A Comparative Study on Internal Political Party Communication Policies in Ghana

A Study Commissioned

By

The Inter-Party Platform of the Joint Party Support and Strengthening (J-PASS) Project

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Executive Summary

On the African continent especially within the Sub-Saharan African region, Ghana is considered as one of the countries that has deepened its democratic credentials by holding six successful elections from 1992 to 2012, with two peaceful transfers of power from one political party to another. Despite the acknowledged progress in the democracy in Ghana and an increase in the number of registered political parties over the past 20 years, not much attention has been given to strengthening the governance mechanisms of political parties in the country. Political parties have extensive branches and membership that requires a more clearly defined governance structures, with clear horizontal and vertical linkages. These governance structures impact much of the party's function, including how women and young people are represented within the party. But the internal governance structures are often neglected leading to mistrust between the political parties and the electorates.

This paper analyses the internal party communications policies and strategies of five political parties in Ghana to identify the gaps in intra party communication. In addition, a review of the internal communication policies and strategies of four political parties selected from different countries including the United Kingdom (Labour and Conservative), Rwanda (Rwandan Patriotic Front) and Kenya (Kenya African National Union) was undertaken. The international best practices on internal communication policies and strategies were documented to provide the background for the development of communication strategies by the parties in Ghana. The main findings of the study are as follows:

Key findings

- Internal communication based on the parties' structure is largely formal and it is guided by certain rules, conventions and principles. Basically, political party constitutions provided for a party structure and decision-making processes. Authority lines as stated in the formal organizational hierarchical structure of the political parties provide for vertical and horizontal communication.

- Party statutes provide for the statuary meetings and gatherings of the party leading to little emphasis on the need for the parties to develop an internal party communication policy and strategy. Political party meetings and formal gatherings are avenues used to discuss party developments and relevant external information that affects the party.

- The most used channels of internal communication are memos, letters, emails and reports. Party newsletters were not popular among the political parties in Ghana even though some had initiated the process of developing party newsletters.

- Parties used notice boards to send message to the staff and party members. However, notices rarely provided the staff and party members with up-to-date information on party policies and issues.

- The parties in Ghana did not pay serious attention to providing party staff with the needed information to understand and share in the values and ideology of the party. Aside party formal meetings, congress and workshops very little is provided with respect to training in

party values and ideology.

- The party websites were more a means of visibility and for documentation, and less as a means for communication and consultations among party leadership, political and administrative staff, causes, branches and members as well as for publishing of party news etc.

- The potential of online communication channels is not adequately tapped by Ghanaian political parties for internal communication.

Way forward

- Political parties must continuously engage their members in discussions that will enable them to identify the political principles and/or ideology that bind them together. Party members are to be educated about the values and principles that the party stands for.

- Political parties must blend new and traditional media in ways that help them best achieve their governance objectives.

- Political parties in Ghana must consider the use of internet based applications for internal communication. For example, political parties could use intranet and internal social networking tools for intra-party communication. Intranet can be used for a wide range of activities in relation to internal communication.

- Parties may seek support to set up intranet facilities in constituencies where internet is available and provide party staff with unique account/addresses that will enable them to access the party portal. Furthermore, using the internet, political parties can have web conferencing among different branches and organs.

  - Political party must develop and maintain functional websites that have current party information and news. These websites must promote interaction between party leadership, caucuses and members so that they can comment on published issues.

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Section One

Introduction

Background

Political parties are a central feature of any democracy (Diamond, Linz & Lipset, 1995; Heynes, 2006; Lipset, 2000). 'Citizens in modern democracies are represented through and by parties' (Sartori, 1976: 24). They are the vehicles by which citizens come together freely to campaign for public office, express their interests and needs, and define their aspirations for their society. Beside filling political office and exercising power, political parties contribute to democratic consolidation through representation, integration, aggregation, recruitment and training, making government accountable and organising responsible opposition to governments. When in the majority, parties provide an organizational base for forming government, and when in the minority, they serve as a viable opposition, or alternative to government. These functions of political parties matter a great deal in sustaining democracy and promoting good governance.

In most instances, political parties perform policy functions in both the process of opinion formation and the process of interest mediation. The success of the policy function of political parties require the existence of political parties that are properly structured, administered and run with proper structures, processes and systems for critical decision making exercises. Aside this, the policies of political parties must also be reflective of the preferences of citizens. Subsequently, political Parties must connect with society if they are to perform their policy function properly and if they are to gain the respect of the people.

In modern mass democracies it is political parties that connect government and the governed with one another. In the process, they play an intermediary role, linking citizens to their representatives, and serving as the primary channel for holding governments accountable for their performance. Political parties can best be conceived as a means of communication (Sartori, 2005). This means that communication occurs through political parties and comes from them. In essence, political communication enables parties to connect with citizens and provide avenues for public participation, structure citizens' electoral choices and link leaders and elected officials around a common program.

In most instances, political parties consider communications with citizens and voters as more relevant to their mandate of winning elections and in the process disregard internal communication policies and strategies. This motive is based on the assumption that parties that are capable of mobilizing a large membership base have higher chances of participating successfully in any political contest, winning elections and exerting influence on the formation of political opinion. As a result, parties focus more on external communication to the neglect of intra party communication. What they lose sight of is that only political parties with an efficient system of internal communication are capable of efficient external communication (Burton, 2008).

Indeed, internal communication is very important for the functioning of political parties as it breathes life to all the organs of the political party linking values to actions within procedures and protocol by creating understanding, harmony and a climate of openness where information flows freely to all (Lawson, 1980). Sound internal communication in political parties helps to build relationships, promotes mutual understanding, and enables party staff and members to contribute to the success of the entity. Considering the spread of political parties geographically with extensive networks of branches, caucuses, organs and wings and the use of variety of staff (volunteers, administrative and political), they need clear internal management and communication structures that are well known and understood by all members (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011).

More so, the organisational structure and functions of political parties require an efficient and effective internal communication system. Political parties have party officials who work in the branches, organs and wings etc. that are linked from national, regional to the grassroots. These different parts need to communicate and coordinate certain activities for the smooth running and coordination of party operations. As with most complex organizations, the hierarchical nature of political parties makes formal communication the preferred option for intra-party communication as party rules detail members' rights and obligations along with a clear decision-making hierarchy. Party constitutions and statutes provide a definitive decision-making process detailing the party's core values. The formal modes of internal communication results in some form of disconnect between the party's' leadership, caucuses, caucuses, organs and wings as well as administrative and political staff working at the national level, regional, constituency/district, wards and in other party structures. Subsequently, this affects the communication of accurate, consistent, and timely information to party staff and members.

Context

On the African continent especially within the Sub-Saharan African region, Ghana is considered as one of the countries that has deepened its democratic credentials by holding six successful elections from 1992 to 2012, with two peaceful transfers of power from one political party to another. Political parties are thus central to Ghana's democratic gains with the 1992 constitution of Ghana guaranteeing the right to form political parties. Since the advent of multi-party democracy in Ghana in 1992, the number of registered political parties is about 23, out of which about 10 are active and contested the 2012 elections. These are the: NPP, NDC, People National Convention (PNC), Convention People's Party (CPP), Great Consolidated People's Party (GCPP), Progressive People's Party (PPP), National Democratic Party (NDP), Reform Patriotic Democrats (RPD) and United Front Party (UFP).

Despite the acknowledged progress in the democracy in Ghana and an increase in the number of registered political parties over the past 20 years, not much attention has been given to strengthening the governance mechanisms of political parties in the country. Political parties have extensive branches and membership that requires a more clearly defined governance structures, with clear horizontal and vertical linkages. These governance structures impact much of the party's function, including how women and young people are represented within the party. But the internal governance structures are often neglected leading to mistrust between the political parties and the electorates. This is evident in the break in communication among the various organs of the political parties and also between the parties and its members as well as the electorates. For instance, a 2012 Afro Barometer report indicated that only 50% of Ghanaians trusted political parties "somewhat" or "a lot".

Thus political parties in Ghana need to reinvent themselves not only through programmes that educate the electorates but by strengthening their internal systems and processes to broaden participation and ensure inclusive and broad-based participation. Drawing upon published literature on political parties' best practices in internal communication as well as practical experiences of five political parties in Ghana, this paper provides a comparative analysis for improving internal party communications. The study is part of the process to strengthen political governance as identified in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF, 2012- 16) for Ghana.

The paper is structured as follows. The second section provides a review of related literature on internal communication. The next section examines the internal communication strategy of political parties in United Kingdom (UK) and Kenya paying attention to best practices. The third section examines the internal communication policy of the five political parties that are on the J-PAS project identifying the present form on internal communication focusing on the key gaps. The final section provides insights on how the identified best practices for internal communication can be adapted to the benefit of the political parties in Ghana.

Objectives and tasks of the assignment

This assignment is expected to provide policy and strategic guidance and direction to the five political parties under the J-PASS project with the view to recommending options for internal party communication polices and strategies. Specifically, the assignment seeks to:

1. compare international best practices on internal political party communication policies from different countries.
2. present the strategies, structures and channels for the implementation of the different internal party communication policies.
3. identify the different party wings, cells and caucuses and their various roles in implementing the internal communication policy and strategy.
4. recommend options for internal party communication polices and strategies for the political parties under the J-PASS.

Methodology

To achieve these objectives, a mixed method approach was used to assess the internal party communication policies of the political parties. Emphasis was placed on documenting how the political parties have used these communication policies to reach out to the different elements in the party especially party caucuses, staff, members, committees, organs and wings of the party. Attention was placed on the internal communication practices and gaps.

The methodology proceeded in three Phases: inception, document review and field data collection and analysis.

Document review

Initially the focus of the project was to review internal communication policies of political parties from Botswana, Rwanda and Denmark. However, the focus changed due to the paucity of data on the internal communication strategies of political parties in these countries. In addition, the contacts from these three countries could not help the Consultant with the required information despite the support of the Project Manager of the J-PASS.

Upon further consultations with the J-PASS team, two countries, namely, United Kingdom and Kenya were selected alongside Rwanda for the review of the international best practices in internal communication. The study reviewed the constitutions and statutes of political parties and focused on sections that related to internal communication policies of these parties. The constitutions were considered adequate in providing information on the internal communication strategies of the political parties selected because they provided details on organizational structures of these parties and the forms of communication used by these parties. In that respect, the following documents were reviewed:

- The party constitutions for the five political parties under the J-PASS project in Ghana.
- The party constitutions of four political parties namely; the Conservative Party and the Labour Party in the United Kingdom, Rwandan Patriotic Front and the Kenya African National Union from Kenya.

The review of documents from the political parties (two each) from the two countries helped in the identification of the international best practices on internal political party communication policies and strategies.

Sampling and data collection

All the political parties in the J-PASS projected were selected for the exercise. The party headquarters of each of the five political parties was visited and interviews conducted with two key members of the party executive committee. The interview method was used to gather the relevant data. The interview guide was used to collect the needed information from all the five political parties. The relevance of this exercise was to provide for a comparison between what exist in documents and practice. The emphasis on party leadership was to enable the researchers gain in-depth insights into the existing organisation culture as well as the strategic narrative of the organization and how this culture creates an appropriate climate for internal party communication.

Section Two

Literature Review

Introduction

In this section, the broad literature related to political parties' communication is reviewed with particular attention to internal communication. The chapter defines a political party and then outlines the its communication systems. The internal and external tools for communication are discussed with emphasis in the role of party's officials in enhancing communication. The aim of the chapter is to articulate the importance of communication in contributing to the success of a party.

Political parties

Several prominent authors have commented on the importance of parties in a liberal democracy (Diamond, Linz & Lipset, 1995; Lipset, 2000). A political party is a team of individuals seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election (Downs, 1957). Following from this definition, political parties are considered permanent associations of citizens based on free membership and a programme, aimed to hold politically decisive positions of the country with their team of leaders through elections, the, and in order to materialize suggestions for resolving outstanding problems (Hofmeister and Garbow, 2011).

Political parties as unique organizations fulfil a number of interrelated functions central to the democratic process of governance. They link the state and civil society, can influence the executive, formulate public policy, engage in political recruitment, structure electoral choices and facilitate coalitions (National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, NDI, 2001). The long list of the potential functions of political parties can be summarized under five key headings: (1) the integration and mobilization of citizens; (2) the articulation and aggregation of interests; (3) the formulation of public policy; (4) the recruitment of political leaders; and (5) the organization of parliament and government (Norris, 2005).Thus, political parties are the channels for organising political representation, political competition, and democratic accountability (Hicken & Kuhonta, 2011).

One important function of political parties in any democracy is the platform they provide to government and the governed in connecting each other. Political parties perform a reciprocal middleman service in communication between state agencies and citizens, in both the process of opinion's formation and the process of interest mediation. According to Sartori (1976: 28), "parties can best be conceived as means of communication". This connecting function is also made clear in the party literature (Key, 1961; Lawson, 1980; Sartori, 1976).

Political parties have different institutional set-ups based on the political system in operation. Usually political parties have decentralized structures. The party organisation follows the structure of the state –national, regional, district and sub-district levels. The structure of the party at a district or county or constituency level should normally correspond to its structure at the higher party levels. In addition, at the district or county levels, there is an Executive Committee that is made up of elected officers or members of the party who are elected by at the party's convention.

Party constitutions and statutes are the main set of written rules by which political parties structure

and organize their affairs. Written statutes are a common requirement for the registration of political parties as it addresses issues concerning representation especially women and minority groups' representation, party-decision-making structures, internal democracy and financial management. Generally, statutes help political parties to define: party labels; their philosophy and purpose; membership eligibility requirements, rights, roles and responsibilities; governing organs and organizational structures (including composition, mandate, relations between party units, lines of communication, authority and accountability); policy development processes; procedures for the selection (and possible de-selection) of party leaders and candidates; systems for proper financial management; mechanisms for internal dispute resolution: how party statutes are to be interpreted and amended; and transitional arrangements. With respect to communication, party statutes can clarify lines of communication, authority and accountability between the parties' various layers.

Political party communication

Communication is one of the most dominant and important activities in organizations (Harris & Nelson, 2008). Political parties need good communication as it is the mechanism that enables them to connect with the voters and the society as a whole, as well as communication with members within the party. The communication of the political intentions and the search for public consent has always been a part of the main requirements for political leadership in any democracy.

Communication helps individuals and groups coordinate activities to achieve goals, and it is vital in socialization, decision-making, problem-solving and change-management processes.
Communication is considered as an instrument of management by which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible, in order to create a favourable basis for relationships with groups upon which the company is dependent" (Theaker, 2004). As this interpretation suggests, stemming from their public's needs, political parties need both to communicate internally and externally in order to be successful (Krizan et al., 2011).

External communication
External communication is directed to the outside and involves the professionalised communication between political decision-makers and the public (Juris, 2004). It primarily aims to connect the party with citizens and voters (Stuart et al., 2007). Citizens and voters are considered very relevant to a party's external communication because political parties need to sway public opinion to win elections and govern. The ability of a political party to win political power is considered a function of their capacity to influence public opinion and strategically draw attention to their parties and their ideas.

The functions of external communication include: requiring information about party policies, convincing citizens to vote for the party, clarifying the party's position on an issue and promoting the party's image or ideology (Guffey et al., 2010).

Regular press releases and press conferences, publication of bulletins and positions are the basics for a party communication and internet nowadays has special relevance for developing a modern party communication. The party website is the main source of communication and should be permanently updated. Political parties also use modern internet social media channels like Facebook and Twitter to deliver their messages and present their leaders to the broader public. Regional party branches have their own website to communicate issues of local or regional relevance. Video platforms like

YouTube are also used for the same objectives.

Internal communication

Deetz (20001) described two ways of seeing and defining internal communication. The most common approach focuses on internal communication as a phenomenon that exists in the organizations. In this view, communication occurs within the organization. A second approach sees internal communication as "a way to describe and explain organizations" (p. 5). Here, communication is the central process through employees share information, create relationships, make meaning and construct organizational culture and values. This process is a combination of people, messages, meaning, practices and purpose and it is the foundation of modern organizations (Shockley-Zalabak, 1995).

Broadly speaking, internal communication represents the communication and the interactions among the members of an organization, being defined as a way of describing and explaining a corporation. Internal communication targets the internal members of an organization, including the superiors, the collaborators and the subordinates. It is viewed as an essential process, through the staff exchanges information, establishes relationships, forms a system of values, creates an organizational culture, harmonizes the activities, collaborates for the achievement of goals and develops formal and informal networks (Berger, 2009).

Internal communication plays a central role within political parties, becoming the "engine" of all activities. Through an internal communication, the staff (political and administrative), as well as party members at the various levels of party organization, can better understand what happens within the party, become more informed and motivated, and identify with the vision, mission and objectives of the party (Smith and Mounter, 2008). It also provides employees with important information about their jobs, organization, and environment.

Political parties need internal communication because it basically enables them to: issue and clarify procedures and policies; develop new policies; convince the employees and the management to make improvements and changes; coordinate the activities; evaluate and reward the personnel (Guffey et al., 2010). Political parties need to promote internal communication as it can:

- Provide people the information they need to do their jobs effectively
- Make sure they know about anything that concerns them
- Provide people with clear standards and expectations for their work
- Give people feedback on their own performance
- Provide them emotional support for difficult work
- Allow them to take the pulse of the organization and understand its overall situation
- Help them maintain a shared vision and a sense of ownership in the organization

Internal communication is considered as intra party communication among national, regional and local levels of the party including organs and groupings. It encompasses both official communication – memos, guidelines, policies and procedures and the unofficial communication that goes on among and between the staff members (political, administrative and voluntary) of the party. Again, internal communication is important for a political party because it enables the party not to inform its own members, but also to represent party positions towards the society.

Internal communication occurs on multiple levels. Interpersonal or face-to-face communication between individuals is a primary form of communication. Group-level communication occurs in teams, units and in interest groups. The focus on this level is information sharing, issue discussion, task coordination, problem solving and consensus building. Organizational-level communications focus on such matters as vision and mission, policies, new initiatives and organizational knowledge and performance. These formal communications often follow a cascade approach where leaders at hierarchical levels communicate with their respective employees.

Communication networks vary within political parties. A network represents how communication flows in an organization. Networks can be formal and informal. In a formal communication network, messages travel through official pathways (e.g., newsletters, memos, policy statements) that reflect the organization's hierarchy. Informal communications move along unofficial paths (e.g., the grapevine, which is now electronic, fast and multidirectional) and include rumours, opinions, aspirations and expressions of emotions. Informal communications are often interpersonal and horizontal (Burton, 2008). Party staff and members and members use both networks to understand and interpret their political organisations.

Communications also can be described as vertical, horizontal or diagonal. Vertical communication can be downward–flowing down the hierarchy of an organization–or upward, i.e., moving from lower to higher levels in the chain of command. Horizontal communication refers to communication among persons who have no hierarchical relationship, such as three supervisors from different functions. Diagonal communication occurs among employees at different levels and in different functions. Party organizational structures and technologies shape communication flows within the party (Williams, 2008).

Party structure and internal communication

The structure of a political party defines the existing communication patterns. Based on the structure or organogram, political parties must have a well-designed system that facilitates open communication between party leaders and members and also between different structures within the party, such as between two local branches or between committees, organs and wings of the party. Organizational structure refers to the formally prescribed pattern of relationships existing between various units of the party (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2011).

Although the basic process of communication is similar in many different contexts, the structure of political parties has a profound impact on the communication process (Greenberg & Baron, 2011). The structure of a political party provides an open communication in two distinct directions: vertical (downward & upward), and horizontal (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). In other words, a party should have open vertical and horizontal communication.

Upward and downward communication flows generally following the formal hierarchy within the political party. At every level of the hierarchy, various people perform roles that are supposed to build the party. A successful party will have a clear communication structure that is well known and understood by its members and reinforced by the party's internal communications mechanisms. The internal communication policy would indicate clear guidelines stating exact roles, responsibilities and authority, in order to ensure coordination and coherence. Within the party structure, every party staff (political and administrative) and active member, from the village level to party headquarters,

should know to whom they report and, in turn, who reports to them. In a well-organized party, staffs should be able to describe their position and line of communication in the structure. Most importantly, vertical communication is not just top-down orders, it also includes eliciting and incorporating the views and experience of party activists on issues that are relevant to the party. This makes vertical communication a two-way process.

Greater size and complexity of political partiers increase the need for communication laterally across the lines of the formal chain of command and this is what it is called horizontal communication. Horizontal communication flows exist to enhance coordination and information sharing among different units or wings of the party. For example, at the national level, specific group like youth and women can share ideas and communicate about their events (Breth & Quibell, 200). Another example would be local branches of the party within a province or region sharing information back and forth. This interchange of information can help spread ideas and create new leaders throughout different sections of the party, activate members in far-away regions, strengthen weak sectors of the party, spread best practices and share experiences. This horizontal channel permits a lateral flow of messages, enabling units within the party to work with other units without having to follow rigidly up and down channels.

Channels for internal communication

Channels are categorized as print, electronic or interpersonal (Burton, 2004). Common print channels include memos, brochures, newsletters, reports, policy manuals, annual reports and posters. New technologies have spurred the use of electronic channels, e.g. email and voice mail, Intranets, blogs, podcasts, chat rooms, business TV, video conferencing, instant messaging systems, wikis and electronic town-hall meetings. Interpersonal or face-to-face channels include speeches, meetings, focus groups, social events and gatherings and management by wandering around.

The main forms of internal communication used by political parties are print and verbal communication. Print communication is defined as all the information transferred in a written form such as memos', notifications, notes, posters and any form where the information is passed through written text (Stuart & Sarow 2007). Verbal communication is the sharing of information between individuals using speech and this can take place during party meetings, congress, conventions. Informal communication includes gossip, briefings at the tea place, pleasantries and body language.

In every organization, the internal communication tools are essentially the same. The difference is how the tools are used. The following matrix shows the various tools and how they can be employed within the political party.

Table 1: Internal communication tools and uses within the organisation

Communication tool	Some common uses	Top-down management driven	Bottom-up management driven	Lateral management and/employee driven
publications - paper or electronic	Keep party staff informed about information, direction, progress, and goals.	Top down		

	Share information about party programs and initiatives Recognize staff achievements/successes. Encourage quality improvement, increased efficiency, improved service, and greater social responsibility			
Intranet or enterprise social network/message boards	Team to communicate, collaborate and share resources on and only those in the group can see the site. Allow party staff and active members to have a say, share feedback and engage in discussion Anything that goes on the intranet is there to stay, to be read at your own convenience,	Top down	Bottom-up	Lateral
Email/ telephone calls	Ongoing day to day communication Updates on important issues or changes	Top down	Bottom-up	Lateral
Memos/letters	Important announcements Dissemination of policies or other important changes in the party	Top down		
Inserts/enclosures	Important notices	Top down		
Meetings/discussions (large/small group meetings)	Communicating visions, policies, strategies or major initiatives	Top down	Bottom-up	Lateral
Notice boards/Bulletins	Upcoming events, Notices about changes Promotion of party programs	Top down	Bottom-up	Lateral

Social media	Announcements on new initiatives Communication Conversations	Top down	Bottom-up	Lateral
Face to face	Reinforcement of all communications	Top down	Bottom-up	Lateral
Displays/exhibits	Highlight party information	Top down		
Grapevine	Fast and effective way to disseminate information about party happenings and issues. Often inaccurate		Bottom-up	Lateral

The common established means for party's internal communication include: telephone; postal and courier; direct mail; internal memos; meetings; face-to-face exchange; broadcasting; and media. Creating and developing a website is another vehicle to effectively disseminate a unified message.

Promoting internal party communication

There are three interrelated issues a political party, as any other organization, needs to address for promoting internal communication. The first involves the organizational climate and culture: the organization has to be a place where open communication is accepted and encouraged. The second concerns are establishing clear definitions of what needs to be communicated and by whom. If you assume that everyone needs always to be informed on everything, the staff would spend all its time merely receiving and passing on the information. In that case, guidelines would be needed to define what and how the information gets passed. The third is the communication systems that the organization creates and through which it gets it processes and enables internal communication to take place. It is important to pay attention to the structure of the internal communication to know if it encourages the communication in all directions or discourage or channel it in particular ways.

1. *Organizational climate and culture*

Organization culture refers to how employees feel about an organization, the authority system, and the sense of involvement and commitment (Schein, 2000). Improving internal communication requires establishing a climate of openness that encourages the free flow of communication and information in all directions. This means that the organizational culture has to embrace internal communication, and those individuals, particularly key individuals, who might be the director and other administrators, or who might simply be the people that others respect and listen to, have to feel comfortable with. Thus, there is the need to leverage leadership to create change.

2. *Clear definitions of what needs to be communicated and by whom*

The critical issue at this stage is the information that needs to be communicated to others, and the person responsible for doing it. Any information anyone needs to do their job or to better understand the context of the work, should be communicated to them immediately by whoever has the information. Some possibilities here include information from another staff member about a participant that both are working with; information from another staff member about a situation that he is about to encounter as part of his job; or new rules, regulations, guidelines, etc. that affect

his work (from the director or his supervisor if they are internal; from whoever learned about them if they are external, e.g. federal laws).

3. *Systems*

Every organization sets up systems of different kinds to make it easier or more effective and complete some of its task. Internal communication can be stifled by the organization's systems or it can be promoted and strengthened through both existing systems and new ones created for the purpose. Parties have to develop a balanced communication strategy that uses the right medium in the right amount.

The systems used for sending and receiving messages may include: newsletters, circulation materials, surveys, meetings, in-house television, face-to-face interactions, email, hotlines, suggestion boxes, Intranet, Internet, telephone calls, memos, letters, notice boards, formal presentations, reports, open forums, blogs, and wikis (Argenti, 2009; Asif & Sargeant, 2000; Baumruk et al., 2006; Goodman & Truss, 2004; Yates, 2006). All the above-mentioned elements in the communication process are a combination of both the message and medium.

A well-designed system facilitates open communication between party leaders and members and also between different structures within the party. Internal communication systems should create ways for employees to exchange ideas, information, and questions. The availability of wide communication channels empowers people to seek answers from their peers, strengthen connections between colleagues, and transfer knowledge across the organisation (Kneece, 2015). These systems should improve both horizontal and vertical communications.

Summary

In this section, the concept of communication has been discussed with emphasis on internal communication, as well as the internal communication processes in political parties and its advantages and disadvantages. The next chapter have been analysed the media used for internal communication, highlighting the multiple channels available to political parties. The section ended with guidelines for design an internal communication strategy.

International political party internal communication best practices

Introduction

The internal communication policies of political parties in the United Kingdom and Kenya were reviewed to identify best practices. The political parties considered from the United Kingdom were the Conservative Party and Labour Party, while the Kenya African National Union (KANU) were selected from Kenya. The analysis of internal communication focused on the following issues: a) internal communication policy and strategies b) channels for internal communication and c) the strengths and weakness of each of the internal communication policy.

Internal communication in the Conservative Party

The conservative party has local associations across the country. Each local Association corresponds to a parliamentary constituency. While associations vary in size, almost all follow the same structure. Officers of the association are elected annually at a national congress to positions that include President, Chairman and two Deputy Chairmen for Membership and Political affairs

The National Convention is effectively the Parliament of the Voluntary Party. It is comprised of all Association Chairs, officers from areas and regions as well as 42 representatives from Conservative Future and the Conservative Women's Organisation. The Convention meets twice a year – its Annual General Meeting is usually held at Spring Forum, with another meeting usually held at Party Conference. Its purpose is to receive the Annual Report, elect the Convention's new officers and to set the Voluntary Party's direction.

The most senior volunteers within the Conservative Party are the Officers of the National Convention. Led by the Chairman, they represent the views of the voluntary party to the leadership of the main party. The Chairman of the Convention is also a Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party. The President is the Chairman of the Party Conference and there are also three Vice Presidents. All of these five senior volunteers are elected at Spring Forum, and also sit on the main Board of the Party. The Board is the ultimate decision making body of the Conservative Party. It is responsible for all operational matters including fundraising, membership and candidates. It is made up of representatives from each section of the party - the voluntary, political and professional.

The objective of the internal communication strategy of the conservative party is to foster a strong communication culture within the party by creating a two-way flow of information that moves information from the party leader to the voluntary, and from the political and professional staff of the party working in the Areas and Regions to other offices of the party. The party consciously communicates its mission, vision, and values statements to the entire staff, including volunteers and members, through media such as newsletters, bulletin boards, intranet, etc. Professionally printed and framed copies of the mission, vision, and values statements are displayed at all party branch offices, so staff and management are constantly reminded of the party's vision, values, and mission.

The communication structure of the party also enables information's flow between the party leadership and the Members of Parliament. The policy making processes of the party also enhances the flow of two-way communication from the party leadership in parliament to the grassroots.

The organizational structure of the Conservative Party is not different from what exist in other political parties. The lines of communication and reporting are clearly stated in the statutes. Depending on the issues and position, the status indicates the appropriate channels of communication. The party has a centralized communication team under the leadership of Communication Director. This role is different from the functions of the General Secretary and other secretaries. Internal communication is mostly a function held by the secretaries across the various levels of the party, rather than a responsibility of the communication section of the party. However, the communication department provides scribes with guidance and coaching on party policies on issues and the Communication Director works in tandem with the General Secretary to formulate the positions on the concerned issues.

The role of the Communication Director is replicated in all areas and regions of the party in order to provide to the General Secretary the space to work on party administrative functions.

The party uses appropriate mechanisms to effectively and efficiently communicate policies and messages to the staff at the various levels of the organisation. The new media alongside conventional methods, forms an integral part of the intra-party communication. Thus, multiple channels of communication are used in intra-party communication, in order to create an intensive and extensive communication. These channels allow for feedback from officers at the lower hierarchy and thus enables both horizontal and vertical communication process. Face-to-Face communication: Formal meetings stipulated in the party constitution are dominant as part of communication within the party.

The use of the Internet is dominant in intra-party communication within the Conservative Party. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are playing greater roles in intra-party communication in the Conservative Party. Through the use of internet, day-to-day administrative processes are simplified and accelerated via intranets, making the coordination of different party branches easier. Intranet constitutes a strategically important tool for the party because it is utilized for the distribution of informative materials such as notices policies etc. among the party staff. Intranet also aides the process of policy development as it enables staff and members to participate at the formulation process. Intranet facilitates the distribution of party documents to party staff. Materials are on the intranet so that staff can review the information they receive at their own pace

The party's website provides current news, interaction and communication, and on-line campaigning. The website serves as an active medium for communication as it provides current news and reports from daily party activities to different levels and wings of the party. It further provides staff with access to important party speeches and addresses, as well as contacts for party executives. Special coverage of party events, such as conventions and regional meetings, are available. The websites also have linked pages, annotated web directories, discussion area or interactive features. The area and regional branches of the party also have their websites that are linked to the main one. Emails are used to convey formal and routine information and updates.

The use of social media has greatly improved communication within the party. For example, individual blogs and twitter handles allow conversations across the party. Issues discussed in one

branch at a constituency level or at the party leadership level are brought to the attention of other members of staff across the party through effective internal communication structure. Party staff irrespective of location are able to comment on posts, building up an exchange of knowledge and opinions within the political party. Social media are used to invite party staff to important functions such as policy discussion circles, and forums.

Newsletters are also a key medium for internal communication. There are two types of newsletters: printed and digital versions: the online version is available on the party's website, while the printed version is distributed across the various branches. One interesting observation is the recruitment of on-line editors who work on the content of all online materials that are posted on the party's website.

The party provides the staff – administrative, political and volunteers –with a telephone number they can call for latest news or information about the party at the party call centre. Staff uses this way to communicate together with personal messaging (e-mail, face-to-face dialogue, etc.).

Internal communication in the Labour Party

The Labour Party is a membership organisation consisting of Constituency Labour Parties, affiliated Trade Unions, socialist societies and the Co-operative Party, which it has an electoral agreement with. The party's decision-making bodies on a national level formally include the National Executive Committee (NEC), the Labour Party Conference and National Policy Forum (NPF)—although in practice the Parliamentary leadership has the final say on policy.

The party has a hierarchical structure that is not different from that of the Conservative Party. The lowest level of the Labour Party is the Branch. Several wards within a boundary make up a branch. The next level up the hierarchy is the Constituency, which is made up by several branches based on electoral area. The Party has a NEC that sets the party's objectives and oversees the running of the party nationally. The Party Conference is the ultimate authority and decides the policy framework from which the next manifesto will be drawn and sets the party rules. The party administration is distinct from the party communication office.

The Labour Party has an internal communication policy that coordinates all intra-party communications among the different levels from the headquarters, constituency and braches, as well as communication among the various organs of the party. The internal communication guideline reveals a clear goal for party communication with clear plans and timeframe for achieving the stated goals.

The role and responsibility for different offices and branches are clearly stated in the party's constitution or status. People are trained to direct their communication to the individuals with the appropriate responsibility throughout the party. For example, communication from an officer at the branch level of the party has to go through the constituency office before been forwarded to the party national headquarters.

The Partnership in Power (PiP) system implemented by the Labour Party has a well-designed mechanism that enables party members to participate in policy formulation. At the local and regional levels, party members participate in policy discussions throughout the year and make submissions to the policy commission via the Your Britain website. The views of the local and regional policy

forums are collated at the national level by the National Policy Forum before it is forwarded to the policy commission of the party.

The party has moved beyond the conventional one-way direction of communication using a blend of different communication media in addition to those stated in party constitutions. Meetings, discussions, seminars and formal gatherings constitute the different modes of internal communication. As is the case with most political parties, the use of online media was also dominant.

Multiple channels are used to communicate with the staff. Each level of party organisation uses a variety of different ways to engage and inform their personnel, including notice boards, text messages, newsletters and Skype. A party e-newsletter on the intranet sites or share via email in a pdf version, disseminates the information. The party has an internal communication team with a full time editor to produce content for the newsletter.

Every member of the party's caucus in parliament as well as staff – political or administrative at every level of party organization - has either a party email or an official correspondence that is used for intra-party communication.

The Labour Party's website has linked pages, annotated web directories, discussion areas and iterative features. Speeches and addresses, as well as contacts of party executives, can be easily found online. The party uses intranet in a variety of ways: to publish news and party-wide messages; carry bulletin boards for discussions; store policies and work-in-progress; provide online materials; organise work and social events; and even carry blogs by staff. There are on-line chat rooms for intra-party communication. The website included a link to the party blog and party's newsletter.

Social media have taken up by party internal communication with their staff communicating through it. Social media have given members at different branches, organs and unions, the ability to interact and engage. Instant messaging and internet telephone services are ways used by staff to communicate. Web conferencing is used for meetings between people in different locations The party has even turned social networking sites as internal communication channels. Staff blogs is distributed via email. Party offices across the country are setting up unique hashtags, and show a live stream of staff posts.

Through social media, the party has opened new feedback channels, encouraging collaboration and communication across different branches and constituencies, committees and organs and improving horizontal networking. The mechanisms enhance approachability as party staff are able to pick and choose who and what to engage in.

Internal communication of the Rwandan Patriotic Front

The Rwandan Patriotic Front is an off shoot of the Rwandese Alliance for National Unity. The party was formed in 1987. The RPF is divided into national, province /Kigali city, district, sector, cell and village level. The RPF leadership from district to village is responsible for the basic political, economic, administrative and social activities of the RPF. The leadership structure of the party at the national level is as follow: a) the congress b) the political bureau c) National Executive Committee. From the Province/Kigali City to the village level the Executive Committee is responsible for the administration of the party under the guidance of the General Assembly. The Party has various

leagues such as the youth council and a women's league and special organ (the Inspectorate is the technical organ that carries out inspection activities with full autonomy)

The Party has a National Chairman and a General Secretary with the latter heading the general secretariat of the RPF. Furthermore, the General Secretary is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the activities of the commissions and committees established by the RPF, as well as the implementation of the political programme. The Secretary General conveys the resolutions of the Executive Committee and the Political Bureau to the lower levels and ensuring their implementation. The role also involves arranging meetings of the executive committee, the Political Bureau and Congress of the RPF. The Secretary General records minutes of all meetings of the executive, the Political Bureau and Congress of the party. Another role is to evaluate and act on all reports submitted by the various levels.

From the provincial/Kigali city level to village level, the party has an Executive Secretary responsible for writing minutes, keeping records and ensuring that correspondence requiring reply is answered. As such, letters, memos, reports, resolutions, bulletins, party documents (policies, statutes, constitutions), manuals, and emails are examples of written communication used for internal communication. Electronic communication such as email and text are also used to keep party leadership, staff at branches and members of party leagues informed on party issues. Regular and well-written, email briefing is increasingly being used as it improves organisation and coordination.

Meetings constitute a major medium for internal communication. For example, the party holds two ordinary meetings of the General Assembly and RPF Congress each year. Meetings are also held at the provincial/Kigali city level to village level. The organs also convene extra-ordinary meetings.

The party engages the various structures, such as party branches, organs and caucuses online. Intranet allows the entire staff to instantly access information and communicate with colleagues. It allows collaboration and knowledge sharing within the party. The party uses intranet in a variety of ways: to publish party news from leadership including those from the province, district level, sector level, cell level and village; to store party statuses and constitution as well as other important party documents; to carry out bulletin boards for discussion; to organise work and social events; to carry blogs by members of the party caucuses, staff and volunteers and to organise party training programmes for members working in the various levels and organs of the party.

The party has a functional website with its main page connected to several relevant internal links. Important documents, such as constitutions, manifestoes and publications, can be found through the link on documents. There is also a link that provides information such as party symbols, motto, history, values and ideology. The section on press provides information on news, speeches, events and announcements. The gallery section provides useful links to photos, video, documentaries, interviews and songs.

Social networking sites are also being used for internal communication. Social media tools like forums, blogs and social networks are increasingly being used to coordinate and communicate issues among the branches and organs. The nature of social media allows any party member – caucuses, executives, political and administrative staff – to participate in discussions, allowing communication to flow from top down, bottom up, and even lateral communication.

Internal communication in the Kenya African National Union Party (KANU)

The Kenya African National Union (KANU) was founded in 1960 and had been the ruling party since independence. KANU's leadership structure consists of a national chairman, a Secretary General and several National Vice Chairman. All these officials are elected at a national delegate's conference.

The constitution identifies a fairly complex organizational structure and organs with defined responsibilities. It reveals a hierarchy of party branches and sub-branches based at the district and location/ward levels making communication in the party top down. The national party secretariat is responsible for official communication and this is clearly stated in the constitution.

The party organizes training for new members and staff on values and ideology usually using several forms. Periodic meetings and training programmes are used to convey party information and discuss pertinent issues concerning the party. Leaders of various party wings and organs are also invited for meetings and round table discussions. Party leadership visits constituencies to interact with them and brief them on party policies and programs: such visits also give the staff the opportunity to interact at first hand with the leadership. Conventions and regional, as well as constituency delegates meetings, are also channels for internal communication. It is during such meetings that the party's strategic plan, manifesto and other important policies are presented and discussed.

Specially prepared materials and activities are usually developed to communicate key messages. This includes newsletters and posters that are distributed to the members.

Conventional media used for communicating and sharing information between members of the party on a regular basis are: formal meetings, telephone, newsletter, notice board, print resources, policies, policies and procedures. However, the use of these channels varies depending on the nature of the message and the intended purpose. For the communication of NEC decisions and directions, party leadership/management decisions and directions paper based methods of communication in the form of memos and letters were the norm. This is the same for communication within the party organs, wings and committees. These methods of communication are considered effective at conveying message within the party. Paper-based items sent by mail have the advantage of providing a clear, fileable statement that is likely to reach its intended recipient. These documents are easily retrievable.

Oral (mobile phone and face-to-face) and online communications (email, SMS and instant messaging) whereby party staff send and receive information is a major form of internal party communication. Oral communication allows most misunderstandings to be resolved immediately and it constitutes an informal means of communication.

On the other hand, online communications were also utilised as a means of intra-party communication, but the intensity was low as compared to the other methods of data collection even though this was considered as a cheap, quick and efficient means of internal communication. The four most popular types of communication over the Internet are (in no particular order): e-mail, chat, instant messaging, and SMS. Internal e-mails were mostly used as key information and messages are sent to target recipients via mass email. Messages can be centrally stored and archived, and the history of replies or forwards can be maintained.

Summary

As expected of political parties, the organizational structure of the political party suggests that information flowed in a hierarchical, top-down pattern, from the core executives at the centre (usually labelled as NEC) and top party administrative staff to other levels of the organization. Each party has a constitution that provides the party with the direction of communication. However, it generally doesn't adequately promote a consistent flow of information throughout all units because individual party officers vary in their propensity to share information, and in their ability to communicate well. In some cases, information may not flow but only trickles. Thus, the decision on whether or not to share information is often based on personal judgment and it may have consequences for coordination purposes in the party.

The following communication means were common among the three political parties: meetings, discussions and formal gatherings, memos, newsletters, circular letters and written reports, internal magazines, team-building sessions and suggestion boxes. The statuses of the political parties emphasize external communication more than internal communication.

The use of online communication was preponderant and seems to have flattened the traditional, hierarchical structure of internal communication. As a result, new ICTs are successfully being implemented in the area of the party organization. The use of World Wide Web for intra-party communication varied among the political parties. The parties make available lots of relevant information on the website. Their website serves as an archive of information and a communication channel.

Internal communication practices among political parties in Ghana

Introduction

Political parties, as any other large organization, require considerable internal communication for coordination and management. The fact that party political and administrative staff as well as membership is geographically dispersed and seldom gathered in one location at the same time, presents communication challenges for political parties. In this section, the internal communication practices of the five main political parties in Ghana are discussed. The chapter presents an overview of the stricture of each political party and then discusses the internal communication practices.

The National Democratic Congress

It's a Social Democratic Party that believes in the equality and the egalitarian treatment of all persons with respect to their social, cultural, educational, political, religious and economic relations in a multi-party environment.

The NDC has a party structure that guides internal communication. Furthermore, there are administrative communicative policies that govern the day-to-day activities within the national Headquarters. Though, not all the members are well-informed about these policies.

Chapter six of the NDC constitution provides a national Secretariat that is the administrative organ of the National Executive Committee (NEC). The NEC's composition is made up of the party's national officers as stated in the NDC constitution. The role and functions ascribed to various national offices in the constitution apply to appropriate office holders in similar offices and at various levels of the structure down to constituency level. This suggests a hierarchical top-town structure with the General Secretary responsible for the day-to-day administration. The General Secretary is responsible for public and internal communication, and also for the promotion of program and policy debate, discussions and dialogue. This applies to party secretaries at the lower levels of the hierarchy.

Chapter four of the NDC constitution outlines the structures describing the organization from the branch to the ward (polling division), constituency, and district (where appropriate), regional and national levels. The constitution further stipulates that there shall be functional executives at each level. As stated by the constitution, the Secretary runs the party and the everyday business.

The General Secretary is responsible for internal communication within the party even though secretaries at the different levels of the party can communicate with their membership in a form of devolved authority. However, this role is complemented by Executive Committee (FEC) that has members from the various organs. The Functional Executive Committee is responsible for the overall administration of the affairs and are part of the National Executive Committee meetings. The composition of the Functional Executive Committee is further replicated at the Regional and Constituency levels of the Party with the necessary modifications. The National Secretariat has

departments and other staff as the NEC may approve. The executives of various committees meet weekly to discuss issues within the party.

The party has a National Communication Secretariat headed by a National Communication Director appointed by the National Executive Committee. The National Communication Secretariat has the responsibility to promote party-media relations, publicity, public education, information dissemination, opinion research and advertising. The National Communication Secretariat, in consultation with the Communication Committee, co-ordinate the communication strategies at all levels and develop communication programs for activities subjected to the approval of the National Executive Committee.

The usual tools used for communication include text messages, emails, correspondence (memos and letters), WhatsApp, calls, and informal communication. Members of the communication team are frequently trained on effective and continuous communication. This training is done both at the headquarters and in the regional and constituencies. The key subjects treated are information sharing, polices issues, party's intervention/intent on various projects and campaign strategies.

The parliamentary caucuses, Finance Committee, the International Relations Committee and the Legal Committee have representatives at the headquarters. These representatives visit the headquarters weekly to meet the administration, so that matters relating to their respective bodies are sent for discussing and finding possible solutions.

The party executives at all levels and in the organs and wings use text messaging to send out information on to the members. This is considered as an informal form of communication within the party. There are instances that executives had to follow up with telephone calls when members failed to reply to such messages.

The utility of new media has been embraced by the party, but did not featured prominently in internal communication methodologies. For example, the party indicated that it had a website including the party's constitutions, the list of party officers, the information related to the membership, as well as textual and pictures of the activities organized. However, the website was not current with respect to content.

Members at different levels have also created groups (WhatsApp, viber, telegram) where they exchange information on the activities (messages, announcements, photos and videos etc.). These platforms are used for one-to-one and one-to-many communication. To transcend the problem of illiteracy and typing information in text, members are also encouraging the use of voice messaging on these platforms. It is gradually becoming the vogue with respect to informal intra-party internal communication because it is instant, saves considerable time and can be used by colleagues who are in remote areas. These platforms give the party executives the opportunity to be informal and more direct with other members of the party. They also provide them with the chance to write messages to individual contacts, group chats, or broadcast lists. The party has a Facebook page, also used to share information on relevant issues and activities with members. The nature of social media brings anyone to participate in discussions, allowing communication to flow from the top down, bottom up, and horizontal.

Communication within the NDC is both consultative and directional. It is directional when its content is intra-party in nature. That includes issues relating to the day-to-day activities which are

conventional to party policies. Communication becomes consultative within NDC when the issues at stake are urgent and need to deviate from the normal lay down policies of the party. Issues that can also be considered as consultative are urgent issues. For instance, if a member of the party lodges a complaint by an issue of constitutional breach, the party leadership may have to consult the legal team for providing a better interpretation.

People's National Convention (PNC)

Internal communication within PNC is done through organized structures within the party. Chronologically (?), the structures are: Congress, NEC, Standing committee, Elected National Officers, Regional Officers and Constituencies Officers. The communication from the Congress binds all members and it is the final authority. The Congress is carried out once every four years. Important issues raised during these four-year period are discussed and a final decision is taken and shared with all members at the Congress. The NEC meets quarterly to discuss issues emanating from the day-to-day activities of the party and national issues. During these meetings, concerns that need to be addressed by congress are discussed.

The Standing Committee (SC) is the administrative Head of the party in charge of the day-to-day activities of PNC. Beside the daily administrative duties, the SC meets once monthly to discuss the activities of the party. During that meeting, the member discuses complains and issues that may be brought to it by party members. The SC communicates through notices, text messages and emails.

Elected National Officers meet three times annually. The regional Officers are in-charge of the party's operations within the region. These officers have the over-sight on all the constituencies in the region. They are responsible for disseminating information from the national executives to the constituencies. All concerns from members in the region are channelled through the regional executives to the national executives. In other words, the regional executives serve as a conduit by which information passes from the national executives to the constituencies and from the constituencies to the national executives.

There are various committees in the party that are in charge of specific duties. These committees, after their meetings, decide policies that are communicated to the SC through internal memos. When SC receives reports from committees, it sends the reports to NEC. Thereafter, NEC meets to discuss the report and a consensus is made for implementation.

The internal communication usually uses memos, emails, text messages and calls. WhatsApp groups are also created by some committees and wings of the party.

The major problem related to the communication between regional executives and constituency is due to the lack of a good network. The large number of constituencies makes difficult for the regional officers to send letters to the constituency officers due to financial constraints. Also, some constituency executives deliberately delay some information by not passing them to the members on time. Even though the party has a website, it is not functional.

The Progressive People's Party (PPP)

The PPP is a Socialist Political Party with four policy pillars of stewardship, education, healthcare and jobs. The party believes in the ideals of the founder and first president of Ghana Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Structurally, PPP is made up of: National Committee, Advisory Council,

National Executives, Headquarters-administration, Regional Executives, Constituency Executives, Polling station officers, Diaspora, Volunteers, progressive Youth Movement-tertiary wing.

As expected, the National Congress is the highest decision-making body and it receives reports on the activities and audited accounts. Under this body, the National Executive Committee is responsible for the execution of the policies and programs as approved by the National Congress. The two bodies enforce the constitution and all other rules, regulations, standing orders and bye-laws. The Standing Committee follows in that order and it performs the administrative and financial management functions.

According to the constitution, the General Secretary is responsible for the day-to day administration and for communicating with all the organs and subsidiary organs. At each levels, the Secretary communicates with the members and reports through the different levels above it to the national headquarters. Communication is usually between the National Executives to the Regional and to the Branch Executives.

The Party has communication policies that govern all communication activities within and outside the party (internal communication that governs the communication. Internal communication is considered important to the party as it enhances smooth operation. The existence of internal communication policy in PPP helps to effectively send 'awake' message to the general public as a whole and to their singular members.

The party further relies on the structures stipulated by the constitution to communicate. The main channels of communication are memos, letters, telephones call and text messages. However, the use of each tool is different across the various levels of the party. Specifically, internal memos and official letters are the formal tools for communication among the executives, from ward through constituency to regional and national levels of the party. Furthermore, the members use formal letters and stipulated channels to either petition or communicate officially with the party on an issue.

Evidence of internal communication policy in PPP is demonstrated by having both communication and education secretaries in all the constituencies in the country. The duties of their communication secretaries are: liaising between the national executives and the grassroots members and training of new communication members. Thus, the communication secretaries are the interface of the party. The education secretaries are responsible for educating people within their constituencies and polling stations on PPP policies especially on their 10 points agenda and the four pillars (job creation, preventive healthcare, quality education and incorruptible leadership).

The party employs modern strategies of communication. Among these strategies are rallies, flyers, text messages, e-mail, intranet, internet, blogs, newsletters, fax, WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook and calls. Bulk messages are used for sending information to members. The Facebook page is one of the most active and followed pages. The party believes that its Facebook page is largely followed by youth because issues normally discussed are job creation and pragmatic social intervention.

Another tool for communication among executives and also between executives, parliamentary caucus and party membership is phone calls, instant messaging and emails. According to the executives, these are the most effective mechanisms for internal communication. Interpersonal communication helps the executives to listen to others and to act quickly and appropriately on their questions, complaints, suggestions, issues. It is important to emphasize that any official

communication to branches, members, caucuses etc. is always through a formal letter or memo on a party letter head.

The notice boards at all levels also provide an avenue for communication. The information is posted on the notice board for members to be read and become abreast with party issues.

Convention People's Party (CPP)

The party makes provision for a hierarchical structure from the National Congress through to the National Executive Committee to the Regional Executive Committees and the wards. However, as per the constitution, the National and Regional Steering Committees are responsible for the day to day activities respectively at the national and the regional level. Thus, the party has a decentralized communication system with the regional and constituency offices, taking directives from the national headquarters. Structurally, the CPP is made up of NEC, Central committee (CC), Leadership (made up of the nine nation elected members) and Wards. The NEC is the highest decision-making body. The General Secretary is the Head of day-to-day activities at the headquarters. Communication channels include meetings, formal letters and memoranda, emails, text messages and calls. The notice boards at all levels and the periodic statements released also constitute another avenue for internal communication.

The party has a website but it is demonstrated to not be functional. The website serves for disseminating information to members both locally and overseas. The Party Executive update members about the structural changes of the party as well.

The party has an Ideological Development Training (IDT) for its members. The main objective of IDT is to educate and train new members on 'Nkrumaism' and to inculcate the need for social development and ways of achieving it.

One of the main problem is disseminating the information on time to the constituencies. Delays due to the continuous use of paper and postal correspondence often occur. The measures put in place to address some of the communication issues include the use of text messages, WhatsApp and calls. However, the use of these tool does not follow the structure provided in the party constitution. These instant messaging formats serve are used for disseminating short and quick information especially announcement of meetings.

The New Patriotic Party (NPP)

The New Patriotic Party (NPP) is a liberal democratic political party, registered on 28 July 1992. The highest decision-making body is the National Congress. As with other political parties, the National Executive Committee and the Regional Executive Committees are responsible for administrating the party at the national and regional levels respectively.

Executive committees take charge of the party affairs at the constituency level and report to the regional committees that who in turn report to the national level. The party has a national Communication Director with similar positions at the regional and constituency levels. The Director works mostly on the external communication and in close collaboration with the party leadership.

Vertical structures for communication exist within parties, but are usually formal and determined by

the leadership. At the central level, most of the representatives holding office in the party executive committee or as heads of committees or organs, are reasonably well-informed about the procedures, despite the poor communication reported between central/national and regional and district levels of party information. In general, communication has been developed following a top-down flow, with the opportunity for top-up correspondence.

Internal communication takes place through the formal channels of the organization structure along the lines of authority established by the party constitution. Such communication is generally in a written form and include letters, memoranda, official meetings, reports and emails. These tools have been identified as the best one for internal communication, in order to maintain the authority relationship in the party. Meetings and served as evidence for future correspondence.

In terms of consultation and reporting, the Executive Committee members and Heads of Committees at all levels from the centre to the lowest level are those who are most regularly consulted by the leadership and, in some cases, are required to meet once a week. The officials also are asked to send reports to the next level up the party hierarchy for onward transmission to the centre. Internal communication is embedded within structures with all formal communications done following the internal procedures.

The party has a newsletter that informs members about the current happenings and activities. The newsletter is however defunct. Notice boards are also used to communicate information about activities to members. Social media are also used for informal communication. Group and one-to-one chats are used to informally relay messages and discuss issues. Recently, WhatsApp has become an accepted mode of informal communication among the members, making easier to It also communicate directly with distant party members on important issues.

Summary

Most party business is conducted through normal channels of communication. Formal communication within the party moves through pre-determined channels that are prescribed by party established systems, procedures, rules and regulations. All the parties have communication departments held by a Director of Communication responsible for communicating the party's positions on political debates and provide party members and citizens with information and arguments. Surprisingly, the internal communication mechanisms used by the parties bear some similarity, especially the way used for formal communication. Traditional paper and postal correspondence (letters, memos, policy documents, procedures and newsletters) as well as face-to face communication (meetings, congress, conventions, and visits) dominate the internal communication tools among the parties. The over-reliance on formal communications channels is due to the fact that they adhere to the party's structure and also allow for information to be recorded and kept in the party's evidence. Telephone calls and social media applications were also preponderant with all the parties acknowledging the use of instant messaging and SMS.

Section Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

Internal communication is not really new among political parties, but it has not been a prioritized area as parties were mostly focused on external communication, in order to share their messages to the public, get more members and possibly win an election. The reality is that political parties need effective intra- party communication to make their external communication efficient.

The communication strategies and policies of five political parties in Ghana: The NDC, NPP, PPP, CPP and the PNC had been examined. Furthermore, the internal communication policies of three political parties, two from the UK (The Conservative and the Labour Parties), One each from Rwanda **(**Rwandan Patriotic Front) and the Kenya (Kenya African National Union Party) had been also reviewed. These case studies helped the researcher to identify the internal communication best practices of the countries analysed and suggest strategies that could be adopted and used by the five political parties on the IPaP.

Key findings

- Internal communication based on the parties' structure is largely formal and it is guided by certain rules, conventions and principles. Basically, political party constitutions provide a party structure and a decision-making process. Authority lines as stated in the formal organizational hierarchical structure of the political parties provide a vertical and horizontal communication.

- Party statutes define statuary meetings and gatherings, leading to little emphasis on developing internal party communication strategies. Meetings and formal gatherings are venues used to discuss development strategies and relevant external information that affects the party.

- The most used channels of internal communication are memos, letters, emails and reports. Party newsletters were not popular among the political parties in Ghana even though some had initiated the process of developing it.

- Parties used notice boards to send message to the staff and members. However, notices rarely provided the staff and party members with up-to-date information on policies and issues. Party notice boards are not considered as major source of information.

- The parties in Ghana do not pay serious attention in providing the staff with the needed information, in order to understand and share the values and ideology of the party. Aside formal meetings, congress and workshops very little is provided with respect to training in party values and ideology.

- The party websites are used mostly for increase the visibility and for providing

documentation, and not much for communication and consultations among leadership, political and administrative staff, causes, branches and members.

- The potential of online communication channels is not adequately tapped by Ghanaian political parties for internal communication.

Way forward

- Political parties must continuously engage their members in discussions that will enable them to identify the political principles and/or ideology that bind them together. Party members have to be trained about the values and principles that the party stands for.

- Political parties must consider using multiple methods of communication to formally engage party caucuses, political and administrative staff, constituency and branch executives.

- Political parties in Ghana must consider the use of internet based applications for internal communication. For example, they could use intranet and internal social networking tools. Intranet can be used for a wide range of activities in relation to internal communication. Parties may seek support to set up intranet facilities in constituencies where internet is available and provide party staff with unique account/addresses that will enable them to access the party portal. Furthermore, by using internet, political parties can have web conferencing among different branches and organs.

- Political parties must develop and maintain functional websites that have current information and news. These websites must promote interaction between party leadership, caucuses and members so that they can comment on published issues.

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Appendix I: Survey Instrument

Party Employee Communication Questionnaire
This questionnaire will ask you questions concerning internal communication within your political party. For the purpose of this study internal communication is defined as the exchange of information both informal and formal between party Executive Committee (management) and party employees. When answering each question think of your current position in the political party.

It is recommended that you write down the first response that comes to mind. When answering the items below think about your political party and your role within the party.

Connection to the organisation

1.1. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I understand the organisation's mission, vision and objectives					
I understand how my work contributes to the achievement of the organisation's objectives					
I am an important part of the organisation					
I am committed to the organisation's mission					

1.2 Do you feel you are an important part of the organisation? If yes, why? If no, why not and are there any changes you could suggest to improve the situation?

2. Policies and Procedures 2.1.
Please rate how familiar you are with your party's policy on:
(1= very familiar, 5= didn't know there was one)

	Very Familiar	Familiar	Somewhat familiar	Aware one exists	Didn't know one existed
elections					
finance					
Leave requests					
Email/Internet					
Security					
First Aid					
Appointments of officers					
Disciplinary procedures					

Communication with different wings of the party					
Other:_____ __					

2.2 Are the party's policies and procedures generally easy to follow? If not, how would you improve them?

2.3 Do any policies and procedures impede your ability to do your job? If so how?

2.4 Should other policies and procedures be developed that would help you do your job?

 Give example and state why?

3. Current Processes
3.1 Please rate how important the following media are to you for communicating and sharing information between members of staff on a regular basis

	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Never use
Formal Meetings					
Informal Meetings					
Email					
Telephone					
e-newsletter					
Programme e-Newsletters					
Notice board					
Print Resources					
Intranet					
Shared Drives					
Website					
List serves					
Policies and Procedures					
Other: _____ _____					

3.2 Please rate how effective current internal communication processes are at conveying the following information:

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor

National Council decisions and directions					
National Executive Committee decisions and directions					
Party news and initiatives					
Programme updates/outputs					
Relevant external news					
Party Office policies and procedures					
Staff news					
Other: _____ _					

3.3 Do you have any suggestions to improve the dissemination of the above information?

4.0 Decision-making Processes

4.1 Are management decisions generally communicated to you effectively? YES/NO

Explain your answer

4.2 Do you generally understand the rationale for National Council decisions and directions decisions?

4.3 Are you generally able to make the necessary decisions to do your job effectively? If not, please explain.

4.4 Do you generally feel that you are sufficiently consulted by management? If not, what would you like to see happen?

5. Information/Resource sharing between departments/programmes

5.1 How often do you use the following to communicate (share/receive information) with other programmes:

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
All-staff meetings					
Staff list-serve					
Individual emails					
Formal meetings					
Informal meetings					
Print materials (i.e. letters, memo, newsletters…)					

Programme newsletters					
e-Newsletter					
Phone					
Other: _____					

5.2 How important is the work of other programmes to your work?

5.3 Do you take advantage of other programme resources/knowledge/skills for your work? If yes, how? If no, why not?

5.4 **A** How often do you communicate/share information about your programme with other programme staff? Circle one

        Daily   *Weekly*   *Monthly*   *Rarely*   *Never*

5.4 **B** How?

5.5 Is information about different programmes shared effectively across the organisation?

6.0 Resources

6.1 Are you familiar with the following resources, and how often do you use them (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Rarely, Never):

	Familiarity		Regularity of use				
	Yes	No	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
Staff List serve							
Intranet site							
e-Newsletter							
Annual Reports							
Books							
Journals							
Newsletters							
Website							
Staff handbook							
Programme factsheets							
brochures							
Toolkits							
Photo collection							
Logo and style guide							
Other: _____							

6.2 For any of the resources listed above that you are not familiar with, would use them if you knew more about them?

6.3 Would you use a central resource library of print and multi-media resources organised by category?

6.4 Would you use an Intranet (Internal website)? What features would you use most?

6.5 Can you think of any other internal communication resources which would be useful to you?

7.0 Identifiable Needs

7.1 What area of the organisation's internal communications needs most improvement?

7.2 Do you have any suggestions on how to address this?

Appendix II: Key informant interview guide

This guide is to help the researcher to interact with key actors in the political parties concerning internal communication. For the purpose of this study internal communication is defined as the exchange of information both informal and formal between party Executive Committee (management) and party employees. When answering each question think of your current position in the political party.

- Importance of internal communication in the party.

- Existence of communication policy

- Existence of political party internal policy and strategy

- Types of communication channels used in the party and frequency of usage

- Key messages in the communication

- preferred form of internal communication among party structures

    - Party HQ

    - Parliamentary Caucuses

    - Individual legislators

    - Sub networks?

- Who are they communicating with?

    - How far down the pyramid?

- How are people communicating?

- How often?

- What information are they sending?

    - Are they evaluating their own communications?

- Is communication interactive?

- What is the balance of top-down and bottom-up messages?

- Have accountability issues been resolved?

- Are human resources being used well?

- Is technology being used intelligently?

- Is the information appropriate & timely?

- Is there a programme for future development?

  - Electoral cycle issues

- Is the process of communication development consultative or directional?

- Does information flow from the top to the bottom of your party?
- Does it flow back up to the top?
- Does if flow horizontally?
- What are the mechanisms of communication that are used in your party?
- How often are they exercised?
- In your opinion, which ones work and which ones could be improved?
- What recommendations would you make to party leaders to make your party communication more democratic?