

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**The impact of effective communication and information sharing on
Spar's supply chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal**

By

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the full requirements for the degree

of

Master of Commerce (Supply Chain Management)

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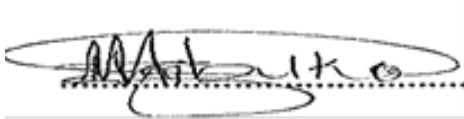
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DECLARATION

I, Hlengiwe Carol Mazibuko (209503822), do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my investigation and research, and that this has not been submitted in part or in full for any degree for any other degree to any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hlengiwe Mazibuko', is written over a horizontal dotted line. The signature is enclosed within a rectangular box.

H.C Mazibuko

21-08-2019

Date

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DEDICATIONS

This dissertation is directed to my lovely mother

Sibongile Minah Sibisi

for her emotional and spiritual support and encouragement, together with the unconditional love that she always give me.

ABSTRACT

Organizations recognize that effective communication at all echelons of the organization expand and progress organizational success and good customer relationships. Communication has been studied with respect to enactment and customer satisfaction, but the relationship with customer attitude and happiness has not been done on a higher education setting. The choice to be happy and have an affirmative attitude has been the subject of different books, articles, speeches, studies, and workshops. The significance of communication in a customer's choice to be content and pleased is enlightened as it affects the individual, team, customers and the overall organizational culture. For all retail companies, this is similar. All these enterprises need to improve their level of collaborations in all their supply chains.

Research has shown that there is a lack of collaboration and integration amongst the corporate management and its stakeholders provided how the fast moving consumer goods enterprises deal with the communication process in the entire retail business.

The aim of this study was to examine the impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's Supply Chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal. This study focused on how effective communication and information sharing has affects the nine management departments namely overall store management, general assistant management, floor management, assistant floor management, stores, fruits and vegetables, bakery, liquor management, and fast foods management.

Concepts such as effective communication, information management and sharing, communication barriers, channels, strategic partnership and managerial communication formed part of the literature for this study. The theoretical framework for this study was based on the Communication Accommodation Theory.

A qualitative research methodology was used for this study. Queensmead Spar, a fast moving consumer goods company from Umbilo, KwaZulu-Natal was the participating company for this study. Non-probability sampling technique was used for the study and the chosen technique under non-probability sampling was

purposive sampling. Face to face interviews were chosen as the data collection instrument for this study. These interviews took place at the physical location of Queensmead Spar Umbilo, Kwa Zulu-Natal. The sample of the study consisted of individuals (managers) from the overall store management (GM), general assistant management, floor management, assistant floor management, stores, fruits and vegetables, bakery, liquor management, and fast foods management. Therefore, the sample size consisted of the total of 9 managers in all.

Content data analysis was used to analyse the recorded data from the interviews with participants from Queensmead Spar. Coding and themes were generated from the data that was collected and then the recommendations were generated and these can be used for upcoming researches.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAT	- Communication Accommodation Theory
CRM	- Customer Relationships Management
EC	- Effective communication
IC	- Information Communication
OM	- Organizational Management
OP	- operative communication
SC	- Supply chain
SCM	- Supply Chain Management

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Researchers have specified the necessity for a friendly association amongst the supply chain partners, suppliers and other stakeholders for a lengthy time. Nevertheless, an organized approach to the Supply Chain Integration has only recently been made. With the escalation in the worldwide competition, businesses are obliged to re-think their methodology to information incorporation. In a business, the supply chain integration can be applied amongst diverse interior operations and divisions, and also exterior trading supply chain associates as well.

Harrison and Hoek (2011, p. 98) argued that the exterior incorporation with the customers and suppliers is simultaneously independent by an interior integration, and the association commitment to the customers and the suppliers. They also signified that the interior integration facilitates exterior integration because businesses first via systems, data, and process integration have to cultivate the competency of the interior integration then assign in substantial exterior integration. The sharing of information can be applied for the interior and exterior integration amongst the supply chains. Spar stores, like most retailers in South Africa, face common challenge thereby affecting the effective and the efficient supply chain performance.

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research problem, aim and objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, research methodology, delimitations of the study, limitations of the study and the structure of the study and conclusion.

1.2 Background of the study

The aim of the retail sector or industry is not only to deliver to its customers, but also to intensify the loyalty and efficiency of the stakeholders, which cannot be achieved without the effective and efficient sharing of the information and transparent communication amongst them. Effective communication has many advantages in the retail industry. According to Azriel (2014, p. 35), sharing of information is considered as one of the greatest proficient methods of enhancing the SC performance.

Effective communication is related to speaking and listening skills which all relevant parties should possess (Fielding, 2013).

If one person is speaking, but the other party is not listening or do not understand the message, the communication stream cannot as effective as it should be (Riley, 2012, p. 42). Maduenyi Sylvia (2015, p. 21) explains that ineffective communication can lead to the improper order fulfilment, delaying the supply process resulting in the improper treatment. As such, effective communication and the sharing of information can benefit the delivery of needs to the customers and intensify the supply chain performance (Miller, 2012).

Advancing from the reflectivity entails the proficient usage of the actual demand and market trend information and sharing it with the potential merchants. Harrison and Hoek (2011, p. 99) further explained that one of the benefits of the effective communication and information sharing in the retail industry is the ability for the management to effectively and efficiently deliver to the customers. The individuals of the organization are the most important components that necessitate effective incorporation (Riley, 2012).

When the stakeholders and the management communicate effectively with one another, then the management can deliver great excellence, value for money spending experience for the people being served (Riley, 2012, p. 60). In turn, this reinforces the excellent customer satisfaction. Effective communication and information sharing between the subordinates is imperious to the retail field because it enables the management, suppliers and other related stakeholders to inform one another about customer treatment so that everyone can be on the same page (Gray and Laidlaw 2014).

It has long been recognised that difficulties in the effective and efficient delivery in the retail industry can arise from the problems in the communication process between the suppliers or customers and the management, rather than any failing in the technical aspects of the purchasing process. The improvement in the management-stakeholder communication can have the beneficial effects on the delivery performance outcomes (Sias and Gallagher, 2009).

Communication is a two way process whereby the information (the message) is being sent from one person (the sender), through the mode or the channel to another (the receiver of the recipient) who therein in return responds by interpreting the message and responding (the feedback) with due regard of many communication barriers (Andrew, 2013).

All merchant and non-merchant members in the retail industry involve in a formal and informal, internal and external communication with one another, customers and other stakeholders (Barrelas, 2010, p. 29). It is therefore crucial to have a trustworthy system of communication (general and specialised functional dimensions of communication in the retail organization. It is also crucial to understand the process, the nature and the scope of communication and to effectively manage all specialised functional aspects and dimensions of communication in this industry (Men, 2015).

The study focused on the effective communication and information sharing status between the management and its stakeholders, especially customers. It was however limited to the management at Quuensmead Spar, KwaZulu-Natal. Spar stores is the global cluster of autonomously possessed and functional retailers, also merchants who work collectively in corporation under the Spar brand in order to deliver great excellence.

The customer spending nature of the supermarket signifies those who come for one time shopping process or complaint reporting, which enables the researcher to understand the customer treatment and communication pattern. The spontaneous shopping at Spar also enabled the researcher to examine the communication pattern between the management and the customers regarding their needs and wants, and its delivery.

1.3 The research problem

Any business has its own vision and mission in which the corporative objective is driven for better accomplishment and increase organization effectiveness. Thus organization requires collaborative interaction and communication to achieve the set corporate objective.

These interactions require distinct, concise and comprehensive information for enhanced execution and success of the business. Thus, effective communication as a strategic instrument for organization success, it requires learning teamwork, protection, innovation and the development of quality of decision-making.

Effective communication and information sharing are one of the most serious difficulties facing the retail supply chain, and Spar stores is one of the paramount retail companies that are bound to strategic collaboration and information sharing in order to enhance their customer service level.. Nevertheless, the discontentment rate of Spar's strategic collaboration and information sharing is slightly high, resulting to the delivery of unclear, incomplete messages and delay of messages to and from the destination point.

Even then, Spar continues to comply with strategic partnerships and information sharing throughout their supply chain. Therefore, there is a need to determine Spar's motives for engaging into strategic partnerships and information sharing and their effects on Spar's functional routine. If this study is not conducted, then the impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar Stores' supply chain performance is going to remain unidentified.

This study was found critical for the reason that it may assist other retail corporations keep their heads high on this competitive economy by following the pathway of progression, which comprises of several challenges of effective communication and the sharing of information, and being able to overcome them, and make the retail sector competitively prosperous.

1.4 Aim of the study

1.4.1 The aim of the study was to:

Examine the impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's Supply Chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal.

1.5 Research objectives

1.5.1 The study objectives were:

1. To determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar.
2. To determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance.
3. To determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar.
4. To determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.

1.6 Research questions

1.6.1 The research questions of the study were:

1. How can effective communication and the sharing of information increase efficiency level at Spar Stores?
2. What are the effects of effective communication and information sharing on Spar Stores' performance?
3. What are the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to information sharing at Spar?
4. How can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information?

1.7 Significance of the study

The study was supposing to come up with the understanding of the factors obstructing effective communication and sharing of information between management and the customers and supplier relations at Queensmead Spar, and the study will firstly help in understanding how collaborative communication and information sharing amongst the management and the organizational stakeholders affect the work performance in the organization. Secondly, the study will make

contributions to intensifying literatures based on issues related to factors obstructing effective communication and information sharing in the retail sector.

This is the first study, to the researcher's information, and it has provided information on the challenges of carefully maintaining collaborative partnerships through effective communication and information sharing at Spar stores, and how such challenges impact on the company's growth and profitability. It is also aimed at providing further baseline information on the recent status on collaborative partnerships on other retail companies, and how far it does benefits the economy at large.

The outcomes of the study will be more valuable to all retail sectors when engaging with the customers and suppliers as they are the key constituents to the organization success. Furthermore, this study will be helpful in organizations as they will be able to overcome the barriers to effective communication within the business.

1.8 Research Methodology

Research techniques are the precise procedures that the researchers use to sample, gather measure and analyse data (Creswell, 2013, p. 75). The qualitative research strategy has been selected through one of the most productive research tools, namely; face-to-face/in depth interviews, as it is extensively believed to be the best method of obtaining data for the qualitative study, has been selected to be the study method to be used to address the research objectives of this study. This data collected was analysed through content/thematic analysis as it is the simpler categorizing strategy for qualitative data.

Qualitative research is the method of research methodology that permits the investigator to gather information that is rich in literal description of how the target population is going through a phenomenon (Sanders 2010, p.78). Using the qualitative research methodology, researchers can gather data about the human viewpoint of the research problem (Creswell, 2013).

This study used qualitative research methodology because of its challenging nature in exploring, describing and generating detailed clarifications about the research matter under study. This empowers researchers to produce new perceptions of

understanding a phenomenon from the view of the insider, and grasping the consequence of the local circumstances (Nelson, 2010, p. 3). Using the qualitative approach, this study discovered, designated and produced full enlightenments about the fundamental aspects to effective communication and information sharing , effects of effective communication and information sharing, and the importance of partnerships at Spar.

In order to determine the validity for my study, data was collected through primary source, and Phenomenological (qualitative) approach was being selected as the best approach to be used since data was collected in a form of semi structured face-to-face interviews.

The strong point of qualitative research methodology is its capability to offer the compound textual explanations of how individuals experience the specified research subject. This also offers information about mortal side of an issue – that is, the frequently opposing behaviours, opinions, philosophies, sentiments, and collaborations of the people.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

Smith and Davies (2010, p. 147) explained the delimitations of the study as those characteristics that define the limits of the study. They assist other investigators to restructure a study or improve the future investigation on the similar subject. They also provide scope within which the researcher accomplish the findings and determine the reliability or external validity of the study (Smith and Davies, 2010, p. 148). The delimitations for this study were:

- This study focused on the retail sector which focuses on the delivery of goods to the customers.
- The interviews were only conducted in English, since the respondents are the management of the organization.
- The data was collected specifically from the store management as they have been regarded as the best in providing the researcher with the information required.

- It is understood that there is a huge number of Spar stores in KwaZulu-Natal, but because of time limit and costs, this research was only conducted at Queensmead Spar.

1.10 Limitations of the study

Smith and Davies (2010, p. 147) explained the limitations of the study as those things or influences over which the research has no control. Due to the design of this research, this study had a number of restrictions. The limitations of this study were:

- By studying just one store, it was not probable to compare integration, behaviour, and effective communication with other retailers nor is it probable to simplify the outcomes.
- Simplifying the results of this study might be limited due to the sample size and data collection from one store.
- This study has been expounded only from the perspective of organizational communication and not going into detail of private, or any other form of communication.

1.11 Proposed structure of the research chapters

The study is composed of five chapters namely: Chapter One, constituting of the introduction, which discusses the background of the study, the research problem, aim and objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and the structure of the study. Chapter Two entails the literature review which highlights and discusses the theoretical aspect of the study relating to the impact of communication and information sharing in the effective delivery of customer needs and wants. Chapter Three discusses the methodology used in the study which is the qualitative research methodology. Chapter Four constitutes data interpretation and the analysis of findings. Chapter Five presents the final conclusion which is basically from the literature review and the study. It also presents the recommendations and highlights the final conclusion of the study.

1.12 Conclusion

The management's responsibility remains that of ensuring profitability of the entire business. Various business strategies are being implemented by successful organizations which include, inter alia, capital investments, merges and acquisitions, outsourcing, enhancing their products and establishing customer partnerships in order to improve inefficiencies. However, establishing customer partnerships is one of the most important strategies an organization can make and implement, given the fact that open and transparent communication is applied effectively. Therefore, ensuring that the customers are satisfied, happy and engaged, it is vital to keep them aware that they are also important.

This chapter gave an overview of the entire research work. The emphasis has been placed on the research problem, the aim and the objectives of the study, the research questions, the method of collecting data, the significance of the consequence of the study and the structure of the study. This prepared the platform for the literature which has been discussed on the following chapter. The next chapter covers the literature review which elaborates the communication process, the methodology applied, theoretical framework, data analysis and the general conclusions of the literature.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher defined and conceptualised the key concepts and discussed the theories applicable and relating to it. Theories on organisational change and communication are examined in terms of how they relate to the study. In addition, other theories and their applicability are discussed.

For the purpose of this study, communication is conceptualised as any physical means of conveying information, such as e-mail, discussions, individual conversations and circulars. Banihashemi (2011, p. 15) defined it as a dynamic and ever-changing process, which helps to create the organisation and develop systems of meaning that people use to make sense of their own actions. According to Government Communicators Handbook (2014, p. 6), internal communication is such an integral part of the process of organising and in organisational culture that it can almost be said that organisations would not be able to exist without it. Communication is defined in this study as the exchange of messages in verbal, written and electronic format (Miller, 2012).

The key research questions supporting this study are being used to convey a structure, through which the literature is prepared, reviewed, combined and presented. Effective communication is a dualistic way of information distribution procedure which encompasses one party conveying a message that is certainly understood by the receiving party (Fay and Kline; 2011).

Riley (2012, p. 16) stated that effective communication and information sharing are often used synonymously in practice. He also stated that the effective communication by organizational management enables information sharing amongst organizational personnel, and can extensively contribute to its commercial accomplishment. These are one of the organizational functions that support the business to stay competent and productive.

The degree of sharing the information narrates towards deciding on the partner with whom the data ought to be shared, the nature of data shared, and the superiority of the data being shared (Riley, 2012).

Furthermore, according to Berry, (2011), there cannot be any real business without the effective communication, for the reason that, it is through communication that the group can impact the persons' behaviour. Supply chain proficiency is extremely significant as today's rivalry is no longer amongst corporations, but amongst the supply chains (Riley, 2012, p. 21). Using the supply chain cooperation further tactically has turn out to be more vital in nowadays' gradually more challenging business procedure for generating innovative return probabilities, efficacies together with consumer trustworthiness (Berry, 2011).

When the company vision its business through the sight of its consumers, it doesn't think about its operating stores, clubs or websites autonomously (Kerns, 2009; 93).As an alternative, its goal is to have consumers understand these channels congregate as one cohesive relationship with them. They want to convey an appropriate, modified and unified experience across all effects they operate in. Thus, their approach to investments will continue to progress to support their remarkable goal of improving the customer experience to further expand sales.

Spar has declared that through united cooperation, all shall benefit. With knowledge and additional resources obtained from functioning in some of the global progressive retail markets, they have developed their brand presence through directed expansion into new marketplaces of scale, and long term prospective (Spar International Annual Report: 2015).

2.2 The Communication process

According to Fielding (2013), the communication process is about transferring, receiving, and understanding the information and its meaning. It encompasses the sender who conveys an idea to the receiver. Effective communication takes place merely if the receiver comprehends the precise information or idea that the transmitter anticipated to convey (Azriel 2014).

Shober (2013, p. 46) further argued that receiving and understanding are the supreme significant actions in the communication process, since the reaction of the receiver describes whether the communication attempt is fruitful or not. Fielding (2013, p. 42) stated that communication is an important process for every business

or organization. It is crucial for organizing individuals, work procedures or subdivisions.

According to Azriel (2014, p. 13), an essential purpose of communication in a business is to facilitate and strengthen employees to carry out deliberate intent. It is vital for associations to have the ability to rapidly ascertain, send, receive, and comprehend relevant information strategically. Without communication businesses would decline to death (Barrelas, 2010, p. 56). It is essential for the information to flow from the lowermost to the top and vice versa by making subordinates conscious of the decisions taken by the superiors or vice versa (Berry, 2011).

In addition, Barrelas (2010, p. 58), explained communication as the establishment and the exchange of views, ideas, feelings and understanding between transmitter and receiver. They found a robust association amongst communication and the effective and efficient performance of the organization. Figure 2.1 Miller (2015), have demonstrated the communication process by also adding the response and obstructions to communication.

Figure 2.1: The Communication Process

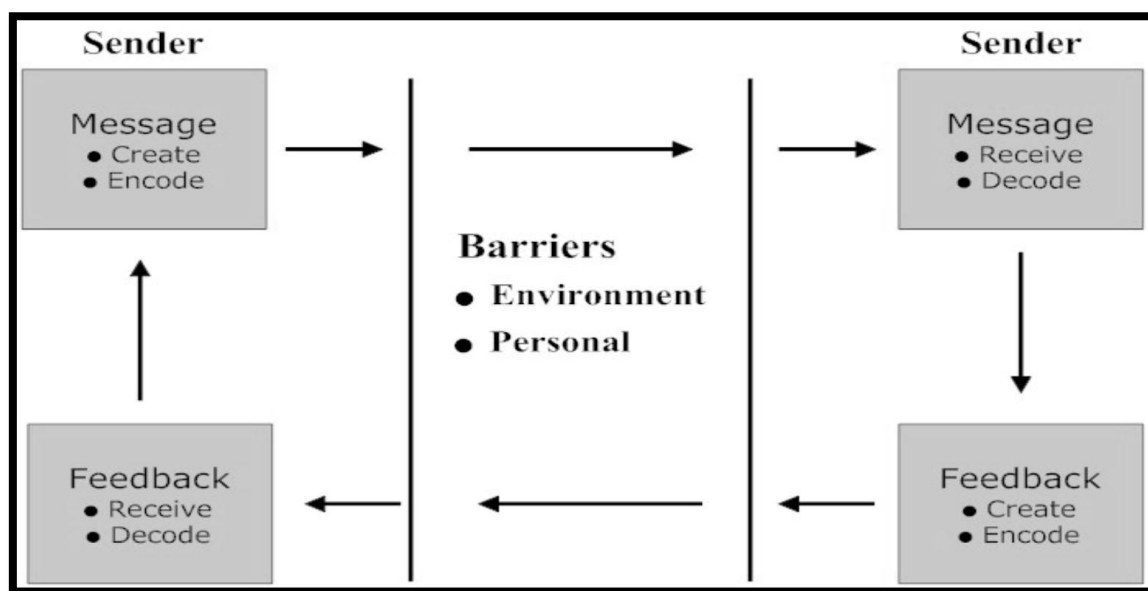


Figure 2.1: Organizational communication: *Approaches and process* (7th ed.), by Miller (2015, p. 12) Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

In the communication process, the response is measured as an essential component, as it correctively contributes to the new contributions of the information, or even works towards the alteration of the disseminator and the receiver (Azriel; 2014; 19). As Azriel (2014, p. 15) also stated that lack of feedback links to one way communication, where there is no probability of the feedback. In opposition, the two way communication is more precise and rich of information.

2.2.1 The general functions of communication

However the role of interactive communication is to share the meaning, effective business communication can be offering extensive benefits to the organizational members, and these include the following:

2.2.1.1 Achieving coordinative Action

From the top management viewpoint, the major function of business communication is to attain coordinative action. The gathering of individuals that make up a business stays just indistinct collection until they are on effective communication to one another (Berry, 2011, p. 187). Emerging information communication and sharing among the members in an organization as well as amongst the employee and customer, suppliers, distributors, alliance partners and host of outsiders provide the organization with important information it requires develop working objectives, assigning individual responsibilities, monitor its own improvement and make decision (Berry, 2011, p. 189). Communication adjusted behaviours of individual or the behaviours of the groups in the business.

The general functions of communication include:

- To convey the message
- To receive the message
- To reply or give feedback
- To clarify the communication intention
- To additionally simplify the communication process
- To conclude the communication
- To generate new communication (Miller, 2015, pp. 82-83).

To this degree, combining with Barrelas (2010, p. 61) outcomes, the application of a two-way communication may possibly direct an organization to an effective and efficient communication process.

There are challenges inherent with the actual practice of feedback in the communication process. These are:

- Receivers are not at all times able to offer response straight to transmitters
- Transmitters are not at all times ready or prepared to receive the response from receivers
- Transmitters are extra prepared, or additionally keen to obtain the response from certain receivers over the others.

Furthermore, Riley (2012, p. 16) identified the two categories of communication that are associated to the workplace communication, that is, the effective and the efficient communication. Effective communication (EC) occurs when the message of the transmitter has an effective translation from the receiver, and the efficient communication occurs when the communication is being done successfully at the lowest possible costs (Riley, 2012; p. 18). The communication process can be either formal or informal.

2.2.2 Informal communication

According to Fielding (2013, p. 42), the informal communication process is also called the grapevine. He examined the grapevine activity a little earlier and concluded that it is an unavoidable part of the organization. Furthermore, he has researched on the factors that impact it, enlightening the idea of the actuality of an informal communication network within an organization.

In particular, Husain (2013, p. 44), revised that four aspects that are correlated with the grapevine processes are the strength and significance of the communication to the workers, the degree of uncertainty and the absence of clearness of the communication to the workers, an organizational atmosphere that is apprehensive or frightening, and an organizational environment where the lack of trust take place between the employees towards the formal communication process. Furthermore, Shockley-Zalabak (2009, p. 92) suggested that the management can adopt and

implement a proactive approach concentrating in the control of this process, while evaluating the above actions.

2.2.2.1. Advantages of grapevine or informal communication in a business

- Increased competence
- Higher flexibility
- Improvement on interpersonal relationships
- Much quicker solutions to problems
- Free environment
- Increased productivity (Akam, 2011, p. 99)

Even though, the informal communication systems and processes are very challenging to evaluate and monitor, it would be a contest for any organization to discover ways and turn this apparent weakness into a capability (Fielding, 2013, p. 47).

2.2.3 Formal communication

Formal communication entails the sharing of authorised information amongst the associates through a chosen channel and map of flows, very often equivalent to the organizational map (Men, 2015, p. 462). It comprises of a given structural organization displaying the in depth flows of the internal communication (Argenti, 2010)

It is connected with the particular positions of the transmitter and the receiver or the recipient in the structure (Fay and Kline 2011, pp. 51-58). Formal communications are mostly of the written type, such as the company handbooks, manuals, bulletins, annual reports, memos, and are intended to meet the particular need of an organization. Formal communication is most frequently divided into three forms, that is, downward, upward and horizontal or lateral, signifying the direction of the information movement.

The downward movement is the flow of communication from one level of a group to a lower level in the hierarchy of an organization (Nelson and Christina, 2010, p.11). This flow is normally used for the orders and commands, instructions and responses

given from the upper level management to the employees, while the upward stream most often requests for direction, support and guidance, information and direction required by the employees or all kind of reports that are being organized for the management, as well as all potential progress ideas presented to the panel (Maduenyi, 2016, p. 46). The table below explains the differences between the upward and the downward communication

Table 2.1 Differences between upward and downward communication

	Downward communication	Upward communication
Definition	It is the process of conveying the message from the superior (top level) to the subordinate (bottom level).	It is the reverse or opposite to the downward communication i.e. it moves from the bottom level to the superiority level.
Nature	The downward communication comprises of orders, commands, counsel and the like. Thus, it is directive in nature.	It contains some recommendations, objections and, the like. Thus, it is non-directive in nature.
Application	It is appropriately found in a strict setting.	It is found in an autonomous setting.
Purpose	It is to provide the subordinates with appropriate information.	It serves the tenacity of response i.e. whether the subordinates have accurately received the message.
Frequency	It takes place quite a few times to give instruction, guidance, and commands to the subordinate.	It does not take place so regularly.

Distortion	People find slight scope to misrepresent the message here because such communication is strict and straightforward.	The message may be distorted here deliberately as the subordinates have some expectations that need to be fulfilled, such as job promotion and so on.
Initiative	Here, the higher authority takes the initiative to make communication.	Here, the subordinates take initiative to institute communication.
Management	It is an instruction category of management	It is as like as advice-giving or review category of management.

Adapted from:

Lunenburg, F.C (2010) *Communication: Process, barriers and improving effectiveness*. Schooling. Vol.1, number1, SamHoustonstate.University, www.nationalforum.com/Lunenburg.

At times, the downward channel may be selectively used for certain issues or matters. Certain subjects of information may be secured as confidential and communicated on the need-to-know basis only (Nelson and Christina, 2010, p. 13). Sharing the information with the lower level managers enhances confidence or morale, specifically when it is being used to clarify the management's actions before they occur. It is valuable for letting people know the outcomes of the management's decisions that affect or impact them in some way (Maduenyi, 2016).

The horizontal channel is required and being used by the employees in order to collaborate with their co-workers and associates (Fielding, 2013, p. 19). It may possibly be essential for the co-ordination process during the course of a project or solely the daily business operations (Nelson and Christina, 2010, p.13). It also assists the employees comprehend the problems of the other sections or divisions or departments, and the way that the work of one division may affect the work and the

productivity of the other. The table below shows the differences between the horizontal and the vertical communication.

Table 2.2 Differences between horizontal and vertical communication

	Horizontal communication	Vertical communication
Definition	Such communication flows amongst individuals at the similar hierarchy or level.	Such communication flows amongst individuals of diverse intensities.
Coordination	Such communication aids in synchronization amongst numerous subdivisions of an organisation.	It generally synchronizes the undertakings of the superior and subordinates.
Communication flow	The communication flows here is linear.	It may flow in an upward or downward system.
Methods	Oral communication is very appropriate for such communication as the transmitter and receiver belong to similar level.	Such communication normally uses transcribed or written measures and approaches
Examples	Communication amongst the procurement and marketing manager.	Communication amongst the marketing manager and marketing executives or sales agents.

Adapted from: Fielding (2013) *Effective Communication in Organizations*. 4th ed. Cape Town: Juta p.7-8.

2.2.4 External Communication

External communication has to do with disseminating information and interaction with the immediate environmental elements such as customers, suppliers, creditors, etc. (De Araujo, 2012, p. 25). However in internal communication the information flow goes downwards, upwards, vertically and horizontally within the organizational structure, in external communication, the information flow goes both inside the organization and outside of it (Fielding, 2013, p.10). Organizations communicate with the exterior world on a day-to-day basis. External communication can also be formal and informal. The effectiveness of this type of communication depends on how perfectly internal communication is handled (Husan et al., 2013).

2.2.4.1 Formal external communication

Exceptional consideration is paid to formal communication in organizations. Irrespective of how it is established, either by means of letters, e-mails, web, telephone or some other ways, effective external communication is the leading step in constructing an applicable image (Shober, 2013, p. 38). Cautiously generated letters, reports, demonstrations or web pages, direct the external world a significant message about the work and quality of business at large.

2.3 Forms of Communication

The three main forms of communication generally used by managers in an organization are:

2.3.1 Written Communication: it comprises of proposals, e-mails, letters, memos, bulletin, manuals, notices, reports, etc., in order to convey information in an organization (Fielding, 2013, p. 36).

2.3.2 Verbal communication: this entails distribution of information amongst individuals by means of speech or sound. It is the most commonly used kind of communication form during meetings, conferences, seminars, consultations, etc. It is very rich in content, because there is a great level of contact between the transmitter and the receiver (Fielding, 2013, p. 15).

2.3.3 Non-Verbal Communication: this means communicating without the use of spoken language. This includes tone, rhythm, volume, gestures and facial

expressions, body position, posture, eye contact and movements, and dress code and appearance (Fielding, 2013, p. 34).

2.4 Communication platforms

The mostly used platforms of communication include emails, telephonic, and meetings. These are being regarded as important communication vehicles for the modern work world.

2.4.1 Email

Email is more effective because it is instantaneous and can reach a mass audience rapidly, but should be used carefully as information and purpose of the message can be misinterpreted (Fowler, 2014, p. 958). Email communication, which characterizes means of interpersonal communication, is used extensively. Since email communication has more precise, comprehensive, arranged and longer expression, it has been seen as the most useful and preferred tool for computer-mediated communication. Emails are a quick, effective, and inexpensive form of communication, and have transformed the rapidity at which people can communicate with others in virtually every part of the world. On the other hand, emails are open to abuse and misuse, and individuals need to think about how they should carefully use them (Fowler, 2014).

2.4.2 Telephones

In a world where mobility and electronic communication are gradually becoming the ideal way to do business, many businesses are forgetting how significant the traditional telecommunication is when interacting with customers. The telephone offers more personal touch, enabling businesses the opportunity to incorporate the real-time two-way communication with their customers (Uddin et al., 2013, p. 96). A competent business telephone system streamlines virtuous communication between organisation and its customers. It offers a quicker interaction than email, is more subjective, and easy and fast to use. With a regular phone call, a person can talk to individuals and get feedback in real time, which can be valuable in the business scenery (Uddin et al., 2013).

2.4.3 Meetings

Meetings can be regarded as the communal influence of individuals' physical presence with their body languages. Face-to-face communication and in-person consultations can enhance competence. These meeting may also enhance creativity as the overall energy will be higher so it may allow brainstorming and solve a multitude of problems at once (Men, 2015).

Meetings and face-to-face communication may also be much more effective for those who may struggle with written communication. Every person has their own distinctive set of skills, and some people are much clearer with verbal communication other than other modes of communication (Men, 2015).

2.5 Importance of Communication

Akam (2011, p. 98) stated that communication is crucial in any business. Without communication, the management cannot obtain the required information the concerning planning and execution of business activities. The coordination of work would be impossible and the business would collapse due to the lack of effective communication. In this case, then, every act of the communication process impacts the performance in an organization. From the management point of view, all operations are only likely to be performed through communication.

Communication is very imperative in associating people together in order to achieve a mutual goal. It associates minds of the people as well as their physical capabilities. .It affects alteration of an individual or group duty performance, behaviours and conduct and also the gradual state of the business at large.

The significance of communication shall be looked at from the study of Niyatimcms (2012, p. 42) which state that the manager conveys information for numerous reasons as highlighted in Obamiro (2011) as follows:

- To attain corresponding action
- To express emotional state and feelings
- To segment information concerning the:
 - ✓ Structural objectives
 - ✓ Task instructions

- ✓ Outcomes of efforts
- ✓ Decision-making
 - To attain operational control
 - To inspire employees contribution in decision-making process
 - To generate a decent public image and status for an organization (pp.73-75)

2.5.1 Communication Network

Kibe (2014, p. 49) explained an organization as a combination of numerous people working collectively, towards its development and growth. They are frequently networking with one other and also with people outside the business or company. The communication network in a business is of two categories which are internal and external communication (De Araujo, 2012, p. 140). Internal communication is an interaction amongst the associates of the same organization and it involves both formal and also informal form of communication.

Big organizations with a numerous number of people working find it very challenging to have a direct interface with everybody. They embrace numerous strategies such as newsletters, reports and also annual reports to communicate crucial information (Shober, 2013; 32). External communication is a continuous process and this does not only take place inside the business, but with individuals outside the business. It can take on numerous methods such as public relations, marketing, advertising, demonstrations, negotiations, correspondences, telegrams and letters (De Araujo, 2012).

In addition, external communication can be oral or written. Oral communication entails the expression of information or ideas through word of mouth, whereas written communication encompasses any kind of message that makes use of written expression. Written communication is the most significant and the most effective mode of business communication.

2.5.2 Effective Communication

The effective communication process entails how partners network and interact with each other, including the formality, uniformity, and the level at which the information

exchange occurs (Niyatimcms 2012, p. 68). It is very imperative in handling human resources as well as in managing organisations effectively (Husain, 2013, p. 26). Corporation literature talks about an uncluttered and frequent information, and sanctioning for differences to be articulated as key to success and limitation of risks of partnerships (Neves and Eisenberger, 2012, p. 126). It has been eminent that communication serves a substantial part in handling social relations; nonetheless, it is improperly practised in certain perceptions.

In businesses, superiors and workers are frequently exposed to the importance of communication, though; this is not comprehended in certain circumstances (Akinyemi, 2011, p. 99). When it is not being comprehended, it activates the reactions and responses that at times find expression in the staffs turn over or planning to leave an organisation, absence of commitment to work, management difficulties and other administration associated matters (Akinyemi, 2011)

Effective communication is a mechanism or instrument that assists in constructing relationships among top management, employees and customers (Akam, 2011, p. 209). It builds admiration among them, nurture learning team to work and achieve the objective of the business as deliberated. There are four fundamental rules for effective communication, and these are:

1. Accurately be acquainted with/describe the message you want to communicate.
2. Express the message in terms that will be simply understood by the target group or individual and usually adequate.
3. Select the best mode of communication (oral, verbal, nonverbal, or written etc.)
4. Select the best communication channel for the message (Azriel, 2014, p. 83).

Effective communication it supplemented with the capability of the management to manage pressure, and construct the ability to distinguish and comprehend their feelings, and those of people they are communicating with (Akam, 2011, p. 116). This allows the management to communicate even the challenging messages without generating conflicts amongst them (Kibe, 2014).

Shober (2013, p. 102) stated that for the communication to be efficient on the business, it is essential for the executive or top management as well as employees and customers to comprehend clearly the communication competencies such as sympathetic skills, active listening skills, speaking, questioning, and also the conclusive skills (Akinyemi, 2011).

The executive or top management may communicate efficiently with their customers and employees through verbal, written or non-verbal (Sias, 2009, p.108). All these are significant means for sharing thoughts, feelings and obligations. It necessitates the management also to comprehend the feelings behind the information (Lunenburg 2010).

Without the decent corporate communication, the interior and exterior structure of the business may face common challenges that can ultimately lead to its death (Azriel 2014, p. 69). Kibe (2014, pp. 114-118) further explained that communication serves as a basis of information to the organizational associates for decision-making processes, as it supports in ascertaining and measuring alternate course of actions. The information plays a significant role in the supervision of supply chain (Klein and Rai, 2009).

2.5.2.1 Elements of effective communication

In the retail environment, effective communication involves arriving at a mutual understanding of a situation and in some instances a collective cause of action. This requires a wide range of generic communication skills, from negotiation to listening, to goal-setting and assertiveness, and being able to apply these generic skills in a variety of contents and situations.

In retail, it is likely to facilitate improvements in the exchange of information between the retail management, and the information should be expressed in the following ways:

Table 2.3 Core components of effective communication

Complete	Effective communication entails answering of all questions being asked to a level that satisfactory to those involved in the exchange
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of information.

Accurate	Indistinct jargons and biased expressions are being avoided.
Concise	Word expressions are shortened or else omitted. It includes only applicable statements and avoids redundant duplication.
Clear	Short acquainted conversational words are used to construct effective and comprehensible messages.
Concrete	Words used mean what they say. They are precise and considered. Precise facts are given.

Adapted from: (Azriel Winnett (2014). Vital steps for effective communication [www.hodu.com \(business.com.shtml\)](http://www.hodu.com/business.com.shtml) visited date 18 September, 2018).

Shoprite client information processing policy (2017, p. 5) reports that to improve communication within the retail setting may lead to:

- Better customer service
- Improved quality of service delivery
- Improved partnerships
- Decrease in communication barriers.

2.5.3 Functions of effective communication

Gopinath, and Becker (2009, p. 84), are one of the individuals who specified that communication procedures which are functioned through the communication process are characterized into four core categories which are; information, control, emotional expression and motivation.

2.5.3.1 Information

Communication plays an imperative part in decision-making for the reason that it offers to individuals the indispensable information so that it enables them to establish and weigh alternate choices, and thus undergo the greatest potential decision (Gopinath, and Becker, 2009, p. 80). It also lessens the business insecurity for the workforce when they are completely acknowledged about everything (Kandlousi et al.; 2010).

2.5.3.2 Motivation

De Araujo et. al. (2010, p. 44) indicated that, through communication, the organizational executive is able to regulate and measure structural members, streamline to workers as to what needs to be done, how it is done and to classify the ways to improve their performance levels. This effort of administration is for setting goals, response in the direction of the goal and strengthening of the anticipated behaviour inspiring incentive and communication is vital of such control (Gopinath, and Becker, 2009).

2.5.3.3 Emotional expression

The other function of communication is the emotions. Neves and Eisenberger (2012, p. 25) additionally stated that it is the means for fulfilling peoples' need for collaboration, and this interaction is the foremost indicator for enthusiasm. So it is important to take a cautious caption of individuals' emotions since they prepare for behaviour that might lead to some improvements (Fielding, 2013).

2.5.3.4 Control

Control is associated with the procedures that the employees are expected to keep an eye on (Shober, 2013, p. 35). Organizations very frequently try to control people and their doings through the setting up of official communication. Kibe (2014, p. 11) further elaborate that on the other hand, casual communication can also serve as a behavioural regulator where certain cluster sustains control by sharing the standards and the procedures to be followed.

2.5.3 Effects of effective communication and information sharing

Communication and information sharing are one of the very imperative skills and the necessity for the efficient management process, through which the superiors initiate and maintain alliances amongst teams in order to carry out essential day-to-day responsibilities appropriately (Abbas and Barootian, 2010, p. 19). So, communication is one of the most substantial components of the supply chain and its management processes. Proficient and accurate communication in an organization has frequently been a crucial part of success in management (Riley, 2012).

The sharing of information is an important feature of synchronization amongst the parties in supply chain. This can strengthen the supply chain competence by diminishing inventories and flattening production.

Effective communication is certain and serves as a compulsory activity of distinct, group, organization and community in all human societies (Riley, 2012, p. 218). A supply chain stays associated by flows of data, finance and material by the suppliers, manufacturers, merchants, distributors and consumers (Hitt et al, 2011. P. 57). Familiarity has verified that, if an organization is not in an appropriate communication, movement of affaires will be troubled and messed.

Planning, scheduling, organization, control and other roles in the absence of an effective communication structure, are not recognized and the probability of managing organizations will not be provided (Azriel, 2014).

Barrelas (2010) further elaborated that communication is a synchronisation of connections and associations that are present amongst organizational bodies. In today's organizations, information has to be conveyed more rapidly than any other time (Shober, 2013: 19). Communication is compulsory to improve the objectives of an organization, for the reason that, this duty relates other management responsibilities together (Cummings, 2011; 69).

Berry (2011, p. 65) discovered structural communication to possess a significant optimistic relationship with affective obligation, although Miller (2012, p. 142) discoveries recommended a solid relationship amongst communication procedures and job gratification and affective occupational obligation. Investigation has revealed that when the employee requirements are being met through adequate communication, then the employees are further probable to construct operative work relationships (Riley, 2012).

2.6 Benefits of productive sharing of information in the workplace

Poor communication in the corporate environment may be very costly. It may possibly lead to decisions that are made with wrong suppositions and variable information (Miller, 2012; 40). One of the foremost communication problems consist of groups and subdivisions working independently and not sharing the information,

and this absence of cooperation may destroy an emerging business. In order to solve this problem, a unified version of certainty in the business should be encouraged. This means that the business have to adopt openness and enhanced sharing of information across the business. The following benefits can be attained through the valuable sharing of information within the business:

2.6.1 Improve delivery to customers

Customers value an organization that can show its extensive capability and the ability to use it to their advantage (Kibe, 2014; 57). Furthermore, the ability to supply on time is crucial and may help the business segregate itself amongst its contestants. Sharing understanding and knowledge can certainly decrease the time required to deliver a product, service, or information which results in customer satisfaction (Kibe, 2014; 59).

2.6.2 Stimulates growth and innovation

Most organizations have the foremost determination of accumulating revenue, but this can be a bit challenging when the competition intensifies. By handling information appropriately, employees and customers can gain access to valuable amount of information and deliver enhanced outcomes. The organization inspires innovation and, directly accomplishes growth very easy.

2.6.3 Empower faster and better decision-making

When the customers are facing complications or an organization has to analyse trends, comprehend competition or design new strategies, it tend to search for resourceful information in order to support such undertakings (Berry, 2011; 188). Information under load or overload can make this process difficult if it has not been resolved accordingly.

Nevertheless, using information again and again in different sources allows the decisions to be grounded on the genuine experiences of the members in the organization (Berry, 2011; 190). All these responsibilities can be executed competently if it's easy to find what is being needed and, most significantly, when is it being needed.

2.6.4 Improved Business Practices

As companies become more worldwide and mobile, business procedures are altering to permit integration of partnerships in the enterprise (Nelson and Christina 2010:11). Cooperation clarifications may expressively improve business operations by refining communication amongst different subdivisions or departments in a people centric way.

2.7 Main Issues to Effective Communication

2.7.1 Effective Communication

Azriel (2014) stated that in order for any business to prosper there must be a two-way of communication. It requires an operative communication (OP) amongst the transmitter and receiver and also vice versa. It entails the management to communicate effectually with the customers, suppliers and employees as well as the response given instantaneously to the management for the decision making process (Miller, 2012: 41). Therefore, communication is a crucial point of accomplishment of any operational business, and a significant instrument for efficient and enhanced attainment of organizational goal/s (Miller, 2012: 41-42).

2.7.2 Organizational Climate and Communication

Organisational environment is an instant discernment which people have regarding an organisation. It is about a structure of collective meaning detained by the members that differentiates the organisation from the other organisations. Therefore, the organisational climate is very significant in the perspective of communication it is thus an overall manifestation of what the organisation is (Barrelas, 2010).

It has been characterized that communication can ascend either from the informal networks of communication (grapevine or gossip), or the formal networks of communication (Fay et al, 2011, p. 208). The grapevine communication or gossips, the organisation has no total control over the gossips or grapevine as they neither generated nor demolished it, and there is no official superior- subordinate association (Fay et al, 2011).

Banihashemi (2011, p. 62) stated that regardless of the draw backs it possesses, grapevine act as the driving force to loosen the employees in cases of the mutual

matters, also offers the opportunity for the generation of innovative thoughts and ideologies that flows at a rapid speed, offer instant response or reaction and as a result gratify the communication requirements of numerous employees.

Akam (2011, p. 96) explained that the organisational environment is a foundation of an individual's ingenuity, provides the degree of accountabilities, self-determination and individuality that individuals possess. They additionally described that organisational environment characterized by organisational support (the degree to which an organisation provides distinct communication, support and sustenance to its subordinates (Akam 2011, p. 98). It provides numerous guidelines and directions and the amount of direct control that is being used to manage and control the employee behaviours and performances, therefore it is the communication arrangements, the degree to which organisational communication are constrained to the official chain of command (Fielding, 2013).

2.7.3 External Communication effectiveness

Akam (2011, p. 102) refer external communication as the communication with individuals outside an organisation. It encompasses communication with the sellers, consumers, external businesses and other stakeholders and opponents or competitors (Nelson and Christina 2010, p. 9). It is very crucial for the creation of brand image and identity. The intention of external communication is to expand the overall enactment, public goodwill, commercial appearance, and therefore accomplish organisational goals and consumer contentment (Akam 2011).

2.8 Barriers to effective business communication

Competence in business communication is often hindered by certain obstacles that may seem to have simple root causes; nevertheless they really stalk from a multitude of quite composite grounds (Fay and Kline, 2011, pp. 67-71). In numerous interactions, the message might not be received accurately the way the source anticipated. So, it is very important that the communicator seek out response in order to check that the message is visibly understood (Gopinath, and Becker, 2009, pp. 68-83).

Individuals tend to respond in diverse ways to the same reason, grounded on their own experiences, customs and understanding aptitudes (Eriksson, 2010, p. 399). For example, individuals who arisen from diverse cultures observe and comprehend information in diverse ways. Amongst other features, enthusiasm and character plays a significant part in the procedure of interpreting and understanding the message (Fay and Kline, 2011).

Communication is the crucial aspect in the success of any business. When it comes to efficient communication process, there are certain obstructions that every business or organization faces, that why uncluttered or effective communication is not constantly attained. Cummings (2011, p. 82) proclaimed that, the difficulty of effective communication is unluckily bigger than just the acknowledgement of its scale and significance. Rosen et al, (2010, p. 16) identified that the key barriers contrary to the effective communication on the business are status differences, gender differences, language, and inadequate time.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

In the conceptual framework there are two interrelated variables and there is no way in which they can be separated. The dependent variables are variables that the researcher measure in order to institute the change or the consequence generated on them. Dependent variable waits for an outcome of an independent variable. Independent variables are the variable that can be handles or manipulated in order to determine whether or not the outcomes obtained is due to it (Adam and Kamuzora, 2009).

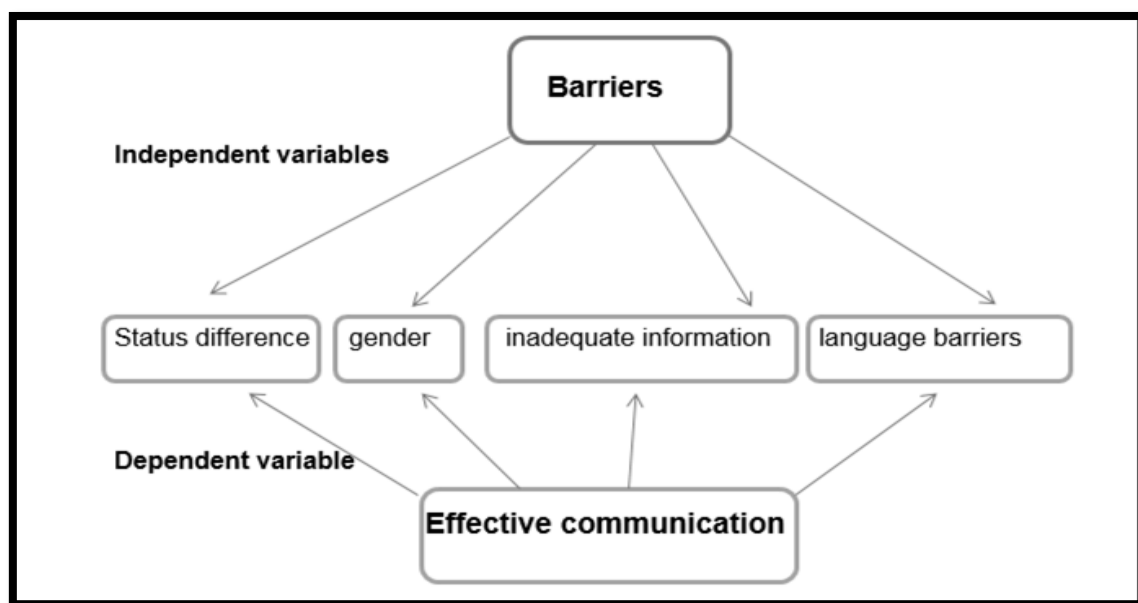
In this study the effective communication is a dependent variable which is affected by the number of independent variables which are being termed as the barriers to effective communication which can be status differences, gender differences, language, and inadequate time.

Also the methods used in communication are the additional independent variables in the organization, of which such methods can be telephone, emails, meetings etc. Telephone distortion may lead to poor communication on the business, and this situation may possibly create information overloading or under loading because of information failing to reach an appropriate person at the precise time. Additionally,

communication channels such as downwards, upwards, horizontal and the grapevine communication generally cause effective and ineffective communication in the organization depending on how the message is being transmitted.

An appropriate flow of communication through using means and forms may generate effective or ineffective communication because of many echelons in the business structure which interferes and cause the delay in the transmission and distortion of the intended message (Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta, 2011).

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework



Source: Author's personalised structure 2018

2.9.1. Status Differences

This type of obstacle happens as a result of the dissimilarities in structural chain of command, where the workers are struggling to communicate either up or down the business hierarchy (Asma, 2010, p. 69). Position in the organizational ladder, contextual, education, status, and the authority contribute to those insights of respect. Status variances can generate a prejudice against the ones with the apparent inferior position/status (Gopinath, and Becker, 2009).

2.9.2 Gender Differences

Zaineb (2010, p. 6) discussed that there are gender communication variances for the motive that strings of a women's' and a men's' intelligence varies when it moves

toward to the discourse. Males usually talk in a coherent way whereas females combine emotions and reasoning altogether. Smith (2015, p. 8) stated that gender communication variances takes place for the reason that males and females communicate in a different way, which is frequently mistaken by one another.

2.9.3 Inadequate time

Deficiency of sufficient time is the other matter that would be problematic for the operative communication (Smith, 2013, p. 16). When it comes to business growth, the time is under no circumstances sufficient for the projects to be finished, and everybody protest that they ran out of time, or that the time limit is more or less over. An excessive challenge when constrained for time would be to administer proper communication networks. Inadequate information sharing can be a source of several complications to communication itself, nevertheless as well as to the accomplishment of goal (Canary, 2011).

2.9.4 Language Barriers

Individuals everywhere the world communicates in diverse languages, and having diverse style of communicating (Bolman, 2013, p. 18). Binary persons belonging to the same constituency does not imply that they also communicate in the similarly. Every portion of the world has its specific communication behaviours. So, the communication style surely creates variance, and it can also be precarious if taken the wrong way (Gopinath, and Becker, 2009).

Zaineb (2010, p. 46). described that people regularly sense that communication is as simple and easy as it sounds but what makes it difficult, frustrating and challenging are the obstructions that come in its way which can be emotional barriers, perceptual barriers, psychological barriers, cultural barriers, and physical an language barriers.

On the basis of the barriers stated, the simple way one can advance the effective business communication is by altering one's views, opinions and feelings with one's co-workers (Zaineb, 2010, p. 85). By so doing, this does not just disrupt the communication barriers, but also construct and shape relationships that work magnificently for a long term.

If each individual in an organisation take their responsibility efficiently, and communicate to each other, works in thorough effectiveness with one another, no

matter how many obstructions come along liable employees, the senior management will constantly know how to overcome problems and barriers to communication.

2.10 Overcoming barriers to communication

Zaineb (2010, p. 68) provided the fact that communication is been distorted by the above stated obstructions, it is essential to mention various methods or techniques that may possibly advance the organizational communication process. One of the safest ways to prevent misinterpretation and incorrectness in communication is to provide or to request feedback. In order for the transmitter of the sender to be guaranteed that the message is completely understood by the receiver, a series of questions associated to the message conveyed could be asked (Fielding, 2013).

2.10.1 Active listening

Listening is very important when communication and it is not an easy thing to do. It necessitates intellectual determination and complete attentiveness (Smith, 2015, p. 40). Most people have the capability to hear, but very few of the can actually listen. Listening abilities also influence a company's collaboration with customers and other external businesses. In order to improve listening skills, it is important to give another person full attention and retain eye interaction. When the sender has finished speaking, the receiver should rephrase their statements and then inquire whether the message is correctly understood (Smith, 2015).

2.10.2 Technology

Technology has become an exceptional part of organizational existence. This means that organizational associates should become more familiar with the new technologies, and also be aware of the methods that advance the communication process between people since technology can be regarded as one of the most important tools of communication creativeness.

2.10.3 Goal setting

Another method that would assist to prevent interruption and misrepresentation in the communication process is through the setting of objectives and goals (Smith, 2015, p. 67). It would be very obliging for the organization if managers or superiors from time to time would gather together and outline the long and short terms goals of

the organization, and how those goals could be achieved. In this way, things would be simplified and very clear for both edges and message distortion would be avoided.

2.10.4 Use affirming responses.

The communication response sent the communicator must acknowledge their experiences. They should be thanked for their input, and assert their right to their emotional state, even if there is disagreement in the communication process. Questions should be asked, express affirmative feeling, and also positive feedback should be provided where possible (Weger et al., 2010).

2.10.5 Shorter communication chain

Using the mediocre or send the message through the third person should be avoided, except if it is urgent (Weger et al., 2010, p. 33). Communication should by all means be sent directly to the person concerned. The risk of distortion of facts gets more if the message is passed through the third or fourth party, and just imagine if there are more people in between the sender and receiver the chances of filtering of the messages is doubled (Weger et al., 2010).

2.10.6 Uncomplicated Organizational Structure

This refers to the type of structure that an organization uses to separate authority and power, roles and responsibilities, and the way in which the information flows throughout the organization. The organizational structure should be simple and understandable. The number of hierarchical echelons has to be optimal. There should be an ultimate span of control within an organization.

2.11 Factors Influencing Organizational Communication

Berry (2011, p. 188) described several factors that influence the effective communication process in the work organization. The formal network of communication is the means of communication that is sanctioned and possibly administered by the managers which comprises of the regular reports and memos and staff gatherings. Christensen and Cornelissen (2011, p. 419) identified that the formal networks of communication encourage communication success in dualistic

ways such as the formal networks shield an ever flaring distance as the organisations advance and mature.

Additionally it can constrain the free flow of information amongst the organisational levels. This is the most frequently but challenging to accomplish particularly if the management is less proficient in decision-making, as well as if there is less of control of its employees (Canary, 2011, p. 45). The formal networks impacts the effective communication by keeping subordinates up-to-date on the organization news, procedures, principles, intentions and several trends.

It cuts through the entire organisation and communicates messages about the organisational climate, environmental concerns, impending strategies and staff concern (Atwater and Waldman, 2011).

2.11.1 Authority structure

The organisations' structure of authority has a comparable effect on the communication effectiveness (Miller, 2012, p. 23). Christensen and Cornelissen (2011, p. 419) stated that status and power alterations in a business assist in regulating who should communicate with whom. He additionally enlightened that the accuracy and content of communication may also be exaggerated by authority alterations, for instance, the dialogue amongst the manager and employee might well be categorized by slightly courtesy and formality (Christensen and Cornelissen, 2011).

2.11.2 Job specialization

According to Christensen and Cornelissen (2011, p. 421), job specialization generally facilitates the communication process within distinguished groups. The associates of similar group are likely to share similar interests, purposes time limits or horizons, responsibilities and subjective styles (Gullin, 2009, p. 53). The challenge of this form of communication is that there is a likeliness of constraining communication amongst vastly discerned groups due to possibly dissimilar interests.

2.11.3 Information ownership

Information ownership entails that the employees process distinctive information and understanding about their jobs (Gullin, 2009, p. 66). For example, the head of human resources division may have a predominantly effective way of controlling and

managing conflict between the employees. The key challenge of this method of communication is that lots of individuals with such abilities and understanding are reluctant to share this information with others; therefore, absolutely, open communication within the organisation does not take place at all (Gullin, 2009).

2.12 Strategic Partnerships and Information sharing

Gray and Laidlaw (2014, p. 425) described these partnerships as the kinds of partnerships where by the partners work together tactically on a shared problem, which they would in cooperation like to see it resolved. It obliges as an important method for the endurance of enterprises and enabler of supply chain assimilation. It entails an official cooperation between the two or more commercial initiatives, typically formalized by one or more business contracts.

In these partnerships, partners see intractable glitches that affect both their mission, and these individual partners are not in a position to tackle the problems by themselves. They are required to cooperate to tackle the problem and succeed. They have the most impending potential for added value, since joining forces allow the actors to reach outcomes that neither individual partner would have achieved alone (Googins and Nochlin, 2012).

2.12.1 Importance of Partnerships

Partnerships are vital for the reason that it permits people and groups to labour together in order to attain a shared goal or acquire some shared paybacks (Men, 2015, p. 452). It also permits the partakers to give-and-take valued information which supports both sides in improving their understanding bases and work in a time- and resource-efficient manner (Cheng and Wu, 2015)

Cooperative interactions can result in a one-time association amongst parties to accomplish a goal, or can encompass recurring meetings and events to allow the parties to continue work together openly. Men (2015, p. 454) further stated that is understood that cooperative partnerships are not always an easy thing to achieve in the workplace, but it is worth the effort, because it leads to a more pleasurable and productive operation.

The benefits of a partnership comprise that:

- two heads or more are better than one
- the business is easy to institute and maintain
- high competent employees can be associated together for better outcomes
- there is limited external regulation
- higher flexibility
- shares responsibility
- better decision-making (pp. 457-459).

2.13 The golden rules for information-sharing

Working Together (2015, pp.7-8) states that efficient sharing of information among the specialists and native interventions is crucial for the operative identification, valuation and service delivery. He further stated that the timely sharing of information is the basic to providing operative initial help valuation where there are evolving complications. These golden rules for information sharing are as follows:

1. Do not forget that the Data Protection Act is not an obstacle to the sharing of information, but it offers a context to ascertain that the personal information about corporeal people is shared accurately.
2. Openness and honesty with the person from the start about what, how, why, when and with whom the information could be shared, and request their agreement, except if it is insecure or unsuitable to do so.
3. Request for guidance if there is any uncertainty, without revealing the individuality of the person anywhere possible.
4. Share with consensus where suitable and where possible, admire the desires of those who do not agree to share the some confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. An individual needs to base their judgement on the facts of the case.
5. Deliberate protection and well-being: Base your information-sharing choices on deliberations of the security and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their activities and actions.

6. Essential, comparable, applicable, precise, appropriate and safe: Make certain that the information being shared is essential for the drive for which it is being shared, is shared merely with those individuals who need to have it, is precise and updated, is shared in a suitable manner, and is being shared accurately and appropriate.

7. Retain a record of the selected choice or decision and the motives for it – whether it is to share the information or not to. If to share it is the decision, then what has been shared, with whom and for what purpose, should be recorded (HM Government, March 2015).

2.14 Managerial communication

More contemporary leadership studies proclaim the point that operational and efficient leadership at the workplace comprises of the continuous use of communication mechanisms so as to generate intellect, shared vision and to construct a shared purpose.

Canary (2011, p. 67) stated that the managerial competence and success significantly depends on the managements' ability to direct communications internally and externally with supreme competence. Certain expertise and capabilities were identified which can add to the intensification of communication usefulness (Grandien and Johansson, 2012, p. 164). The management, as the key disseminators, have to possess the following skills and expertise:

- To disseminate pure and thorough messages
- To encrypt the messages in codes that the receiver will comprehend
- To choose the most sufficient setting for conveying the message
- To prevent or avoid misrepresenting the information
- To make certain that the response mechanism is assimilated in the messages
- To offer detailed information so as to make certain that rumours do not spread (Azriel 2014).

The management must become competent and well-organized as well. In this case, the following capabilities are being reflected as necessary:

- To be attentive
- To be good listeners
- To manifest empathy
- To comprehend the language styles by being conscious of the diverse cultures (Akam 2011).

At the present time, communication is consistently acknowledged as the fundamental aspect to organisational excellence and success (Miller, 2012, p.18). In spite of how strong the company is, it cannot function appropriately without the decent communication structure. The communication process holds an organisation together and makes it work (West and Turner, 2010, p. 39). Communication efficiency is essential for the success of the entire organisation. As in everyday existence, in an organisational communication it is being referred to two basic categories:

- The verbal communication (transcribed, spoken and recently, electronic, with the comment that there are writers who reflect that this kind of communication should be taken discretely; the mutual element with the other two is the use of the word/s as an essential constituent)
- The non-verbal communication (which possesses a countless amount of the capacity of conveyed messages, virtually 70 per cent, and which has such forms as the signs, impersonators, voice tone or promptness) (Shockley-Zalabak, 2009).

2.15 Theoretical Framework

2.15.1 Theory

Dainton and Zelley (2015, p. 44) described the theory as a set of rationally connected statements and conceptions that offer a dependable description for the perceived phenomenon. They saw constructs, known as the concepts, as valuable in

constructing theories. The following section is the discussion of theories that are being applicable to this study.

2.15.2 Communication Accommodation Theory

The communication accommodation theory is a social cognitive approach that was first developed by Giles and the associates in the year 1973. It focuses on the procedures that go into an individual's perception of the setting or environment, and the communicative behaviours therein. More precisely, this theory attempts to explain both the motivations and constraints acting upon speech shifts that occur in human interactions. Speech shifts are simply changes in a person's speech that can lead to different conditions, depending on the context of the interaction (Baxter et al, 2009).

According to the theory, the communicative behaviour takes place as a result of designating their approaches and attitude towards each other, and obliges to gauge the level of social detachment amongst the interactants. This continuous changing of communicative behaviour as an approach to move towards and away from each other is called an accommodation (Soliz and Giles, 2014).

At first, Baker et al. (2011, p. 381) described that "correspondents are driven to control their communication styles with respect to one another, by means of uttering morals, attitudes, and purposes" The second idea proposes that how we retort to another is influenced by how we understand and observe the individual's speech.

This theory designates two core accommodation practices. The convergence practice, talks about the approaches through which entities adjust to each other's communicative behaviours so as to lessen these societal variances (Dougherty et al. 2010, p. 163). In the time being, it also elaborates about the divergence practice which denotes the instances in which entities draw attention to the speech and the non-verbal variances amongst themselves and their panellists (Dougherty et al. 2010).

Occasionally, when the entities attempt to participate on integration they can also end up over-accommodating, and regardless of their decent purposes, their integration may be understood as patronising (Baker et al., 2011).

2.15.3 Components of Communication Accommodation Theory (Framework)

According to Soliz and Giles (2014, p. 108) this theory “explores the different ways in which we put up our communication, our motivations for doing so, and the consequences”. It argues that during the communication process, individuals will try to accommodate or modify their style of speaking to others, and this is done in two ways: divergence and convergence. Figure 2.3 below shows different components for the theory.

Figure 2.3 Communication Accommodation Theory components

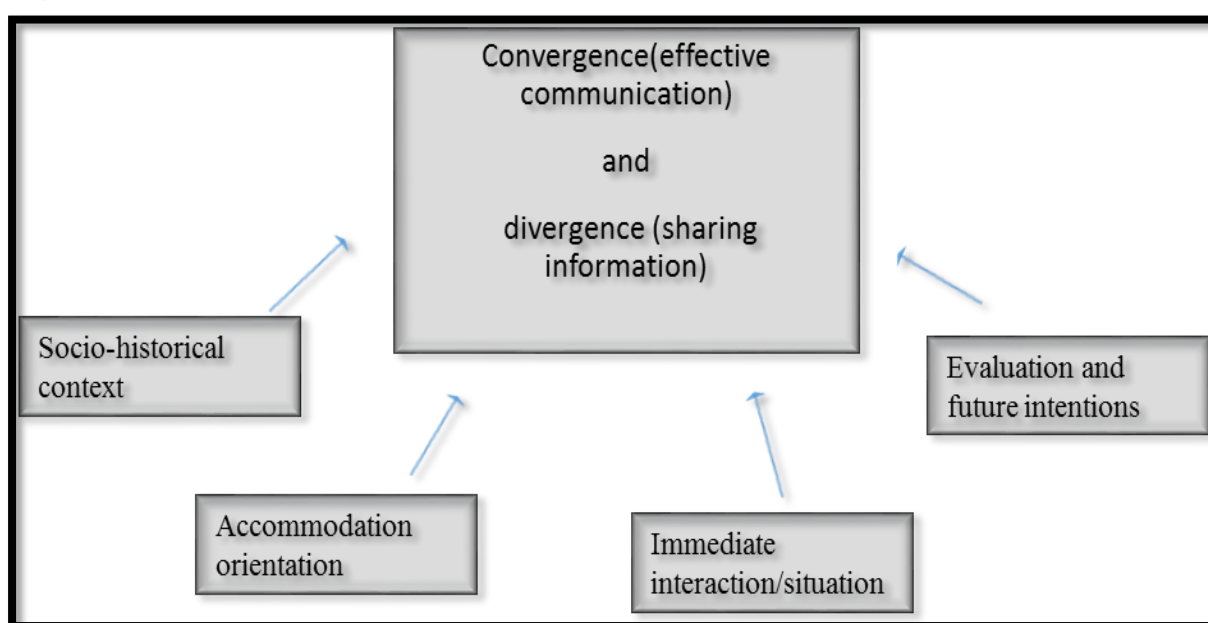


Figure 2.3 Communication Accommodation Theory components. Adapted from Relational and identity processes in communication: A contextual and meta-analytical review of Communication Accommodation Theory by from Soliz and Giles, 2014, p. 48 Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

2.15.3.1 Socio-historical context

This component entails that, before an interaction takes place amongst two parties, there are pre-established associations amongst the individuals and the clusters to which they belong to. Historical context comprises of an anticipation of the sender and the receiver in circumstances that occur frequently or have taken place in the past. The social context is a subjective matter. It contains the relationship of the

sender and the receiver, and the anticipations involved in that relationship (Soliz and Giles, 2012).

2.15.3.2 Orientation of Accommodation

Accommodative orientation can be referred to as speaker's tendencies to observe encounters without group members on interactive terms, inter-group terms, or the combination of the two. It involves the stance each communicator assumes regarding whether or not they are likely to perceive the encounter as inter-personal or inter-group (Dougherty et al. 2010).

2.15.3.3 Actual/Immediate interaction

The immediate situation refers to the moment when the concrete communication takes place between the parties (Baker et al., 2011, p. 47). It is formed by five interconnected characteristics which are; socio-psychological states, goals and addressee focus, socio-linguistic strategies (such as convergence and/or divergence), behaviour and tactics (such as the subject matter, pronunciation) and labelling and ascriptions (Dougherty et al. 2010).

2.15.3.4 Evaluation and future intentions

Within this component, Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) addresses how the communicators evaluate their communicative counterpart and whether or not they are likely to seek interactions with the individual in the future (West and Turner, 2010).

At the extent of businesses and occupation, the accommodation theory was thought to inspire contentment one has with the occupation, and the output that one owns in that occupation through convergence with or divergence from the associates together with their work surroundings (Dainton and Zelley, 2015).

2.15.4 Application of the study

2.15.4.1 Socio-historical context- these constructs has been be used to explore the influence of socio-historical context on effective communication and information sharing at Spar.

2.15.4.2 Orientation of accommodation- this idea has been used to investigate the influence of orientation of accommodation on effective communication and information sharing.

2.15.4.3 Actual/Immediate interaction- using these concepts the study has studied the influence of actual/immediate interaction of Spar in terms of effective communication and information sharing.

2.15.4.4 Evaluations and future intentions- this has been used to explore the evaluations and future intentions on effective communication and information sharing at Spar.

Furthermore, this theory has been used to study other benefits, barriers and consequences or effects of effective communication, and some challenges of contributing to effective communication and positive sharing of information.

2.15.5 Convergence

This tactic happens when the speakers incorporate with or show social approval of another by constructing their speech more parallel to that of the other. Convergence has also been defined as the method whereby the individuals alternate their speech styles to become more like that of those with whom they are interacting with (Soliz and Giles, 2014).

When the individuals converge, it demonstrates a longing for the social recognition, incorporation, identification, and/ or an efficient communication with one another (Soliz and Giles, 2014, p. 128). There are several things that take place when two individuals come across each other. According to Akam (2011, p. 81), there is an inclination for two individuals to become more similarly in terms of their semantics, articulation, language rates, pauses, word lengths, verbal strengths, and in the familiarity of their self-disclosure.

Convergence is typically taken in an affirmative way by the others, and stimulates smooth communicative interactions (Soliz and Giles, 2014, p.131). On the interview situations, convergence has been instituted to improve social desirability and capability rankings.

Communication accommodation theory has been developed out of research investigating numerous interpersonal procedures. One of these, the similarity-attraction procedure, was important to the expansion and improvement of the communication accommodation theory. It states that the more an individual's principles and approaches are parallel to another's, the more that individual will be attracted to the other (Soliz and Giles, 2014, p. 126). Converging one's speech is one way an individual can seem similar to another individual.

Outcomes of the studies recommend that the more an individual requires another one's consent, the more she/he will converge his/her speech and attempt to sound like another person. This convergence takes place relatively because individuals want the contact to carry on and want to look more corresponding with an individual with whom they are interacting with.

Convergence for consent may also take place because of the longing for future interfaces with each other, or for the reason those previous converging encounters. Dougherty et al. (2010, p. 167) found this to hold true on the interview circumstances. On their research, the contenders were more probable to converge on the speech rate and also the period when they were trying to sound pleasant to the investigator.

The results of the study by Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2011, p. 245) recommend that an unlimited deal of how we perceive others has to do with an attitudinal resemblance. We are like others who possess comparable attitudes to ours, supposing that we signify our own attitudes. When the other person shares our own attitudes, this provides us validation and a feeling of shared reception. Individuals report being more fascinated to others who are more comparable to them, and also respond more favourably to them.

One of the reasons individuals are doubtful of those who are unlike them is the terror of modification and control. Broome's research presents a clear reason as to why individuals would want to accommodate, that is, if they are perceived as more comparable, then they feel that they will be adored further. Certainly, it is very significant to realize that on the accommodation circumstances, it is an individual's insight of the other's discourse that will regulate the estimative and communicative reactions (Dougherty et al. 2010).

Convergence may reproduce an individual's longing for the social incorporation or identification (Toma 2014, p.121). For instance, when the subordinate status clusters alter their language to more closely align that of the advanced status groups in the hope of attaining their endorsement and recognition. Advanced status groups might possibly converge in the direction of the lower status groups for further intellectual motives.

Barrelas (2010, p. 29) opposed that people of higher status might adopt some of the communication patterns of the subordinate status speakers, such as the slower speech frequency, in order to support them better comprehend the message. An individual might also converge for the reason that, that individual feels the plunders be more important than the costs (Soliz and Giles, 2014, p. 132). Communication accommodation theory also draws upon the social discussion theory to generate this idea (Giles et al. 2010).

The social exchange theory recommends that before an action is taken by an individual, he or she must first attempt to figure out the plunders and the prices of the alternative actions (Soliz and Giles, 2012, p. 136). Then, the action that has the maximum probability of generating a positive consequence is taken. By converging the speech to that of the others, individuals frequently sense that the rewards could be abundant, as formerly stated (Toma, 2014, p. 48). It has also been observed that individuals will be more probable to converge if they feel that they are already alike in speaking style to the other. Therefore, the recipient will be a more possible target to shift (Giles et al. 2010).

Whatever the longing of the converging person, it is the listener's insight of the drive of the convergence that frequently regulates the consequence of the encounter (Baker et al., 2011, p. 382). Communication accommodation theory also draws upon the fundamentals of causal attribution theory to enlighten the concept of convergence in communication (Soliz and Giles, 2012, p. 137). Causal attribution theory states that individuals assess others and their behaviour based on the motivations and drives that are recognized as the motive for their behaviour.

Frequently, listeners attribute a pronounced communication or message to an exact intent on the part of the speaker. This intent is being regarded as definitely or adversely affects how the speaker is perceived.

As a result, if someone does not converge, adverse provenances may be made. According to the study by Dougherty et al, (2010, p. 26), it was established that if the listener endorsed the speaker's convergence as being done to gain interpersonal intimacy, and break down the cultural obstructions, then it was absolutely and positively received. Nevertheless, if the listener observed and viewed the convergence as obligatory or due to more exterior pressures, it was observed and viewed more adversely.

Even though convergence is commonly assessed positively, it can go wrong if taken to an extreme. Over convergence may occur and is viewed adversely when an individual's level of convergence is observed as unsuitable for the particular circumstances (Giles et al. 2010).

The speaker rankings were highest when he converged on either one or two intensities. On the other hand, when he converged on all three echelons, the rankings went down, as the conveyer was seen as being condescending. Thus, Toma (2014, p. 236) recommended that there are optimum echelons of convergence that can be gotten, and going further than them can have adverse significances.

Convergence is a very decent way of accumulating the competence of communication, minimising uncertainty and interpersonal nervousness, and also maximising common understanding which is also a motive for individuals to converge (Dougherty et al., 2010).

2.15.6 Divergence

Dougherty (2010, p. 166) explains divergence as a communication approach of accentuating the dissimilarities in speech and non-verbal behaviour amongst the communicators. Individuals usually communicate in a divergent way to accentuate, either to themselves or to the other, that they belong in a dissimilar group that the other party is not a part of (Griffin, 2012, p. 399). The fundamental intention is in the longing to signal uniqueness and strengthen group distinctiveness (Soliz and Giles 2012, 106). If two entities are involved in the communication process, and one or both of the come to consider themselves or the other as representatives of the group, they will deviate from each other.

In divergence, the speakers detach with or show discontentment of others by deviating their speech from that of the other (Griffin, 2012, p. 396). The speaker using divergence strategy is trying to make the speech dissimilar from the other's, and essentially uses the behaviour contrasting to the other's, for numerous potential reasons (Giles et al. 2010, p. 201). Divergent communicators base their behaviours on their individual insights of other participant's' principles, anticipations, and/or stereotypes.

In contrast to its furcate equivalency, divergence can be described as an emphasis of alterations and serves as the means by which the participant can institute and highlight his or her relationship with a certain social group that is not characterized by another participant (Soliz and Giles, 2012, p. 237). Assumed that communication features are frequently fundamental magnitudes of what it is to be a member of the group, divergence can be considered as a very significant approach of demonstrating a valued individuality from another.

This aids to withstand a constructive image of one's in-group, and therefore to reinforce one's social uniqueness. Instances where there is a necessity for the divergence are when the specialists are with customers or clients (Dougherty et al., 2010, p. 171). Communicating in a style to make speech dissimilar can also be understood as a sign of aversion towards an individual or the group.

Divergence, nevertheless, does not certainly occur as a countenance of attitudes. Relatively, an individual may possibly diverges his or her speech in order to improve the understanding of the communication process. Divergence could be used in this way as an endeavour to make one's partner alter his or her approach (Soliz and Giles, 2012).

Divergence can nevertheless be seen as an undesirable behaviour, and it can upset and/or offend others (Turner and West, 2010, p. 96). The recipients of divergence have a tendency to regard it as undesired and unpleasant behaviour, as it can be understood as being exclusive rather than comprehensive behaviour. In addition, the recipients might feel that they are the cause of divergence for the reason that they do not deserve the other party's respect or constructive honour (Soliz and Giles, 2012).

As Turner and West (2010, p. 24) placed it: divergence might be a method for adherents of the different groups to preserve their ethnic personality, a technique to compare self-images when another person is treated as a member of an undesirable group, and the way to signify authority or status dissimilarities.

2.15.7 Strengths of Communication Accommodation theory

Diverse writers have diverse sentiments about the communication accommodation theory. For example, one of the most important concentrations of the communication accommodation theory is the diverse roles of discussions on individuals' lives. The theory's utmost strength is that it can be functional in different fields, both subjectively and professionally (Dainton and Zelley, 2015, p. 79). The theory is still emerging, and is still massively reinforced by the research from numerous authors. What supports the straightforwardness of the theory is the fact that the procedures of convergence and divergence make the communication accommodation theory very easy to comprehend.

2.15.8 Weaknesses of Communication Accommodation theory

The Communication accommodation theory also has also its weaknesses. The censure towards the theory has been particularly articulated by three researchers namely, Judee Burgoon, Leesa Dillman, and Lesa Stern. Their observations were frequently about the convergence – divergence system and structure. They modelled the questions such as, "What occurs if the procedures of convergence and divergence on the discussions take place at the equivalent time? Who suffers the penalties or consequences- the speaker or the listener, or in cooperation?"

The researchers grasp that the discussion amongst individuals is excessively difficult to be enlightened by the procedures of the communication accommodation theory. The theory depends too much on the sensible way of communicating and, therefore, causes the conflicts for the reason that individuals do not constantly have a sensible way of intelligence (Harwood, 2012).

2.16 Implications of effective communication on organizational performance

2.16.1 Empirical Study

This section discusses the observed studies and explorations that have been carried out on the effective communication and organizational performance. The primary aim is to determine applicable outcomes and findings and ascertain potential gaps that the study could fill.

Chris Smith (2013) alleged that most people would approve that communication amongst two persons should be very simple. It's essential to recall that there are differences amongst speaking and communicating. When an individual communicates, it's all about successful getting the point across to the person they are talking to. When someone is talking, they tend to create barriers that obstruct their ability to communicate.

Chris Smith (2013) came up with the seven varieties of barriers to effective communication which is the physical barriers, perceptual barriers, emotional barriers, and also diverse cultures whether they are societal or just the work culture of the business, can obstruct developed communication if two diverse cultures clatter. In these circumstances, it is essential to discover a common ground to work from. On work circumstances, ascertaining a problem and coming up with an extremely effective way to resolve it can rapidly knock down any cultural or institutional obstacles, which can be semantic, gender and interpersonal barriers (Smith, 2015; 83).

Canary (2011) describes the communication in the workplace and clarifies the influence of communication in the negotiation process. He said that business issues can then be resolved through interactive communication and pleasant labour relations. Communication in a business necessitates all employees to take one another into account while following an anticipated outcome. Effective communication is important to comprehensive labour relations and to the endurance of an organization concerned, as well as of the society in general (Berry, 2011, p. 196). The effectiveness of communication is determined by whether the message communicated is understood by the receiver as having the same content that the transmitter anticipated (Kibe, 2014, p. 118). It is therefore important that an anticipated meaning is passed on.

According to Kibe (2014) explored the effects of communication approaches on organizational performance. Descriptive research design was used for this study. A total number of one hundred and thirty two questionnaires were distributed to the participating employees. The findings for this study concluded that for any organizational performance to be effective, an open communication setting should be stimulated. Once members of the organization feel unrestricted to share their feedback, notions and even criticism at each level increases organizational performance.

Chris Smith (2013) summarized by saying that, communication is not a one-way process. In order to have others open you, you must be open yourself. By overcoming these communication obstructions, you can make certain that the proclamation you are making is not just received, but also understood by the person you are communication with. In this way, you can be self-assured that your argument or point has been properly articulated.

Shafique, Ahmad, Abbas and Hussain (2015), the investigation identified the challenge of improving the organizational performance through customer relationship management competences which are, customer interaction management competence and customer relationship elevation competence) in the existence of competition. The results show that, customer relationship management competences had positive association with organizational performance and customer relations management competence had positive association with organizational performance.

It shows that most of the studies applied the qualitative research method which is accurate according to the nature of the topics, and all of these studies have extreme relations or connection with the topic under the study. And based on the review of the literature, the gap in the knowledge that is the subject of this study has not been studied.

2.17 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the literature review by various authors relating to the impact of effective communication and information sharing in different sectors particularly in the effective delivery of goods and services to customers in order to meet their needs based on the literature review. It has been realised that goods and services alone cannot send customers home being satisfied after ordering or buying them from the retail outlet, but effective communication that has been ensued between the customers and the management and staff serves as the satisfaction itself. This prepared the platform for the research methodology and design which has been discussed on the following chapter. Qualitative research method has been used for the study.

The following chapter introduces the brief overview of the company, research philosophy, approaches, strategy and design, target population, sampling, study participants, data collection, data collection tools that have been used, pilot study, data analysis method, data quality control, tools for data analysis, study rationale and ethical considerations for the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the researcher established the necessity for further investigation on the effective communication and information sharing given the gap that exists in the literature. There has not been enough research done on the importance of effective communication in the retail sector. This chapter details the methodology used in conducting the research at Queensmead Spar.

The aim of this study was to examine the impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's Supply Chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal.

The objectives of the study were to determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar, determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance, determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar and to determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.

The methodology discussion entails and describes the research methodology, study site, research design, target population, sampling design, data collection, research instruments, data analysis, validity and reliability of the study. The other aspects being covered in the chapter are the reliability and validity of the study, research limitations, pilot study and the ethical considerations.

3.2 Brief overview of the company

SPAR stores is an global cluster of autonomously possessed and functioned retailers and suppliers who work together in collaboration under the Spar trademark to deliver a high quality, value for money shopping experience for the communities being served (Spar International: 1 June 2016). It is one of the leading companies in South Africa held up in the wave of vendor managed inventory through strategic and collaborative partnerships. Even though, the success is not 100%, strategic partnerships and information sharing have been and continue to be a very popular

strategic alternative for Spar's growth and diversification (Spar International: 1 June 2016).

It functions a system of storerooms - ice-cold, freezing, medium and general, which is holding up to 10000 products. The regular implementation for Spar brand standards of cleanness, superior, excellence and amenity fascinates tradition and reliability for the customers worldwide. In every country and retail layout, Spar provide customers with the wider range and variety of quality fresh foodstuffs and welcoming, individual service. Communication has been deliberated with respect to the performance and employment gratification, but the association with employee assertiveness and contentment has not been done in a higher education setting (Guffey et al., 2010).

The spontaneous difference about shopping at Spar is for the reason that it has generated a philosophy of being compassionate about the community to make sure its consumers have a reliably pleasant spending experience in an exclusively welcoming and family orientated retail store.

3.3 The research process

Lindlof and Taylor (2011, p. 63) contended that the research is a multistage procedure that must be followed in order to commence and complete the research project. The research process is referred to as a sequence of stages through which a researcher must pass (Lindlof and Taylor, 2011, p. 64). These stages in the research comprises of the construction and clarification of the topic, the review of the literature, research design, data collection, data analysis and lastly the writing up of the research project.

The objectives of this study are aimed at examining the impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's Supply Chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal.

3.3.1 The study objectives are:

1. To determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar.

2. To determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance.
3. To determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar.
4. To determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.

3.3.2 The research questions of the study are:

1. How can effective communication and the sharing of information increase efficiency level at Spar Stores?
2. What are the effects of effective communication and information sharing on Spar Stores' performance?
3. What are the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to information sharing at Spar?
4. How can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information?

3.4 Research Philosophy

According to Sekaran (2010, p. 48), there are two widely recognised research paradigms-the positivist and phenomenological. The positivist is sometimes referred to as the quantitative and the phenomenological as the qualitative. Phenomenological is the method of research that permits the researcher to gather the information that is rich in literal description of how target group or population is going through that phenomenon. (Sanders, 2010).

This study will apply the qualitative approach due to its challenging nature in exploring, describing and generating detailed clarifications about the research matter under the study. This empowers the researcher to produce new insights of understanding the phenomenon from the insider point of view and grasping the consequence of the local circumstances. (Sanders, 2010, pp. 79-88). Using the qualitative paradigm, the study will discover, designate and produce full

enlightenments about the fundamental aspects to effective and efficient communication and information sharing, and also the consequence of partnerships at Spar stores.

3.4.1 Research Approaches (qualitative/quantitative)

Creswell (2013, p. 17), defined research approaches as the strategies and the techniques for the research that span the phases from comprehensive suppositions to the detailed processes of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010, pp. 68), the researcher decides on the approach to apply or use based on the kind of data being used in the study. Research approaches are divided into three categories; that is, qualitative and quantitative (Coldwell and Herbst 2014).

Sekaran (2010, p. 49) specified the crucial difference amongst quantitative and the qualitative research approaches is their flexibility. Generally, the quantitative research approaches are equitably inflexible (Bernard and Bernard, 2012, p. 23). The quantitative approach is used when the quantities of elements, like the numbers and figure can be collected in or during the study, while qualitative is based on the theory and hypothesis of data being collected (Creswell, 2013).

3.4.1.1 Qualitative approach

Qualitative approach is defined as a clarifying methodology that occurs in a normal setting that allows the researcher to improve a level of detail from the high participation in the real experiences based on the study (Creswell, 2013, p.14). It permits the investigator to gather information that is rich in literal description of how the target population is going through a phenomenon (Sanders 2010, p. 79). Using the qualitative research methodology, researchers can gather data about the human viewpoint of the research problem (Bernard and Bernard, 2012).

What constitutes qualitative research encompasses the decisive use for unfolding, clarifying, and the interpretation of the collected data (Sekaran, 2010, p. 93). Glesne (2011, p. 11) assumed that qualitative methodology is less designed in description for the reason that it expresses and constructs new notions. Qualitative study can

also be explained as an effective method that occurs in ordinary scenery that permits the researcher to cultivate a level of detail from being extremely involved in the real experiences (Creswell, 2013).

3.4.1.2 Quantitative approach

Creswell (2013, p.17) described that the quantitative study comprises of the study in which the data apprehended can be analysed in terms of the numbers and statistics. Quantitative method focuses on the analysis of hypothesis, and is being used when the researcher ascertains variables from the literature, and desires to experiment and authenticate the existing theories (Bernard and Bernard, 2012).

Referring to Gill and Johnson (2010, p. 31), there are three (3) sub- classifications to the quantitative methodology, namely the experimental, quasi-experimental, and the non-experimental. Quantitative study design has numerous significant characteristics:

- the exploration to describe the fundamental relationship among variables
- the gathering of the quantitative data
- the engagement of controls to sanction the analysis of the hypothesis, and
- The significance of ideas to be operationalized in a way that allows data to be measured quantitatively (Saunders et al., 2009).

The table 3.1 below tabulates the differences between the qualitative and the quantitative research.

Table 3.1 Differences between the qualitative and the quantitative research

Basis for comparison	Qualitative research	Quantitative research
Meaning	Qualitative research is a method of inquiry that develops understanding on human and social sciences, to find the way people think and feel.	Quantitative research is a research method that is used to generate numerical data and hard facts, by employing statistical, logical and mathematical technique.
Nature	Holistic	Particularistic

Approach	Subjective	Objective
Research type	Exploratory	Conclusive
Sampling	Purposive	Random
Data	Verbal	Measurable
Inquiry	Process-oriented	Results-oriented
Hypothesis	Generated	Tested
Elements of analysis	Words, pictures and objects	Numerical data
Objective	To explore and discover ideas used in the on-going processes.	To examine cause and effect relationship between variables.
Methods	Non-structured techniques like In-depth interviews, group discussions etc.	Structured techniques such as surveys, questionnaires and observations.

Adapted from: Creswell (2013) Research design: A qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches. Sage publications

3.5 Research Strategy

The research strategy is a methodology that assists the researcher to investigate the research issue (Myers, 2009, p. 26). According to Zigmund et al. (2013, p. 48) the research strategy has been explained as the general plan that will be used and support the researcher in answering the questions systematically. An efficient research strategy assists the researcher to define why the researcher applied or used a certain strategy to conduct the research study in an effective and efficient way (Rogers et al., 2011).

The research strategy is also helpful for the investigator to use precise data collection methods to support the views (Collis and Hussey, 2009, p. 68). Some imperative research strategies include literature review analysis, case study analysis, experimentation, reviews, interviews, direct observations and fact-finding studies (Bickman, 2009).

For this study, questions were designed, and faces to face semi structured interviews were verbally conducted according to the questions on the interview

guide. The interview conversations were all recorded using the voice recorder and then transcribed for the results and analysis.

3.5.1 Target Population

According to Sekaran (2010, p. 43), population is being referred to as a comprehensive or totality of all substances or members that fit in to the set of specifications. It is also the process of selecting a fractional part of the whole relevant group. In this study the targeted population is from Queensmead Spar, KwaZulu-Natal. The reason for selecting Queensmead Spar as the centre for the study purpose is due to its convenience and being the closest site where data can be efficiently collected at lower possible costs.

The targeted population were the store operational managers. It consists of the general managers, assistant managers, store/floor managers, fruits and vegetables managers, bakery managers, liquor managers and the fast foods management.

3.5.2 Sampling

Sekaran (2013, p. 51) identified a method to be followed when selecting a sample, which involves defining the target population, determining the sample and the sampling design, determining the sample size and the implementation of the sampling process. According to Mason (2010, p. 9), the sample size of the qualitative study depends on the number of factors that are unique to every study.

A non-probability, purposive, and a judgement sampling approach to select the appropriate company to be investigated were deemed appropriate. A non-probability sampling method entails the selection of elements with the aim to replicate certain group activities within the population that is experimented. A purposive sampling design was utilised to ensure that accurate and reliable data was collected (Henry, 2009).

The judgement sampling method aims to identify and gain access to the individuals who have the requisite information about the topic studied. This design was deemed suitable for this study since it targeted one specific retail company and interviewed specific participants who had the required information on the topic investigated (Zigmund et al., 2013).

The guiding principle in selecting the size of the sample is that it should be large enough to address the research problem, and yet being able to increase or decrease accordingly as new themes that merge or stop merging. The sample size of the management interviewed at Quuenmead Spar, consisted of nine managers, as the larger study would not be suited for the qualitative study.

3.5.3 The Population Sample

Sekaran (2013, 58) explained a sample as a representative number of a population on which the research is being conducted. As this study used the phenomenal/qualitative approach, non-probability sampling has been selected and used to support in selecting the staff for the insertion in the sample. A selective or purposive sampling has been used with an aim of focusing on the particular characteristics of the population that is of the researcher's interest, which will best enable the researcher to answer the research questions.

The sample size of the study is nine (9) participants, that is, two general managers, two assistant managers, one store/floor manager, one fruits and vegetable manager, one bakery manager, liquor manager and the fast foods manager.

All nine participants took an active part in the interviews sessions. The rationale behind the choice of the participants was to obtain complete range of opinions about the effective communication and information sharing as the supermarket. To make this effective, the respondents included the senior, middle and junior management. They were on duty during the time of interviews and they fully engaged themselves in the process.

3.5.3.1 Purposive sampling

Glesne (2011, p. 52) explained purposive sampling is a non-probability sample that is being chosen based on the characteristics of the population and also the objective/s of the study. It is a method that is commonly used in the qualitative research ascertaining and selecting the information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Rule et al., 2011, p.65). This consists of ascertaining and selecting the individuals or groups of individuals that are exclusively well-informed about or proficient with a phenomenon of interest (Saunders et al., 2009, p.153). It is

also known as the judgmental, discerning, or subjective sampling (Zigmund et al., 2013).

3.5.3 Study participants

According to Lazar et al. (2010, p. 14), a participant is “an individual who answers or respond to the questions, normally in an interview or group interview”. The following individuals participated in the empirical research study (Table 3.2)

Table 3.2: List of participants in the study

DEPARTMENT	PARTICIPANT	DATE	TIME
Overall store management	Participant A	20/11/2017	11:00
General assistant management	Participant B	24/11/2017	10:30
Floor management	Participant C	20/11/2017	11:30
Assistant floor management	Participant D	04/12/2017	14:00
Stores	Participant E	24/11/2017	11:20
Fruits and Vegetables	Participant F	06/12/2017	13:00
Bakery	Participant G	24/11/2017	12:00
Liquor Management	Participant H	04/12/2017	14:45
Fast Foods Management	Participant I	20/11/2017	12:15

A total number of nine managers at Spar were interviewed in order to provide an insight onto the impact effective communication and information sharing in increasing the efficiency level at Spar, the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store’s performance, the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar, and the impact of productive sharing of information at Spar.

3.5.4 The Research Instruments

The research instrument used for this study is for the qualitative research. Sanders qualitative research as the methodology that authorizes the investigator to gather the information that is rich in literal description of how the target population is going through the phenomenon. Qualitative methods are being regarded as being useful in 'feeling' out the complex issues (Creswell, 2013).

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009, p. 115) explain the data collective instruments as the devices used for the collection of data. For this study, semi structured face to face interviews have been conducted with the Spar management, as it will allow some new ideas to be transferred during the interview as an outcome of what the interviewees or respondents said.

3.5.5 Data collection method

Collis and Hussey (2009, p. 56) explains data collection as the process of collecting and measuring data on the variables of concern, in a recognized orderly manner that allows one to respond to the stated research questions, examine hypotheses, and the assessment of outcomes. It entails collecting and evaluating information on the variables of interest in a reputable systematic fashion that allows one to respond to the stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate the outcomes (Sekaran 2010).

Rogers et al. (2011, p. 124) explains triangulation as a process of verification that escalates validity by integrating several viewpoints and methods. Zigmund et al. (2013, p. 46) contends that triangulation is actually used to intensify the accuracy of the study. In this case 'triangulation' is one of the validity measures. Triangulated techniques are helpful for cross-checking and used to provide confirmation and completeness, which brings the balance between two or more different types of research (Sekaran 2010, p. 46). The purpose is to maximise the credibility and validity of the results. Triangulation allows researchers to be more confident of their results and can play many other constructive roles as well (Rogers et al., 2011).

Table 3.3: Matching objectives and data collection techniques for primary data

Research objective	Technique addressing the objective
To determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar	This objective was achieved through a qualitative investigation which consists of in-depth semi-structured interviews
To determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance	This objective was achieved through a qualitative investigation which consists of in-depth semi-structured interviews
To determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar	This objective was achieved through a qualitative investigation which consists of in-depth semi-structured interviews
To determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information	This objective was achieved through a qualitative investigation which consists of in-depth semi-structured interviews

3.5.5.1 Primary sources

Sekaran (2013, p. 56) referred to primary data as the information on the variables of the interest that the researcher gathers first hand from the subject of the study. This kind of information is collected by the researcher personally during their own research, using their own data collection tools, such as surveys, interviews, experiments and direct observations.

3.5.5.1.1 Interviews

Coldwell and Rogers et al., (2011, p. 302) described interviews as one of the useful data collection methods for enabling the respondents to provide detailed responses about the complex issues. Myers (2009, p. 24) stated that conducting interviews is one of the effective and efficient approaches of collecting data as the researcher is able to ask the subjects direct questions to gather data on the variables of concern.

Such interviews can be in a form of face to face, telephonic or video conferencing depending on the geographical position of the interviewees (Rogers et al., 2011).

According to Sekaran (2013, p. 49), the interviews can be structured, which offer the interviewer the capability to standardize the questions and to record some answers to assist in lessening inaccuracies or mistakes and to also to process data simply. They can also be unstructured, offering the interviewer to explore by asking unplanned and open ended questions during the interview process.

3.5.5.1.2 Semi structured interviews

Semi structures interviews are flexible in the process since they consent the interviewer's own perceptions to be discovered. In the semi structured interviews, the interviewer has a list of subjects and questions to be discoursed, but has some flexibility in the order of subjects covered, and can permit the interviewee to intricate on the subjects and or issues being raised. Zigmund et al. (2013, p. 46) stated that open ended questions are being used which defines the area or areas to be discovered and explored, but also consent the interviewer or the interviewee to deviate so that certain areas can be tracked up in more detail.

Rogers et al. (2011, p. 136) stated that the semi structured interviews are more challenging to conduct than the completely structured interviews, as the interviewee's responses cannot be anticipated, and hence the responses from the interviewer has to be unarranged, which necessitates conceptual preparation. Therefore, the semi structured interviews

The researcher contacted the specialists or participants who agreed to participate in order to make appointments for the interviews.

3.5.5.2 The Interview Guide

Before conducting the actual interviews, the researcher needs to have an interview guide that the researcher can use to help himself/herself in directing the conversation towards the topic and issues that the researcher wants to learn about

the interview guides vary from highly composed to comparatively loose, but they all share certain features.

They help the researcher to know what to ask about, in what or which sequence, how the questions should be carried and directed, and also how the follow ups should be carried out. They also provide the guidelines about what to do or say afterward, after the respondent has given the answer to the most recent question. The focus of the interview guide was on the impact of effective communication and information sharing at Queensmead Spar.

3.5.5.2 Secondary sources

Zigmond (2013, p. 45) explained secondary data as the data used for the research project that was initially collected for some other purposes. This consists of written materials such as books, journals, magazine articles, reports, correspondences, transcripts of the speeches, public records and also the newspapers.

Secondary data was collected and used in this study to provide the viewpoint on the retail industry, both internationally and nationally which includes South African retail sector, an overview of the scope and concept of SCM, an overview of the scope and concept of effective communication, and insight into important best practices in effective communication practices. The data attained from different secondary sources was recognized by full referencing.

3.5.5.3 Study site

The study site of the project was the Queensmead Spar Supermarket at Hillier Rd, Umbilo. This site has been selected as it is the most expedient and closest site where data could be collected.

3.5.6 Pilot Study

Gill and Johnsons (2010, p. 19) explains the pilot study as the probationary try-out to examine/test the design of the research with the sub-sample of the respondents who has the comparable characteristics to those perceptible in the main sample to be interviewed. Pilot study is obligatory as it is very challenging to forecast how

respondents will construe and react to the questions being given to them (Gill and Johnsons, 2010, pp. 18-20). The pilot study assisted the researcher to:

- Prior the conduction of interviews with the final respondents, the research instruments was tested on three respondents to test them on a small sample. The pilot testing assisted the researcher to:
- Devise the adjustments obligatory to reduce the error rate on the answers from the respondents.
- Classify the open-ended questions to an equitable degree
- Carry out the analysis on the preliminary sample and also testing all computational measures and produce some preliminary hypotheses
- Assess the suitability of data for the research questions (Zigmund et al., 2013).

The pilot study was conducted with the Westwood Pick n Pay floor supervisor, and two store controllers. The aim was to determine if the desired outcome is exactly what is needed by the study. No amendments or changes were made on the interview questions.

3.6 Administration of Interviews

The interviews were administered on face to face basis. The reason for choosing this method was to be assured that the questions being asked are clearer to the respondents, to ensure that the process is less time consuming and also to ensure the high response rate. Again, the researcher was able to help the respondents who found it difficult to clearly understand the questions being asked and what is being required from them. This enables the effective and efficient collection of data.

The face to face method also ensured the instant collection of responses for the analysis of data. The researcher directly visited the site to conduct the interview process. The data collection process took four days as some of the respondents could not be found in one day due to personal absentia and shift work. At the collection stage, nine interviews were conducted with the Spar management, as stated on the sampling section, none of the respondents failed to be interviewed due

to the consecutive absentia at work due to long holidays/leave. The attendance for interviews was 100 percent.

3.7 Research Design

Research design centres on the end research, and all relevant steps in the process to attain that outcome (Zigmund et al 2013, p. 74). In this case, research design is regarded as the useful plan in which certain research approaches and procedures are connected together to attain a consistent and an effective body of information for experientially grounded analyses, suppositions and also the formulation of theory.

The research design therefore offers the researcher with a strong and clear research structure as it guides the approaches, choices and sets the foundation for clarification (Zigmund et al., 2013, p. 43). Creswell (2013, pp. 20-22) described the research design as the processes that have to be implemented in order to examine the exact hypothesis below a particular or given circumstance.

According to Welman et al. (2009, p. 65) research design is best defined as an inclusive strategy, according to which respondents of an anticipated study are being chosen, as well as the strategies and means of data collection, whereas Robson (2011, p. 16) defined research design as a strategy or design for conducting the study. The research design furthermore necessitates a comprehensive design, according to which the study is being undertaken.

According to Rogers et al. (2011, p. 68), the key functions of the research design are to empower the researcher to anticipate what the suitable investigation choices are probable to be, and also to maximize the authenticity and reliability of the ultimate outcomes. The related data has been collected, which in the framework of the current study centres on the management's communication capabilities towards their customers at Spar.

The research design has to be perceived as a diversified approach that involves selecting from diverse alternatives, and choices to guarantee that the study purpose and perception are being properly simplified and attained. The research problem will regulate on the approaches and processes to be followed, that is, the varieties of measurement, sampling, data collection and the analysis of data to be implemented

for the projected study (Zigmund et al., 2013).

For the purposes for this study, the researcher will use the literature study, which involves the interviews and phenomenology in order to gain understanding onto the distinctive experiences of the participants in order to attain comprehensive conclusions.

3.7.1 Classification of the research design

This study is descriptive and exploratory, and literature review approach was adopted. Table 3.3 differentiates the two designs.

Table 3.4 the differences between exploratory and descriptive researches

	Exploratory	Descriptive
Aim	Exploratory research is one which aims at providing insights into and an understanding of the problem faced by the researcher. The objective is to discovery of ideas and thoughts. Exploratory research aims to improve understanding of a researcher's about a topic and to seek new insights (Robson 2011:37).	Descriptive research, on the other hand, aims at describing something, mainly functions and characteristics. The objective is to describe characteristics and functions. With a descriptive study, a researcher seeks to facilitate description of a particular situation and fill the existing gaps.
Characteristics	Such research is usually characterised by a high degree of flexibility and lacks a formal structure, broad in focus and rarely provides definite answers to specific research issues	Descriptive research is used to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied.

Overall design	Flexible	Rigid
Methods	Exploratory research study can be conducted using three methods. These include literature review, undertaking interviews with experts in the subject and focus group interviews.	The following three main methods can be used to conduct descriptive research study: observational methods, case-study methods and survey methods.

Adapted from: Bernard & Ryan (2010). Analysing qualitative data: Systematic approaches. Los Angeles, CA: Sage. p. 96

As shown in Table 3.3, the design of the research is exploratory and descriptive as it offers supplementary information about the topic of effective communication and collaboration. The study aims to offer comprehension into the current status of the phenomena to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation.

Descriptive research is carried out in this study to designate and determine the features of the variables that the researcher is interested in (Sekaran 2010, p.56). The purpose of this research study is, firstly to determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar, secondly to determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance, thirdly to determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar, and lastly to determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.

Robson (2011, p. 36) describes an exploratory study as a valuable technique or method of finding out what is going on, for pursuing new perceptions, for probing questions and for evaluating phenomena in a new light; and is predominantly beneficial if the researcher desires to simplify his or her understanding of the problem where the researcher is uncertain of the precise nature of the problem. It

refers to the research that primarily anticipates gaining an understanding and becoming familiar with a precise circumstance (Bernard & Ryan 2010).

Literature review was adapted in order to: (1) determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar, (2) determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance, (3) determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar, and (4) determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.

By its nature, literature review is exploratory and can provide a rich body of information about particular situations (Bickman and Rog 2009, p.167; Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 93). This approach is appropriate in order to provide a deeper understanding into and examining the impact of effective collaboration on Spar stores' performance level.

3.8 Research paradigm

Research paradigm can be explained as a manner of investigating phenomena so as to obtain certain understandings of them and attempt clarifications (Welman et al. 2013, p. 59). There are two main categories of research paradigms, that is, positivism and post-positivism. According to Welman et al. (2013, p. 60), positivism ascertains on the measurability and predictability, and it also constructs regulations and procedures for the investigation phenomena.

According to Waismann (2011, p. 127), positivist overviews are based on actual causes which are perceived as the true sources of behaviour, and are based on unvarying, sound foundations. Positivism sets out to forecast and control realism. It strongly concentrates or focuses on the deterministic view of basis and result (causality) which is being derived from inferential reasoning that research is led by theory (Kinsler, 2011)

Post-positivism on the other hand entails subjectivity and understanding (Rogers et al. 2011:119). It focuses on the quantitative methods, such as survey questionnaires and experiments in exploring phenomena, while anti-positivism focuses on a variety of qualitative research methods, such as face-to-face interviews and observations (Bernard & Ryan 2010)

3.9 Data analysis

The interviews data were analysed using the content analysis. Zigmund et al. (2013, p. 61), defined content analysis as a methodology for analytically describing the recorded, articulated or optical communication. Data was additionally edited for correctness, constancy, uniformity and preparation. Therefore the analysis of the earlier interviews or pilot study may have influence on the focus on future interviews, should findings highlight matters that are being considered to offer further investigation. The interviews were transcribed then analysed as soon as possible after the completion of each interview process. This permitted any evolving results or findings to impact and nature upcoming interviews.

The data collected was arranged and coded. Data preparation procedure made certain that the data was precise and that it was transformed into from raw to a categorized or reduced form for suitable analysis and analysis (Schurink, Fouché and De Vos 2012).

Coding is the key process in the content analysis process, consisting of the reviewing of the interview transcripts, and labelling parts of the theoretical implication, as the initial stage in the generation of the findings (Smith and Davies 2010, p. 152). Saldaña (2013, p. 21) further described data coding as the method in which data is being categorised or gathered into numeral classes. The restraint virtual method of data analysis was being used. This encompasses the contrast of new codes, concepts and categories, as they materialise with those which already exist, therefore making certain that the emerging theory remains grounded in the research (Saldaña, 2013).

The process of memo writing was also being conducted during the data collection process. Memo writing entails the writing of informal analytic notes throughout the study as this could be helpful in moving from the focused codes to the conceptual classifications (Rule et al., 2011).

3.210 Data Quality Control

3.10.1 Validity

According to Bearden, Netemeyer and Haws (2011, p. 42), validity is the process of adequately making certain that data collected through the interviews are accurately conducted without any terror of dishonesty or biasness. This suggested that the collection of data should be free of any other intervention other than that of the respondents. Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2012, p. 108) see it as “the ability of your measurement to correctly measure what it is supposed to measure”. By validity, they entail that the researcher’s conclusion is in harmony with the actual state of the world. The typologies of validity are internal, construct, external and statistical conclusion (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010).

Validity ensures that the research study does not deviate from what is considered to be the reality for the entire population of a study (Welman et al. 2011, p.142). According to Sekaran (2010, p. 57), different types of validity tests can be used to test the goodness of measures. Validity tests can be categorised under four broad headings:

- (1) Face validity. This is a basic and nominal index of validity. It shows that the items included in the questionnaire are clear and understandable to the respondents.
- (2) Content validity. This ensures that the measures include a sufficient and representative set of items that draw on the concept.
- (3) Criterion-related validity. This is determined when the measure separates people in terms of a criterion the measure is expected to predict.
- (4) Construct validity. This confirms how well the results derived from the use of the measure fit the theories around which the test is devised (Welman et al. 2012).

An effort has been made to ensure validity in this research. The sample of the interview questions will be aligned strictly to the aims and objectives of the study. Construct validity was adequately ensured as the main idea of a construct validity is to ascertain after the research that the results support the theory (White and McBurney 2013).

The interview guide was pre-tested by the three academics in the School of Management, Information Technology and Governance, to ensure that the questions in the interview guide were clear and not ambiguous. Consistency and accuracy

were also maintained during the interviews. This has contributed to the trustworthiness of the results of the study. The questions were phrased in simple language to capture all aspects of the factors to be measured. The participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarity before responding to questions.

3.10.2 Reliability

In conducting research, one cannot doubt the efficacy of reliability of variables. Reliability shows that the data collected are free of errors and mistakes that do not tamper with the conclusion. In other words, the findings and conclusions should be corroborated in a subsequent research if the conditions of research remain the same (Yin 2014; Bonds-Raacke and Raacke 2012).

Reliability refers to an evaluating measure which tests the accuracy and consistency of a measuring instrument in measuring whatever concept it is designed to measure (Sekaran 2010, p. 56). According to Yin (2014, p. 64), reliability refers to the extent to which data collection techniques or analysis procedures will yield consistent findings. It can be assessed by posing the following three questions:

- Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions?
- Will similar observations be reached by other observers?
- Is there transparency in how sense was made from the raw data?

In order to ensure reliability, the interviews were recoded using a digital voice recorder. Data was then transcribed verbatim in order to make sure that all the important information was captured. The recorded information was played back to the participants by the researcher to make sure that the data was captured accurately and that it reflected what the participants said.

It is the uniformity of the same measure to present similar conclusions on different instances. This means reliability is concerned with the ability to represent the same findings over and over again (Yin, 2014, p. 36). The researcher will made use of the test-retest in order to ascertain the reliability of the findings. This yardstick will ensure

that the founded facts are established by confirming and ascertaining the facts more than just once with the participants.

3.11 Rationale

The qualitative research approach is normally used in response to the questions about the foundation of problems, with an aim of describing and understanding the problems from diverse point of view. It seeks to realise a given study problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it incorporates. Qualitative research methodology is perfectly suitable for this study in order to provide an ideal examination on the actual impact of collaborative partnerships and information sharing at the Spar supermarkets. The semi-structured face-to-face interviews have been used as information gathering techniques for this study.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The researcher retained ethical standards for the duration of the study. A high level of objectivity, integrity, sensitivity, anonymity of participants and confidentiality of information (where applicable) were maintained during the study. The respondents were assured that their responses would be kept confidential as the results were electronically collated. The interview guide with questions was reviewed by the supervisor in order to check for correctness of the questions.

The permission to undertake the study and ethical clearance to conduct the interviews was gained from the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, University of KwaZulu-Natal Westville Campus.

Creswell (2014, p. 34) clarified that at any point in the research process the ethical issues may ascend and the researcher is required to anticipate, what issues that may ascend, as well as put procedures in place to address all stated issues. Furthermore, the research should be able to adjust to any unanticipated issues that may arise.

For this study, none of the selected managers refused to be interviewed, and no ethical issues ascended during the interview process.

3.13 Elimination of bias

Whilst conducting the interviews with all participants, it will be made extremely clear on the points below to be followed in order to lessen or reduce any biasness, and to make certain that the moral standards are being sustained:

- participating on the interview process was voluntary
- participants were requested but not hurried to finish the study
- participants were made to understand that they were permitted to terminate their participation if they want.
- The participants were offered the right to query anything regarding construction and the answering of the questions.
- participants were made to understand the foundation of the research and its particulars before they were being interviewed.

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research methodology and design, and justified the reasons for adopting the qualitative method. In addition, issues pertaining to the target population, sample size, pilot study, collection of data and its analysis, as well as the reliability and validity of data were also examined. The explanation of ethical issues and considerations in the data collection were also discussed. The reliability and validity of the empirical data collected were addressed by conducting a pre-test to ensure that questions in the interview guide are clear and not ambiguous. The questions were phrased in simple language to capture all aspects of the factors to be measured. Ethical guidelines recommended for the type of research conducted were strictly adhered to during the research.

In the following chapter (Chapter 4), the information, data and the results obtained from the open-ended interview process with the Queensmead Spar management is being presented and also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters of this study began by presenting the research purpose, significance, objectives and research questions of which this was achieved in chapter one. Thereafter, the following chapter (chapter two), the literature review discussed the various aspects of effective communication and information sharing as per the research questions and research objectives. In the previous chapter (chapter three), the research methodology that has been chosen for this study was examined. This chapter entails the analysis, presentation and the discussion of the findings of the experiential data collected from the research sample. The findings are presented, analysed and discussed and conclusions are drawn in relation to the objectives of this study.

This chapter presents data collected in this study on examining the impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's Supply Chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal. Content analysis and thematic analysis was used for the analysis and discussions, where data was presented and analysed by tabulation of the statistical historical records as well as classifying and cross classifying responses of interviews held and document analysis. The empirical research for this study consists of a qualitative method employing the use of open-ended questions in order to allow the participants to efficiently express themselves without any restrictions. This chapter presents the findings from the data collected at Queensmead Spar in Umbilo, KwaZulu-Natal.

This chapter presents the findings first by introducing the response rate to the study, followed by the presentation of findings for each question and the discussion of the study results according to the question and objectives stated in chapter one. This enables the reader to see how each objective has been individually achieved. This chapter also covers issues conferred during the interviews with the management at Spar which are extremely significant in responding to the research questions and objectives for this study.

4.2 Revisiting the research question and objectives

Before discussing the data analysis and findings, it is important first to re-visit the research question and objectives to determine the focus of this chapter. To reiterate, the main research question of this study was:

“How can effective communication and the sharing of information increase efficiency level at Spar Stores?”

4.2.1 The objectives for this study aims:

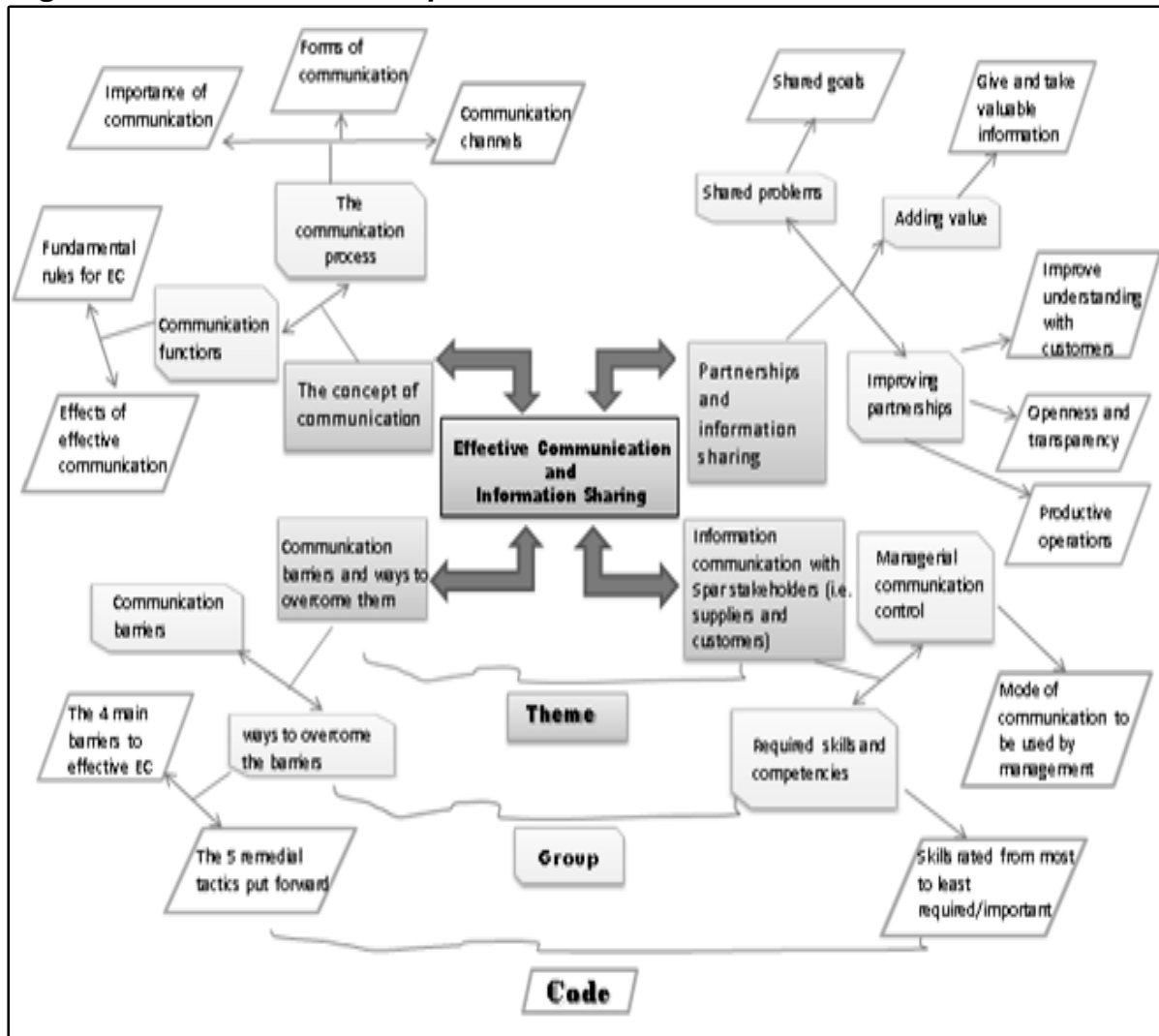
1. To determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar.
2. To determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance.
3. To determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar.
4. To determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.

4.2.2 Based on the above stated objectives, the research questions of the study are:

1. How can effective communication and the sharing of information increase efficiency level at Spar Stores?
2. What are the effects of effective communication and information sharing on Spar Stores' performance?
3. What are the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to information sharing at Spar?
4. How can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information?

Research objectives and questions above are each discussed in detail as different themes. Each theme deals with each of the research objectives and questions which are further broken down into groups which are then coded.

Figure 4.1: The Thematic Map



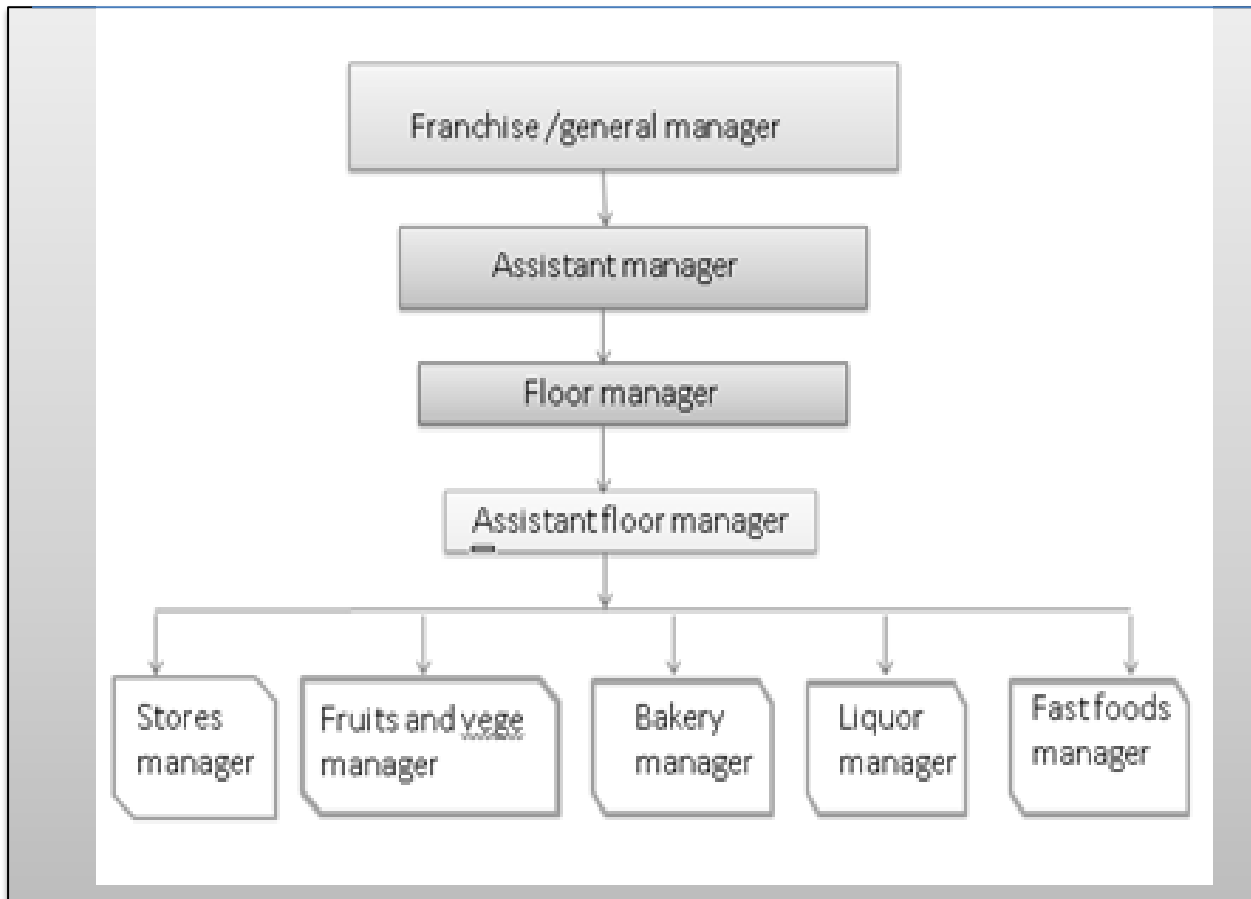
Source: Author's Own Design

Figure 4.1 above represents the thematic map that channelled the findings of an analysis of data. The sections of this chapter will unpack the four themes stated. Figure 4.1 above presents the thematic map that guided the findings of the data analysis. The subsequent sections of this chapter will unload or unpack the four different themes.

The research questions were used as the basis for the formation of the eight different categories with the responses provided by the participants falling into one of the different categories which in turn, were linked to a broader theme, as illustrated above in figure 4.1. Lastly, the various responses obtained from the participants

were grouped together and coded for better examination. The managerial structure of Spar is briefly discussed below.

Figure 4.2 Spar managerial structure



Source: Author's own design

Figure 4, 2 represents all participants who took part in the empirical field research. As stated earlier under non-probability sampling, in section 3.10 these participants were precisely selected to partake in this study as they have extreme experience that will allow them to answer the research objectives and questions of this study very well.

4.3 Justifying why spar was selected

Spar is one of the leading companies in South Africa held up in the wave of vendor managed inventory through strategic and collaborative partnerships. The regular

implementation for Spar brand standards of cleanness, superior, excellence and amenity fascinates tradition and reliability for the customers worldwide. It is a global cluster of independently possessed and functioned retailers and suppliers who work together in collaboration under the Spar trademark to deliver a high quality, value for money shopping experience for the communities being served.

Even though, the success is not 100%, strategic partnerships and information sharing have been and continue to be a very popular strategic alternative for Spar's growth and diversification. It is for this reason that Spar was selected to conduct this study of effective collaboration and information sharing. On the topic of Spar, the next section deals with the interviews conducted with the different managers at Spar, these 9 managers were discussed above in section 4.2 under the company's managerial structure.

4.4 Interviews with Spar management

The main reason why the researcher chose Spar supply chain as the participating company is that it is one of the largest companies in South Africa, impacting the lives of many people through the wide range of brand categories they provide and the vital role they play in the South African economy.

This section contains the responses of nine participants at the spar supply chain - Queensmead. The purpose of the interviews was to identify the effectiveness of communication and information sharing on the performance of Spar supply chain, as well as the challenges that are faced in the process of communication and information sharing and the ways which are used to mitigate the challenges.

An interview guide was drawn up and is attached as Appendix C. Participants were presented with different open-ended questions according to their tasks in their respective departments. Permission was granted to use a recording device during the interviews. The interviews took approximately an average of 10-15 minutes each and each participant suggested that, should any more information be required for this study, the researcher could email further questions to the participants.

4.5 Response Rate

The researcher went out to do the interviews, of the 9 respondents the researcher managed to hold interviews with all of them. The table below shows that there was a high response rate of 100% and as a result this made it easier to analyse and make conclusions on the data. This high net response rate was high enough to warrant validity and reliability of research findings. The high response rate can be explained for by piloting that was done by the researcher. The level of the response rate helped the researcher to make generalisations to the population. Communication prior to administering of the questionnaires and follow up contributed to a higher response rate.

Table 4.1: Research objectives and chapters covering the objectives

Research objective	Secondary data
	Empirical data
PRIMARY OBJECTIVES	
To determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar.	Chapter 4.7, section 4.7.2.1
To determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance.	Chapter 4.7, section 4.7.2.4
To determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar.	Chapter 4.7, section 4.7.2.9
To determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.	Chapter 4.7, section 4.7.2.9.1 and 4.7.3.2

4.6 Presentations of the responses and literature control.

Question 1:

Participants' perspectives on: **'How managers inspire their employees when they don't have good news to share?'**

"Basically as a manager I inspire my employees by communicating with them, it's very important because the most important part of inspiration is communication. And another thing, I value them each and every employee is very important in my organization. I know my convention; I have more employees so I value them. Another thing that is important is that I speak with each one of them, I ask them question, I make them open about the organization. That is how I inspire my employees so that they stay motivated, stay happy in my organization." Respondent A

"As a manager; employees sometimes and most of the time, there are not really happy in the workplace but true leader is one that can find ways to connect to the employees and help them fulfill their maximum potential so I really inspire them by connecting with them and just find out their strength so that we can put more emphasis on they are good at instead of the weakness." Respondent B

"∴ Okay, firstly thank you for having me this afternoon, for me it is always important to know my subordinate so I always do what is best for them so that they will stay inspired to do they work effectively. One of the important things is it is important for me to know their characters so when they do the job for me I must know if they are not happy so that I will maybe engage with one of those who are not happy or in a normal way so it is always for me to motivate or engage that person and it is to me that when they did a good job I must update them, I must tell them that you have done a good job for me so keep on doing that, when they are not happy u must know who amongst them that I can maybe comfort and check what is the problem so it is always important for me to know them and work with them hand in hand and check their work and update them and maybe encourage them and by doing maybe brief meeting in the morning and everything I think that's it." Respondent C

“Thanks for having me here and I support, my employees should know that they have my support when they did a mistake, they must not hesitate to come back and maybe repeat those mistake they did because they know my support so it important to always support them so that they keep going and the next think to always remind the goal of the company because we have to share what goals do we want to achieve as a company so they must reminded, i always reminded them do not the goals of the company and making them know they are part of the growing company and the company wants to groom them for the future of the company and for them.”

Respondent D

“By all means I need to try to inspire my employees so acquire knowledge about the way to deal with the issue and also for me to address them about the new things and the changes in the organization to take place. The other thing is just to inspire them to read about the company policy, and new amendments on the papers. And also to motivate to ask questions where the need be; to gain information also to ask and work as a team to improve about the organization.” Respondent E

“The first question which say how do I inspire my employees is firstly to understand what my employee want or what makes them so that whatever I do I make sure that they are happy so that they can be happy and satisfied whilst working with me as their manager and if they do not have good news to share? I’m open enough with them for them to communicate with me if they that they have any complication or problem that they need to solve or to communicate with me in that way they are always happy and then we can working with them.” Respondent F

“I will say I support them and encourage them to do better as some sort of motivation. This will inspire them to be more open to share their issues with us”

Respondent G

“The most important thing to do is to provide more support to the employees, and ensure that they feel more comfortable to share their problems with us as their leaders.” Respondent H

“The most important way to motivate and inspire your employees is to demonstrate that you have faith in their abilities to get the job done. So I could say that a high proportion of engaged employees yields higher productivity and profitability. In

addition, employees who are enthusiastic about their career are less likely to leave the organization. So it is important to show care and support to them so they ensure organizational throughput is achieved.” Respondent I

Question 2

Respondents’ perspectives on: **‘Which characteristics are most important of for a skilled leader communicator in an organization?’**

“Like I said the very important skill, 1 is communication skill. Without communication skill a leader it means my employees will not be productive so when I mean communication skill I mean I must be able to know when there is a problem and another thing is motivation. I motivate my staff on daily bases how? By asking them questions guys how do u think we can do a certain thing in your own way? Because you are doing the thing on daily bases maybe you know better than me. I am a manager and you are employees you are doing the job.” Respondent A

The most important thing is good leadership, I lead my employees on daily bases and show them that because as a manager you need to be a leader, you need to inspire, you need to make your employees not to follow you but to do as you do.” Respondent B

“Well the important skills for any manager because a manager will be working with different kinds of people so as a manager you have be adaptable and be able to kind of click with different kinds of people and be able to accept it with all their different” Respondent C

“Communication skill is always important, you communicate with you people you know what they want and you know whether there are challenges, what are the challenges they are facing and it is always important. There is always what they call a record skill; when you do something you must record so that when it helps you, you can use it again to keep momentum goal. So as a leader I must know how to leader those people so leadership skill is always important, management skill is important again because you have to manager those people in a good way. The way that make them happy and hungry to work again and time management skill when

you report to work and update your work you must be a time at all time... that will go smoothly and that's it." Respondent D

"Being a good leaders and a good communicator is more important when dealing with people. Being a good leader is when you as a manager or leader is able to direct you followers to the right direction without any criticism. Give them the opportunity to learn and inspire them to put more effort on their job. Being a good communicator is when you are being understood. It is very important to have good communication with people around you. It may lead to the smooth running of business without further complications and dissatisfaction." Respondent E

"Communication skill is always vital to have a good communication within the working area because you will always be able to know where you did wrong or where you did right so that you can do more good work and the other thing is team work, team work. It is a must that you practice team work skill at all team because you know your staff candlelight to others to perform their duties, they can't let you down if they are a team and always think a positive thing and the last one, I can mention is time management, you must know when you are working that you have targets and you must familiarize your staff with targets of your company and always you meet time frame." Respondent F

"Just to mention with you effective communication skill; a manager should have it's a must to have it. The second it's a problem managing skill, you can't manager a person without knowing how to solve if they are having problems. The other one is to be none bias when judging or judging after hearing the story of the employee or subordinates. The other one is to know if we can practice nepotismor employees or when giving incentives." Respondent G

"The significant skill that I think is important as a leader is the communication skill because as the manager you need to have that skill to ensure that you communicate well with your employees and they understand whatever you are communication with them and ensure that whatever that you are communicating is simple and understandable to them." Respondent H

"Good interpersonal skills, that is, being able to communicate with each of the employees and other people maybe personally if they have any personal things to

share with you or even as a team they can easily come and speak to you and solve their problems. The next one is that a manager has to be able to manage their time because everything goes according to time, so there must be time limit for everything to ensure that everyone will be fulfilling what needs to be done according to the time scale. Also good communication, encourage team work and good time management”
Respondent I

Question 3

Participants’ perspectives on: **‘how the managers major efficiency or effectiveness of their communication in their organization?’**

“For that question, actually what is important is that based on majoring what I do; I look at their profiles. Okay I know that like this employee like hobbies maybe he like playing soccer and number likes to debate or maybe he likes or is interested in Golf, so that’s how I do in order to fill that this employee like to talk so you can make him a team leader within a group of employees so he or she can continue talking with other employees, she can continue motivating other employees so that the approach I use. Another thing I use to measure the effectiveness of our employees, I ask them questions, okay guys, if this problem happens, how can we solve it? Those solving will help me to see how effective they are. Another thing that I do, I check their emails, yes it’s very important because the way they write it determines their effectiveness, it determines their efficiency within a job.” Respondent A

“Communication is most effective when you can see the response from the message that was sent so I will be able to major it by feel, if the messages you do send across to your staff are getting through the team spirit and attitude towards what you are expecting from the team so if expectations are not met definitely that means somewhere somehow the communication is not going right.” Respondent B

“Okay by taking complaints from stakeholders or external stakeholders that is telling how they are happy or how they are unhappy about my services I am giving them. So that’s where I check or major my service delivery to my stakeholders.”
Respondent C

“To that i always examine feedback I get from customers. I must know about their happiness, I must know about their needs and I must always make sure I keep everything in record about their happiness maybe about products I give them maybe the products that I give them sometimes they receive the products that has expired or something so I must communicate with them, check their feedbacks knowing that their feedbacks can tell me how much I do wrong or I do right.” Respondent D

“I think if there are no conflicts between the employees the customers, I think that there is a good or effective communication skill in an organization. Employee or subordinates are skilled with organization information so if ever you can ask any question to the employee they can answer without hesitation. Rating communication is produced when needed also if the customers problems are addressed effectively I think that’s show if there is effective communication in our organization.” Respondent E

“What I can is that this question is similar to the first one where I do ensure employees are being productive is that I have the performance indicates I do and to also ensuring that whatever needs to be done I monitor and control it and make sure that if there is anyone who is not going accordingly and I try to motivate that person to meet the standards or requirements of his or her responsibility in the job” Respondent F

“I will check if they give me the reports or the feedbacks all the time whenever I instructed them to do something or do they share the ideas that they have or keep performance indicators” Respondent G

“As managers, we play a key role in establishing clear lines of communication within the organization. Our roles include planning, staffing, leading and overseeing all functions inside and outside the company. All of these functions require communication or work will not get done. By going further to communicate more effectively with employees, you can achieve a more efficient, productive and satisfying work environment. So in conclusion, I would say as a manager, it is important to find ways to solicit feedback from your employees. This facilitates two-way communication and let the employees know their ideas are important.” Respondent H

“Employees need to know that their managers are credible and will follow through on what they say. Management can establish credibility by promising only what they can deliver and admitting when they’re wrong. Employees should be credited for their contributions and never mocked for their ideas, particularly in front of others. Managers also need to be attentive of their communication style, including non-verbal signals. Everything from how they stand to their facial expressions indicates an openness and willingness to communicate. In this way, employees will definitely work more effective in the business.” Respondent I

Question 4

Participants’ perspectives on: **‘The greatest communication challenge that respondents ever experienced when in their acting with their external stakeholders especially suppliers and customers.’**

“Okay, that is a very sensitive and important question because I am dealing with many stakeholders and employees. What I do or what I encountered as a challenge the most is ambiguity within suppliers. What do I mean when I say ambiguity – whereby suppliers are supplying wrong material or maybe they supply in correct specification and then that’s the biggest challenge within our organization? Another thing that I found as a challenge is, not understanding my company culture. Most of the company suppliers are external. They are supplying the organization from external; they don’t understand the culture of my organization so that’s a big challenge.

For instance in my organization there are things that are standard; they need to do as it is but most of the suppliers they do not understand that so culture is very important. And another thing is politics; it’s a very challenging one from suppliers some of the suppliers are supplying me on a political based maybe there are different political so those are the challenges are I encounter from my external stakeholders.” Respondent A

“Communicating with external stakeholders is a bit challenging because you will find that; let’s say if you want a prop to the collection’s clerk or..... whoever, some of the

times they change the people and so it takes a while to actually build a relationship whereby it's just a smooth sealing from there on because people use change position a lot of time." Respondent B

"Sometimes the challenges are the things that are retained down and the receipts are not there when they bring the stuff so there is always a problem because I have to keep that on pause waiting for them to go back to where they are coming from the stuff and letting me what was wrong or what exactly is it sometimes they come with wrong sizes of goods and they write something on their paper but they bring something else maybe the difference is the sizes or the quantity of the goods they bring so there is a challenge there because sometimes I will expect to bring this stuff and they do something else so I will have to pause that process and wait for them." And *"And with my customers, sometimes they purchase goods and they come back always looking for the manager instead of checking what was wrong and how they can rectify that with cashiers and everything. Sometimes they come complaining but they do come back with the receipt, they don't even know the date they purchased those goods so sometimes it is difficult, it is challenge."* Respondent C

"Yes, i am talking about suppliers when suppliers are expected to delivery some stock and they delay and they take their time and I end up having a short of stock because they and their excuses they say they don't have stock that causes their delays sometimes the other is incorrect stock, they come they deliver when you check it incorrect delivery it's not what you order, it's not what you need there so there is always a challenge to that. So it causes the customers to have a problem with me so that's I can't." Respondent D

"One of the challenges is when the customers are exercising their rights wrongly or customers are causing unnecessary conflicts in the organization due to some miscommunications amongst the employees or with their orders" Respondent E

"As with the customers or any stakeholders I can say that one of the challenges is the time; they need time especially when they purchase whatever product then they require it to be delivered on time or in the specified time so if the time lapses without their need fulfilled then they complain or they do anything that they fill it's comfortable as the customers and they come to me as the manager and I have to ensure they are satisfied maybe the problem might be from the supplier; the delay in

the supply side and how it will affect the customers it also leads in the fulfilling of demands of the customers which are the deliver their goods or maybe the is nothing”

Respondent F

“On that case let’s say the customer orders something and it took very long for suppliers to transport or deliver so I will experience a with a customer so the moment where I have to get to suppliers that is where the communication challenge will happen will occur. So when communication problems in the workplace lower standards, it’s usually because you as the manager or leader lack consistency on how to communicate well with your stakeholders. It’s a good idea to establish a communication policy to standardize the methods used for communicating with both colleagues and customers. Avoid relying too heavily on one type of communication. For example, using only verbal communication makes tracking conversations and information difficult.” Respondent G

“Communication, especially intercultural, is open to interpretation and is sometimes interpreted incorrectly. People often make assumptions based on the information they hear or read whether or not they hear or read it correctly. Non-verbal cues also lead people to make assumptions that can obstruct communication. For example, someone who avoids eye contact may cause others to assume she is hiding something when she may simply feel inferior or shy. So it is important to understand your stakeholders, build good relations with them, and manage it accordingly.”

Respondent H

“Customers are one of the most challenging stakeholders that you will ever meet. This is because their demand ability is very high, and should be delivered accordingly. Also dealing with their attitude is very demanding and challenging due to their high level of expectations and complaints. So it is viable to understand them and be able to resolve their queries accordingly.” Respondent I

Question 5

Participants’ perspectives on: **‘How they (respondents/managers) create a positive happy worth place for yourself and others in the workplace?’**

“First thing that is important I encourage positive thing, employees please come to my table with thing that you can thing they can change the organization, come with

ideas that are going to make our work fast, our work efficient as well as our work effectiveness. Another thing I motivate them often, I talk to my employees guys it is very important to do A,B and C so that the organization can move forward and another thing I show that duty, what do I mean by show that duty I appreciate my employees that are doing good things so that he or she can continue doing that very same thing. Even others can learn so thatappreciation of good things that are done by employees.” Respondent A

“As a manager you always have to give recognition to your staff so if someone gets recognition for even the smallest of efforts it helps improves the mood and it gives a certain atmosphere of happiness within the team so just praise your employees, give him appreciation and recognition and you will find that this will f..... the team and it will just be the normal spirit within the team and then improve and generally create a happy environment.” Respondent B

“Sometimes it’s good to know your people it is always important to know what makes them happy and what does not make them happy so you check that and do what is best for you and them so that they will be happy at all time when they are at work. So sometimes I ask them what we can do maybe small function maybe we contribute something will go out after sometimes we check how much we achieved on our work and how can we promote the good team work with them so it is always important to do these things to keep them going.” Respondent C

“I can mention attitude especially a positive attitude and in that I can add openness when you are open and they know you are not happy; when you are not happy it always gives a chance to communicate to communicate with you and maybe to tell you what is wrong and if they are not happy you can see there are not happy but you must be open and check what are the challenges so that you can give the support they need. The other thing is I don’t know whether I used to say promotions or what but let me say responsibility, responsibility that is given to your employees you must give your employees or yourself the responsibility and if you are giving that responsibility to your employees you are automatically creating a positive workplace and you make your staff happy because the person know i can take a full responsibility of my section and you must explain to them because most of the time it helps them to grow in the industry.” Respondent D

“If my employees and subordinates are healthy I am so sure that we can work a healthy, if there is a good staffing; the staff attitude they are having no problems if they are having problems their problems are addressed and solved even the customers and to count at last the incentives that makes myself and also the employees very happy.” Respondent E

“One of the is transparency of which I think it’s required of any manager or any leader to ensure that people are being satisfied of you being their leader so if there is any difficulties or problems they can easily approach you and then communicate with you the problems or you can solve them or you can solve them in a team sector so open and transparency and even also it also assists in ensure people are learning new skills if they are being supported by their managers. Maybe from moving one job to another and it will assist them gain new skills and abilities that may assist an organization to function better.” Respondent F

“In that case you have to give your workers a good support and be understanding of their situation whenever they tell you something. You have to listen to them. You have to be a good listener as a manager and encourage good team work. In this way, you give them more enthusiasm to become more productive a doing their work.” Respondent G

“I would say being more appreciative is the most suitable response to this question, followed by good leadership, support and proper communication. Thank someone for something they did but weren’t expecting to get thanked for and also be specific about what it was and why it was helpful or important.” Respondent H

“Clear, good communication between the manager and his or her employees and other stakeholders is crucial for a positive working relationship. So being a good manager or leader lies in knowing how to motivate, inspire and encourage a work environment that brings out the best in individuals and the team at large.” Respondent I

Question 6

Participants’ perspectives on: **‘Which platforms or channels do managers use to communicate with their stakeholders?’**

“Thank you so much, actually at moment the very fast and convenient platform I use is emails, why? It’s because emails are current as well as they are fast, they are able to reach the stakeholders fast as possible and on the other side stakeholders are able to respond as fast as possible so I use emails most of the time to communicate with the stakeholders.” Respondent A

“External stakeholders we communicate using telephonic devices as well as emails that’s what we use to communicate with them unless we came face to face in a meeting or we setup a meeting with them then we give them a calling or we communicate via an email.” Respondent B

“There are these things what do you call them social networks and everything but I always prefer emails sometimes I communicate with them via telephone, sometimes it will be media that is normal in nowadays but the most important is to use email for me because I always keep the record for me and it is always there when I check if I have done a mistake or someone is complaining I will go straight to that date and check back my emails where I did the wrong things and I will respond quickly as easy like that” Respondent C

“Okay thank you. In that I can mention telephone communication, telephone communication most of the time you use it when you are dealing with reports about stock or items that need to be send back to them. Okay it is when you are giving a report or maybe general queries and the other communication is face to face interviews when you need to hear about the responses or ... section or complaints about merchandisers and everything but you must call them to a boardroom and speak with them.” Respondent D

“Most of the time nowadays technology is create more ways of doing things easily, so most of the time we use emails or the paper work or verbal communication which is the face to face communication or if the is also a telephonically communication which we usually use if either the employee or the stakeholders are not within the organization” Respondent E

“Thank you so much, the platform I use to communicate with my stakeholders is most telephone we also have the email, they can send their enquires or request by email but the most communication mode of communication to with our customers is

via the telephone is very easy and very fast and it's easy to reach the people on time other the email what if the is no internet connection what so ever the customers are facing at that particular time so it's not going be easy for them to get maybe to get quick responds." Respondent F

"With me, I will say emails because there is always proof when you are sending an email let's say like you want to tell something about the document; with an email you can actually attach the document that is a proof even the telephone because its way quicker I can talk to you direct." Respondent G

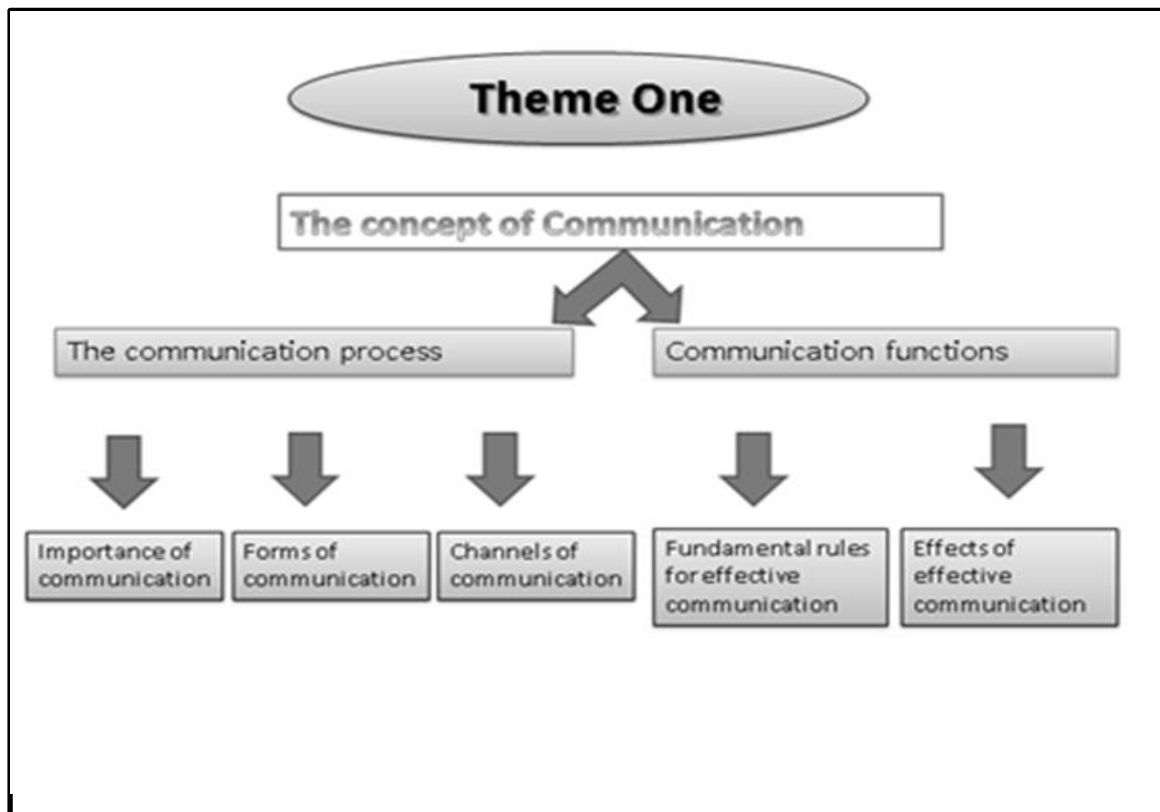
"Out of all other methods, of which are also important, e-mail is an important method of business communication that is quick, inexpensive, accessible and easily replicated. Using email greatly benefits the business as it provides efficient and effective ways to transmit all kinds of electronic data, such as text documents, photos and data sheets to several contacts simultaneously by attaching the file to an email." Respondent H

"As much as telephone communication is the fastest, with e-mail, one can gain further advantages and increase efficiency by setting up an email software to automatically create entries in your address book for every message you send or receive and respond to incoming emails automatically, e.g. to confirm receipt of an order, or to let people know that you are on leave or out of the office. So I my personal conclusion is that e-mail platform is the most convenient mode of communication, especially formal communication." Respondent I

4.7 Analysis of data: Presentations of the themes and literature control.

4.7.1 Theme 1: The concept of effective communication

The main objective for this theme is to determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar.



Source: Author's own personalized structure

The first theme will now be discussed – the concept of effective communication. As per the thematic map, the two main categories arising from theme one is that of the functions of communication as well as the communication process at Spar.

4.7.1.1 Communication

In section 2.2 of chapter two, the literature review, communication was defined as being made up of two components which are the sender and the receiver; where communication is about transferring, receiving, and understanding the information and its meaning. Effective communication takes place merely if the receiver comprehends the precise information or idea that the transmitter anticipated to convey. To provide a second definition of communication from the literature review section, communication was defined as the establishment and the exchange of views, ideas, feelings and understanding between transmitter and receiver.

Both of these definitions were upheld by the nine participants who partook in the interview session.

From the responses gathered above during the time of interviews, manager A highlighted that they use communication with everyone as a tool to motivate their employees, they communicate with workers some on personal levels so as to understand how they are living and to extend of trying to find if there are any challenges they are facing in their lives and as managers they motivate them and encourage them to face their challenges.

Further, if employees are doing well as a managers they show some appreciation and acknowledgement to the employee, whereas some managers they value their employees. Even when some employees have done some mistakes, as managers they support them and help them by reminding them always the goals of the company so that employees continue to strive to best for the organization.

“As a manager; employees sometimes and most of the time, there are not really happy in the workplace but true leader is one that can find ways to connect to the employees and help them fulfill their maximum potential so I really inspire them by connecting with them and just find out their strength so that we can put more emphasis on they are good at instead of the weakness.” Respondent A

These results from the research are in line with the literature review which emphasizes on communication as a tool used in motivation of employees as elaborated by Kitchen and Daly (2012, p. 13), who says “internal communication is such an integral part of the process of organizing and in organizational culture that it can almost be said that organizations would not be able to exist without it.” Moreso, Eisenberger and Stinglhamber, (2011, p. 41), also stated that the effective communication by organizational management enables information sharing amongst organizational personnel, and can extensively contribute to its commercial accomplishment.

These are one of the organizational functions that support the business to stay competent and productive. The degree of sharing the information narrates towards deciding on the partner with whom the data ought to be shared, the nature of data shared, and the superiority of the data being shared. Furthermore, according to Iyler, (2013, p. 44), there cannot be any real business without the effective communication, for the reason that, it is through communication that the group can

impact the persons' behavior. The next part of theme one looks at the forms of communication.

4.7.1.2 Forms of communication

Regarding the forms of communication, section 2.6 of the literature review affirmed that formal communication is most frequently divided into three forms, that is, downward, upward and horizontal or lateral, signifying the direction of the information movement.

The above channels were agreed to by all the participants. They agreed that the downward movement is the flow of communication from one level of a group to a lower level in the hierarchy of an organization, and this flow is normally used for the orders and commands, instructions and responses given from the upper level management to the employees, while the upward stream most often requests for direction, support and guidance, information and direction required by the employees or all kind of reports that are being organized for the management, as well as all potential progress ideas presented to the panel.

With regards to communication effectiveness, In response to question on how the management major efficiency and effectiveness of their communication at Spar, manager D said that they look at how other people who are positions lower than their lead others, their expectation is that they should be able to do as they would have been asked to. Further, they look at how other workers respond to them in any case where there is need for them to get a feedback. Also some use the aspect of listening at feedbacks from their clients, how much they appreciate their products and services.

“Communication is most effective when you can see the response from the message that was send so I will be able to major it by feel, if the messages you do send across to your staff are getting through the team spirit and attitude towards what you are expecting from the team so if expectations are not met definitely that means somewhere somehow the communication is not going right.” Respondent D

These results are supported by information from literature review that says in the communication process; the response is measured as an essential component, as it correctively contributes to the new contributions of the information, or even works

towards the alteration of the disseminator and the receiver. As section 2.2 in literature review states that the lack of feedback links to one way communication, where there is no probability of the feedback. In opposition, the two way communication is more precise and rich of information.

4.7.1.3 Importance of communication

In sections 2.8 of the literature review, the significance of communication has been explained that it is a very crucial component in any business. Without communication, the management cannot obtain the required information the concerning planning and execution of business activities. The coordination of work would be impossible and the business would collapse due to the lack of effective communication.

The results above reflect that one of the most important characteristics of a good communicator is that one should always adhere to communication of information in the rightful manner.

“Communication skill is always important, you communicate with you people you know what they want and you know whether there are challenges, what are the challenges they are facing and it is always important.” Respondent A

This result is supported by Kerns (2011, p. 65) who stated that for the communication to be efficient on the business, it is essential for the executive or top management as well as employees and customers to comprehend clearly the communication competencies such as sympathetic skills, active listening skills, speaking, questioning, and also the conclusive skills (Kerns, 2011).

4.7.1.4 Functions of Communication

In sections 2.12.1-2.12.4 of the literature review, the five foremost functions of communication were explained, these are: information, motivation, emotional expression and control.

The first driver is discussed, with the other four main drivers being discussed successively.

4.7.1.4.1 Information

Information recording is one of the characteristic of a good communicator and this should not be taken for granted. The results from the research mentioned the aspect of recording information as a way of keeping records, as well as recording information in case something happen, people would need to refer back to what was agreed upon a certain point.

“There is always what they call a record skill; when you do something you must record so that when it helps you, you can use it again to keep momentum goal. So as a leader I must know how to leader those people, so leadership skill is always important, management skill is important again because you have to manager those people in a good way.” Respondent G

This is further highlighted by the information from literature review that says retain a record of the selected choice or decision and the motives for it – whether it is to share the information or not to. If to share it is the decision, then what has been shared, with whom and for what purpose, should be recorded. (HM Government, March 2015).

4.7.1.4.2 Motivation

Most managers at Spar, if not all, suggested that for one to create conducive environment at a workplace one should be able to motivate his or her workmates or employees. Leonsis, (2010, p. 85) indicated that, through communication, the organizational executive is able to regulate and measure structural members, streamline to workers as to what needs to be done, how it is done and to classify the ways to improve their performance levels. This effort of administration is for setting goals, response in the direction of the goal and strengthening of the anticipated behaviour inspiring incentive and communication is vital of such control (Gopinath, and Becker, 2009).

4.7.1.4.3 Emotional expression

The other function of communication, as stated in section 2.12.3 is the emotions. It has been stated that it is the means for fulfilling peoples' need for collaboration, and this interaction is the foremost indicator for enthusiasm. So it is important to take a cautious caption of individuals' emotions since they prepare for behaviour that might

lead to some improvements. Effective communication is also supplemented with the capability of the management to manage pressure, individual's emotions and construct the ability to distinguish and comprehend their feelings, and those of people they are communicating with. This allows the management to communicate even the challenging messages without generating conflicts amongst them.

4.7.1.4.4 Control

From the information gathered by the researcher from the primary sources, leadership skills is one of the most important characteristics of a good communicator that is to say for a manager to be a good communicator he/ she must be good at leading the team of workers.

“So as a leader I must know how to leader those people, so leadership skill is always important, management skill is important again because you have to manager those people in a good way. The way that make them happy and hungry to work again and time management skill when you report to work and update your work you must be a time at all time... that will go smoothly and that's it.”

Respondent C

This is further supported by the literature review that says more contemporary leadership studies proclaim the point that operational and efficient leadership at the workplace comprises of the continuous use of communication mechanisms so as to generate intellect, shared vision and to construct a shared purpose. Atwater and Waldman (2012, p. 41) stated that the managerial competence and success significantly depends on the managements' ability to direct communications internally and externally with supreme competence.

4.7.1.5 Effects of Communication

As per the section 2.13 of the literature review, communication and information sharing are one of the very imperative skills and the necessity for the efficient management process, through which the superiors initiate and maintain alliances amongst teams in order to carry out essential day-to-day responsibilities appropriately.

As per Respondent E, good communicator is that of a manager who encourages team work in the organization. This was further emphasized that effective

communication is a mechanism or instrument that assists in constructing relationships among top management, employees and customers. It builds admiration among them, nurture learning team to work and achieve the objective of the business as deliberated.

“It is a must that you practice team work skill at all team because you know your staff candlelight to others to perform their duties, they can’t let you down if they are a team and always think a positive thing and the last one” Respondent E

4.7.1.6 Fundamental Rules for Communication

As per the section 2.10 of the literature review, these rules involves being accurately familiar with the message you want to communicate, express the message in terms that will be simply understood by the target group or individual and usually adequate, select the best mode of communication (oral, verbal, nonverbal, or written etc.), and also selecting the best communication channel for the message.

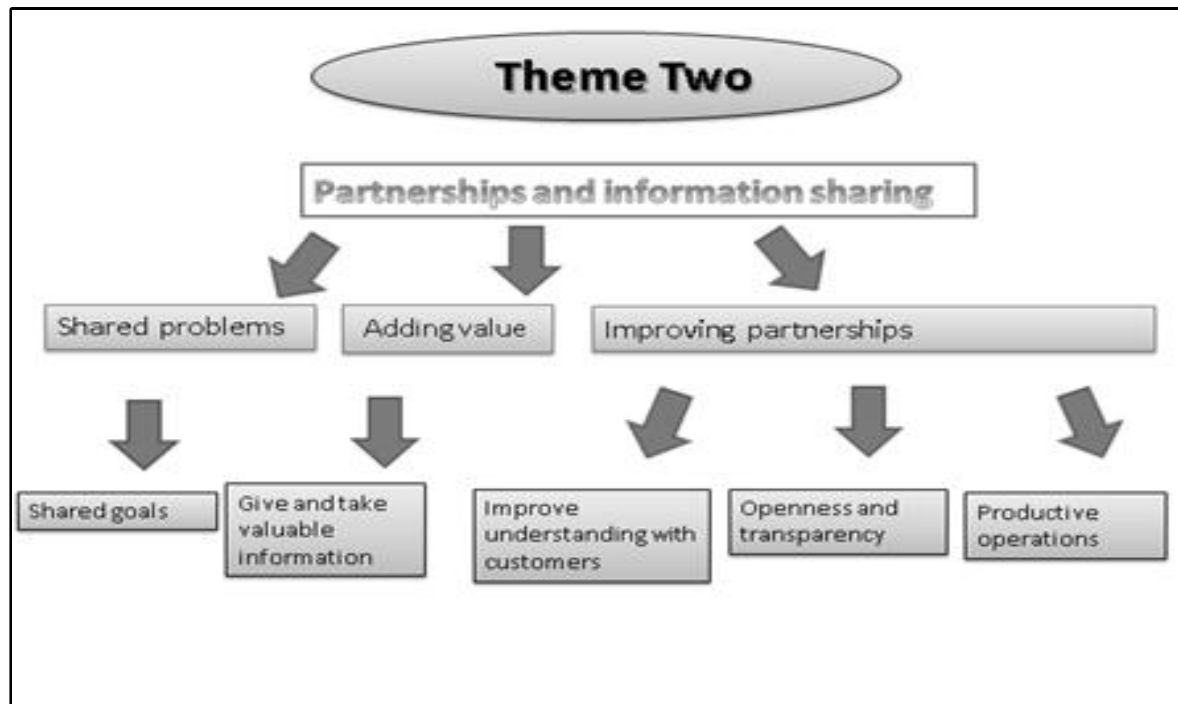
In some instances the managers face a challenge with their external stakeholders usually when it comes to understanding organizational culture. Some organizations use external suppliers instead of internal hence most of these external suppliers they won’t be in a position to know and understand the organizational culture i.e. some suppliers won’t be knowing the expected standard in services or goods supply.

“Another thing that I found as a challenge is, not understanding my company culture. Most of the company suppliers are external. They are supplying the organization from external; they don’t understand the culture of my organization so that’s a big challenge. For instance in my organization there are things that are standard; they need to do as it is but most of the suppliers they do not understand that so culture is very important.” Respondent D

This is also supported by Asma (2010, p. 182) who described that people regularly sense that communication is as simple and easy as it sounds but what makes it difficult, frustrating and challenging are the obstructions that come in its way which can be emotional barriers, perceptual barriers, psychological barriers, cultural barriers, and physical an language barriers.

4.7.2 Theme 2: Partnerships and Information sharing

The main objective for this theme is to determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance.



Source: Author's own personalized structure

The second theme will now be discussed – the concept of partnerships and information sharing. The three main categories arising from theme two is that of the shared problems, value adding as well as the ways in which partnerships can be improved at Spar.

4.7.2.1 Shared problems

One of the greatest communication challenges that respondents ever experienced in their acting with their external stakeholders especially suppliers and customers is that of different political affiliations which in turn causes people from different political set up not to communicate well.

“And another thing is politics; it’s a very challenging one from suppliers some of the suppliers are supplying me on a political based maybe there are different political so those are the challenges are I encounter from my external stakeholders.”

Respondent D

This is however supported by information from literature review that says individuals tend to respond in diverse ways to the same reason, grounded on their own experiences, customs and understanding aptitudes (Rosen et al, 2007, pp. 261-273). For example, individuals who arisen from diverse cultures observe and comprehend information in diverse ways. Amongst other features, enthusiasm and character plays a significant part in the procedure of interpreting and understanding the message (Fay and Kline, 2011).

4.7.2.2 Shared goals

Section 2.21 of the literature review states that most businesses move onward by setting goals and then working towards attain them. Any business, whether big or small, work best when there is a mutual goal. Creating a collective purpose sets the basis and serves as the glue to holding the business together. In companies, big and small, staff members may feel alienated from the management. Breaking down the walls amongst the employees and management can advance the health of the business. Bringing everybody together in pursuit of mutual goals is very critical to moving forward, sustaining and emerging a business over the long run.

“Goal setting skill is also essential. To have mutual goals, you first need to identify and understand and what exactly those goals are. For these goals to be mutual amongst the staff and management, they need to be communicated from the business owner or management to all people involved, and the subordinates know that every person is involved in the process and that everyone plays a significant role.” Respondent B

4.7.2.3 Paybacks

Setting mutual business goals is a decent start for the business payback. An additional step to take is to reward management and staff for achieving those goals. This plays a vital role on personal motivations that inspire people to work together and share a commitment to improving the business. Rewarding management and staff with gratitude, bonuses or promotions sets productive team members up as good examples for others to follow, and gives the management and staff personal investment in reaching organizational goals.

4.7.2.4 Value-Adding

Lotfi et al. (2013, p. 125) defines information sharing as distributing useful information for systems, people, or organization units, while Li and Lin (2010, p. 141) state that information sharing refers to the extent to which critical and proprietary information is communicated to one's business partners. No matter the boundaries of to whom the information is shared with, it is seen as an essential factor in the modern business world, and a competitive advantage of a company like Spar. This contributes to better facilitate information sharing and at the same time improve the efficiency of the company.

In the world where competitors can come from around the corner or around the world, it is progressively challenging for firms to function in separation and create and retain a valuable competitive advantage. Usually, a firm may do a few things very well, but to be incomparable at something valuable, the business frequently needs to combine its skills and capabilities with those of others in order to be truly competitive over time.

4.7.2.5 Improving partnerships

Section 2.18 of the literature review states that strategic business partnerships consent businesses a chance to grow their customer base and also improve their business. Partnership and strategic collaboration are essential to enhance business outcomes. Strategic collaboration benefits everyone: companies, workforces and also customers. Companies can extend their significance and escalate their addressable market, where customers benefit from the strengths and offerings each business brings into the table, employees can increase their growth opportunities by being exposed to the new viewpoints and capabilities.

And more, expanding ties amongst corresponding businesses nurtures association and durability, and also allows businesses to offer amenities and solutions that support their customers and other businesses to become more effective and successful.

4.7.2.6 Productive operation

Neergaard et al (2009, p. 28), as per section 2.18 of the literature, described

strategic partnerships as the kinds of partnerships where by the partners work together tactically on a shared problem, which they would in cooperation like to see it resolved. Successful partnerships and alliances rely on the principle that the work involved in maintaining a partnership, and the benefits from the alliance are equally spread, rather than one partner carrying the load whilst the other reaps the benefits.

In creating a positive happy workplace for everyone, some managers said that they encourage full participation of everyone in day to day activities. That is managers usually give responsibilities to the co-workers and this has seen the creation of an environment where everyone fully participates in the development of the business.

“First thing that is important I encourage positive thing, employees please come to my table with thing that you can think they can change the organization, come with ideas that are going to make our work fast, our work efficient as well as our work effectiveness.” Respondent H

This is also supported by Neergaard et al (2009, p. 32) who described partnerships as the kinds of partnerships where by the partners work together tactically on a shared problem, which they would in cooperation like to see it resolved. It obliges as an important method for the endurance of enterprises and enabler of supply chain assimilation. It entails an official cooperation between the two or more commercial initiatives, typically formalized by one or more business contracts, thus improving business operations.

4.7.2.7 Openness and transparency

The other idea that can help create an open and happy environment that was highlighted in the research findings is that of transparency and openness. This usually creates faith and trust among workers thereby creating an environment with no tensions. This was further highlighted from the review that says openness and honesty with the person from the start about what, how, why, when and with whom the information could be shared, and request their agreement, except if it is insecure or unsuitable to do so.

4.7.2.8 Listening to different views

The next factor is that of listening to the views from other workers, as well as

knowing their employees and what they like. Also some managers said that they give moral support to their employees as a way of create a good environment. Atwater and Waldman (2009, p. 68) stated that the managerial competence and success significantly depends on the managements' ability to direct communications internally and externally with supreme competence. Certain expertise and capabilities were identified which can add to the intensification of communication usefulness (Jones and George, 2008)

4.7.2.9 Improved understanding with customers

Effective communication is at the heart of human interaction, and it can make or break a business. Being able to communicate effectively with customers can lead to increased sales, repeat business and referrals. On the other hand, not being able to communicate can quickly lead to decreased sales, frustrated customers and negative word of mouth. Spar should re-focus their customer service teams on becoming a customer's ally in resolving their issue, rather than on trying to hit metrics. Businesses often let metrics get in the way of actual problem solving. Instead of trying to beat the fastest support time, focus on engaging customers in a meaningful way, ask them what their problems and expectations are, and go at the problem as a team rather than working against the customer to solve their issue.

“Communicating better with your consumers co-generates better involvements that leave them more likely to buy, engage with you and refer business to you.”

Respondent B

4.7.2.9.1 Manage customer relationships

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is all about handling your association with present customers with a focus on building loyalty towards them. After an investment in finding new customers have been made, it is essential for Spar management to consider how the business can handle its relationships with customers in order to build the business together with the customer base, and also retain customers. Understanding customers is essential in knowing how and also why they buy from the business.

Constant communication with customers across all business channels is essential

for Spar in keeping them updated with the business and helps sustain the association. It is also significant to communicate with the customers in a way that is acceptable to them.

Some of the benefits of building relationships with customers are as follows:

- Building goodwill and the value of the business.
- Retaining customers to the business.
- Enhanced word of mouth helps interest new customers.
- The after sales service a business provides becomes an investment in the customer relationship.
- Being customer-centred may improve profitability.
- Concentration on customers may help the business plan the activities for a long-term success.

4.7.2.9.2 Some of the challenges that could be managed through effective collaboration with Spar stakeholders

4.7.2.9.2.1 Supply of wrong products

In dealing with external stakeholders, most if not all Spar managers said they face a challenge when it comes to service or goods deliveries, most suppliers they come with wrong products, wrong measurements and quantities mainly because maybe there would be wrong information communicated to them.

“Okay, that is a very sensitive and important question because I am dealing with many stakeholders and employees. What I do or what I encountered as a challenge the most is ambiguity within suppliers. What do I mean when I say ambiguity – whereby suppliers are supplying wrong material or maybe they supply in correct specification and then that’s the biggest challenge within our organization”

Respondent A

This fact is also supported by the information from the literature review that says in numerous interactions, the message might not be received accurately the way the source anticipated. So, it is very important that the communicator seek out response in order to check that the message is visibly understood (Gopinath, and Becker, 2010).

4.7.2.9.2.2 Late deliveries

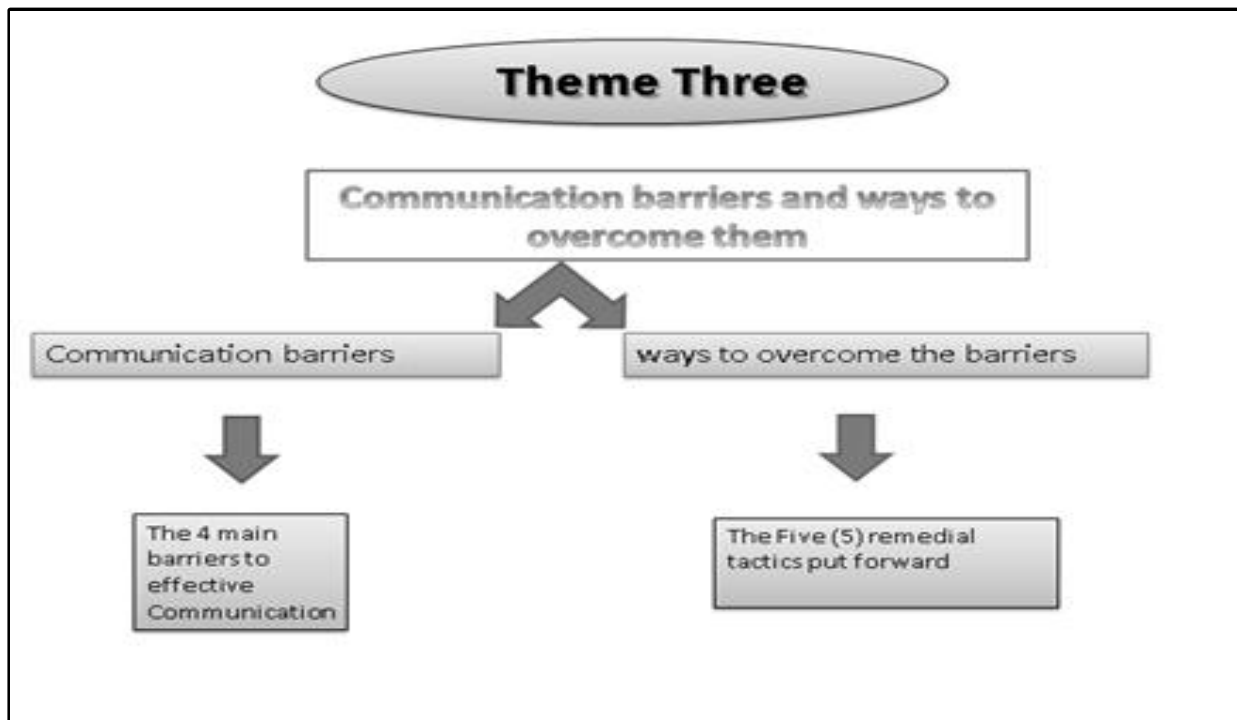
Apart from the above, the other challenge when dealing with external stakeholders, some of the Spar managers have highlighted that they face a challenge where goods are supplied late or they always get late deliveries. This is mainly because of information would have been communicated wrongly or lately which will result in goods taking time to be delivered.

“Yes, i am talking about suppliers when suppliers are expected to delivery some stock and they delay and they take their time and I end up having a short of stock because they and their excuses they say they don’t have stock that causes their delays sometimes the other is incorrect stock, they come they deliver when you check it incorrect delivery it’s not what you order, it’s not what you need there so there is always a challenge to that. So it causes the customers to have a problem with me so that’s I can’t.” Respondent F

Atwater and Waldman (2009, p. 206) says that deficiency of sufficient time is the other matter that would be problematic for the operative communication When it comes to business growth, the time is under no circumstances sufficient for the projects to be finished, and everybody protest that they ran out of time, or that the time limit is more or less over. An excessive challenge when constrained for time would be to administer proper communication networks.

4.7.3 Theme 3: Communication Barriers and ways to overcome them

The main objective for this theme is to determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar.



Source: Author's personalised structure

The third theme will now be discussed – Communication barriers and ways to overcome them. It comprises of the two main categories arising from theme, one is that of barriers to communication as well as the ways to overcome these barriers stated on the first category.

4.7.3.1 Barriers to Effective Communication

As per section 2.16 of the literature, competence in business communication is often hindered by certain obstacles that may seem to have simple root causes; nevertheless they really stalk from a multitude of quite composite grounds. In numerous interactions, the message might not be received accurately the way the source anticipated. So, it is very important that the communicator seek out response in order to check that the message is visibly understood. Individuals tend to respond in diverse ways to the same reason, grounded on their own experiences, customs and understanding aptitudes. The key barriers contrary to the effective communication on the business are status differences, gender differences, language, and inadequate time.

4.7.3.1.1 Status and gender differences

In response to the question on status difference as a barrier at Spar, some managers said that they look at how other people who are positions lower than their lead others, their expectation is that they should be able to do as they would have been asked to. Further, they look at how other workers respond to them in any case where there is need for them to get a feedback. Also some use the aspect of listening at feedbacks from their clients, how much they appreciate their products and services.

“Communication is most effective when you can see the response from the message that was send so I will be able to major it by feel, if the messages you do send across to your staff are getting through the team spirit and attitude towards what you are expecting from the team so if expectations are not met definitely that means somewhere somehow the communication is not going right.” Respondent D

These results are supported by information from literature review that says in the communication process, the response is measured as an essential component, as it correctively contributes to the new contributions of the information, or even works towards the alteration of the disseminator and the receiver (Goris and Vaught; 2002, p. 665). As Guo and Sanchez (20015, p. 28) stated that the lack of feedback links to one way communication, where there is no probability of the feedback. In opposition, the two way communication is more precise and rich of information.

4.7.3.1.2 Language

Section 2.16.4 of the literature stated that Individuals everywhere the world communicates in diverse languages, and having diverse style of communicating. Language barrier occurs when individuals do not communicate the same language, or if they do not have the same level of capability in the language. Nevertheless, language barrier may also occur when individuals are speaking the same language. At times this barrier occurs when people use unsuitable levels of language or when they use jargon which is not understood by one or more of the individuals who are communicating. Even when communicating in similar language, the vocabulary used in a message may serve as a barrier if it is not fully understood by the receiver of the message.

Some of the ways to overcome language barrier

- Understand whom the person is communicating with
- What their language necessities may be.
- Preparation is an essential part of communication

The results above reflect that one of the most important characteristics of a good communicator at Spar is that one should always adhere to communication of information in the rightful manner.

“Communication skill is always important, you communicate with you people you know what they want and you know whether there are challenges, what are the challenges they are facing and it is always important.” Respondent A

This result is supported by Kerns (2009, p. 129) who stated that for the communication to be efficient on the business, it is essential for the executive or top management as well as employees and customers to comprehend clearly the communication competencies such as sympathetic skills, active listening skills, speaking, questioning, and also the conclusive skills (Kerns, 2008).

4.7.3.1.3 Inadequate time

Regularly, in business like Spar, the targets need to be attained within a quantified time period, the failure of which could have contrary consequences on the employee. Thus, adequate time should be given in order for effective communication to be maintained.

Time management is one characteristic of a good communicator at Spar, as highlighted from the results gathered by the researcher.

“A manager has to be able to manage time because everything goes according to time there must be time limit for everything to ensure that everyone will is fulfilling what need to be done according to the time scale.” Respondent D

Deficiency of sufficient time is the other matter that would be problematic for the operative communication (Atwater and Waldman 2008, p. 206). When it comes to business growth, the time is under no circumstances sufficient for the projects to be finished, and everybody protest that they ran out of time, or that the time limit is more or less over. An excessive challenge when constrained for time would be to administer proper communication networks.

4.7.3.2 Ways to overcome barriers to effective communication

4.7.3.2.1 Technology

Section 2.18 of the literature highlighted that information systems and technology has become an exceptional part of organizational existence. This means that organizational associates should become more familiar with the new technologies, and also be aware of the methods that advance the communication process between people since technology can be regarded as one of the most important tools of communication creativeness. Technology has imperative effects on Spar processes and operations. No matter the size of the business is, technology has both physical and incorporeal benefits that will help Spar to make money and also offer the results that customers demand.

4.7.3.2.2 Customer Outreach

Reaching customers is much easier than ever. Using technological systems and tools, and various social platforms, even the most recent small business can post information that helps interested customers find them. Other than paying the third parties for promoting or publicising on print or electronic media, today's businesses are more in charge of their own customer outreach through the use of technology. In this manner, it becomes easier to create and maintain good relationship with the customers.

4.7.3.2.3 Uncomplicated organisational culture

In some instances the managers face a challenge with their external stakeholders usually when it comes to understanding organisational culture. Some organisations use external suppliers instead of internal hence most of these external suppliers they won't be in a position to know and understand the organisational culture i.e. some suppliers won't be knowing the expected standard in services or goods supply.

"Another thing that I found as a challenge is of the stakeholders not understanding my company culture. Most of the company suppliers are external. They are supplying the organisation from external; they don't understand the culture of my organisation so that's a big challenge. For instance in my organisation there are

things that are standard; they need to do as it is but most of the suppliers they do not understand that so culture is very important.” Respondent D

This is also supported by Asma (2010, p. 146) who described that people regularly sense that communication is as simple and easy as it sounds but what makes it difficult, frustrating and challenging are the obstructions that come in its way which can be emotional barriers, perceptual barriers, psychological barriers, cultural barriers, and physical and language barriers.

4.7.3.2.4 Shorter communication chain

In a structure of an organization, chain of command can be described as a business's ladder of reporting relationships, from the lowest to the highest of an organization. The chain of command not only institutes responsibility, but it also lays out an organization's lines of authority and the decision-making control.

“It is advisable to avoid sending the message through the third party unless it is imperative or urgent to do so. It's more advisable to try and directly communicate with the person concerned. The risk of misrepresentation of facts gets more if the message is distributed through the third person, and just imagine if there are more individuals in-between the transmitter and receiver, the likelihoods of filtering of the messages is multiplied” Respondent G

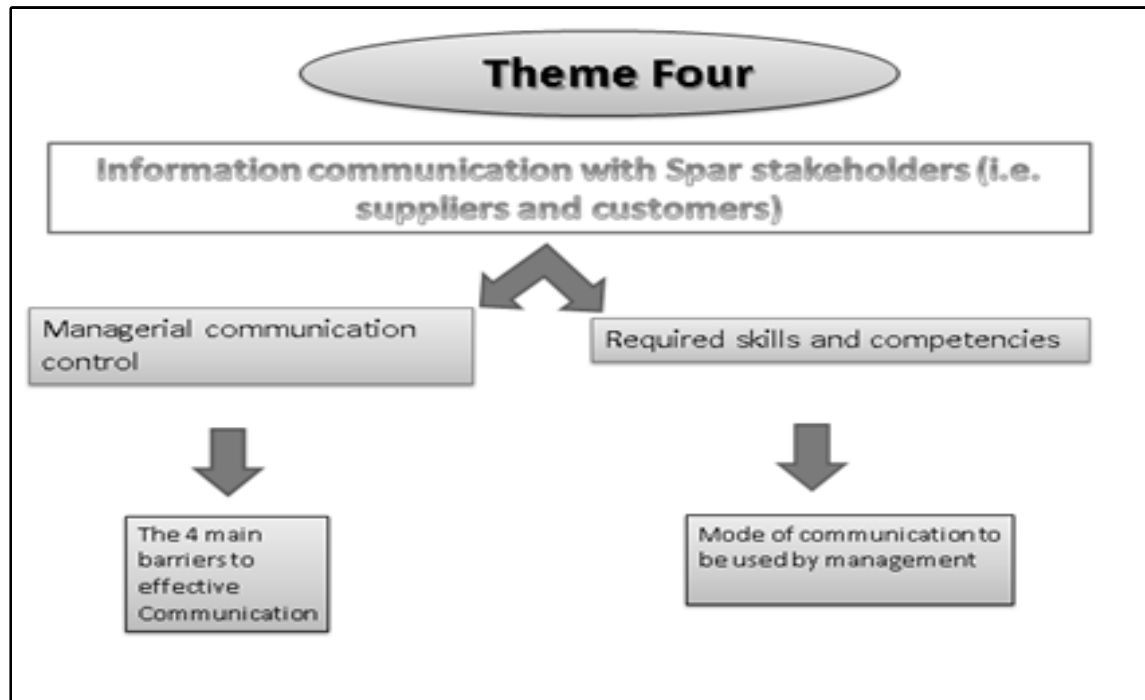
“An appropriate chain of command guarantees that every single task, job location and subdivision has one person undertaking accountability for performance.”
Respondent I

4.7.3.2.5 Active Listening

Lastly the other factor is that of listening to the views from other workers, as well as knowing their employees and customers, and what they like. Also some managers said that they give moral support to their employees as a way of create a good environment. Atwater and Waldman (2009, p. 148) stated that the managerial competence and success significantly depends on the managements' ability to direct communications internally and externally with supreme competence. Certain expertise and capabilities were identified which can add to the intensification of communication usefulness (Jones and George, 2008)

4.7.4 Theme 4: Information Communication for Spar stakeholders

The main objective for this theme is to determine how Spar Stores and its customers can maintain the productive sharing of information.



Source: Author's personalised structure

The fourth theme will now be discussed – Information communication with Spar stakeholders. It comprises of the two main categories arising from theme, which are managerial communication control as well as the skills and competencies required by Spar management to be able to effectively communicate with their stakeholders.

4.7.4.1 Managerial Communication

Section 2.21 of the literature review, stated that managerial competence and success significantly depends on the managements' ability to direct communications internally and externally with supreme competence. Certain expertise and capabilities were identified which can add to the intensification of communication usefulness. The management must become competent and well-organized as well. At the present time, partnerships and information communication is consistently acknowledged as the fundamental aspect to organisational excellence and success.

4.7.4.2 Modes of Communication to be used by Spar

Section 2.7 of the literature review discussed that the mostly used platforms of communication include emails, telephonic, and meetings. These are being regarded as important communication vehicles for the modern work world. Each of them is unpacked below.

4.7.4.2.1 Use of e-mails

From the results above, it was highlighted that most managers use e-mails as a way of communication. This is because they say e-mails are fast and efficient and also they help them keep records of their communication in case there might be complaint raised, managers will just have to go check to the emails.

“Thank you so much, actually at moment the very fast and convenient I use is emails, why? It’s because emails are current as well as they are fast, they are able to reach the stakeholders fast as possible and on the other side stakeholders are able to respond as fast as possible so I use emails most of the time to communicate with the stakeholders.” Participant F

This is further supported by Scott (20015, p. 113), who says that communication process is about transferring, receiving, and understanding the information and its meaning. It encompasses the sender who conveys an idea to the receiver. Effective communication takes place merely if the receiver comprehends the precise information or idea that the transmitter anticipated to convey. Also the verbal communication (transcribed, spoken and recently, electronic, with the comment that there are writers who reflect that this kind of communication should be taken discretely; the mutual element with the other two is the use of the word/s as an essential constituent).

4.7.4.2.2 Telephones

Apart from e-mails, most managers said that they resort to the use of telephones when communicating with their external stakeholders. Atwater and Waldman (2008) stated that the managerial competence and success significantly depends on the managements’ ability to direct communications internally and externally with supreme competence.

“Okay thank you. In that I can mention telephone communication, telephone communication most of the time you use it when you are dealing with reports about stock or items that need to be send back to them. Okay it is when you are giving a report or maybe general queries and the other communication is face to face interviews when you need to hear about the responses or ... section or complaints about merchandisers and everything but you must call them to a boardroom and speak with them.” Participant C

Certain expertise and capabilities were identified which can add to the intensification of communication usefulness (Jones and George, 209, p. 128). Further this is supported by the view that says the non-verbal communication (which possesses a countless amount of the capacity of conveyed messages, virtually 70 percent, and which has such forms as the signs, impersonators, voice tone or promptness)(Shockley-Zalabak, 2009).

4.7.4.2.3 Meetings

Some managers use meetings as way of communicating with their stakeholders that is they set up meetings where they discuss matters face to face; some use some conference calls as well to have these meetings.

“External stakeholders we communicate using telephonic devices as well as emails that’s what we use to communicate with them unless we came face to face in a meeting or we setup a meeting with them then we give them a calling or we communicate via an email.” Participant H

4.7.4.3 Control

As per section 2.12.4 of the literature, Control is associated with the procedures that the employees are expected to keep an eye on. Organizations very frequently try to control people and their doings through the setting up of official communication control is one of the key aspects towards effective managerial communication, and in order for them to manage effectively, there are key skills that they need to possess. Some of these skills are elaborated below.

4.7.4.4 Required Skills and Expertise

4.7.4.4.1 Time management

Time management is one characteristic of a good communicator as highlighted from the results gathered by the researcher.

“The last one is a manager has to be able to manage time because everything goes according to time there must be time limit for everything to ensure that everyone will be fulfilling what need to be done according to the time scale.” Respondent D

Deficiency of sufficient time is the other matter that would be problematic for the operative communication (Atwater and Waldman 2009, p. 206). When it comes to business growth, the time is under no circumstances sufficient for the projects to be finished, and everybody protest that they ran out of time, or that the time limit is more or less over. An excessive challenge when constrained for time would be to administer proper communication networks.

4.7.4.4.2 Leadership skills

From the information gathered by the researcher from the primary sources, leadership skills is one of the most important characteristics of a good communicator that is to say for a manager to be a good communicator he/ she must be good at leading the team of workers.

“So as a leader I must know how to leader those people, so leadership skill is always important, management skill is important again because you have to manager those people in a good way. The way that make them happy and hungry to work again and time management skill when you report to work and update your work you must be a time at all time... that will go smoothly and that’s it.”
Respondent C

This is further supported by the literature review that says more contemporary leadership studies proclaim the point that operational and efficient leadership at the workplace comprises of the continuous use of communication mechanisms so as to generate intellect, shared vision and to construct a shared purpose. Atwater and Waldman (2009, p. 146) stated that the managerial competence and success significantly depends on the managements’ ability to direct communications

internally and externally with supreme competence.

4.7.4.4.3 Team work

Another characteristic of a good communicator is that of a manager who encourages team work in the organisation. This was further emphasized by Effective communication is a mechanism or instrument that assists in constructing relationships among top management, employees and customers (Akam, 2011, p. 209). It builds admiration among them, nurture learning team to work and achieve the objective of the business as deliberated.

“It is a must that you practice team work skill at all team because you know your staff candlelight to others to perform their duties, they can’t let you down if they are a team and always think a positive thing and the last one” Respondent E

4.7.4.4.4 Adherence to communication

The results above reflect that one of the most important characteristics of a good communicator is that one should always adhere to communication of information in the rightful manner.

“Communication skill is always important, you communicate with you people you know what they want and you know whether there are challenges, what are the challenges they are facing and it is always important.” Respondent A

This result is supported by Kerns (2009, p. 95) who stated that for the communication to be efficient on the business, it is essential for the executive or top management as well as employees and customers to comprehend clearly the communication competencies such as sympathetic skills, active listening skills, speaking, questioning, and also the conclusive skills (Kerns, 2009).

4.7.4.4.5 Employee Appreciation

The other way of creating a good and typical environment in an organization is through appreciation of workers by their top management. This can however be done in different ways for example appreciating a worker in front of other colleagues, some companies organize some functions just to go out with its workers to celebrate

certain achievements. Also most managers emphasized that whenever an employee does something good he or she needs some recognition.

Share with consensus where suitable and where possible, admire the desires of those who do not agree to share the some confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.

4.7.4.4.6 Information recording

Information recording is one of the characteristic of a good communicator and this should not be taken for granted. The results from the research mentioned the aspect of recording information as a way of keeping records, as well as recording information in case something happen, people would need to refer back to what was agreed upon a certain point.

“There is always what they call a record skill; when you do something you must record so that when it helps you, you can use it again to keep momentum goal. So as a leader I must know how to leader those people, so leadership skill is always important, management skill is important again because you have to manager those people in a good way.” Respondent G

4.8 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter the qualitative researcher outlined the themes of data/information collected during the process of data collection from the participants and applied literature control of research findings related to the this study.

This was followed by the data analysis section of the chapter. Consideration was given to the responses obtained from the participants during the interviews. Six general themes were identified, namely, employees' inspiration, characteristics of good leadership, the importance of effective communication, communication challenges, how to create a happy environment for workers and the channels used for communication in an organisation.

The following chapter, Chapter 5, concludes this dissertation by summarising the main findings. Each objective will be considered individually, revisiting both the literature and the empirical findings of each objective in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The unfolding chapter focuses on the concluding remarks of the research project and making recommendations on certain aspects of the research project. Provisions will be made with reference to conclusions based on the research process from the beginning, and research findings/ results. This chapter will present not only conclusions, but also the recommendations to the study based on the qualitative research process, research findings and further and future research.

5.2 Conclusions based on:

5.2.1 The research process

The research approached this research project from a qualitative perspective and qualitative methods of collecting data were utilized to collect data, and ethical considerations were observed. The collected data was analysed with exploratory, explanatory and contextual study designs. The overall aim/ goal of the study were to discover the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of grandparents living with a grandchild abusing substances. It was advantageous to the study and for the researcher to be able to learn about people in their social, political and historical context.

5.3 The research findings

5.3.1 The following were the general findings by the researcher:

5.3.1.1. Based on objective number one: To determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase the efficiency level at Spar

When good communication skills are contemporary in an organization, workers tend to keep each other accountable. Just because effective communication in the workplace provides clear guidelines, workers know exactly what is anticipated from each of them. This helps improve efficiency and accountability, which in turn increases the productivity in the business at large.

5.3.1.2. Based on objective number two: To determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on the Spar Store's performance

Employees are the key sources to bring about change in an organization. In order to inspire employees for anticipated change, an organization must address the anxieties and concerns related with them. Job insecurity should be decreased at Spar and a sense of community should be created so that employees may feel their responsibilities and serve the customers accordingly. The need for change and its advantages will motivate the staff to participate in change plan and execute it.

Importantly employees' performance can be improved by ensuring appropriate recognition and reward for their efforts, and by improving communication, learning and working conditions that are mostly comfortable with them.

5.3.1.3. Based on objective number three: To determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to the information sharing at Spar

Regardless of the industry the business belongs to, there's no denying that customers are and will always be an organization's lifeline. Therefore, providing excellent customer service support should be on top of the business priorities.

One of the main challenges experienced by customers at Spar is wrong supply of goods and services ordered due to miscommunication during the order processing process. This causes further delays in the product or service delivery to the customers, which turns out to be the customer complaints to about the store.

From efficiently handling customer complaints, to responding to queries on certain products/services, and a whole lot of other concerns, properly addressing everything is a must and requires clear, effective communication.

5.3.1.4. Based on objective number four: To determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information

The study found that communicating with your stakeholders helps in building more connection with them and retaining them for longer period of time. The main guidelines on how to retain effective communication with the stakeholders were to keep up open communication, accepting stakeholder (especially customers) feedback and inquiries and taking them seriously and keeping them informed on regular basis.

Powerful customer relationships are also crucial to an organizational success. Just like personal relationships, it's significant to encourage and cherish customer relationships. When organizations cultivate solid relationships with their customers, it can lead to loyal clients, positive word of mouth and increased sales. This can be achieved through productive sharing of information amongst the parties. So it is vital that each employee is aware that information sharing is the key to delivering better, more efficient services that are co-ordinated around the needs of the customers.

5.3.2. The following were the general findings based on interview questions:

5.3.2.1 Question number one: How do you inspire your employees when they don't have good news to share?

- It was found out that managers should give value to their workers as well as acknowledge them whenever they do well.
- The manager should be able to communicate with everyone in the organization whereby he can ask them questions on the way forward of the company.
- Also manager should be able to the strengths and weaknesses of his or her employees and if possible work on their or concentrate on their strengths.
- Managers should be able to give morale support to the employees as well as continue to remind the employees about the organization goals.

5.3.2.2 Question number two: Which characters do you think (as a manager) are most important for a skilled leader communicator?

- In terms of what must a good communicator do, it was found out that a manager should be a good communicator always when it comes to information dissemination.

- A manager should be a good leader, he or she must be a source of inspiration to his or her employees, also should be able to adapt to all environments as well as blending with all people in the organization.
- A manager as a good communicator should be able to record everything down and keeps records for future references.
- Also time management skills should exist in anyone who is leading or managing people in an organization as well as team work spirit.

5.3.2.3 Question number three: How do you measure the effectiveness/efficiency of communication in your organization?

For managers to achieve an effective and efficient communication system, it was discovered that managers should encourage teamwork and efficient support system that will benefit everyone involved in the process. Effective communication guarantees that every person is on the same page.

5.3.2.4 Question number four: What is the greatest communication challenge do you experience when interacting with your external stakeholders (suppliers and customers)?

Sometimes suppliers have a tendency of supplying wrong products, wrong measurements, this usually with also lead to the delay of deliveries of the proper products needed. The customers get affected since the delays from the suppliers affect the availability of products and services demanded by the customers. This causes the increased waiting time for the customers to receive their orders.

5.3.2.5 Question number five: How do you create a positive, happy workplace for yourself and others in the workplace?

Although it is true that effective management of performance need to include measurement standards in order to offer constituent and responsibility, the actual key to performance management is effective communication and efficient sharing of information. Every person needs to have somebody to assist and support them to process the data that supports the management of performance.

5.3.2.6 Question number six: Which platforms do you use to communicate with your stakeholders? Why?

The email has been observed as the best platform as it is fast, and it is the best on keeping information for future use. It is said that, out of all other methods, of which are also important, e-mail is an important method of business communication that is quick, inexpensive, accessible and easily replicated. Using email greatly benefits the business as it provides efficient and effective ways to transmit all kinds of electronic data, such as text documents, photos and data sheets to several contacts simultaneously by attaching the file to an email.”

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Recommendations pertaining the qualitative research process:

From the perspective of the researcher enough time was required for this interesting study to be complete and appealing to the readers. Qualitative data methods in regard to how they were used in the research process were not applied correctly. From sampling, data collection, and data analysis, these skills were not deeply looked into by the researcher. At some point in the process mistakes were made, and corrected with the assistance of fellow students.

There needs to be improvements in this are because it is indeed a spot which intervenes with our service rendering capabilities. There more we as researchers take enough time on this concept, and reading literature in general there more we understand and begin to reflect on our intervention skills with clients.

5.4.2 Recommendations pertaining the research findings

Managers of business organisations should aim at inspiring their employees in order for them to motivate. They should use different ways of inspiring their co-workers such as recognising them, giving them attention as well as communicate with them properly for them to feel that they are part of the organisation.

With regards to characteristics of a good communicator it is hereby recommended that, managers should carry the rightful character that makes it easy for them to manage their employees.

As discussed in the research above it is recommended that managers should value the effectiveness or the efficiency of communication in their organisation as this has a bearing on the day to day running of the organisation.

In face of many challenges managers face in communicating with their stakeholders it is here by recommended that, proper communication should be emphasised.

It is recommended that managers should try and create conducive environment for employees for them to realise maximum participation from them.

Last but not least, managers should use fast and efficient ways of communication, such as use of telephones, face to face meetings as well as emails.

5.4.3 Recommendations pertaining further and future research

In future research endeavours it is vital that proper planning be done and documented outlining what should be done, how it should be done, when it should be done, and by whom it should be done to make sure that the research project is accomplished and properly conducted according to what the university requires. The focus will not only be on planning, but also looking at important elements or aspects of a certain issue so that it can be address ed with understanding for an objective, valid and a successful study one had.

5.5 Conclusion

The researcher conducted the study from a qualitative perspective to discover the role of effective communication and information sharing on the effective supply chain performance. The qualitative methods of collecting data, ethical consideration and data analysis were considered in making sure the study is a success. From the study, it is clear that effective communication and information sharing plays an important role on the effective supply chain performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: A LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY

THE SPAR GUILD OF SOUTH AFRICA
(ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED UNDER SECTION 21)
CO. REG. NO. 1982/004166/08



20th June 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Hlengiwe Carol Mazibuko, Student number 209503822, is a research student at the University of KwaZulu Natal and is doing research on the topic: "Investigating how strategic collaboration and information sharing impacts SPAR Stores' performance in KwaZulu Natal."

We hereby give her permission to visit stores in KwaZulu Natal and seek permission from individual owners to interview them on the above research project.

Yours sincerley

ROELF VENTER

22 Chancery Lane, Pinetown 3610 | Tel: 031 719-1900 | Fax: 031 719-1990
P.O. Box 1689, Pinetown 3600 | Website: <http://www.spar.co.za>

DIRECTORS: M. Aduccioli, D.C. Bonaguidi, B.W. Bollen, J.H. da Viera, C. Hagmann, A. Holmann, W.A. Hook, C.L. Isaac, D.E. Jankelsohn, F.J. Jooste, G.M. Maudke, G. Mousques, G.O. O'Connor, M.J. Ode, R.G. Phillips, H.G. Prende, M.R. Schmitz, A.J. van der Merwe, R. Venter (Chairman), A. Zwaan.
COMPANY SECRETARY: K.J. O'Brien



APPENDIX B: A LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY (FROM THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL)



20 September 2017

Ms Hlangwe Carol Mazibuko (209503622)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear Ms Mazibuko,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0589/017M

Project title: The Impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's supply chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 19 May 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shanuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Mrs Jayrasha Ramasamy-Gurayah
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Isabel Martins
Cc School Administrator: Ms Angela Pearce

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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APPENDIX C: THE INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT AT QUEENSMEAD SPAR.

Interview guide

Topic: The impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's supply chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal.

Department:

How do you inspire your employees when they don't have good news to share?

Comment:

.....

Which characters do you think (as a manager) are most important for a skilled leader communicator?

Comment:

.....

How do you measure the effectiveness/efficiency of communication in your organization?

Comment:

.....

What is the greatest communication challenge do you experience when interacting with your external stakeholders (suppliers and customers)?

Comment:

.....

How do you create a positive, happy workplace for yourself and others in the workplace?

Comment:

.....

Which platforms do you use to communicate with your stakeholders? Why?

Comment:

.....

APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 04 May 2017

Greetings,

My name is Hlengiwe Carol Mazibuko, from The University of KwaZulu-Natal (Westville Campus), School of Management, Information Technology & Governance, and College of Law & Management Studies. My contact numbers are 0835364560, and email address is hlengiwecarol@yahoo.com.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research on: The impact of effective communication and information sharing on Spar's supply chain performance at Queensmead KwaZulu-Natal. The aim and purpose of this research is to determine Spar's intentions for engaging in strategic collaboration and information sharing and their effects on Spar's functioning routine. In addition, it also aims to clarify on the purposes of communication, the key features and also components that might obstruct operative collaboration and information sharing within organizations. The main objective above will be addressed by the following sub-objectives:

- To determine how effective communication and information sharing can increase efficiency level at Spar.
- To determine the outcomes that effective communication and information sharing has on Spar Store's performance.
- To determine the challenges experienced by the customers with regards to information sharing at Spar.
- To determine how can Spar Stores and its customers maintain the productive sharing of information.

The study is expected to include nine participants in total. Two of the managers will be randomly selected for the pilot study and the remaining seven managers will be requested partake on the final interviews. The study site of this project will be the Queensmead Spar Supermarket at Hillier Rd, Berea. It will involve the following procedure: no maltreatment arises to partakers, and that all partakers have made choice in supporting the researcher with thorough information as to what is essential. The data collected in this study will be confidential and will be used only for research purpose. The duration of your participation in this interview if you choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be less than thirty minutes. The study will provide no direct benefits to participants.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at 0835364560, and email address is hlengiwecarol@yahoo.com, or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your participation in the study is voluntary and by participating, you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in the study. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, I.T. & Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study.

All data, both electronic and hard copy will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this time, all data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the study, please contact me or my research supervisor at the numbers listed above.

Sincerely
Hlengiwe Carol Mazibuko

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hlengiwe', is written over a horizontal dotted line.