

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

GROUP BEHAVIOUR AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN
THE GHANA RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED - TAKORADI

BY

SAMUEL KOFI MENSAH

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DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's signature.....Date.....

Name: Samuel Kofi Mensah

Supervisor's declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast

Supervisor's signature.....Date.....

Name: Mr. Frederick Koomson

ABSTRACT

Group behaviour has both positive and negative effect on the overall performance of an organisation. These effects have not been considered by various consultants who were engaged to come out with remedies to the challenges confronting Ghana Railway Company Limited. It is in view of this that, this descriptive investigation into the effects of group behaviour on the overall performance of the Ghana Railway Company Limited was conducted using Takoradi (i.e the headquarters) as a case study. Out of a total population of thousand and three staff at the headquarters two hundred and Seventy five were sampled from six departments using both purposive and random sampling technique. The study results indicate that behaviours such as lateness, punctuality, loafing, poor supervision, conformity, rumour mongering are some negative behaviours which when controlled can add to the performance of the organisation even though they have been overlooked. The study recommends user supervisors should ensure that their subordinates come on time and sign correct time. Movement registers should be introduced and individual performance within the group measured to prevent loafers from riding on.

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DEDICATION

To my wife Beatrice Amorkor Mensah

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Managers need to understand group behaviour within the organisation and its relation to the overall performance if the organisation is to remain in business. Behaviours put up at the workplace have implications but the impact is more pronounced if the group reinforces it other than the individual. This may affect the performance positively or negatively. As such in organisations, rules and regulations are laid down to bring about acceptable behaviours which are desirable that help raise its image in the eyes of the public and also affects the overall performance.

To achieve its objectives, the organisation may be divided into departments, sections, units and workgroups. Out of such divisions, groups may be formed. This position is buttressed by Liket (1961) who considers organisations as groups rather than individuals. In his view, the individuals will belong to more than one group and as a result, groups will overlap.

Apart from belonging to the social and cultural settings into which they are born, people voluntarily join groups based on shared occupations, beliefs, or interests (such as unions, political parties, or clubs). Membership in these groups influence how people think of themselves and how others think of them. These

groups impose expectations and rules that make the behaviour of members more predictable and that enable each group to function smoothly and retain its identity. The rules may be informal and conveyed by example, such as how to behave at a social gathering, or they may be written rules that are strictly enforced. Formal groups often signal the kind of behaviour they favour by means of rewards (such as praise, prizes, or privileges) and punishments (such as threats, fines, or rejection).

Affiliation with any social group, whether one joins it voluntarily or is born into it, brings some advantages of larger numbers: the potential for pooling resources (such as money or labour), concerted effort (such as strikes, boycotts, or voting), and identity and recognition (such as organizations, emblems, or attention from the media). Within each group, the members' attitudes, which often include an image of their group as being superior to others, help ensure cohesion within the group but can also lead to serious conflict with other groups.

From the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Study Text Advanced Certificate for Marketing published in 1994, various reasons have been assigned to why groups are formed. These include: preference for small groups, where closer relationships can develop; the need to belong and to make a contribution that will be noticed and appreciated; common rank, specialties, objectives and interests; resources offered to groups (for example sports facilities).

Alternatively, the reasons why an organisation may form groups include bringing the group to perform tasks which require the collective skills of more than one person; consulting or negotiating, especially to resolve disputes within

the organization; creating ideas (acting as a ‘think tank’), exchanging ideas, collecting and transmitting information; co-ordinating the work of different individuals or other groups; motivating individuals to devote more energy and effort into achieving the organisations goals

Having been attracted by the above factors, groups may be formed with or without the knowledge of the authorities. In a situation where the groups have a formal structure and are organized for a function allotted to them by the organization and for which they are held responsible, with leaders chosen and recognized by the authority and given legal authority by the organization, this group can be termed as formal group. Out of the formal structures of the organization may also arise informal groups. Informal groups mostly arise if opportunities exist.

Statement of the problem

Performance of Ghana Railway Company Limited has not been good. The finances have been dwindling and the morale of the workers is also at its lowest ebb. The Company is not even able to pay the salaries of the workers (monthly salaries now in arrears). The attitude of the workers towards work is lackadaisical. Factors that have contributed to this downward trend have been emphasised over and over and “perceived” appropriate measures taken without having any solution to them. Various investments have been made by way of bringing in more trucks, vans and coaches to improve the operations, yet the overall performance of the organisation does not seem to suggest that the

Company is moving towards a break even point. Much attention has been focused on the economic aspect, with very little being done on the social aspect that is, the work attitude of the collective groups within the organisation that are coordinated to achieve the overall performance of the organisation. The behaviour of the groups toward work does not seem to be given much attention yet it is undeniable that the positive attitude of the group to the assigned tasks can contribute immensely to performance. It is the behaviour of the groups with attendant norms that go contrary to that of the organisation that has prompted this study. This study therefore intends to bring out the various behaviour outcomes of the groups within the organisation that affect the organisational performance and to prescribe ways and means to overcome such negative behaviours that affect performance.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study was to examine the relationship between group behaviour and organisational performance in order to prescribe ways of improving the existing situation. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Describe group behaviour patterns in Ghana Railway Company
- Examine the factors that influence group behaviour
- Examine the effects of group behaviour patterns on the performance of Ghana Railway Company Limited, and
- Make appropriate recommendations to the management of Ghana Railway Company Limited

Research questions

The following research questions were addressed:

- What are the group behaviour patterns within the organisation?
- What compels the group to behave in a particular pattern?
- How does group behaviour pattern affect performance?

Significance of the study

The research will help the Ghana Railway Company Limited identify areas other than financial which if well grafted can assist in raising output and contribute immensely to the overall performance of the organisation. This is because most of the researches conducted concentrated on economic, financial, technological and structural defects without taking into consideration the social aspect. In some situations only the surface of the social aspect is scratched and not much emphasis is laid on it. For instance the DanRail Consult AS July 1995, and Plan Consult 2006 mentioned punctuality as lacking but could not bring out clearly the relationship between punctuality and performance. It is however understandable in that the other social factors will need further enquiry if not academic, which their terms of reference did not take care of. Furthermore, it is not easy to quantify behaviour more so when GRCL does not have data on them.

Perhaps this research will give credence to the necessity for keeping data on such aspects in order to harness the benefit thereof. The awareness will now be created for others to tow this line of investigation.

Limitations

The study did not take into consideration the whole population of Ghana Railway Company Limited but rather concentrated on Takoradi and Location. As such, generalisation of the results may be far fetched. Future researchers may therefore have to consider adding Accra and Kumasi Areas as well.

Summary

In the next chapter, discussions on the views of the various scholars and works on group behaviour and performance relating to the area of this study are reviewed.

Definition of terms

Carriage and wagon section: Shop where defective trucks are repaired or serviced immediately to be re-used for the next journey.

Engine crew: Comprises the driver and his assistance who operate the

Enginemmen: Usually all the train staff who constitute the union

Freight traffic: Volume of goods carried by the trains

Light Engine: A moving locomotive pulling no trucks or coaches

Locomotive: The engine of the train that pulls the trucks or coaches

Operating ratio: Percentage of working expenses to gross earnings

Passenger kilometre: Unit of measure of passenger traffic corresponding to the conveyance of a passenger over a distance of one kilometre

Running shed: The shop where running locomotives are serviced on return from journey or operations before it is declared fit to travel again

Shop floor: Workshop where locomotives are worked on and where workers socialise,

Ticketless travel: passengers travelling on train without tickets.

Train: This consists of an engine or locomotive with a number of trucks attached or coupled.

Tonne kilometre: Unit of measure which represent the movement of one tonne over a distance of one kilometre. i.e tonnage X distance travelled.

Tonnes carried: This represents the quantum of goods originating on each railway as well as the quantum of goods received from other railways gauges and also those crossing the railway

Turn round of a wagon: interval of time between two successive loadings of a wagon

Turnaround time: The time it takes the train to move from the originating station to its destination and returns with freight or passenger

Working expenses: Expenditure on administration, operation maintenance and repairs, contribution to depreciation reserve and pension funds.

Passenger traffic: Number of passengers carried by the train

Staff : A signalling instrument usually used by the station masters giving them authority to admit trains to their section. They are usually small wooden sticks with metal plated at the end which are placed in a machine which can only be removed with the express permission with the next station master ahead or the requesting station or before the requesting station.

Vehicle: coaches and wagons

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The hallmark of every organisation is to make the best of its resources with the view of meeting the goals and the purpose for which it was established. Profits, though necessarily may not be the ultimate. At least, breaking even in business is necessary if the reason for establishing the organisation is anything to go by. Human activities within the organisation contribute a lot to the overall performance of the organisation. In this section, the researcher reviewed literature on the concept of group behaviour and performance, group behaviour patterns, the implications of group behaviour and its attendant effects on performance.

The concept of group behaviour and performance

Bringing the concept of group into organisation, Liket (1961), states that organisations should be considered as a collection of groups, rather than individuals. In his view, individuals would eventually belong to more than one group and as a result the groups would overlap. For example, a clerk in the Personnel Department of Ghana Railway Company Limited (GRCL) may belong to the Clerical Association as well as Personnel and Administrative Welfare

Association or Taskforce for collection of vendors rent and also perform clerical duties.

According to Sherif and Sherif (1969) a group is a social unit consisting of a number of individuals who stand in role and status relationship to one another, established in some degree at the time, and who possess a set of values and norms of their own regulating their behaviour, at least in matters of consequence to the group. In this definition they tried to show that groups are formed for the mutual benefit of the individuals who form it and that the behaviour of its members are regulated through set of values and norms.

Tuckman (1965) addresses how groups change over time and his model is seen as the basis for examining group stages. He gives five stages for the development of groups. These are forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. In the forming stage, personal relations are characterized by dependence. The purpose of the group is discussed along with its title, composition, leadership and life-span. At the storming stage heightened tensions associated with competition for status and influence arises as the group members attempt to organize for the task. Purpose, leadership, roles and norms may all be challenged. Hidden agenda may be revealed, and some interpersonal hostility is to be expected. If successfully handled, storming leads to the formulation of more realistic objectives, procedures and norms. In the norming stage, rules and standards of behaviour are agreed. At the performing stage the group matures to a point where it is able to work together as a team. The adjourning stage involves the termination of task behaviours and disengagement from relationships. A

planned conclusion usually includes recognition for participation and achievement and an opportunity for members to say personal goodbyes. According to Fulmer (1983), once a group has developed maturity, it is primarily a communications unit. Members interact with each other in a meaningful fashion to accomplish goals and satisfy socio-psychological needs.

Schein (1988) defines a group as “any number of people who interact with one another, are psychologically aware of one another and perceive themselves as a group”. From Schein’s (1988) definition, it means that, before any group can be perceived as such, they should have interacted regularly with one another and in pursuit of a common goal which may have been brought about as a result of their long interaction. According to Martin (2003) these include the size, norms, goals, member characteristics roles, cohesion, leadership, decision making, interpersonal relationships and the environment. The effect of these factors on the output or performance of the group depends on how the synergy of the group is harnessed.

It is undeniable that everybody is born into a society and the culture of the society we find ourselves in, influences the way we behave or how the society expects the individual to behave. The cultural expectations on the individual becomes so deeply imbedded in the human mind that, they often operate without the individuals themselves being fully aware of them (that is unconscious behaviour). As a result, if a single culture is dominant in a large region, its values may be considered correct and may be promoted not only by families and religious groups but also by schools and governments. These behaviours are carried over into organizations and therefore need to be shaped if the organization

is to achieve its desired goals. Similarly every organization has its own culture that affects the way the workforce behave.

The culture of an organisation which is a combination of the values and beliefs of the people in an organisation can also impact on its performance. According to Dubrin (2002) culture of an organization could be defined as the values, norms, beliefs, behaviour and practices that are expected of employees in order to achieve the ultimate goals of the institution. It can be felt in the implicit rules and expectations of behaviour in an organisation where, even though the rules are not formally written down, employees know what is expected of them. It is usually set by management whose decisions on policy usually set up the culture of the organisation.

Organisational culture usually has values and beliefs that support the organisational goals. The culture of the organisation, if it is positive and helpful can help to motivate staff or at least prevent them from becoming dissatisfied. For instance if the culture of the organisation is to attract skilled and qualified personnel, it would probably help maintain the staff that they have. If the climate does not satisfy the needs of staff, then it will probably become a demotivator (Schein, 1982).

Technology also plays a very important role in human behaviour (Martin, 2003). For instance, the high value placed on new technological invention in many parts of the world has led to increasingly rapid and inexpensive communication and travel, which in turn has led to the rapid spread of fashions

and ideas in clothing, food, music, and forms of recreation. It is now common to hear the phrase “the world has become a global village”.

Studies have been done to show the relationship between group cohesion and productivity. Cohesion may be defined as the degree to which members of the group desire to remain in the group. High group cohesiveness tends to foster conformity. In their studies, Dorman and Stepheman (1984) note that high cohesion contributes to low absenteeism and low turnover and therefore the cohesion can make for more effective group performance. Similarly, performance can in turn contribute to cohesion. According to Dubrin (2002) leadership and its type have been found to contribute to the behaviour and performance of the group. A group leader has the role of inspiring and empowering members to commit themselves to achieving a shared vision. One of the best known investigations of the effects of different leadership styles was conducted in the 1930s by Lippitt and White known as 'Leadership and Group Life'. This involves three types of leadership styles viz authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire. The results indicate that in a democratic type, morale is high, relationships between the group members are friendly, as well as with the group leader. In the case of authoritarian type, the groups exhibit two types of behaviour - 'aggressive' and 'apathetic'. The laissez-faire groups are the worst of all. They did not produce many masks and those they produced were of poor quality. Their group satisfaction was the lowest, they co-operated little and placed great demands on the leader, showing little ability to work independently.

In an organisation, the authoritarian style involves close supervision of subordinates with the leader issuing precise and detailed instructions to cover every task undertaken. Dictatorial tendencies are exhibited. In this case the leader tells the subordinates exactly what to do, without comment or discussion. There are rewards, and penalties and threats of sanctions for underperformance. The disadvantage in this style of leadership is that employee's knowledge, skills and experiences are not fully applied to their work. It also suppresses workers' initiative and staff cannot develop to their maximum potential. Furthermore in the absence of the leader the workers have a "field day". They either absent themselves or feign illness, thus the work suffers.

In an organisation the democratic leader specifies overall objectives, leaving the subordinate to achieve these as he or she thinks fit. This approach normally involves much communication and consultation between the leader and the group, with group members actively participating in the leader's decisions. However, the disadvantage in this type is that decision taking may be slow because of the time absorbed by the need to consult subordinates. Disagreements may occur leading to subordinates not willing to take decisions. Subordinates may also not be capable of working without close supervision.

It has been established that the group has effect on performance. In his pioneering work on group effect on performance, Triplett (1898) observed that activities of the group has effect on individual performance. He established that people performed faster when competing against other people than when competing against a clock. Two decades later, Psychologist Floyd Allport (1920)

found that people performed variety of tasks better when working in the same room than when working in separate rooms. Allport(1920) called the improvement in performance caused by the presence of other people social facilitation.

However, later studies have found that the presence of others can sometimes impair performance. Reviewing 241 studies involving 24,000 subjects, it was found that the presence of other people improves performance on simple or well-learned tasks and impairs performance on complex or poorly learned tasks (Bond & Titus, 1983). This may account for the reason why lower level personnel are kept in the general offices while top management personnel are kept in single offices.

In trying to find an explanation for the cause of the social facilitation and social inhibition, Zajonc (1965) in his research came out with the drive theory which was derived from a motivational theory put forth by Hull (1943). According to Zajonc (1965), the presence of other people increases physiological arousal, which energizes the performer's most likely responses to a task. For those who are good at a task, the most likely responses will be the effective one; consequently, those people will perform better in the presence of others. In contrast, it was observed that those who are not good at a task, the most well learned responses will be the ineffective ones; consequently, those people will perform worse in the presence of others. However, a study of performance on a sport related task found that extraverts performed better than introverts in front of an audience (Graydon & Murphy, 1995).

Patterns of group behaviour

It has been established that groups form their own norms and put pressure on its members to adhere to them. This view point is demonstrated by Asch (1950) who carried out a series of classified studies. He demonstrated that group pressure can influence individual members to agree with majority view even when it contradicts external reality. Thus, when seven members of a group who were his confidants argued that a line given was greater than a set of lines on another card, they were able to force the other person to accept their view even though that was not the case.

Asch (1950) found that one of the situational factors that influences conformity is the size of the opposing majority. In a series of studies he varied the number of confederates who gave incorrect answers from 1 to 15 persons. He found that the subjects conformed to a group of 3 or 4 as readily as they did to a larger group. However, the subjects conformed much less if they had an "ally". In some of his experiments, Asch (1950) instructed one of the confederates to give correct answers. In the presence of this nonconformist, the real subjects conformed only one fourth as much as they did in the original experiment.

Curthfield (1955) extends Asch's (1950) work and devised a new procedure whereby conformity could be investigated more efficiently. He used five subjects and placed them in a booth and manipulated some lighting systems of the experiment and restricted communication of each person using some switches and was able to let each of the subject think that each other group members were in agreement with each of the subjects at the same time. Each of

the subjects were made to believe that he is the last to respond on each trial. Crutchfield (1955) similar results to Asch's (1950) subjects but was able to use a far wider range of materials.

Similar results have been reported with American, Brazilian, Lebanese, Hong Kong Chinese and Fijian college students, and somewhat higher levels of conformity in African (Zimbabwe) and Fijian Indian students (Whittaker & Meade, 1967; Chandra, 1973). In the American experiments, close questioning of the students who took part suggested that the desire to conform did not just lead them to lie about what they saw but actually caused them to see what the other said they saw. It has also been realised that some motives are carried over into the laboratory from experience in the real world. Children of poor families tend to overestimate the physical size of coins more than children of richer families (Tajfel, 1957; Munroe et al., 1969).

According to Crutchfield (1955), in the workplace, the individual accepts the behaviour to which he or she conforms. Once this occurs, the person will display the behaviour even in the absence of external pressure from the group. Organisations often strive for those levels of conformity from employees on behaviours that are believed to be central to the effective functioning of the organisation. For example, it is hoped that new employees who may initially conform to a norm for high-quality standards will internalise that norm and voluntarily behave in line with it because they believe in maintaining high standards of quality. Similarly, the reverse also happens. The benefit one derives from conforming to group pressure, the more likely is conformity behaviour.

Crutchfield (1955) further investigates the sort of variables which influence conformity and in particular what sort of person is likely to resist conforming. Various attributes were found. Non-conformers are said to display more intellectual effectiveness, ego strength, leadership ability, and maturity of social relationships. They lack feelings of inferiority, authoritarian tendencies and rigidity of thought. The non-conformer is efficient, expressive, aesthetic, active, natural, unpretentious, self-reliant and is not submissive, narrow, inhibited or lacking in insight. It was also found that females apparently conform more than males but this may be a reflection of the fact that women are more conservative than men; conservatism/authoritarianism being a strong determinant of conformity. Adult women who had attended college were, however, less conforming than their male counterparts. However, there is little difference between occupations in terms of the amount of conformity displayed by persons in different occupations. Fifty American military officers displayed conformity 37 per cent of the time but equal conformity was found in samples of engineers, writers, scientists and architects (Wheldall, 1978),

Group communication affects performance. Dubrin (2002:194) is of the view that “communication and cooperation within the work group contribute to effectiveness. Collectively, the right amount of these process characteristics contributes to cohesiveness, or a group that pulls together. Without cohesiveness, a group will fail to achieve synergy”. Some of these processes or characteristics relate to the belief that the group can do the job, social support to one another and sharing the workload.

Organisational performance

Different views have been expressed on what performance is. Some regard it as simply the record of outcomes achieved. On an individual basis, it is considered as a record of the person's accomplishments (Campbell, 1990; Bates & Holton, 1995) Campbell (1990) believes that, performance is behaviour and should be distinguished from the outcomes because they can be contaminated by systems factors. Bates and Holton (1995) on the other hand state that performance is a multi-dimensional construct and its measurement varies depending on a variety of factors. Bates and Holton (1995) further state that, in considering performance it is imperative to determine whether the measurement objective is to assess performance outcomes or behaviour. Armstrong (2003:478) citing Bernardin et al (1995) explain performance to be "the outcomes of work because of satisfaction, and economic contributions". This refers to outputs/outcomes (accomplishment) but also states that performance is about doing the work as well as being about the results achieved. Kane (1996) on the other hand argues that performance is something that the person leaves behind and that exists apart from the purpose. From the various views expressed, performance could therefore be regarded as behaviour – the way in which organisations, teams and individuals get work done (Armstrong, 2003).

According to Brumbach (1988) performance means both behaviour and results. He further explains that, behaviours emanate from the performance and transform performance from abstraction to action. To him, it is not just the instrument for results but, behaviours are also outcomes in their own right – the

product of mental and physical effort applied to tasks – and can be judged apart from results.

This definition of performance leads to the conclusion that when managing the performance of teams and individuals both inputs (behaviour) and outputs (results) need to be considered. This is the so-called ‘mixed model’ (Hartle, 1995) of performance management which covers competency levels and achievements as well as objective setting and review (Armstrong, 2003).

On the other hand, organisational performance comprises the actual output or results of an organisation as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives). Specialists in many fields who are concerned with organisational performance include strategic planners, operations, finance, legal, and organizational development. In recent years, many organizations have attempted to manage organisational performance using the balanced scorecard methodology where performance is tracked and measured in multiple dimensions such as: - financial performance (for example, shareholder return) - customer service - social responsibility (for example, corporate citizenship, community outreach) - employee stewardship.

Effects of group behaviour pattern on performance

Various researchers have ascribed factors that affect group behaviour in an organisation. These include communication – (Knapp, 1944; Dubrin, 2002), leadership style (Lewin et al 1939), cohesion (Dorman & Stepheman, 1984), groupthink (Janis, 1972, Magnus, 1986), organisational culture, conformity, educational level or lack of knowledge.

Social loafing

It has been observed that the individual would under normal circumstances work under set targets but in group, loafing can set in. Loafing is the tendency for individuals to lessen their effort when they are part of a group (also known as Ringelmann effect). Causes of loafing in a team have been attributed to individuals perceiving others to be working less hard than themselves thereby giving them an excuse to put in less effort; believing that their own efforts will have little effect on the outcome; disliking hard work and assuming that their lack of effort will not be noticed; feeling “off form” and believing their mates will cover for their lack of effort. As such they are less motivated to exert their maximum (Sdorow, 1998).

In the 1880's a French agricultural engineer named Max Ringelman found that people exerted less effort when working in groups than when working alone. He had men pull a rope attached to a meter that measured the strength of their pull. As the number of men pulling increased from one to eight, the average strength of each man's pull decreased. Ringelman (1880) attributed this to a loss of coordination when working with other people, a phenomenon that became known as the Ringelman effect (Kravitz & Martin, 1986). His study was successfully replicated almost a century later, but the effect diminished markedly beyond a group size of three (Ingham, Levinger, & Peckham, 1974). More recently, the Ringelman effect has been attributed to a decrease in the effort exerted by individuals when working together, a phenomenon known as social loafing. In one experiment, high school cheerleaders cheered either alone or in

pairs. Sound level recordings found that individual cheerleaders cheered louder when alone than when cheering with a partner (Hardy & Latone, 1988). Various researches have been conducted in the area of sports concerning social loafing such as elite rowing (Anshel, 1995) and high school swimming (Miles & Greenberg, 1993). A meta-analysis of 78 studies found that social loafing has been demonstrated across many different cultures, though it is more common in relatively individualistic cultures such as Canada and the United States (Karau & Williams, 1993).

It is therefore explained that individuals can get lost in the crowd and as such they do not feel accountable for their contributions and so are not concerned about being evaluated hence the decrease in their output. Corrective measures have therefore been suggested. One way is to get people to be more aware of their performance, perhaps by comparing it to some standard, such as a norm or how others in the group are doing (Harkins & Szymanski, 1987, 1988, 1989). Another way is to have others evaluate the individual efforts within a group. Coaches do this by going over videotapes of games and pinpointing individual performances. Other conditions that can minimize social loafing include: being engaged in tasks that are challenging or involving (Brickner et al., 1986); believing that one's team mates are also working hard (Zaccaro, 1984); feeling committed to the group and being rewarded for group success (Hackman, 1986)

Groupthink.

The term “groupthink” coined by Psychologist Irving Janis (1918-1990) refers to a decision making process in small, cohesive groups that places unanimity ahead of critical thinking and aims at premature consensus (McCauley, 1989). In a groupthink situation, each member of the group attempts to conform his or her opinions to what they believe to be the consensus of the group. In a general sense this seems to be a very rationalistic way to approach the situation. However, this results in a situation in which the group ultimately agrees upon an action which each member might individually consider to be unwise (the risky shift).

A classic case of groupthink as observed by Janis (1972) occurred during John F. Kennedy’s presidency, preceding what has come to be known as the Bay of Pigs fiasco. In the early part of 1961, President Kennedy and his inner circle of foreign policy advisers decided unanimously to use Cuban exiles trained by the Central Intelligence Agency to invade Fidel Castro’s Cuba. Thinking that there will be an easy victory, the group failed to appreciate many obvious and vital factors, such as the size, strength, and loyalty of Castro’s troops and the moral of the invaders. They were humiliated and thus could not understand why they were so stupid not to have considered other alternative.

Another instance of disastrous group performance was the decision-making process that sent the space shuttle challenger on its fatal journey in January 1986 (Magnuson, 1986). Engineers at the companies that manufactured the rocket’s boosters and the orbiter warned their company managers and NASA

officials of the danger of launching in subzero temperature. However, NASA pressed the managers to authorise the already much-delayed launch of Challenger. Overruling the engineers, the managers agreed to go ahead. The result was the fatal accident which cost the lives of the crew (Moorhead, Ference & Neck, 1991). According to Janis (1983), the situations occurred due to poor decision making because of several powerful conditions within the groups. He attributed it to the groups cohesion. He further argues that members often feel a strong compulsion to avoid disrupting group unity and the positive feelings it creates. As a result, they tend to convince themselves that all the group's decisions are sound which is a major symptom of group think (Zaldivar, 1986).

Punctuality and productivity

Savage (2008) in her article on “Punctuality and Productivity in Personal Work Habits” (as printed online <http://businessethics.sulter101.com>) tries to show how employees who are new to the workforce copy inappropriate behaviours which affects productivity. She states that many people like to get their coffee and breakfast prior to starting their work day. To her the biggest problem this attitude brings is that they use the company time. She further states that, 10 to 15 minutes of their workday is used in conducting non-business rituals such as getting coffee, eating breakfast and chatting with co-workers about their evening or weekend.

Industrial action and performance

It is generally accepted that industrial action can have a negative impact on an organisation's performance. In their paper submitted to the Department of Economics, Curtin University of Technology in 1997, James Ted McDonald and

Harry Block assert that impact from the industrial action on the organisation is only one component. To them, the existence of indirect or “spillover’ effect can also have important implications for the economic performance of competing organisation which are not directly involved in the dispute. Significantly, disruptions to production at one organisation arising from a strike may actually improve the profitability of competing organisations by temporarily or permanently increasing the market share of those organisations.

Group communication and performance

Research has established that group communication is one aspect that affects performance. One of such aspect of communication that affects performance negatively is rumour mongering. Rumour is often viewed as an unverified account or explanation of events circulating from person to person and pertaining to an object, event, or issue of public concern (Peterson, Warren, Gist, & Noel , 1951).

Knapp (1944) in his analysis of reports over one thousand rumours during World War II that were printed in the Boston Herald's "Rumour Clinic" Column defines rumour as “a proposition for belief of topical reference disseminated without official verification” He further states that rumour is a special case of informal social communications, including myth, legend, and current humour. From myth and legend it is distinguished by its emphasis on the topical. Whereas humour is designed to provoke laughter, rumour begs for belief. Knapp (1994) also found that negative rumours were more likely to be disseminated than positive rumours (Allport, Gordon & Postman, 1951).

It follows that in an organisation where rumour is rife, the workforce are prepared to listen to such rumours rather than the official mouth piece which negatively affects performance.

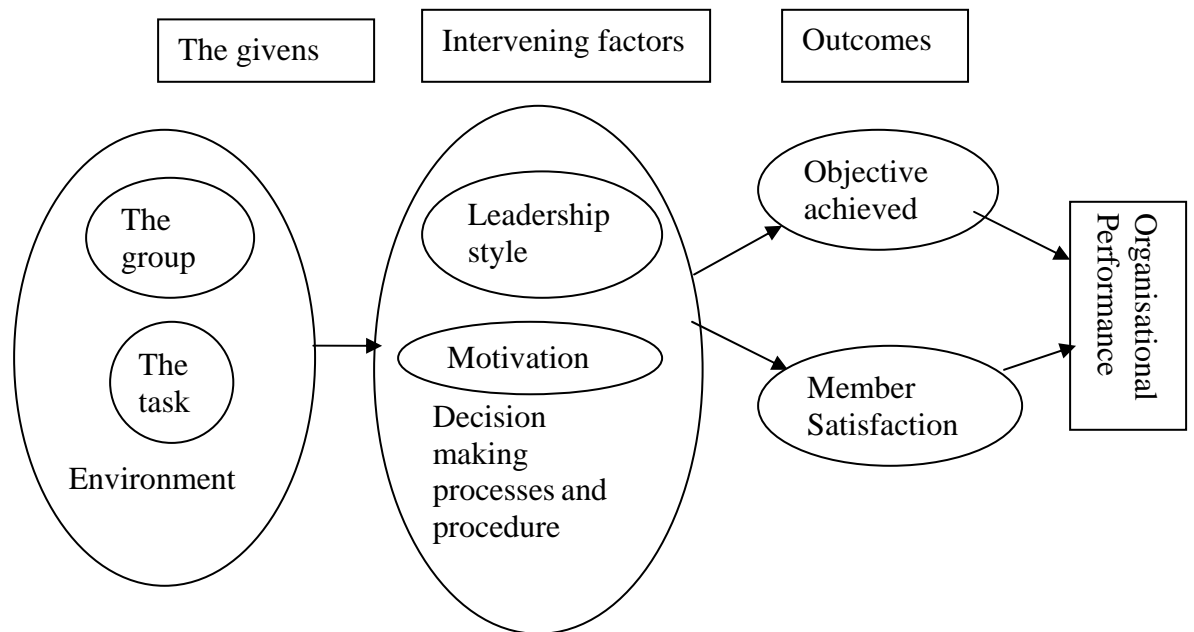


Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing factors that contribute to performance

Source: Kretch, Crutchfield, and Ballachey (1962)

Figure 1 shows the group effectiveness model by Kretch et al. (1962). In this model the givens (The group, the Task) provide the constraints within which the group must work. Other environmental factors including the size of the group, its purpose, the difficulty of the task, the physical setting for group meetings and the frequency and form of interaction with other groups. These can

lead to better performance. However, the intervening factors (such as leadership style, Motivation) reflect the decision-making process which in turn leads to achieving the objectives of the organisation in terms of productivity which further leads to member satisfaction and performance outcome.

Indiscipline in relation to performance

According to Upadhyay (1980), performance of an organisation, to a very great extent, is determined by the state of discipline in that organisation. He further states that “Good discipline means permitting human beings to make their maximum contribution for the achievement of the objectives of the organisation. No programme of productivity can succeed in the absence of disciplined workforce” (Upadhyay, 1980:80). He further observes that, maintenance of discipline has a direct bearing on the operational cost and production programmes because discipline ensures highest productivity by maximum utilisation of time and energy of workers and managers and also economical use of resources of the organisation.

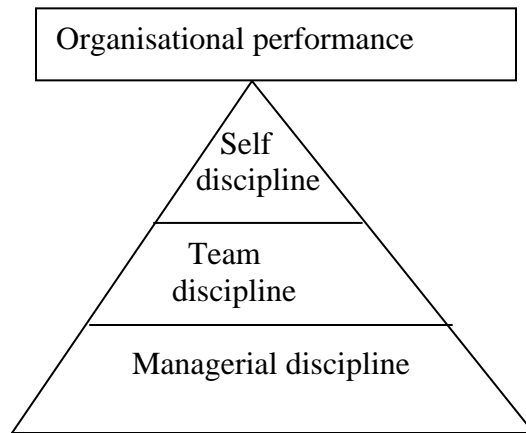


Figure 2: Discipline in relation to performance

Source: Martin (2003)

Torrington and Hall (1995) use a hierarchical model of discipline in an organisational context to describe the level of responsibility for ensuring appropriate behaviour (Figure 2). Discipline is defined in terms of behaving in expected ways and can be seen as a means of control. Groups determine how the members behave through norms and values and the culture of the organisation or the group.

According to Martin (2003), management discipline is a behaviour control achieved through a superior. Team discipline is achieved through group norms and influence and self-discipline is achieved through accepting and internalising the desired behaviours. At the self discipline level of the hierarchy very little management is required as employees effectively police themselves by delivering that which is expected of them automatically. If this level of the hierarchy can be achieved then the benefits to managers in terms of the reduced cost of

management, an improved performance from employees and levels of conflict are reduced considerably.

Summary

Organisations may form groups to perform tasks which require the collective skills of more than one person. Closer relations can develop leading to members of the group preferring to belong to it. The group develops norms that members have to follow if they are to remain in it. Thus the norm of the group compels the individual to conform. Where the norms are in favour of the organization then productivity is affected positively.

It has been established that group behaviour affect output. High group cohesion contributes to low absenteeism and low turnover and therefore cohesion can lead to effective group performance.

The group may insulate the individual from being singled out and punished. As a result indiscipline may prevail. Members of the group may not want to report loafers hence the tendency for the individual to lessen their effort when they are part of the group. On the other hand, maintenance of discipline has a direct bearing on the operational cost and production programmes in that, it ensures highest productivity by maximising utilization of time and energy of workers and economic use of resources. Punctuality and personal work habits affect productivity. Communication gap among group and management can contribute to the group misconstruing good intensions and do otherwise. Rumour thus fills the gap. In a situation when indiscipline is rife, productivity is adversely affected.

In the next chapter, the methodology used in collecting the data is discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This section sets out the methodology for the study. It deals with the data type and sources, population and choice of sample, instrument used, data collection method and data processing.

Research design

The study design is a descriptive case study. This is because group behaviour pattern has not been thought of as a contributory factor to performance in Ghana Railway Company Limited. The reason for this assumption is that none of the reports that the researcher who happens to be an employee of the organisation and also has access to reports of committees, boards and consultants contracted to review the operations of the organisation had ever highlighted this issue of group behaviour.

Organisational profile and structure

Ghana Railway Company Limited (GRCL) is the national railway of the Republic of Ghana. The railway consists of 947 route km of 1067mm gauge tracks (or a total of 1200 km of total lines) located in the southern Ghana. The

railway is predominantly single-track (except a 30 km stretch from Takoradi to Manso which is a double track) and uses diesel-electric motive power.

The network forms a triangle between the cities of Takoradi and Accra, both located about 200 km apart on the southern coast of Ghana, and Kumasi located about 250 km inland. The main network lines are designated Western line (Takoradi-Kumasi), Eastern Line (Accra-Kumasi), and Central Line, which connects the Western and Eastern Lines running parallel to the coast and about 80 km inland. The network has five branch lines: the Sekondi, Prestea and Awaso Branches originating from the Western Line; the Tema Branch originating from the Eastern Line; and the Kade Branch originating from the Central Line. The Prestea, Tema and Kade Branches and part of the Sekondi Branch are currently not active.

It is the Company's policy to recognize informal groups whose activities do not go against the goals of the organization. The essence of this policy is to be able to reach the group easily through their leaders. However as a result of their cohesiveness some of the groups at the shop floor do take some decisions without taking contingency plans. Sometimes one wonders why they should take certain action which under sober reflection is considered contrary to the Company's goal. It sometimes becomes very difficult to discipline offenders without incurring the displeasure of the whole group. In the long run, the overall performance of the organisation appears to suffer. It is in the light of this that this study is being undertaken.

Official documents indicate that performance of Ghana Railway Company Limited (GRCL) comparatively before 1983 was better (see Appendix A). It experienced its peak performance in 1965 when it carried over 2.3 million tons of freight whilst it achieved its highest performance of over 8 million passengers in 1971. Ever since, it has continually dropped until it came to its lowest in 1983. Freight traffic reduced to 357,000 tons whilst the lowest passenger performance of 546,000 was experienced in 1980.

From that period, performance of the Company has observed a downward trend. The financial situation keep worsening, showing net loss each year but became serious between 2001-2005 (that is, freight performance of GRC from 1965 - 2005). This has led to the organisation's inability to support modern rail operation. In addition, this has also contributed to the inability of the organisation to sustain its maintenance programmes thus further worsening financial situation of the Railway. The worsening financial situation has also resulted in the default on loan payments, deferring of tax payments to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Social Security Fund (SSF). Inadequate financing has culminated in the deterioration of maintenance leading to drop in service quality and thus leading to loss of customers and eventual drops in revenues (see appendix A for freight performance of GRC from 1965 -2005). Despite various interventions taken, now the salaries of the employees are in arrears.

Various consultants have been contracted to come up with appropriate measures to curb this increasing downward trend. These include Special

Manpower Committee set up in 1986, DanRail Consult AS July 1995, CPCS Transcom International Limited June 2003, and Plan Consult November, 2006

The DanRail Consult As July 1995 report attributes the problems of the Company to gaps in financing important components of the approved projects, and partly due to managerial shortcomings. According to the report even though some of the factors contributing to GRCL's deficient performance such as, massive wage increase authorised by government at the end of 1992 industrial action by staff, inadequate release of foreign exchange by government, and shortage of locomotives and spare parts, were not within GRCL's control. The decline in performance could have been minimised by effective managerial control, such as better locomotive availability, usage and reliability, better wagon utilisation, better reliability of communications system and effective control on revenue leakage due to "ticketless" travel.

Furthermore, the report states that "Discipline throughout GRC is weak. Trains are regularly late and accidents are frequent. Senior Managers are often late for appointments, so punctuality is not a management message to the employees of the Railway. Managers seem to prefer to respond to events rather than to manage them actively and some seem to have been promoted beyond experience or activity. Vertical communication is poor leading to uncertainty among employees about Management intentions, and to frustration and inaction."

Group behaviour in Ghana Railway Company Limited

It is easy to reprimand individual who goes contrary to rules and regulations within the organisation or show open defiance to authority. However, similar offence or defiance by a group is difficult to pin down more so when the group holds sensitive area in production. Workgroups may generate distinctive cultures of resistance based on informal relations or some sense of shared occupational identity. They may share distinctive ways of communicating, such as a repertoire of sayings and jokes. Such a culture – frequently the expression of past struggles with management – can form a basis of unity and continuing resistance to formal controls. The classic study of workgroup resistance, is the famous Hawthorne research (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1943), Where the workers consequently restricted output to a level they regarded as reasonable. Group pressure therefore forces members to conform to common norms which may eventually affect the performance of the organisation.

Group norms and sanctions are used in persuading members to accept informal goals. Sometimes these norms and sanctions are too strong that individuals feel compelled to go along with the group in spite of their own inclinations. Similarly in Ghana Railway, especially at the shop floor much effort is not put in normal work during the weekday and thus creating avenue to work overtime at the weekends or even after work. A huge wage bill is therefore created as a result of the overtime. In a situation where overtime payment is sometimes half the salary of the individual indicates how grievous the problem is. Attempt at reducing the overtime is always collectively resisted. As a result not

much has been achieved by management in drastically bringing it down. As such this also continues to affect the overall performance of the Company.

In addition to these norms are the various avenues of informal communication among the groups which is detrimental to performance of the organisation. One such communication which is rife in Ghana Railway Company is rumour mongering.

Rumour is said to be unverified or untrue part of grapevine information. Communication theorists often define rumour as a product of interest and ambiguity. The effect of rumour is to distort what the situation is and create mistrust. A case in point is lack of information on the divestiture of the Ghana Railway Company which resulted in slow down of work at the workshop and thus affected output greatly. Immediately the workers heard that the Company had been placed on divestiture it was rumoured that the divestiture implementation had been finalised and that they were going to receive their severance immediately even when investors had not been found. Despite the fact that it was made explicit that the implementation would only begin when investors have been found and negotiations have been completed the workers held on to that belief. Workers were prepared to listen to their informal leaders rather than management. As a result they did not give out their best and for the five years that it never happened performance suffered greatly as can be seen in the organisation's performance table (2001 – 2005) at Appendix B.

There is the tendency for individuals to lessen their effort when they are part of a group (also known as Ringelmann effect). This is attributed to

individuals perceiving others to be working less hard than themselves thereby giving them an excuse to put in less effort and also believing that their own efforts will have little effect on the outcome. Also disliking hard work and assuming that their lack of effort will not be noticed. That they are less motivated to exert their maximum. This behaviour eventually affects the total output of the organisation and hence the overall performance. In Ghana Railway Company there are some workers at the shop floor who are found more often loitering during working hours. The reason given more often is that they are chasing their overtime which did not go through or salary advance they have applied for. They either come to work late and close early or use the excuse of chasing their advance and absent themselves. These workers are usually covered by their co-workers and that their absence or their non contribution to output are not noticed.

Organisational performance in relation to railways

In order to carry their intensions through, groups within the organisation tend to be cohesive. Thus, it is difficult to deal with individuals within the group without touching the whole group. This makes management policies difficult to implement when the group is not in favour especially in increasing output. The ultimate result is reduction in output thus affecting organisational performance.

Conformity and adhering to group norms has the tendency of leading to groupthink. In Ghana Railway Company Limited, such behaviour is seen at the shop floor of Location and the Running Sheds. These groups take rush decisions which otherwise would not be taken by each individual. More often than not such decisions result in not “passing out” trains to be used thus affecting the operations

of the Company. For instance, there are situations where a section had to withhold their services and thus affected the operations of the whole performance of the organisation.

Ghana Railway Company Limited has a chequered history of having the most vibrant union in the country. The union was so militant that it became a tool in the struggle for independence of Ghana by actively participating in the positive action which was declared by the first President of Ghana who was then the leader of the Convention People's Party. The Gold Coast Railway was then rewarded with two Unions (The Railway Workers Union and the Enginemen's Union).

The Unions see their strength in their unity and their cohesiveness. As such, strike actions organised by them had very negative effect. This cohesiveness has permeated the associations and groups within the organisation and has eventually become the culture of the organisation. The workforce is forced to conform to norms and behaviour of the unions which is dictated by its leadership.

To break the front of the Unions, on 1st July 1977, the Supreme Military Council (SMC) passed the Ghana Railway Corporation Decree (SMCD 95) and the Ghana Ports Authority Decree (SMCD 96) which separated the Railway from the Ports and established them as two distinct bodies-corporate under separate administrations.

Ghana Railway which was then under civil service became a Corporation. This period marks the beginning of the running down of the organisation because the Railway alone cannot make much money to fend for itself due to the capital intensiveness. The passenger trains though punctual and was patronised by the

public, was mere social service and never brings in much revenue. It is rather the freight traffic (that is, goods) that actually brings in much revenue. In view of this, government decided to give subvention to the organisation to mitigate the losses being incurred as a result of the social services it rendered. The withdrawal of the subvention in 1997 by the government saw the rapid downward trend in the revenue accruing to the organisation. This situation has continued till now and thus the salaries of the workers are in arrears of three months (that is, at the end of December, 2007).

Now the Railway is governed by an eight-member Board of Directors. On 7th March 2001, Ghana Railway Corporation was issued with a Certificate of Incorporation by the Registrar of Companies, and is now known as Ghana Railway Company Limited. This is to allow for private sector participation and investments into railway operations.

Executive control of the organisation is vested in the Managing Director who is assisted by two Deputy Managing Directors, one for Administration and Operations [DMD(A/O)] and the other for Engineering [DMD (E)]. The day to day management of its business falls under the jurisdiction of Heads of Department, who variously report to the Managing Director and his deputies. The various heads of department which form the fourth hierarchy of authority on the organisational chart (Figure 3) include: the Chief Internal Auditor (CIA), the Financial Controller, the Solicitor Secretary, the Traffic Manager (TM), the Personnel/Administrative Manager (PAM), the Data Processing Manager (DPM), the Chief Mechanical/Electrical Engineer (CMEE), the Chief Signal & Telecoms

Engineer (CSTE), the Chief Civil Engineer (CCE), the Project Manager (PM) and the Controller of Supplies (COS). The next line of authority below the heads of department are the various deputies. The railway network is divided into three areas, that is, Tarkwa, Kumasi and Accra, headed by Area Managers. The Area Managers (AM) are responsible for the administrative control and co-ordination of work in the Areas. Their status are at par with the deputy heads of department.

Despite the administrative set up and the various interventions by the Government by way of assisting in the phase lift in 1986 and the provision of Locomotives and coaches for the running of the train services there has been no let off in the downward trend of revenue realised. For the purpose of this study and due to availability of records five years of operations from 2001 – 2005 will be considered.

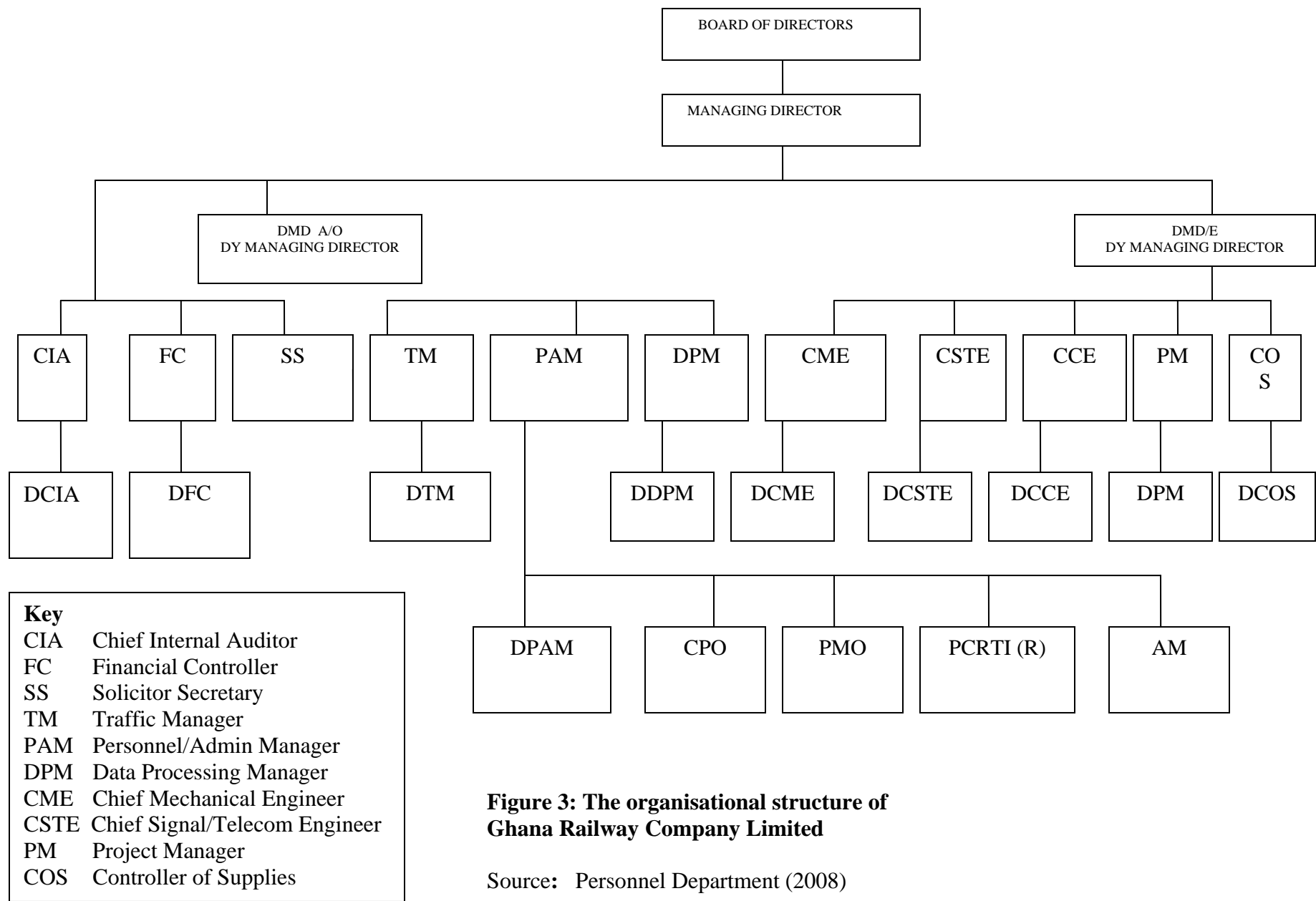


Figure 3: The organisational structure of Ghana Railway Company Limited

Source: Personnel Department (2008)

Target population

Ghana Railway Company Limited has a total workforce of 2,431. Out of this total number, 241 are Senior staff while the rest are junior staff. The staff are mainly stationed at Takoradi, Tarkwa, Kumasi and Accra. The population in Takoradi (comprising the head office in Takoradi and Location complex at Ketan-Sekondi) which is the headquarters is 1003.

The target population for this study is the workforce in Takoradi. It is taken as the target population because it is the headquarters of the organisation where all the heads of department are stationed including the National Union Executives of the Ghana Railway Workers Union. In addition, it is at the headquarters that all activities including strikes and go slow are initiated and carried through to the other stations.

Sample and sampling procedures

A multistage sampling technique was used to target the respondents who the researcher felt would best serve the purpose of the study. First, the target population was stratified into ten departments, out of which six departments were randomly selected for the research based on accessibility and proximity (note: the workforce are scattered along the train lines from Takoradi to Kumasi and from Kumasi to Accra) . Prior to the design of the questionnaire for the collection of the data, a pilot survey using focus group discussion (FGD) with the researcher as the moderator dwelt on what pertains in the Ghana Railway Company Limited. Few staff from the Audit department and a section of the Personnel &

Administrative department were used. The reason for using the FGD was to help reframe some of the questionnaire and to find out how well the respondents would respond to them. (Note: not the same respondents were used in the final data collection)

The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size estimation was used to estimate the number of respondents required from the headquarters population of 1003. From Krejele's table, the number of respondents required for the sample population is 275. The number selected from each stratum is indicated in Table 1. Out of the total sample of 275, there were 178 junior staff while 97 were senior staff. In terms of gender, there were 22 female and 253 male respondents. Simple random sampling was used in selecting the respondents.

Characteristics of respondents

Ghana Railway Company has 9 departments, comprising Personnel & Administration, Finance and Accounts, Supplies, Computer, Traffic, Mechanical, Civil, Signals and Audit departments. Out of these, only six were involved in the research as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by departments

Department	Population	Sample	Percent
Personnel/Admin	72	41	14.9
Audit	20	13	4.7
Finance & Accounts	47	20	7.3
Traffic	170	47	17.1
Mechanical	329	69	25.1
Civil	235	85	30.9
Supplies	34	0	0
Security	47	0	0
Computer	26	0	0
Signals	34	0	0
Total	1003	275	100

Source: Field data, 2007

From the pilot survey conducted before embarking on the actual research, it was noticed that the responses were not so different as such not all the departments were drawn into the research. In all, two hundred and seventy five (275) questionnaires were administered as indicated in Table 1.

Data collection methods

Questionnaires were distributed to those who were sampled for the research. In addition, key personnel in GRCL such as Heads of departments and other principal officers were interviewed. This was to complement and further elucidate responses which otherwise could not be captured by the questionnaire.

In the case of secondary data, reports received from the various consultants who have undertaken review on the performance of the Ghana Railway Company (GRC) were used. These included Special Manpower Committee Report (1986); DanRail Consult AS July 1995, CPCS Transcom International Limited June 2003, and Plan Consult November, 2006 and also quarterly and yearly reports. In addition, books and magazines and journals were used.

Processing and analysis of data

The data collected using the questionnaire were numbered and rechecked for any missing values. They were then coded, captured and analysed using Statistical Package for Service Solutions (SPSS) software version 12. Frequencies for the various responses were generated to determine the trend of the responses and inferences made out of them.

Summary

Details of the organizational structure and the Railway network were given. The target population of GRCL was 2431. The workforce were concentrated in Takoradi, Kumasi, and Tarkwa.. Due to time, economy and labour constraints the workforce in Takoradi (i.e. Head office and Location complex) totaling 1003 were used. Out of the workforce of 1003 for Takoradi, 275 staff were sampled for the study using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size. The target population was stratified into departments and multi-stage and random sampling used to select the respondents.

In the next chapter, the responses of the respondents are discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter the analysis of the results of the data collected is discussed. These are based on the responses from the respondents as expressed in the questionnaire administered and the interview of heads of department and principal officers.

Distribution of respondents by sex

Sex distribution was taken into consideration to know the sex balance situation at the Ghana Railway Company Limited (GRCL). Out of the total of 275 respondents, 253 representing 92% were males while 22 representing 8% were females as shown in Table 2. It is evident that an overwhelming majority of the staff were males. This is because the railway work is dominated by men. In the case Civil department, there was no female respondent because the department does not have any female due to the nature of the work which requires a lot of lifting of heavy rails.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by sex

Department	Frequency	Male	Percent	Female	Percent
Personnel/Admin	41	33	12	8	2.9
Audit	13	10	3.6	3	1.1
Finance & Accounts	20	14	5.1	6	2.2
Traffic	47	45	16.4	2	.7
Mechanical	69	66	24	3	1.1
Civil	85	85	30.9	0	0
Total	275	253	92	22	8

Source: Field data, 2007

From Table 3, out of the 275 respondents, 177 representing 64.4% were Junior Staff while 98 respondents representing 35.6% were Senior Staff. Thus, majority of the staff are at the junior level.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by category and sex

Sex	Junior staff	Senior staff	Total	Percent
Male	166	88	254	92.4
Female	11	10	21	7.6
Total	177	98	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Length of service

Length of service of the respondents was considered necessary in view of the fact that some of the questions would best be answered by respondents who

had served the Company over a long period. Fortunately, since GRCL had for a long time suspended engagement of workers, those who happened to be interviewed were fairly old in the service as can be seen from Table 4. From the Table, 81.8% of the respondents had worked for 21 years and more while 9.1% each had worked for between 6 to 10 years and 11 to 20 years respectively. The details are captured in Table 4.

Table 4: Length of service

Years of service	Frequency	Percent
6 – 10 years	25	9.1
11- 20 years	25	9.1
21 years & above	225	81.8
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Ages of respondents

In considering the age of the respondents due cognisance was given to behaviours likely to be portrayed by the elderly and also the young ones at the workplace. For instance, it is common knowledge that those nearing their retiring age behave responsibly just to avoid missing their retiring benefits if they should fall foul to the rules and regulations of the organisation. The details are presented in Table 5. Out of the 275 responses gathered, most of the respondents whose ages fell within 40 and 50 years constituted 48.1%, followed by 51 and 59 years

(38.1%), 21 and 30 years (2.9%), 31 and 40 years (0.1%). This indicates that the GRCL has an aging workforce and thus Management would have to recruit younger ones to augment the workforce.

Table 5: Age distribution

Age	Frequency	Percent
21 – 30	8	2.9
31 - 40	28	0.1
40 – 50	135	48.1
51 – 59	104	38.1
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

This clearly indicates that Ghana Railway Company Limited has fairly old workforce which is likely to affect the performance. In view of this, Management will need to consider recruiting young staff to augment the present staff position.

Educational background

Educational background affects the way one understands, learns new techniques and behave at the workplace. In addition, since the questionnaire needed to be understood and answered independently, the educational background was taken into consideration as detailed in Table 6.

Educational levels such as Middle School Leaving Certificates (MSLC), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), General Certificate Examination (GCE) and Senior Secondary Certificate Examination were

considered in the various departments as in Table 6. Most of the staff with GCE constituted 17.09% in the Civil Department followed by 11.27% in the Mechanical Department. It is clear that most of the staff interviewed had GCE background constituting 55.64% followed by SSCE constituting 28.73%.

Table 6: Educational background of respondents

Department	MSLC	BECE	GCE	SSCE	Frequency	Percent
Personnel/Admin	-	7 (2.5%)	30(10.9%)	4(1.4%)	41	14.91
Audit	-	-	9 (3.27%)	4(1.4%)	13	4.73
Finance & Accounts	-	-	7 (2.54%)	13(4.7%)	20	7.27
Traffic	-	-	29(10.5%)	18(6.5%)	47	17.09
Mechanical	4(1.5%)	17(6.2%)	31(11.3%)	17(6.2%)	69	25.09
Civil	3(1.1%)	12(4.36%)	47 (17.09%)	23 (8.36%)	85	30.91
Total	7(2.54%)	36(13.1%)	153(55.6%)	79(28.73%)	275	100

Source: Field data, 2007

A critical analysis of the educational background of the workforce revealed that the level of education of the workforce was low. This could likely affect the ability of the workforce to take quick and decisive decisions in relation to their work. In the long run, this would affect performance.

Group behaviour pattern

In trying to address the first objective, questions were asked to solicit various group behaviour patterns in the Ghana Railway Company Limited (GRCL). It was also to find out whether the respondents were aware of such

behaviours before touching on the specific behaviour patterns. The questions centred on broad behaviour patterns such as conformity, punctuality/lateness, rumour mongering, loafing/loitering, indiscipline, group-think and resistance to change.

Respondents were asked whether they had noticed some peculiar behaviours among GRCL workforce (that is, behaviours that could easily be identify). From their responses, as evident in Table 7, about 199 (72.1%) of the respondents claimed to have noticed some behaviour patterns among Ghana Railway workers (GRC) whereas 49 (17.8%) and 28 (10.1%) were either not certain or had not noticed any group behaviour pattern.

Table 7: Respondents affirming behaviour pattern

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	199	72.1
Uncertain	49	17.8
No	27	10.1
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

When it was probed further to know what some of these behaviour patterns were, the respondents came up with: conformity 40 (14.5%), rumour mongering 17 (6.2%), indiscipline 69 (25%), lateness/punctuality 42 (15.2%), loafing/loitering 31 (11.2%) as revealed in Table 8. The observations made by the respondents support the findings of Asch (1950) on conformity where group

pressure affects behaviour of the individual. For the respondents to have noticed rumour as a behaviour pattern in GRCL, is a clear indication that there was communication gap among the workers as observed by Peterson, Warren, Gist, and Noel (1951).

Table 8: Various behaviour patterns observed by respondents

Behaviour	Frequency	Percent
Conformity	40	14.5
Rumour mongering	17	6.2
Indiscipline	69	25.0
Lateness/punctuality	42	15.2
Loafing/Loitering	31	11.2
Undecided	76	27.9
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

However, 76 (27.9%) could not respond to this question because they had already indicated that they were either not certain or had not noticed any group behaviour pattern in GRCL. The researcher posed similar question to various heads of department and some principal officers to find out whether they had also observed any peculiar behaviour pattern among the workers. Similar responses were given but added “chatting during working hours” to their observations. What accounts for the various behaviour patterns observed by the respondents were that, staff in different departments (that is, different groups) exhibit different

behaviours that are peculiar to it. In effect, certain behaviours put up by some individuals could easily be identified or associated to a particular group within GRCL.

Rumour as a communication tool

Where there is insufficient formal communication in an organisation, informal channels take over. Rumour is one of such informal communication. Rumour is said to be unverified account or explanation of events circulating from person to person and pertaining to an object, event or issue of public concern (Stern, 1902). From the field study, respondents mentioned rumour mongering as one of the behaviour patterns they had observed in the organisation (see Table 8). Further enquires revealed that rumours had even caused panic, strikes and go slow among the workers. For instance, it was reported that there was the rumour that one Engineman whose train hit and killed a trespasser on the track was to be arraigned before court and possibly jailed. This sparked off a strike action by the Enginemen. Similarly rumour about GRCL having gotten an investor to take over the Company, led to lackadaisical attitude of the workers and thus affected the performance. There was also the rumour about the installation of clocking machine that would be used to dismiss workers who came to work late. This also led to go-slow among the workers at the Location (that is, where major repair works on the trains are done) about twenty years ago. In all such situations, output fell and therefore affected performance of the organisation. Interestingly, the study found out that respondents now preferred the installation of the clocking machine because of the downward trend of the performance of the organisation.

This clearly shows that rumour that may create panic and fear at one time may not have the same effect at another time depending on the situation and the removal of the communication gap.

Conformity to group behaviour

Conformity entails behaving in a way the group expects with little or no overt pressure to do so (Sdorow, 1995). As evident in Table 9, 77.9% of the respondents were of the view that workers did not sign correct time when they report for duty (that is, never) whereas only 10.6% and 11.6% indicated always or sometimes respectively. Table 9 shows the details.

Table 9: Signing correct time on arrival

Response	Frequency	Percent
Always	29	10.5
Sometimes	32	11.6
Never	210	77.9
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Even though workers were aware of their action (that is, signing wrong time) and its effect on productivity (man hour lost), yet no effort was made to put a stop to this behaviour. The reason that can be assigned to this behaviour is that, in the workplace the individual accepts the behaviour to which he or she conforms (Crutchfield, 1955). They saw others engaging in similar act and they also

followed suit. Invariably, it is clear from Table 9, that, staff of GRCL did not sign the attendance register hence it was difficult to check regularities and punctualities.

Furthermore, the study observed staff who came late and later checked the time they signed in the attendance register. This confirmed the opinion of the respondents that workers did not sign correct time. It was also observed that workers had developed some norms which they conform to. In so doing, they cheated the organisation by not coming to work early and also prevented being noticed later when the attendance register was checked.

Even though the supervisors more often insisted that workers signed the correct time on reporting for duty, hardly did the workers comply. From Table 10, out of the 275 responses gathered, 36.6% agreed that supervisors always insisted they signed the correct time while 47.1% agreed that supervisors more often insisted on that.

Table 10: Supervisor insisting on signing correct time

Response	Frequency	Percent
Always	101	36.6
More often	130	47.1
Sometimes	45	16.3
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

This is a clear evidence of supervisors shirking their responsibility for not insisting and ensuring that workers did the right thing by always signing correct time on arrival. Effective supervisory effort to manage attendance can result in saving increased productivity and morale.

From Table 11, 162 representing 58.7% of the respondents showed that the attendance register had never been used for punitive measure. Also, 20 representing 7.2% of the respondents asserted that the attendance register was sometimes used for punitive measures while 34.1% of the respondents asserted that the attendance register was rarely used for punitive measure. This therefore explains staff's attitude in not signing the correct time when they reported. As to why the attendance register was not used for punitive measure can be deduced from the findings of the DanRail Consultants, July 1995. According to the findings, senior managers were often late for appointments, so punctuality was not a management message to the employees of the Railway.

Table 11: Using the attendance register for punitive measures

Response	Frequency	Percent
Rarely	94	34.1
Sometimes	20	7.2
Never	162	58.7
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

It follows, therefore, that by their own behaviour, supervisors did not have the moral right to check lateness and punish offenders. In effect majority of the junior staff were in a way copying the behaviour of their senior members. It

therefore behoves on Management to put in some measures that could correct these anomalies and increase productivity.

Industrial action may be taken by Labour Unions or organised labour with the view of reducing productivity at the workplace and thereby pressuring management to give in to their grievances (Borland, 1997; Neumann, 1980, Becker & Olsen, 1986). This may include strike, occupation of factories, work-to-rule, general strike, shut down or go slow, and overtime ban. When any of such action is taken, it is the work that suffers and the overall performance of the organisation is affected. GRCL is noted for its numerous and very effective strike action. The researcher wanted to find out whether respondents had at any time been involved in strike action and whether they did that on their own accord.

Table 12: Involvement in strike or industrial action

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	233	84.7
No	42	15.3
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

As evident in Table 12, out of the 275 respondents, 233 had actually been involved in strike action whereas 42 had never been involved. Out of the 233 who had been involved in strike action, 54 (19.6%) joined on their own accord whereas 179 (64.9%) were pressurised to join. On their own they wouldn't have joined but had to conform to the opinion of their leaders as indicated in Table 12.

From Table 13, 201 (73.1%) of the respondents were of the view that even though they involved themselves in the strike action, on hind sight they would not have done what they did but had to conform to the opinion of their leaders, while 74 (26.9%) of the respondents joined on their own accord. It can be observed that individual willingness to partake in strike or industrial action is less pronounced than the group's willingness since the group plays a vital role in decision making in the lives of ordinary staff. This view point was demonstrated by Acsh (1950) who carried out series of classified studies to indicate that group pressure can influence individual members to agree with the majority. This is also supported by Crutchfield (1955).

Table 13: Joining strike or industrial action on own accord

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	74	26.9
No	201	73.1
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Also, various strike actions by GRCL staff have resulted in poor performance by its major stake holders such as Manganese and Bauxite Companies. As a result, the two Companies now use road vehicles in carting their goods though it is even expensive to them. The road transport is now reaping the net effect on GRCL's numerous industrial actions and its low performance.

Punctuality

Punctuality was one of the observed behaviour patterns by the respondents. It is said to be characteristic of being able to complete a required

task or fulfil an obligation before or at a previously-designated time. Punctual is often used to denote "on time". The study therefore took a turn to find out the means of transport by which staff came to work as indicated in Table 14.

It became clear that most workers came to work on their own because the workers' bus had its own route and some staff were not prepared to join it at some designated stops. As can be observed from Table 14, a total of 50.9% came to work using their own means of transport (that is, by private cars, walk, or own means). On the other hand, a total of 41% came to work by means provided by the Company.

Table 14: Means of transport used by workers

Means	Frequency	Percent
Staff bus	49	17.8
Workers train	19	6.9
Staff car	37	13.5
Private car	44	16.0
Public transport	76	27.6
Walk	20	7.3
Combination	30	10.9
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Relatively, 47.9% of the respondents as shown in Table 15 were of the view that those who came by staff car and private cars reported early to work than other means of transport. Also 22.5% of the respondents said that those who came by staff car reported early while 25.4% of the respondents were also of the view

that those who own private transport reported early. However, a check from official records indicated that, only few workers owned private cars and those who came to work using staff cars were also few. It followed that the bulk of workers who came on their own (that is, using public transport) come to work late having already lost man hours. This implies that if the Company were to be able to provide more workers with private vehicles and staff cars, workers would be able to come to work early and thus affect productivity.

Table 15: Means of transport which is punctual

Means	Frequency	Percent
Staff bus	38	13.8
Workers train	15	5.4
Staff car	62	22.5
Private car	70	25.4
Public transport	47	17.0
Walk	40	15.9
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Every supervisor is required to check the attendance register everyday. The essence is to ensure that staff are punctual at work and those who absent themselves are found out. The report from the attendance register is also used for periodic performance appraisal as well as the end of year appraisal. As such, the researcher expected over 80% of the respondents (if not 100%) to have attested to

the fact that supervisors checked the attendance register everyday. On the contrary, as indicated in Table 16, only 58% agreed that their attendance register were checked everyday. This is a clear indication that, not much attention is given to the use of the attendance register as a means of determining punctuality by workers.

Table 16: Checking of attendance register

Response	Frequency	Percent
Everyday	158	57.5
More often	97	35.2
Sometimes	20	7.3
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

The researcher was aware of GRCL's Management attempt over 20 years ago to install clocking machine to check lateness. This idea was resisted by the workers and therefore could not be implemented. In view of this, the researcher wanted to find out whether workers still stand by that idea after so many years had passed. Contrary to expectation, this did not seem to be the case. As indicated in Table 17, about 64.2% of the respondents agreed that the clocking machine should be installed.

Table 17: Installation of clocking machine

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	86	31.5
Agree	90	32.7
Undecided	51	18.5
Disagree	33	12.0
Strongly disagree	15	5.5
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

On the other hand, 17.5% of the respondents disagreed that the clocking machine should be installed while 18.5% of the staff remained undecided. When probed further to find out why the change, it came out that productivity was going down and it was difficult to check lateness since the supervisors were not able to do so because they themselves were involved.

From the results obtained in Table 17, it shows that behaviour pattern can change over time depending on the circumstances and the situation. Perhaps the Company's inability to pay its workers regularly, coupled with staked reality of loosing out to the Company's competitors (that is, road haulage) could be some of the reasons for the attitudinal change.

Loafing/loitering

In organisations where group performance is not evaluated, loafers have a free ride. In a situation where individual targets in a group are not set, workers are able to leave their work post to other places without caring that their action could affect output and eventually lead to poor performance of the organisation.

As evident in Table 18, about 56.9% of the respondents informed their colleagues each time they were leaving post followed by 42% of the respondents

who sometimes did and 1.1% of the respondents who never informed their colleagues before leaving post. This can be partially attributed to the non existence of movement register hence they could go and come in at any time they wanted. This situation disrupts the flow of work and eventually leads to reduction in output.

Table 18: Informing colleagues before leaving work post

Response	Frequency	Percent
Every time	157	56.9
Sometimes	116	42.0
Never	2	1.1
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

As personally observed by the researcher, workers were fond of moving from shop to shop and sometimes to the administration under the cloak of going to chase their documents or hospital refunds. More often than not, these workers dislike hard work and assumed that their lack of effort would not be noticed. They also perceived others to be working less hard than themselves thereby giving them an excuse to put in less effort (Sdorow, 1998). As part of the group, their colleagues had to cover for their lack of effort.

As indicated in Table 19, 58.2% of the respondents more often than not saw some workers leaving work and loitering whereas 33.5% of the respondents sometimes saw some workers leaving their work post and loitering. On the other hand 8.3% of the respondents had never seen workers leaving work post and

loitering. Meanwhile their absence has the effect of reducing the collective effort which otherwise can be used in productive work.

Table 19: Leaving work post and loitering

Response	Frequency	Percent
More often	160	58.2
Sometimes	92	33.5
Never	23	8.3
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Further enquiries from the various departments and offices revealed that all the offices did not have movement register. Some even did not know what a movement register was. As a result of the non existence of the movement register, workers went out without being monitored. They most often informed their colleagues without asking permission from their supervisors for fear that they might not be allowed to go. Where they did, they only informed them without taking permission. Also, because they did not sign any movement register, there were no records that indicated that they left their post during working hours.

Table 20: Signing movement register before going out

Response	Frequency	Percent
No	183	66.5
Yes	92	33.5
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Table 21 shows that 270 (98.2%) of the respondents did not sign the movement register on return, while 5 (1.8%) of the respondents did. Thus, a greater proportion of the respondents did not sign the movement register on return.

Table 21: Signing movement register on return

Response	Frequency	Percent
No	270	98.2
Yes	5	1.8
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Further analysis of the responses in Table 20 and Table 21 reveal that, the assertion by the 33.5% that they signed the movement register before going out were not true. Similarly, if there were no movement registers at any of the departments that the researcher visited, then the 5 (1.8%) of the respondents could not have signed the movement register on their return. This proves that, the workers knew what should be done but did otherwise.

Indiscipline among workers

Workers are expected to behave well if the organisation is to achieve its targets. As such, rules and regulations are set by the organisation to guide and punish those who go contrary to them. In a situation where rules and regulations are not adhered to strictly, it is the work that suffers. Accidents may result, and

the overall performance would be affected. Respondents agreed that there was indiscipline in GRCL and indicated in their responses in Table 22.

Table 22: Indiscipline among workers

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	151	54.9
Agree	25	9.1
Undecided	23	8.4
Disagree	59	21.4
Strongly disagree	17	6.2
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

From Table 22, a total of 176 representing 64% (that is, 54.9% and 9.1%) of the respondents agreed that there was indiscipline among workers while a total of 76 representing 27.6% (that is, 21.4% and 6.2%) disagreed that there was indiscipline among workers. On the other hand, 23 (8.4%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue of indiscipline among workers. Managerial discipline, as described by Martin (2003), is a control achieved through a superior. However, where there was indiscipline among managers, the propensity for the workers also to be indiscipline becomes obvious. The ultimate result of lack of control is the unproductive activities of the workers which affect the overall performance of the work. According to Upadhyay (1980), performance of an organisation, to a very great extent, is determined by the state of discipline in that organisation. He further states that “good discipline means permitting human

beings to make their maximum contribution for the achievement of the objectives of the organisation. Thus no programme of productivity can succeed in the absence of disciplined workforce” (Upadhyay, 1980:80).

Resistance to change

New policies are devised by Management to get around problems in an organisation in order to direct or guide the behaviour of the workers towards achieving its goals and objectives. However, where new policies are not readily embraced or takes a long time to be accepted, this further pushes the change contemplated forward as indicated in Table 23.

Table 23: Embracing new policies

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	22	8.0
Agree	54	19.6
Undecided	30	9.1
Disagree	167	60.7
Strongly disagree	7	2.6
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

From Table 23, twenty (22) of the respondents representing 8.0% strongly agreed that new policies were readily embraced by the staff members while 2.6% strongly disagreed. Also, fifty-four (54) of the respondents representing 19.6% agreed that new policies were readily embraced while 60.7% disagreed. A small

proportion of the respondent (9.1%) remain undecided about staff's embracing of new policies. Thus, majority (60.7%) of the respondents did not readily embrace new policies. The effect of such behaviour is that employees are not able to take advantage of changing trends and this affects their ability to adapt to situations, as can be recalled in the installation of the clocking machine which was resisted by workers; a clear evidence of resistance of the workers to change.

Effects of group behaviour on performance

Group activities have both positive and negative effects on the overall performance of the organization. In every organization the positive aspect is to be maintained if not improved but it is the negative that this research sought to dwell on.

In effect, the third objective was to find out whether respondents were aware that certain group behaviours could have effect on performance. It was also to demonstrate how the various behaviour patterns identified by the respondents could affect the performance of the organisation negatively. In addition, there were other observations which though did not come out strongly as an observable pattern by the respondents, yet the researcher thinks, affects performance negatively.

In Table 24, the questionnaire sought to find out from the respondents, if they were aware of some attitudes or behaviours of some group of workers that affected performance and how it did. From the responses gathered, it was observed that the majority (56.0%) of the respondents were of the view that group behaviour affected performance while 9.5% disagreed. About, 18.5% strongly

agreed that group behaviours affected performance while 8.7% strongly disagreed that the attitude of group of workers in the organisation affected performance. Small fraction of the respondents (7.3%) remained undecided as to whether group behaviour affected performance or not. It is, therefore, common knowledge to the majority of respondents that group behaviour affected performance.

Table 24: Group behaviour affects performance

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	51	18.5
Agree	154	56.0
Undecided	20	7.3
Disagree	26	9.5
Strongly disagree	24	8.7
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Loafing was one of the observed behaviour pattern indicated by the respondents. It is a situation where people exert less effort when working in a group. This occurs when individuals within the group think that their individual performances are indispensable (Sdorow, 1998). Loafers are the lazy group. The concept of diffusion of responsibility sets in. Thus, few hands work for the group as shown by the responses in Table 25. As such 36.0% of the respondents were of the view that few workers worked at any point in time and thus work is not completed on schedule (45.8%). The resultant effect is the resentment shown by

the workers (18.2%) thus leading to shoddy work done. The phenomenon of ringelmann effect is seen in this respect.

Table 25: Effects of loafing on performance

Effect	Frequency	Percent
More work for few hands	99	36.0
Work not completed on time	126	45.8
Resentment among group	50	18.2
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

From interview granted by the Traffic Manager, it was deduced that lots of derailments that Ghana Railway Company Limited experiences which are mechanical-oriented come as a result of lack of effective repairs and examination of the trains before they are put in service. Similarly, few workers on the track means that they would not be able to examine the tracks as expected hence defective tracks are not reported. As a result, trains derail by passing over them. Derailment and the time used in re-railing also affect the turn around time. Major derailments (that is, accidents) had the effect of destroying the wagons and thus reducing the wagon fleet (Appendix C). The result is the organisation's inability to put more wagons into service and thus affecting the output which in turn affects the overall performance. Revenue is similarly lost to the organisation resulting in its inability to pay workers adequately and also have some left for maintenance work.

According to Savage (2008), workers waste Company’s time by taking their coffee and attending to other “rituals” before they start work. The researcher wanted to find out whether such notion hold in Ghana Railway Company. When the respondents were asked as to whether they took their breakfast at the workplace, about 63.6% agreed that they more often do as indicated in Table 26, while 16.4% always took their breakfast at the workplace. Also, 14.2% of the respondents sometimes took their breakfast at the workplace while 5.8% had never done so. Taking the total time spent, the total man hours lost can be substantial.

Table 26: Taking breakfast at the workplace

Response	Frequency	Percent
Always	45	16.4
More often	175	63.6
Sometimes	39	14.2
Never	16	5.8
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Apart from workers taking their breakfast at the workplace, it was also noted that workers hardly start work on time when they arrived at the workplace. From Table 27, about 24.7% of the respondents said that they started work later after signing the attendance register while 13.5% started immediately. The majority of the respondents (61.8%) rested for a while before starting work. Even

though the time they used in resting before they started work was not taken into consideration, it became evident that not less than 30 minutes was taken before they started work and more so when the bus or the train they came with was already late. Eventually it is the overall performance that is affected.

Table 27: Starting work immediately after signing the attendance register

Response	Frequency	Percent
Start later	68	24.7
Rest for a while	170	61.8
Immediately	37	13.5
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Table 28: On time arrival of goods/passenger trains

Respond	Frequency	Percent
More often	28	10.2
Sometimes	177	64.3
Never	70	25.5
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Records available at the Traffic Manager's office indicated that trains were virtually able to depart on time but this was not the case with the arrival time. It was obvious that most of the workers were aware of this fact and clearly

demonstrated in their responses in Table 28. From the Table, 64.3% and 25.5% of the respondents were of the view that the trains sometimes arrived on time or never arrived on time respectively.

Also, 10.2% of the respondents in Table 28 were of the view that the trains more often arrived on time. The on-time arrival affected the turnaround time which in turn affected performance. (The turnaround time is the time it takes the train to travel from the originating station to its destination and returns to the originating station with freight or passengers). This also affected the trust the stakeholders had in the organisation.

In a competitive marketplace, every customer wants to feel happy or satisfied with the goods and services purchased in order to continue its patronage. It is clear from Table 29 that 51.3% of the respondents were of the view that customers were very unhappy with the services provided by GRCL while 1.4% were very happy. Also, 6.9% of the respondents were of the view that customers were happy with the services provided by GRCL while 40.4% were unhappy.

Table 29: Stake holders appreciation of services

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very happy	4	1.4
Happy	19	6.9
Unhappy	111	40.4
Very unhappy	141	51.3
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Thus, a greater majority of the respondents in Table 29 were of the view that customers were unhappy. It means that, when customers are not happy or satisfied with the services then alternative means of satisfying their needs would be sought. No doubt that in recent times, the Company's major customers, that is, Manganese and Bauxite Companies, have now turned to road transport for the transportation of their goods even though the price for the road haulage is higher than that of rail. This has greatly affected GRCL and hence not being able to pay its workers with the revenue that is realised in a particular month.

The image of the organization affects the performance in that it determines how readily others would want to deal with the organisation. Low image leads to perception of poor quality which in turn affects bargaining power and patronage of the services. Lievens (2003) talks about the image of an organisation in relation to patronage of its goods and services. To her, the image of an organisation has the propensity of attracting customers and investors as well as attracting and retaining qualified personnel/professionals who in turn add to output and hence to the overall performance of the organisation. From the responses gathered in Table 30, 7.6% and 28.4% of the respondents were of the view that the image of the organization was very high or high respectively.

Table 30: Rating the image of the organisation

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very high	21	7.6
High	78	28.4
Low	162	58.9
Very High	14	5.1
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

On the other hand, 58.9% and 5.1% of the respondents in Table 29 rated the image of the organization very low and low respectively. As pointed out by Lievens (2003) and confirmed by respondents, the image of GRCL was very low and this had affected its bargaining power with its stakeholders and similarly affected the attraction and retention of qualified personnel. The ultimate effect is less business acumen and further reducing the performance of the organisation.

Reasons for the behaviour pattern

Various researchers have ascribed factors that affect group behaviour in an organisation. These include communication (Stern, 1902; Knapp, 1944; Dubrin.2002), leadership style (Leppit and Whyte, 1930), cohesion (Dorman and Stepheman, 1984), groupthink (Janis, 1983, Magnus, 1986), organisational culture, conformity, educational level or lack of knowledge. However as can be deduced from earlier discussion, various behaviours which respondents claimed to have noticed included, conformity, rumour mongering, indiscipline, lateness,

loafing and loitering. The researcher further interviewed some principal officers of the organisation who then ascribed various reasons for the behaviour patterns observed by the respondents. The reasons given were that, there was no strict adherence to rules and regulations of the organisation. For instance, attendance and movement registers were hardly used for any punitive measure. As such some workers could come to work late and also loiter during working hours. Where they did not loiter, they chatted during working hours. Lack of information flow had also led to rumour mongering with its attendant repercussion. Other reasons included low level of education, group pressure, the work culture and the work environment.

Socialisation and working hours

According to Dubrin (2002) workers learn the organisation's culture through socialization which is the process of coming to understand the values, norms and customs essential for adapting into the organisation. Similarly, through this socialisation workers are able to communicate matters of current interest usually referred to as grapevine. Much as socialization is necessary, the extent as indicated by respondents in Table 31 appears to be on the high side. As high as 72.1% often and 10.9% more often socialized during the workday.

Table 31: Socialisation during working hours

Response	Frequency	Percent
More often	30	10.8
Often	199	72.1
Sometimes	46	17.1
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

In the same vein 67.4% of the respondents as indicated in Table 32 sometimes attended to private issues while 27.5% more often did. In situations like this, it is the work that suffers since due to their absence only few workers work for the rest in the group.

Table 32: Attending to private issues

Response	Frequency	Percent
More often	76	27.6
Sometimes	186	67.6
Never	14	4.8
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field data, 2007

Summary

From the results, it was evident that various groups within an organisation have peculiar behaviours which identify them. Supervisors were not able to supervise their subordinates hence they did not sign correct time when they

arrived late to the office. Thus the attendance register could hardly be used for any punitive measures. Coupled with loafing and indiscipline, overall output was adversely affected.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, summary of the findings of the research are made and conclusions drawn from it. Also the implications of the findings of group behaviour on the overall performance of the organisation are presented and recommendations and suggestions made to management to guide them in harnessing the strength of the group behaviour which otherwise impinges negatively on the organisation.

The study therefore set out to achieve the following:

- Describe group behaviour patterns in Ghana Railway Company
- Examine the factors that influence group behaviour
- Examine the effects of group behaviour patterns on the performance of Ghana Railway Company Limited.
- Make appropriate recommendations to the management of Ghana Railway Company Limited

Questions were posed to find out whether the respondents had noticed any group behaviour within the departments and those that cut across the various departments. Specific questions were also asked on the agreed behaviour patterns.

Similarly questions were asked to solicit views on how group behaviour can affect performance of the organisation.

Summary

Observations were made by the researcher on certain behaviours which he felt though had some implications on performance, were being overlooked or not considered by management. All the time, financial and observable inputs of workers were considered without thinking of infinite activities of the groups within the organisation which contribute to the failure of good policies which otherwise could help move the organisation forward.

Group behaviour patterns identified included: indiscipline, punctuality or lateness, conformity, loafing or loitering, rumour mongering and group think.

In trying to find out what compelled the group to behave the way they did, it came out that there was laxity in the enforcement of rules and regulations. Certain negative behaviours had become a norm such as lateness or punctuality, conforming to what the group was doing instead of thinking about the implications. Individuality is lost to the group and therefore what the group thought was good was done before considering what management wanted to be done. Other reasons included lack of dedication to the work, group pressure, the work culture, support from leadership and the importance of the work to the organisation.

Lateness and punctuality of staff had the effect of affecting the turn around time of the trains. Man hours were lost before the workers started their work.

Instead of starting their work immediately they came to work, they rather took their breakfast which further added to loss of man hours. Supervisors who were to check attendance and signing correct time themselves came late and signed wrong times. Punctuality of the trains had further resulted in lack of trust in the organisation by the stake holders. Lack of dedication to the work with the resultant neglect to the maintenance of the infrastructure had further exasperated the situation in that, a lot of derailments (accidents) which otherwise could have been avoided occurred. The tracks were single line and therefore when derailments occurred all train operations had to be stopped. Sometimes it took about a week or two before the derailments were cleared for the trains to resume operations. Until the time that the train operations were restored all the period of no operations affected the revenue or the performance of the organisation. It is to be noted that whereas the causes of the derailment might be identified through investigation, the underlying factor which was not visible was neglected.

The trust that had been lost by the stakeholders had resulted in them looking for alternative sources of transporting their goods. Now the Bauxite and Manganese Companies prefer to use road transport to cart their ore to the port even though it costs them extra to do so.

Loitering and loafing had the ultimate effect of reducing output since at any point in time there were few workers to work on particular assignment. For instance at the carriage and wagon section (that is, where defective trucks were repaired) only few might be available to work on the trucks thus resulting in “passing” them out to be added to the fleet of trucks in the system at a period,

without taking pains to examine them and effect proper repairs. Also, because few employees would be working while others loafer or loiter, the examination of the trucks and servicing is not done well and thus causing derailments when plying.

As a result of indiscipline on the part of workers, rules guiding operations are flouted. Like vehicle drivers on the road, locomotive drivers are to observe some warning signs which are sometimes neglected resulting in accidents. Drivers are not supposed to carry passengers in the locomotive but they do. As such instead of stopping at the stations, they sometimes refuse to stop and take their “staff” before clearing the station (that is, passing through the station). Such disregard had sometimes led to collision of two engines which result in damage to the fleet, derailment or injuries to unauthorised passengers in the locomotive cabin. Those who do the right thing are rather shun at so they also have to conform to what others do, the result of which performance suffers.

Performance in freight and passenger traffic kept increasing but did not translate into net revenue increase since the operating cost also kept increasing. Other leakages such as pilfering, lots of derailment, cost of repairs and the cost of paying ration for workers who work on derailed wagons in Railway all contribute to the net loss. Similarly, passenger trains are ran at a loss since it is only a social service. This further erodes the revenue base. As a result, this service has now been stopped.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Various group behaviour patterns that were identified include: indiscipline, punctuality or lateness, conformity, loafing or loitering, rumour mongering and group think. These behaviours can be attributed to non enforcement of rules and regulations on the part of management and strict supervision of subordinates.
2. The behaviour patterns exhibited by the workforce were influenced by factors such as communication gap between management and the workforce. Group norms and sanctions were used in persuading members to accept informal goals. Sometimes these norms and sanctions were too strong that individuals felt compelled to go along with the group in spite of their own inclinations. Management's inability to re-direct the organisational culture through policy decisions to attract expected goals from the workforce had also contributed to negative behaviours put up by the workers.
3. From the research, it can be concluded that the performance of GRCL does not solely depend on the technical factors which various consultants had hammered to no avail. However in addition, there were behavioural factors which were overlooked which contribute immensely to overall performance. This is what the research refers to as group behaviour which if not handled well can even worsen the already worse situation.

Recommendations

From the outcome of the studies, the following recommendations are made:

- Loafing and loitering can be minimised if individual as well as group performance appraisal can be conducted by management.
- Reintroduction of movement register at the various offices and workshops by heads of departments can in effect minimise loitering.
- Management should set targets and group incentives for workers.
- Punctuality and lateness can be avoided if supervisors strictly use the attendance register for punitive measure.
- Effort should be made by management to improve the image of the Company so as to attract quality personnel and investors and strengthen its bargaining power.
- Poor communication system has affected information from management getting to the workforce, hence effort should be made to improve it. Meetings and durbars should be conducted at regular intervals to avoid resentment from workers.
- Socialisation and charting during working hours should be curtailed by supervisors ensuring that workers adhere to the ethics of work.
- Management should be firm in dealing with offenders without favour if indiscipline is to be curtailed.
- Training of staff and technological improvement in the operations of the Company will help improve the overall performance.

Recommendations for further research

The research did not take into consideration the whole workforce of GRCL. It is recommended that, in future the whole population of GRCL would be taken into account. Those scattered along the train lines should also be covered. This will make generalisation possible. The causes of derailments and the revenue lost for not operating should be taken into consideration and linked to attitudes and behaviours of the workforce which otherwise could have averted it.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FREIGHT TRAFFIC FROM 1965 – 2005

	Cocoa	Timber	Bauxite	Manganese	Others	Total
Year	Tonnage	Tonnage	Tonnage	Tonnage	Tonnage	Tonnage
	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)
1965	419.33	546.46	276.75	597.65	447.93	2,288.12
1966	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1967	290.39	446.78	345.08	615.64	279.24	1,977.13
1968	232.06	515.93	304.18	451.33	347.61	1,851.11
1969	175.67	494.74	244.83	410.35	365.60	1,691.19
1970	213.06	498.87	344.53	343.21	339.17	1,738.84
1971	213.60	464.59	339.84	476.47	327.50	1,822.00
1972	220.66	475.75	355.63	467.93	237.82	1,757.79
1973	250.31	514.66	308.95	477.08	252.36	1,803.36
1974	117.86	304.34	378.00	158.57	306.16	1,264.93
1975	114.02	150.70	377.98	317.97	230.46	1,191.13
1976	121.64	239.70	263.07	321.77	256.47	1,202.65
1977	92.26	176.96	281.12	346.46	212.29	1,109.09
1978	68.49	115.82	271.60	333.98	175.45	965.34
1979	68.13	103.24	276.61	272.34	118.27	838.59
1980	95.40	64.60	229.40	260.10	54.78	704.28
1981	60.10	41.29	167.20	202.40	99.87	570.86
1982	83.90	42.50	152.80	157.90	44.56	481.66

1983	46.84	61.20	59.40	137.60	52.43	357.47
1984	16.34	22.97	52.08	252.41	30.56	374.36
1985	33.30	35.00	134.50	269.00	38.09	509.89
1986	95.75	43.09	206.97	247.38	16.05	609.24
1987	70.54	43.39	261.41	237.51	26.06	638.91
1988	75.55	38.69	296.46	288.83	43.86	743.39
1989	75.00	19.00	351.00	277.00	39.00	761.00
1990	67.00	32.00	362.00	249.00	17.20	727.20
1991	44.00	24.00	360.00	304.00	11.00	743.00
1992	26.00	18.00	326.00	279.00	13.40	662.40
1993	24.00	36.00	439.00	273.00	8.00	780.00
1994	16.00	55.00	393.00	243.00	8.00	715.00
1995	16.91	55.54	518.11	187.55	33.33	813.17
1996	34.79	47.87	463.90	247.74	51.08	857.08
1997	20.52	38.76	450.65	269.30	44.56	847.09
1998	31.05	60.13	362.18	300.53	30.80	816.00
1999	26.73	60.35	365.95	444.40	18.39	973.02
2000	19.08	55.04	398.17	652.36	0.10	1,157.46
2001	14.40	40.86	582.14	864.78	0.07	1,554.24
2002	11.61	40.30	655.29	917.01	0.14	1,681.69
2003	11.28	46.32	546.42	1,184.66	1.18	1,867.04
2004	18.78	33.08	480.99	1,188.82	42.62	1,764.29
2005	22.02	36.53	526.45	1,203.97	37.60	2,134.00
2006	22.02	19.36	368.12	1222.72	22.78	1654.40
2007	9.12	8.19	249.50	854.58	15.10	1136.49

APPENDIX B

FREIGHT TRAFFIC FROM 2001 – 2005

Year	Cocoa tonnage (000)	Timber tonnage (000)	Bauxite tonnage (000)	Manganese Tonnage (000)	Others Tonnage (000)	Total tonnage (000)
2001	14.40	40.86	582.14	864.78	52.06	1,554.24
2002	11.61	40.30	655.29	917.01	57.48	1,681.69
2003	11.28	46.32	546.42	1,184.66	78.36	1,867.04
2004	18.78	33.08	480.99	1,188.82	42.62	1,764.29
2005	22.02	36.53	526.45	1,203.97	37.60	1,826.57

Source: GRCL statistics from Traffic Department 2007

APPENDIX C

TABLE SHOWING DERAILMENT ON WESTERN LINE

Year	No Of Mainline Derailment (Western Line)	Line Restoration Time (Hrs) (Western Line)	No. Of Trains Run (Freight)	Average Line Restoration Time (Hrs) Per Derailment
2001	124	2,475	3,992	19.96
2002	128	3,118	4,323	24.36
2003	126	2,884	4,884	22.89
2004	137	3,322	4,614	24.25
2005	126	3,286	4,773	26.08
2006	110	3,476	4,304	31.60
2007	80	4,554	2,924	56.93

Source: GRCL traffic statistics from Traffic Department 2007

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE

This study is designed to solicit some responses from staff of this Company to enable me form an opinion on behaviour patterns within Ghana Railway Company and its relationship with performance. This study is **purely academic** and has nothing to do with the impending staff rationalisation. Your maximum co-operation will be very much appreciated. Please note that your anonymity will be protected so feel free to give your responses to the best of your ability. Where in doubt ask for clarification.

Your name **should not** appear on the questionnaire attached. Thank you for having given your responses as honest as possible.

Section A: Bio-data

Please tick or underline the appropriate box or answer which best fits your response.

1. Sex (a) male (b) female
2. Age (a) 21 – 30 (b) 31 – 40 (c) 41 – 50 (d) 51 – 59
3. Length of service (a) under 5 years (b) 6 – 10 years (c) 11 – 20 years (d) 21 yrs above
4. Category (a) Senior (b) Junior Staff
5. Educational level (a) illiterate (b) Elementary/JSS (c) Secondary/SSS (d) Tertiary/University

6. Are you still in service (a)Yes (b) No
7. Which department were/are you (a) Personnel/Admin (b)Finance & Accounts (c) Supplies (d) Security (e) Computer (f) Traffic (g) Mechanical (h)Civil (i) Signal & Telecomms (j) Audit

Section B: Punctuality

8. By what means do you come to work (a) bus (b). workers train (c) staff car (d) private car (e) own means (f) walk (g) combination
9. Which of the means is punctual (a) bus (b) workers train (c) staff car (d) private car (e) own means (f) walk (g) All (h) none
10. Are you penalized for coming to work late by joining the company's vehicle ? (a) often (b)sometimes (c) rarely (d) never
11. Would you like a clocking machine system to be introduced? (a) strongly agree (b) agree (c) undecided (d) disagree (e) strongly disagree
12. In your opinion do workers sign correct time when they come late? (a) everyday (b) more often (c)sometimes (c) never
13. Does your supervisor insist on signing correct time? (a) everyday (b)Sometimes (c) Never
14. How often is the attendance book/register checked?(a) everyday (b) sometimes (c) rarely checked
15. Do you think the poor timings of the bus or train affects productivity? (a)certainly (b)Not quite (c) undecided (d) never

16. Do you start work immediately you sign the attendance book/register? (a) start later (b) rest for a while (c) immediately
17. Do take your breakfast at the workplace? (a) always (b) more often (c) sometimes (d) never
18. Do you sign before going to have your breakfast ? (a) Yes (b) No (c) not applicable
19. Does the passenger or goods train arrive on time? (a) always (b) more often (c) some times (d) Never
20. Are passengers/customers happy with the arrival timings of trains? (a) very happy (b) happy (c) unhappy (d) very unhappy
21. How will you rate the image of Ghana Railway Company in the eyes of the public? (a) Very high (b) high (c) undecided (c) low (d) very low

Section C: Businesslike

22. Do workers have the chance of attending to private issues during working hours (a) more often (b) Sometimes (c) Never
23. Do individuals get the opportunity to socialise with one another during the workday? (a) more often (b) often (b) sometimes (c) never
24. Do you have a movement register? (a) yes (b) no
25. Do your colleagues take permission before moving from their office/shop to another? (a) always (b) sometimes (c) occasionally (d) rarely
26. Do you sign the movement register before going out? (a) Yes (b) No

- 27 Do you sign the movement register after you have come back? (a) Yes (b) No
- 28 Have you ever asked permission to go to another office/shop but have been refused by your supervisor? (a) several times (b) sometimes (c) insists on break time (d) not at all
- 29 Does your supervisor give you time to report back? (a) yes (b) No
- 30 Do you leave your office/workshop for another without first telling a colleague? (a) Yes (b) sometimes (c) no
- 31 How often do you tell your colleague before leaving? (a) Every time (b) sometimes (c) Never
- 32 Do you see some workers loitering? (a) more often (b) sometimes (c) never

Section D: Response to change

33. Has management been able to control OT? (a) Very much (b) partially (c) never
34. If Never or partially, why do you think management has not succeeded? (a) departmental/group resistance (b) management not firm (c) exigency of the work (d) no idea
35. Is overtime at the weekends really necessary? (a) Very necessary (b) somewhat necessary (c) sometimes (d) unnecessary
36. Do you think most of the work done during OT could have been done during the day? (a) most likely (b) likely (c) unlikely (d) most unlikely

37. Have you been constantly changing the way of doing your work? (a) Yes
(b) some how (c) No
38. New policies are readily embraced? (a) Strongly agree (b) agree (c)
undecided (d) disagree (e) strongly disagree
39. Has the method of doing your work changed since you started it?
(a) Completely changed (b) Changed a bit (c) still the same
40. Workers willingly accept innovation in their way of doing their work
(a) Strongly agree (b) agree (c) undecided (d) disagree (e) strongly
disagree
41. GRC has a very huge overtime bill. Why has this persisted?
(a) management's ineffectiveness (b) employees unwillingness (c)
neither management nor employees

Section E: Conformity

42. Do you boast of being a Railway worker? (a) very much (b) much (c) not
much (d) shy (v) very shy
43. Have you noticed any behaviour pattern among Railway workers? (a) Yes
(b) uncertain (c) No
44. If yes what are some of these? _____
45. Workers are discipline and adhere to rules and regulations? (a) Strongly
agree (b) agree (c) undecided (d) disagree (e) strongly disagree
46. Have you ever been involved in a strike or go slow action since you joined
Railways? (a) yes (b) no

47. Did you join the strike or go slow on your own accord? (a) Yes (b) No
(c) not applicable
48. On hind side would you have laid down your tools? (a) Yes (b) No (c) not applicable
49. Do you think you were under pressure to lay down your tools? (a) Yes
(b) No
50. Who takes decision for the association/group? (a) members/group (b) by the leaders/Executive (c) by the leaders and members/group
51. Do you believe in the leaders of your association? (a) Yes (b) some how
(b) No
52. Are you comfortable with the environment that you work in? (a) Yes
(b)No
53. Do you think the work you do has affected the way you do things; such as dressing, the rate of work, and your social status? (a) Yes (b) No (c) somehow

Section F: Group and administrative polices

54. Does the organisation have a policy norm? (a) it has (b) not aware (c) doesn't have
55. Do you know the charter of this organisation? (a) Yes (b) not off hand (c) no
56. Where can you readily get or find it? _____

57. Do employees have easy access to policies? (a) very easy (b) easy (c) somewhat easy (d) difficult (e) very difficult
58. Do you think that the attitude/ behaviour of a group of workers towards work affects performance? (a) Strongly agree (b) agree (c) undecided (d)disagree (e) strongly disagree
59. What are some of the effects of their behaviour? (a) few work for the rest (b) work not completed on time (c) resentment among group

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Rumour

1. How is information from management passed on to workers officially?
2. How does information get to workers unofficially?
3. To what extent is rumour accepted in Ghana Railway Company limited (GRC).
4. In your opinion are the rumours usually distorted?
5. If yes, why do you think they are distorted?
6. If no why do you think is the case?
7. Are the distortions far from the reality?

Group think

8. Do you think that the attitude/behaviour of a group of workers towards work has affected performance?
9. In your opinion does the group think they are powerful or untouchable ?
10. Why do you think so?
11. Group behaviour pattern

What compels the group to behave in a particular pattern?

12. Have you noticed any peculiar behaviour among some group of workers of GRC especially the various departments?
13. What are some of these behaviours?

14. What do you think compels the group to behave this way?
15. What are the values, norms and beliefs of the group that affect performance?
16. In your opinion do you think there are some group of workers who are favoured or not given stiffer punishment and so keep on putting on bad behaviour?
17. In your opinion do you know of any behaviour that cuts across departments?
18. Why do you think is the case?
19. Where can you get or find the charter of the organisation?