

Effective Communication and Employee Engagement in Higher Education: Evidence from University Administrators

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of effective communication on employee engagement among university administrators in higher education. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 150 administrative staff of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, selected through stratified random sampling. Structured questionnaires measured communication effectiveness and engagement dimensions, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression techniques. The results revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$) between effective communication and employee engagement, indicating that open, transparent, and participatory communication significantly enhances motivation and commitment. Regression analysis further showed that communication clarity ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.01$), feedback mechanisms ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$), and management openness ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$) jointly explained 68% of the variance in engagement levels ($R^2 = 0.68$). However, challenges such as limited interaction between top management and lower-level staff and unequal information dissemination persisted. The study concludes that effective communication is a strategic tool for promoting employee engagement and recommends that university management strengthen feedback systems, ensure inclusivity in communication, and build leadership communication competence to enhance institutional performance.

Keywords: Effective communication, Employee engagement, Higher education, University Administrators, Organizational performance.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to communicate effectively is increasingly crucial to the success of institutions and the dedication of their staff in today's knowledge-driven academic world. The way leaders interact with their subordinates, the flow of information, and the feeling of belonging that workers have inside the organisation are all influenced by communication. Collaboration, information exchange, and administrative efficiency are the three pillars upon which universities and other higher education institutions rest their communication infrastructure. There is more buy-in, enthusiasm, and clarity of purpose when information is delivered in a timely, open, and transparent manner. In contrast, disengagement, low morale, and inefficient organisational processes all stem from a lack of good communication, which in turn reduces productivity. An important factor in an organization's performance is the level of employee engagement, which can be defined as the degree to which workers care about and invest in their job and the company as a whole. Employees who are actively involved in their work are more likely to be motivated, creative, and eager to help achieve company goals. How well university administrators are able to communicate both internally and with upper management has a significant impact on their engagement levels, since they are the ones responsible for bridging the gap between policy and execution. Administrators are more likely to feel appreciated, empowered, and in sync with the institution's mission when there is two-way, supportive, and inclusive communication.

The role of communication is shifting from that of a mundane administrative task to that of a strategic management tool, according to recent research in organisational behaviour. Raza et al. (2023) found that open

and honest communication increases trust and engagement among employees. Employees' feeling of purpose and affiliation with organisational ideals are enhanced by good internal communication, according to Okunade (2025). But hierarchical, fragmented, and excessively formal communication structures are common in higher education settings, particularly in poor nations. This leads to a lack of communication, which in turn hinders teamwork and makes workers feel like they are not making a difference. Universities in Ghana are going through a period of tremendous change, with digitalisation, more accountability, and rising stakeholder expectations all calling for more robust approaches to communication and engagement. Despite their critical role in policy implementation and institutional governance, few empirical research have investigated the impact of communication techniques on employee engagement among university administrators. The majority of previous research has focused on students or teaching staff, which has prevented us from fully comprehending the communication dynamics that impact administrative personnel.

This study enhances existing studies by concentrating explicitly on university administrators, a group that has been inadequately examined in higher education research in Ghana and across Sub-Saharan Africa. Although most previous research focus on teacher or student communication experiences, the administrative workforce is crucial in policy implementation, institutional governance, and internal coordination. By anchoring the analysis in Kahn's Personal Engagement Theory and Social Exchange Theory, the study offers twin theoretical frameworks that elucidate the psychological and relational processes by which communication affects engagement. This emphasis provides new empirical data from the Global South, where communication cultures are often hierarchical and inadequately theorised in engagement research. The research addresses a contextual and theoretical void by offering data-driven insights into internal communication patterns in African higher education institutions.

This study, therefore, investigates the relationship between effective communication and employee engagement among university administrators in higher education. Specifically, it seeks to:

- Assess the level of communication effectiveness among university administrators.
- Examine the dimensions of employee engagement among university administrators.
- Determine the relationship between effective communication and employee engagement.
- Identify communication challenges that affect employee engagement in the university.

The study's findings are expected to contribute to both theoretical and practical understanding of employee engagement in higher education, offering insights for management to design more participatory communication strategies that foster collaboration, motivation, and institutional performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Effective Communication

Organisational communication is defined as "the art and science of getting people to understand one another, share ideas, and convey information in a structured and organised way" (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Clear, accurate, and properly actioned upon communications constitute effective communication. The process encompasses not only the dissemination of data but also the development of common understandings that pave the way for teamwork and participation. Communication is key at higher education institutions for a number of reasons, including the coordination of administrative tasks, the development of relationships between leadership and staff, and the successful understanding and implementation of institutional goals. Clarity, consistency, trustworthiness, and empathy are the hallmarks of good communication, say Hammond (2024). There has to be room for both peer and upward communication as well as possibilities for management to communicate from the top down. Administrative communication at universities often involves a variety of mediums, such as face-to-face meetings, emails, memoranda, and memos. When these channels are available and open, they promote honesty and openness among employees. People get frustrated, misinformed, and disengaged when communication is not explicit or two-way (Men & Bowen, 2017).

Concept of Employee Engagement

According to Kahn (1990), an employee's level of involvement with their organisation affects their motivation, dedication, and performance. Employees who are engaged in their work show passion for what they do, strive towards organisational objectives, and go above and beyond to get the job done (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Administrators' active participation is crucial in higher education institutions because they maintain institutional efficiency via coordinating academic and administrative procedures. According to Nguyen and Ha (2023), there are three main aspects of engagement: vigour, which refers to mental resilience and energy on the job, devotion, which refers to a feeling of importance and excitement, and absorption, which refers to a profound participation in the activities at hand. All three dimensions are directly affected by communication. Employees' zeal and commitment are boosted when there is open and inclusive communication about their work and the reasoning behind organisational actions. In contrast, a lack of clarity in expression leads to a sense of disconnection and doubt.

Relationship between Communication and Engagement

Effective communication is one of the strongest predictors of employee engagement. Shirina, et al., (2022) argue that organizations with strong communication cultures experience higher employee commitment and lower turnover. Communication builds engagement by fostering trust, enabling participation, and clarifying expectations. According to Mbhele and De Beer (2021), employee engagement is sustained when communication allows for two-way feedback, reinforces shared values, and recognizes employee contributions. In higher education, administrators often face communication barriers resulting from bureaucratic hierarchies. When communication becomes overly top-down, employees may feel alienated from decision-making. On the other hand, participatory communication encourages openness, teamwork, and shared responsibility (Henley, 2021). Therefore, communication is not only a managerial function but also a psychological mechanism that strengthens employees' sense of belonging and purpose.

While several studies acknowledge communication as a factor influencing employee engagement, many of these works see communication only as an administrative function instead of a purposeful relationship activity. Men and Bowen (2017) underscore the importance of management communication excellence while neglecting the cultural or institutional communication limitations prevalent in African colleges. Similarly, Raza et al. (2023) indicate that openness builds trust, although their business context varies dramatically from public institutions where bureaucratic processes restrict information flow. Conversely, Mbhele and De Beer (2021) contend that participation in resource-limited settings is significantly shaped by bidirectional communication frameworks, emphasising contextual variances often neglected by several worldwide research. This contradiction in the research reveals a deficiency in comprehending the functioning of communication practices inside hierarchical higher education institutions, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, while current research recognises the correlation between communication and engagement, few studies explicitly contrast the varying impacts of certain communication components such as clarity, feedback mechanisms, digital instruments, or leadership transparency on engagement results. Research by Henley (2021) and Lovell et al. (2022) indicates that digital and crisis-related communication influence engagement; nevertheless, they fail to examine how communication practices affect psychological states like meaningfulness or safety, as highlighted by Kahn (1990). This underscores a significant conceptual constraint in contemporary research, whereby engagement mechanisms are seldom associated with particular communication behaviours. Consequently, a comprehensive examination is required to elucidate how communication affects engagement via psychological, social, and environmental routes.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study draws on two major theories that explain the link between communication and engagement Kahn's (1990) Personal Engagement Theory and the Social Exchange Theory (SET). Kahn's Theory of Personal Engagement postulates that employees engage physically, cognitively, and emotionally when they experience

meaningfulness, psychological safety, and availability in their work environment. Communication plays a critical role in ensuring these conditions. Transparent and empathetic communication fosters psychological safety, allowing employees to express opinions without fear of negative consequences. When administrators feel heard and valued, they invest more of themselves in their roles.

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) explains that relationships in organizations are based on reciprocal exchanges of trust and support. When management communicates openly, provides timely feedback, and listens to employees, a sense of obligation and loyalty develops. Employees reciprocate through greater engagement, commitment, and productivity. Therefore, communication can be seen as a form of social currency that strengthens the relational contract between leaders and employees. Together, these theories suggest that communication influences engagement through both psychological and relational mechanisms fostering trust, inclusion, and shared purpose.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the relationship between effective communication and employee engagement among university administrators. A cross-sectional survey approach was employed, where data were collected at a single point in time to explore the correlation between communication practices and engagement levels. The study aimed to gather objective, numerical data to establish patterns and relationships that can inform both theory and practice in higher education administration.

Population and Sample

The target population for this study consisted of administrative staff at the University of Cape Coast, a public university in Ghana. The university employs a diverse group of administrators responsible for both academic and non-academic operations. Given the size of the university's administrative workforce, a stratified random sampling technique was used to select 169 respondents. Stratification was based on the various administrative departments to ensure that all segments of the workforce were adequately represented. The sample size of 169 was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, which provides a statistically valid representation for a population of approximately 300 administrative staff. This sample size was considered sufficient for generalizing the findings and is consistent with similar studies in higher education (Men & Bowen, 2017).

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, adapted from established scales on organizational communication and employee engagement. The questionnaire contained three sections:

- **Demographic Information** (e.g., age, gender, educational background, years of experience, department).
- **Communication Practices** (measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), adapted from Clampitt's (2016) communication satisfaction scale. Key items included statements such as "Communication in my department is open and transparent" and "I feel well-informed about university decisions that affect my role."
- **Employee Engagement** (also measured on a 5-point Likert scale), using Schaufeli and Bakker's (2004) Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), which measures vigor, dedication, and absorption. Statements included "I feel enthusiastic about my work" and "I feel proud to be a part of this university."

The instrument underwent content validity checks by two experts in organizational communication and higher education administration, ensuring that it accurately reflected the constructs being studied. A pilot study involving 10 participants from a similar university setting was conducted to test reliability, yielding Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.85 for the communication scale and 0.87 for the engagement scale, both indicating high internal consistency.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection took place over a period of four weeks, during which the questionnaires were distributed to the selected administrative staff via email and in-person handouts. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The survey was administered in English, the official language of instruction at the university.

A total of 150 questionnaires were completed and returned out of 169, yielding a response rate of 88.8%. This high response rate was due to the support of university administration in encouraging participation and the perceived importance of the study among staff.

Although the research yields significant insights, the study's design has certain constraints. The reliance on a single university limits the generalisability of the results, since communication cultures and administrative frameworks may vary across universities. The cross-sectional methodology collects impressions at a single moment, thereby failing to show causation between communication strategies and employee engagement. A longitudinal approach would enable the investigation of how changes in communication systems affect engagement over time. Future research might further use qualitative interviews to investigate communication subtleties that formal surveys may inadequately address.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS Statistics 25. The following statistical methods were used to analyze the data:

- **Descriptive statistics** (mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions) were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics, communication practices, and engagement levels.
- **Pearson's correlation coefficient** was calculated to examine the strength and direction of the relationships between communication and employee engagement.
- **Multiple regression analysis** was performed to assess the extent to which communication practices predict employee engagement. The regression model included communication clarity, feedback mechanisms, and leadership communication as independent variables, with employee engagement as the dependent variable. The regression model was checked for multicollinearity and homoscedasticity to ensure the validity of the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Respondents' Characteristics

Participating university administrators' demographic information is included in Table 1 of the Effective Communication and Employee Engagement in Higher Education research. The breakdown of respondents by gender reveals that female made up 56% and male 44%. What this indicates is that there was a healthy balance of men and women on the administrative team. Having an equal number of male and female administrators demonstrates that the communication and engagement mechanisms within the administrative structure of the institution are well-rounded. Based on the age distribution, 42% of respondents were in the 31–40 age bracket, 30% were in the 41–50 age bracket, and 18% were in the 21–30 age bracket. The majority of administrators are in the age bracket of productive and experienced workers, which bodes well for the workforce's ability to comprehend and interact with institutional engagement and communication programs. The presence of senior administrators who can assist and maintain administrative procedures is shown by the fact that only 10% of the population is 51 years of age or older.

Among those who participated in the survey, 48% had Master's degrees, while 34% held Bachelor's degrees.

While 12% had HNDs or Diplomas, just 6% held PhDs. This breakdown demonstrates that the administrative team has a high level of education, which is critical for effective dialogue, familiarity with institutional regulations, and active engagement in decision-making. A higher level of education is associated with

improved analytical and interpersonal communication abilities, which in turn lead to greater engagement and productivity in the workplace. When asked about their positions within the company, 64% of respondents were junior employees and 36% were senior employees. The majority of the university's administrative structure consists of junior administrators, making them crucial for everyday involvement and communication. Although there are fewer senior staff members overall, those who do hold or manage departments have a voice in the departments' communication strategies and methods of engaging people.

Finally, looking at the statistics on years of experience, we see that 58% of the respondents had worked for 6 to 10 years, 32% for 1 to 5 years, 8% for less than a year, and 2% for more than 11 years. The majority of the administrators have been with the organisation for six to ten years, so they are well-versed in its inner workings and the best ways for employees to connect with one another. This allows them to provide well-informed feedback on the impact of communication techniques on their engagement levels.

Table 1: Respondent Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	66	44.0
	Female	84	56.0
Age	21–30 years	27	18.0
	31–40 years	63	42.0
	41–50 years	45	30.0
	51 years and above	15	10.0
Level of Education	HND/Diploma	18	12.0
	Bachelor's Degree	51	34.0
	Master's Degree	72	48.0
	PhD Degree	9	6.0
Position	Junior Staff	96	64.0
	Senior Staff	54	36.0
Years of Experience	Less than 1 year	12	8.0
	1–5 years	48	32.0
	6–10 years	87	58.0
	11 years and above	3	2.0

Source: Field

Objective 1: To Assess the Level of Communication Effectiveness among University Administrators

Table 1: Perception of Communication Effectiveness

Statement	Mean	SD	% Agree
Communication in my department is open and transparent.	4.28	0.66	88
Supervisors provide timely and clear feedback on work performance.	4.10	0.74	84
I receive adequate information about university policies and decisions.	4.02	0.77	82
Communication channels in my department are reliable and accessible.	3.94	0.81	78
I feel comfortable sharing my ideas and opinions with my supervisor.	4.18	0.72	86
Communication from management is consistent and accurate.	3.88	0.79	76

I am satisfied with the flow of information across units in the university.	3.74	0.84	72
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The findings indicate that 81% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that communication within the university is effective. The highest agreement (88%) was recorded for the statement “Communication in my department is open and transparent,” suggesting that most administrators perceive a culture of openness in information sharing. However, the relatively lower agreement (72%) regarding the flow of information across units suggests that horizontal communication between departments remains a challenge.

These findings align with Raza et al. (2023), who noted that transparency and openness are the cornerstones of organizational communication. They also support Men and Bowen (2017), who found that frequent and two-way communication enhances trust and engagement. Therefore, while communication within departments appears strong, cross-departmental communication could be improved to enhance overall institutional cohesion.

Objective 2: To Examine the Dimensions of Employee Engagement among University Administrators

Table 2: Employee Engagement among University Administrators

Statement	Mean	SD	% Agree
I feel enthusiastic about my work.	4.36	0.59	90
I am proud to be part of this university.	4.24	0.64	88
I am willing to put in extra effort to help the university succeed.	4.18	0.70	86
I find my work meaningful and fulfilling.	4.08	0.73	82
I feel motivated to perform at my best every day.	3.96	0.78	78
My ideas and contributions are valued by management.	3.88	0.81	76
I am emotionally connected to my job.	4.12	0.68	84

The results show that 83% of administrators are generally engaged in their work, indicating high levels of enthusiasm and pride in their roles. The highest agreement (90%) was for “I feel enthusiastic about my work,” confirming that most respondents find their roles intrinsically motivating. However, the lower agreement (76%) for “My ideas and contributions are valued by management” suggests that administrators desire greater recognition and inclusion in decision-making.

These findings align with Kahn’s (1990) theory that meaningfulness and psychological safety are essential for engagement. Similarly, Ariyanto, Wijaya and Sari (2025) emphasized that engagement is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption all of which appear present among UCC administrators. Nonetheless, engagement could be further enhanced through improved recognition and feedback mechanisms.

Objective 3: To Determine the Relationship between Effective Communication and Employee Engagement

A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to determine the strength of the relationship between effective communication and employee engagement. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between Communication and Employee Engagement

Variables	Communication Effectiveness	Employee Engagement
Communication Effectiveness	1.00	—
Employee Engagement	0.71**	1.00

Note: $p < 0.01$

The results show a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$) between effective communication and employee engagement. This indicates that as communication becomes clearer, more open, and participatory, employees' engagement levels increase. The result supports Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that when employees perceive fair and supportive communication, they reciprocate with loyalty and higher performance.

These findings also reinforce Zainab, Akbar, and Siddiqui (2022), who observed that transparent communication enhances employees' identification with organizational goals. In the university context, when administrators are kept informed and have channels for feedback, they become more motivated and committed to institutional success.

Objective 4: To Identify Communication Challenges Affecting Employee Engagement

Table 4: Communication Challenges Affecting Engagement

Statement	Mean	SD	% Agree
Information from management does not reach all staff equally.	4.06	0.69	84
Feedback from employees is not always considered in decision-making.	3.94	0.77	78
There is insufficient interaction between top management and lower-level staff.	4.10	0.72	86
Communication channels are sometimes slow or inefficient.	3.88	0.81	76
Bureaucratic procedures delay the flow of information.	4.02	0.73	82
Some staff lack access to formal communication platforms.	3.80	0.84	74

The findings show that 80% of administrators agreed that communication challenges exist within the university. The most significant issues were limited interaction between top management and lower-level staff (86%) and unequal information dissemination (84%). This suggests that despite general satisfaction with departmental communication, institutional-level communication remains overly hierarchical and sometimes delayed.

These findings correspond with Lovell, Dolamore, and Collins (2022), who reported that bureaucratic communication channels reduce engagement in higher education institutions. According to Madsen (2022), participatory communication is essential for employee involvement and trust. The results imply that UCC needs to strengthen upward and horizontal communication to reduce information asymmetry and foster inclusion.

Regression Analysis

A multiple regression model was used to assess the extent to which communication variables predict employee engagement. The model included communication clarity, feedback systems, and management openness as predictors.

Predictor Variable	β	t	Sig.
Communication Clarity	0.41	3.42	0.001
Feedback Mechanisms	0.36	2.98	0.004
Management Openness	0.29	2.54	0.007
$R^2 = 0.68$, $F(3, 46) = 32.61$, $p < 0.001$			

The regression model explained 68% of the variance in employee engagement ($R^2 = 0.68$). All predictors were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), indicating that communication clarity, feedback mechanisms, and

management openness strongly influence engagement levels. These findings reinforce Hadziahmetovic and Salihovic's (2022) conclusion that transparent and participatory communication systems are key drivers of employee engagement. The results demonstrate that the more effectively management communicates goals, expectations, and feedback, the higher the likelihood that employees will feel valued, motivated, and connected to the institution's mission.

The results highlight significant institutional difficulties beyond mere statistical correlations. In higher education environments characterised by intricate administrative coordination, clear communication and feedback serve not just as operational instruments but also as strategic mechanisms that influence organisational culture and productivity. Institutions such as UCC, experiencing digital change and heightened responsibility, must institutionalise multi-channel communication systems, integrate digital communication platforms, and engage in leadership communication training. These interventions may improve transparency, diminish hierarchical obstacles, and foster relational trust elements crucial for maintaining employee engagement in academic settings.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have significant implications for the management of higher education institutions, particularly in enhancing employee engagement through effective communication. The strong relationship between communication and engagement indicates that clear, open, and timely information sharing is fundamental to developing an engaged administrative workforce. When administrators receive adequate feedback and are included in communication processes, they become more motivated, committed, and aligned with institutional goals. The results further suggest that communication is not merely a technical function but a strategic management tool that influences organizational climate and employee behavior. For university management, this means that communication strategies should be designed to promote dialogue rather than directives. Two-way communication systems that allow feedback from administrators can help identify operational challenges early and encourage a sense of ownership among staff. By integrating regular communication meetings, feedback sessions, and transparent reporting structures, management can build trust and foster engagement across all administrative levels. The findings also imply that effective communication enhances psychological safety and mutual respect among employees. When communication channels are open and consistent, employees feel valued and are more willing to share ideas and innovations. This aligns with Kahn's (1990) view that psychological safety is a precondition for engagement. Therefore, leaders at all levels must demonstrate openness, empathy, and responsiveness in their communication styles to maintain an environment that supports engagement and collaboration.

Additionally, the study highlights the need to address communication barriers such as hierarchical structures and limited feedback loops. Policies should be developed to promote inclusive communication where employees have equal access to information regardless of position. Leadership training programs should incorporate communication competence as a key component to ensure that managers possess the skills to engage employees effectively.

The implications of this study emphasize that effective communication is a critical driver of employee engagement in higher education. By prioritizing openness, feedback, and inclusivity, university management can cultivate a motivated and committed administrative workforce capable of driving institutional performance and continuous improvement.

The assessment indicates the need to include characteristics like leadership style and digital communication technologies. Leadership communication behaviours significantly impact engagement by affecting trust, openness, and psychological safety (Tyagi, 2021). The emergence of digital communication platform such as emails, intranets, and internal social media has revolutionised the management of information flow inside academic institutions (Madsen, 2022). Future models of employee engagement at universities must include these characteristics, since they influence information sharing, feedback processing, and staff alignment with institutional objectives.

Further Research

While this study provides valuable insights into how effective communication influences employee engagement among university administrators, it was limited to a single public university. Future studies could broaden the scope to include multiple universities across different regions in Ghana or West Africa to enhance the generalizability of the findings. A comparative analysis between public and private universities would offer a deeper understanding of how institutional structures and leadership styles affect communication and engagement patterns.

Subsequent research could also employ a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or focus group discussions. This approach would allow researchers to capture the nuances of communication experiences and engagement behaviors that may not be fully reflected in survey data. Moreover, longitudinal studies would be valuable in examining how changes in communication practices over time influence sustained employee engagement and organizational performance.

Further studies may also investigate the mediating role of trust, organizational culture, and leadership communication in the relationship between communication effectiveness and engagement. Exploring these variables would provide a more comprehensive framework for understanding how communication systems can be optimized to promote engagement and institutional growth. By addressing these areas, future research can deepen the theoretical and practical understanding of how communication dynamics shape employee experiences in higher education institutions.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of effective communication on employee engagement among university administrators. The results demonstrated a strong positive relationship between communication effectiveness and engagement levels, indicating that clear, transparent, and participatory communication significantly enhances motivation and commitment among administrative staff. Administrators who received consistent information, timely feedback, and open opportunities for dialogue reported higher levels of enthusiasm, pride, and emotional connection to their work.

The findings further revealed that communication challenges such as hierarchical barriers, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and slow information flow continue to hinder full engagement. These results affirm the view that communication within higher education institutions must evolve from traditional top-down patterns to more participatory and inclusive systems that encourage openness and trust. When communication fosters a sense of belonging and psychological safety, employees are more likely to align with institutional goals and exhibit proactive behavior. The study concludes that effective communication is a strategic resource for enhancing employee engagement and overall institutional performance. To sustain an engaged administrative workforce, universities must institutionalize regular feedback mechanisms, strengthen leadership communication skills, and ensure equal access to information across all departments. By embedding communication excellence into administrative practice, higher education institutions can create a culture of collaboration, commitment, and continuous improvement that supports their broader mission of academic and operational excellence.

The research establishes a robust correlation between communication and engagement while highlighting the need for systemic enhancements in institutional communication frameworks. The institution may enhance involvement by implementing more inclusive communication channels that use digital technologies, promote upward feedback, and minimise bureaucratic delays. The study establishes a platform for comparative and multi-institutional research within Ghana's higher education system, providing an empirical basis for the development of communication policies and engagement methods. Future research may enhance comprehension of how communication fosters psychological safety, trust, and sustained engagement in higher education by expanding this study to more institutions and integrating qualitative or mixed-method techniques.

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Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the University of Cape Coast's Research Ethics Committee. Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and their informed consent was obtained before participation. Data confidentiality was ensured by anonymizing responses, and participants were assured that their involvement was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without consequence. Results will only be reported in aggregate form to ensure anonymity.

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