioral patterns for the improvement of the organization, involving exploration, creation, diffusion and exchange of new ideas regarding the activities of the organisational approaches. This links directly with the theoretical framework laid by Martin and Terblanche (2003:67); Burnette and Mc Murray (2003:3); Verwey and Du Plooy (2003:159).

- ▪ What is the general understanding of management and employees about the flow and structure of communication within GCIS?

  According to the findings of this study, general understanding of the management and employees about the flow and structure of communication within GCIS is very minimal.

- ▪ Which communication channels are mainly used within GCIS according to the management and employees' experience?

  According to the findings of this study, GCIS mainly use three communication channels namely email, intranet and notice boards.

- ▪ What are the most preferred communication channels within GCIS according to management and employee's experience?

  Though there are four communication channels that are mainly used within GCIS it does not necessarily mean that they are preferred by the respondents. According to figure 7.12 there are three preferred communication channels including email, intranet and notice board. 'Let's talk,' which is one of the communication channels mainly used by GCIS is one of the least preferred by the respondents.

8.3.2 Areas for future research

It is critical to establish how the organisational structure, culture and leadership style impart or affect the functions of internal communication; and how to maintain compatibility between these variables.

As reflected previously, communication channels and communication flow are key components of internal communication and its function. Thus it is critical to establish factors that influence the choice of those particular communication channels, the criteria employed to make such decisions and the process followed.

_____

Communication Scholars like Kitchen and Daly (2002: 46) contend that as an organisation becomes more focused on retaining a happy workforce with changing values, the organisation would have necessarily had to think more in the present than in the past about how they communicate with employees through what is also often called internal communication. Thus it is critical to establish the impact of the functions of internal communication on the employees' communication satisfaction; organisation climate and job satisfaction.

The results of this study indicated that there is a fragile understanding of the communication channels and communication flow. Future research could explore the contributing factors for the fragile understanding of the communication channels and the communication flow and the implication thereof on the functions of internal communication.

The results of this study presented interesting revelations. The overall results of Section B suggest differing perceptions between the management and the employees about the functions of internal communication. Future research could be harnessed to explore why the employees and management within the same organisation at times have different views about the functions of internal communication and the implications thereof.

Finally, future research could explore ways to ensure that both the employees and the management prefer the communication channels mainly used within the organisation.

8.3.3 Specific recommendations for GCIS

The following recommendations are presented specifically to assist GCIS to review and improve its internal communication if necessary.

- It is highly recommended that GCIS have quarterly internal communication seminar as a way of bridging differing perception between the management and the employees about the functions of internal communication within GCIS.

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- The seminar could focus on the functions and value of internal communication within GCIS; that is the value - add of internal communication within GCIS.

- Internal Communication Department should take a lead in educating management and employees of GCIS about communication flow within the organisation. The assumption is this will overcome the fragile general understanding of communication flow within GCIS.

- It does not make any economic sense to have eight communication channels yet only four are mainly used. It is therefore recommended that GCIS review its communication channels and focus only on those that are mainly used by management and employees.

- It is also recommended that GCIS have an annual review of its communication channels with a primary aim of identifying preferred communication channels. The assumption is this will address the situation of having communication channels that are mainly used by employees and management but not necessarily preferred.

8.4 CONCLUSION

Internal communication is concerned with the exchange of information (i.e. up, down and across the organisation) to create understanding, meaning, and to promote positive attitudes and behaviours to help organisations achieve organisational success. As reflected by the literature and the findings of this study for the internal communication to be effective, the organisation should have a common understanding of the importance of internal communication and its functions. Both the management and employees should share this common understanding.

_____

The literature and the findings of this study previously reflected that internal communication does not function in isolation. Thus it is important to integrate the functions of internal communication into other subsystems within the organization. Also to ensure the optimal functioning of internal communication, the organization should ensure compatibility with other key organizational variables such as structure, culture and leadership.

The selection and the understanding of communication channels within the organization is one critical element of internal communication. Therefore, the communication department should ensure broader consultation with other key stakeholders within the organization. It is sad to have a number of communication channels within the organization that are not understood by the majority of employees and to discover that out of the twenty that are implemented, only five are mainly used and two preferred by most of the management and the employees.

Fundamentally, the functions of internal communication within the organization should be known by everyone in the organization; starting from the cleaner to the chief executive officer. Internal communication is the key to forging strong emotional contracts between individuals and the organizations but if the communication practitioners are the only people who understand it, it does not serve any purpose.

Furthermore, the flow of communication within the organization should not be a mere organization requirement but should be focused on the organizational needs. According to the production function of internal communication within the organization, vertical upward communication flow is used to provide feedback to the immediate supervisors that should be implemented and sustained, because it cost the organization money to develop and to implement the internal communication strategy.

_____

The ever-changing competitive business environment compels GCIS to view communication as its strategic element of service delivery. Therefore it is important that those responsible for internal communication within GCIS ensure that all the employees within GCIS understand the three core functions of internal communication which include production, socialization and innovation functions and how they relate to other subsystems within the organization. In addition, the challenge is to ensure that all the employees within GCIS have a strong understanding of the communication channels and communication flow since this has a major bearing on how they communicate. Without an in-depth understanding of communication channels and the flow thereof, it is unlikely that internal communication will fulfill its core functions.

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APPENDIX TWO: QUESTIONNAIRE

Internal Communication Survey

Thank you for being willing to complete this Internal Communication Survey. The survey aims to determine what the management and employees perceive as the function of internal communication within GCIS. It will take approximately **45 minutes** to complete.

For quality assurance, your individual response will be highly appreciated!
(Please do not discuss your views with your colleagues)

Anonymous survey

1. Please note this is an anonymous survey.
2. Demographic details are asked, but this survey CANNOT be traced back to the respondent, so your identity is anonymous.

Scale of Survey

Please answer this survey, using 3 – point scale, unless otherwise specified.

1 = Disagree (with the statement)

2 = Unsure (about the statement)

3 = Agree (with the statement)

Completion of survey

1. Kindly complete this survey and return it to the internal communication Manager of GCIS – Mr. Phillimon Kgomo.
2. This survey is part of Mr Richard Montsho's Master degree in Communication Management offered by the University of Pretoria (Marketing and Communication Department)
3. Kindly note that the due date for the completion of this survey is Friday, October 28, 2005.

Section A: Demographic Information	For office use
1. Respondent number	V1 ☐☐☐ 1- 3

2. Please indicate the **directorate** you work in at GCIS

Corporate Services	1
Policy and Research	2
Provincial and local liaison	3
Communication Services	4
Agency and Media liaison	5
Other specify:	6

V2 ☐ 4

3. Please indicate **department** you work in at GCIS

Human resource and development	1
Internal communication	2
Information centre	3
International and media liaison	4
News Services	5
National liaison	6
Institutional development	7
Local liaison	8
Information management	9
Development	10
Content development and marketing	11
Advertising and distribution	12
Other specify:	13

V3 ☐☐ 5 - 6

4. Please indicate your **position** at GCIS

Senior management	1
Middle management	2
Supervisor	3
Administrator	4
Clerk	5
Messenger	6
Cleaner	7
Security guard	8
Secretary	9
Other specify:	10

V4 ☐☐ 7 - 8

Section B: Functions of Internal Communication

1. The functions of internal communication within
   GCIS mainly help to_____

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Educate employees about the GCIS's policy	3	2	1
Monitor progress within different departments	3	2	1
Control the activities within GCIS	3	2	1
Inform employees about the strategic objectives of GCIS	3	2	1
Give the employees feedback regarding their performance	3	2	1
Coordinate the activities within GCIS	3	2	1
Maintain socialisation amongst the employees	3	2	1
Encourage openness between employees and management	3	2	1
Encourage free flow of two – way communication	3	2	1
Promote fairness within GCIS	3	2	1
Promote transparency within GCIS	3	2	1
Improve communication satisfaction	3	2	1
Encourage interaction amongst employees	3	2	1
Encourage employees to attend information sharing sessions	3	2	1
Encourage employees to attend communication forums	3	2	1
Inform employees about the work contents (What needs to be done)	3	2	1
Inform employees about work – related procedures (How things are done)	3	2	1
Encourage dialogue between management and employees	3	2	1
Provide employees with feedback regarding the performance of GCIS	3	2	1
Issue work - related instructions	3	2	1
Define the job descriptions of individual employees	3	2	1
Create a clear sense of the purpose of GCIS amongst employees	3	2	1
Create a clear sense of the missions of GCIS amongst employees	3	2	1
Coordinate the flow of information between management and employees	3	2	1

V6		12
V7		13
V8		14
V9		15
V10		16
V11		17
V12		18
V13		19
V14		20
V15		21
V16		22
V17		23
V18		24
V19		25
V20		26
V21		27
V22		28
V23		29
V24		30
V25		31
V26		32
V27		33
V28		34
V29		35

Question 1 continues . . .

The functions of internal communication within GCIS mainly help to_____

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Regulate the flow of information between management and employees	3	2	1
Make information readily available	3	2	
Make employees feel part of the GCIS	3	2	1
Allow social interaction between employees and management	3	2	1
Create a user friendly working environment for the employees	3	2	1
Acknowledge and recognise employees' efforts	3	2	1
Provide socio – emotional support to employees through communication	3	2	1
Strengthen GCIS's values	3	2	1
Strengthen individual values			
Establish organisational climate through communication	3	2	1
Influence employees' morale	3	2	1
Enhance individual employees self - concept	3	2	1
Maintain interpersonal relationships	3	2	1
Enhance individual's sense of worth	3	2	1
Encourage creativity within the organisation by informing employees	3	2	1
Motivate employees to take initiatives	3	2	1
Organise information sharing sessions for the employees	3	2	1
Encourage employees to develop new ideas	3	2	1
Influence the innovative views within GCIS	3	2	1
Encourage employees to make suggestions	3	2	1
Promote open communicative management style	3	2	1
Encourage employees to explore innovative problem solving techniques	3	2	1

V30		36
V31		37
V32		38
V33		39
V34		40
V35		41
V36		42
V37		43
V38		44
V39		45
V40		46
V41		47
V42		48
V43		49
V44		50
V45		51
V46		52
V47		53
V48		54
V49		55
V50		56
V51		57

2. In general the information from GCIS's internal
   Communication is _____

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Accurate	3	2	1
Relevant	3	2	1
Of quality	3	2	1
Useful	3	2	1
Timely	3	2	1
Credible	3	2	1

V52 [ ] 58
V53 [ ] 59
V54 [ ] 60
V55 [ ] 61
V56 [ ] 62
V57 [ ] 63

Section C: Internal communication flow and channels used

3. Information flow within GCIS include _____

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Vertical downward communication, which is used to transmit orders from supervisors to subordinates	3	2	1
Vertical upward communication, which is used for feedback and suggestion to the supervisors	3	2	1
Horizontal communication, which is used for exchange of messages and social interaction	3	2	1
The grapevine, which is the informal communication that spread rumours	3	2	1

V58 [ ] 64
V59 [ ] 65
V60 [ ] 66
V61 [ ] 67

4. Internal communication within GCIS mainly use the
   following communication channels_____

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Let' s talk	3	2	1
Email	3	2	1
Information sharing sessions	3	2	1
Staging Social events	3	2	1
Intranet	3	2	1
Notice boards	3	2	1
Other specify:	3	2	1

V62 [ ] 68
V63 [ ] 69
V64 [ ] 70
V65 [ ] 71
V66 [ ] 72
V67 [ ] 73
V68 [ ] 74

5. The most preferred communication channel within GCIS is_____

	Most preferred	Least preferred	Not preferred
Let's talk	3	2	1
Email	3	2	1
Information sharing sessions	3	2	1
Staging Social events	3	2	1
Intranet	3	2	1
Notice boards	3	2	1

V69   75
V70   76
V71   77
V72   78
V73   79
V74   80

6. In general terms I am _____

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Satisfied with the flow of information from the top and senior management	3	2	1
Satisfied about the communication from my immediate supervisor	3	2	1
Satisfied with the flow of information from employees to the top and senior management	3	2	1
Satisfied with the functioning of internal communication within GCIS	3	2	1

V75   81
V76   82
V77   83
V78   84

Thank you very much for completing the survey!

APPENDIX THREE: LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDIX FOUR: LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Link between objectives and questions

Table 1.2: Structure of the Study

Table 5.1: Summary of approaches to organisational structure

Table 6.1: Conceptual framework

Table 6.2: Multiple choice questions

Table 6.3: Ordinal questions