

PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION IN AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the issue of unsatisfactory interaction in a distance education institution in Botswana by examining interaction dynamics among its employees. Unsatisfactory stakeholder interaction was perceived to stall delivery of educational service to students, the primary stakeholder. This, therefore, compromised learning and development. To investigate the problem, research questions were posed, and the primary one was: How extensive is the problem of lack of regulated interaction at the institution? Based on this, one of the objectives was to: systematically seek answers to the primary question by soliciting views about the nature and extent of the problem from the insiders. Pursuit of this was guided by the innovation change model, which stipulates investigation stages. Data were collected using two methods, namely, focus group and the written questionnaire. The study was conducted over a period of five weeks, and involved 167 employees of the organization to respond to the written questionnaire, and 23 purposively selected employees to participate in the focus group discussion. The study came up with several findings, and the pivotal one was admission by majority of the participants (78%) that the issue of unsatisfactory interaction was indeed a problem, and that participants (85%) had confidence that the initiative to address the problem had the potential to succeed in harmonising workplace relations. Specific overlapping areas that needed to be addressed, were spelt out as part of the results. The findings were mainly analysed thematically, with some few of them subjected to statistical interpretation. The main recommendation was that the institution should follow a model for purposes of addressing the problem in a more definitive manner.

Keywords: Cohesion, interaction, stakeholder engagement, collaboration, harmonization, overlapping, interface.