Examining the Influence of Organisational Culture on Employee Ethical Behaviour: A Case Study of a Security Agency in Ghana

RICHARD AFEDZIE

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to look into the impact of organisational culture on employee ethical behavior, focusing on three police departments in Ghana's Greater Accra Region. The goals were to figure out what kind of organisational culture prevailed in these police departments and how that culture affected employee ethical behavior. It also sought to find out if culture and ethical behaviour have any effect on the quality of job performance. The study utilized a qualitative research approach with a simple case study descriptive research design. Semi-structured interview questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The study found out that this public security agency values individual contributions and has a culture that sees change as a challenge and an opportunity for personal development. The study also indicated that partnership with the community was a primary focus to ensure security. It was revealed that this public security agency whose core responsibilities were to attend to the security and protection of citizens guided their ethical behaviour in good and bad political times. The findings of this research concluded that a positive and significant relationship exists between organisational culture and employee's behaviour.

Keywords: *Ethical behaviour, Integrity, Teamwork, Organisational culture*

Introduction

Background of Study

Manners and how people deal with their coworkers at work have been used to predict employee ethical behavior. Employee ethical behavior is strongly linked to the degree of accountability, duty, and openness shown by workers at work. Employee productivity and effectiveness are critical in our twenty-first-century market landscape. As a result, the value of ethical behaviour in the everyday lives of workers cannot be overlooked.

Similarly, organisational culture has evolved into a force of orientation and behavior style that is often demonstrated by workers. The way workers behave themselves at the workplace is driven by organisational culture, which shows the model of behavior. Organisational culture, in particular, establishes the standards for acceptable and unacceptable behavior within a company.

Every person has a distinct personality that reflects his or her attitude toward work, coworkers, and the business as a whole; and culture is one of the many factors that contribute to these personality traits (Hofstede, 2010). Scholars in organisational culture have established various hypotheses and meanings of culture over the years, but the core idea remains the same. Organisational culture, according to Schein (1982), is the proper way to act within an institution. This culture is defined by leaders' common ideals and values, which are then conveyed and reiterated by different approaches, directing employee attitudes, behaviors, and comprehension. Community, according to Hofstede (1998), is a common ideology that distinguishes one group of people from another. The culture, strategy, and relationships built within the company influence an employee's behavior (Janiijevi, 2013). Organisational culture is a crucial component of organisational behavior since it influences how people perform inside a company (Sinclair, 1993). Similarly, Steinberg (2009) defines ethics in business organisations as "ordinary courtesy," which includes dignity, transparency, and justice.

According to McNutt (2005), businesses cannot ignore ethics, so they aim to incorporate ethics into their corporate principles. Behaving ethically is often mentioned as part of an individual's social duty to ensure the organisation's security and longevity (Adenubi, 2000). According to Rossy (2011), 85 percent of organisations have developed and implemented codes of ethics in order to improve ethical behaviour at the workplace. According to studies in business ethics, the presence of a structured code of ethics ensures the highest level of behaviour and prevents immoral behavior by organisational participants. However, according to other business ethics reports, these formal rules of conduct are often violated by the use of informal codes (Chye, 2004).

The justification behind corporate ethics as a good idea in organisations is that the ethical background in the organisation will provide the best environment for workers to demonstrate ethical behavior (Buckley et al., 2001). Furthermore, it has been shown that an organisation's environment has a huge impact on workers' behavior (Cullen, Parboteeah, & Victor, 2003; Eli & Alpkan, 2009; Wang & Hsieh, 2012). Long-term outlook, indulgence, discipline, ambiguity avoidance, collectivism and individualism, according to Hofstede (1998), are six dimensions of organisational culture that affect organisational functions. Leadership, corporate strategy, and human resources may also be influenced by the interaction between organisational culture and behavior influences (Hofstede, 2010). The security service plays a major role in ensuring national security in the Ghanaian society; and it is often used as a yardstick for ethical conduct. As a result, their demeanor in communicating with the media has a huge impact on the public ethical culture.

Continuous ethical corruption in the workplace in the twenty-first century almost often results in large annual financial losses for businesses (Nasir &Bashir, 2012). The rising incidence of workplace fraud, ethical lapses, and other deviant behaviors has negative consequences for businesses, as it decreases competitiveness, fosters inefficient employee attitudes, and eventually gives the company a bad public image (Nasir & Bashir, 2012).

As a result of the frequency of ethical lapses in organisations, different business practices have been implemented to address ethical problems. Several reports have shown that unless we pay more attention to understanding the core drivers of unethical leadership in organisations, efforts to prevent potential corruption in organisations can amount to nothing more than conjecture (Otaye-Ebede, Shaffakat, & Foster, 2020). The main goal of this research is to look at the impact of corporate culture on employee ethical behaviour. In this vein, the study's goals were outlined as follows:

- To determine the organisational culture that exists in organisations.
- To examine the impact of organisational culture on employee ethical behaviour.
- To determine if organisational culture and ethical behaviour have some impact on the quality of job performance.

The following research questions will guide this study:

- What types of organisational culture exists in organisations?
- What impact does organisational culture have on ethical behaviour?
- What are some of the challenges creating ethical lapses among employees in this security agency?

To assess the impact of organisational culture on employee ethical conduct, the study uses one protection contractor in three separate geographical area districts. The decision to use these three districts was based on the fact that they were the most populous of the regions and had the greatest capacity for obtaining feedback that would reflect the whole sample community. In the end, this research will make a significant contribution to the literature on business ethics in both public and private security organisations. It will act as a model for participants of public security organisations to use to effectively promote ethical behavior. This thesis will act as a reference point for prospective scholars and will add to the somewhat limited literature on corporate culture and ethical behaviour of workers in Sub-Saharan Africa, with an emphasis on a security agency in Ghana.

Literature Review

Introduction
The longitudinal analyses of organisational culture and employee ethical behavior in Ghanaian public sector organisations are examined in this part of the paper. Online library services at Pentecost University were used for this literature review. EBSCO databases were used to look through online textbooks and scholarly publications that focused on the Ghanaian public sector's organisational culture.

Hofstede (2001) defines organisational culture as the collection of theories, norms, job styles, and relationships that distinguish one organisation from another. According to Lund (2003), corporate culture is related to worker satisfaction, organisational engagement, competitiveness, and the likelihood of turnover. Organisational culture has a different impact on individuals because everyone's psychological makeup is different (Lok & Crawford, 2004). This research review will look at historical, theoretical, and observational findings in the fields of organisational culture and employee ethical behavior that have been published during the last decade. Finally, the aim of this research is to determine which aspects

of organisational culture and business ethics have been explored in organisations over the last decade.

Concept of Organisational Culture

"Organisational culture is the collection of ideals, traditions, job styles, and relationships that distinguishes one organisation from another," according to Hofstede (2001, p.43). Work satisfaction, organisational engagement, efficiency, and attrition intention have also been studied in relation to organisational culture (Lund, 2003; Sims, 2002). Organisational culture, according to Robbins and Sanghi (2007), is a set of shared beliefs that workers embrace while having diverse backgrounds within the company. Organisational culture, according to Yirdaw (2016), acts as a bond that ties nonhuman capital to human resources in an organisation to foster coordination and high efficiency. Internal corporate policies are influenced by organisational culture, as is an employee's adherence to the organisation's goals and values (Bolton et al, 2000).

Ethics and Ethical Behaviour

Ethics, according to Buckley et al. (2001), are standards that control employee behavior and include right and wrong. Ethics is critical to effectively managing unproductive and dishonest employee behavior in the workplace. Ethics, according to studies by Boshoff and Van Zyl (2011), is a behavioral analysis in an organisational sense that is consistent with the values, norms, and expectations of corporate activities that are supported by a specific community. They concentrate on a mutual, channeled, and influenced values structure that guides the behavior of employees in the organisation. Ethics, according to Jones (2007), are universal ideals that form the foundation of a culture that is capable of human contact and interaction. When a company's ideals clash with societal norms, the company's ethics are brought into question and discussed. The justification for ethics as a good idea in organisations is that the ethical context in the organisation will provide the right environment for workers to behave ethically (Buckley et al., 2001). Furthermore, it has been established that the organisational environment has a direct impact on employee behavior and attitudes (Cullen, Parboteeah, & Victor, 2003; Eli & Alpkan, 2009; Wang & Hsieh, 2012). Work ethics can be seen as a display of one's attitude, disposition, character, and faith in everything. Individuals, as well as other communities and even the general public, have adopted this attitude (Tasmara, 2002).

Theories of Employee Ethical Behaviour

The idea that external and internal influences of certain organisations profoundly induce workers to partake in unethical conducts is supported by three psychosocial theories of human behavior demonstrated by Baehr et al. (1993). Employee Risk Triangle Theory, Stress Facilitation Theory, and Social Disorder Theory are examples of these hypotheses. These ideas serve as the foundation for this research. Smith (2003) proposed the differential interaction hypothesis, according to which criminal behavior is taught through direct or indirect association with people who still do it.

The Employee Risk Triangle Theory, according to Said, Alam, Ramli, and Rafidi (2017), describes three powers that respond on an employee's propensity to participate in unethical behavior. Want, opportunity, and mentality are the three powers at work. Employee Risk Triangle Theory, according to scholars at DePaul University in Chicago, provides a significant contribution to presenting a common-sense theory of employee crime and deviance by examining the impact of psychological tension as one of the key causes for workers engaged in unethical conducts in organisations (Jones, 2005). According to the stress facilitation hypothesis, as more unethical workers are under more stress at work, their anxiety facilitates a multiplicative fraud answer. Employees who support unethical attitudes toward stealing are more likely to rob at work than career seekers who support intolerant and punitive attitudes toward theft (Sujeewa, Yajid, Khatibi, Azam & Dharmaratne, 2018).

Researchers from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands performed studies to back up the theory that "signs of disturbance" in a community can lead to other social norm violations and delinquent behaviour (Keizer & Lindenberg, 2008). This hypothesis is relevant to this research because it examines the social factors that may influence workers' ethical behaviour when they engage with one another at work. The theory, on the other hand, does not include the outcomes of the influenced ethical conducts or how they contribute to an organisation's success.

The utilitarian ethical philosophy is focused on the concept of defining a result through the prism of right and wrong. It is founded, in principle, on the idea of consequentialism. According to this philosophy, the best ethical decision is always the one that will result in the highest benefit for the greatest number of people. It is critical in the sense of employee professional behavior and its impact on the general interest because it justifies behavioral consequences in terms of cost and rewards. According to unilateralism, the rationale for morality is to make life better by increasing the number of positive things in society, especially enjoyment and satisfaction and lowering the level of negativity.

Social Environment and its Relation to Ethical Behaviour

The term "social atmosphere" refers to the social interactions in which people are immersed (Boissevan, 1974). Since certain employees can impose control on coworkers' behaviour and personnel can also be affected by input from other employees, it is critical to review social interactions in systemic contexts. The definition of social climate varies from corporate culture, in that, the latter refers to structured norms of behaviour that direct employees' behaviours, while the former refers to how employees perceive their interactions with other employees. Under the information sharing process, social contexts or informal social networks play a critical role (Reagans & McEvily, 2003). The strength of interactions between

structure members is anticipated to influence knowledge-sharing behaviour. Decisive robust links and fragile ties can be used to assess the social network's strength. According to Nelson (1989), strong relations have affective and welcoming characteristics. On the one hand, fragile relations are less common and do not seem to be mostly relational. Strong connections are likely to make knowledge exchange easier. As a result, they foster trust among coworkers by offering shared support and, as a result, information sharing (Lin, 2007; Wong & Boh, 2010). Robust ties are related to emotional attachment and frequency of communication (Reagans & McEvily, 2003). Staff with poor social networks are unable to exchange information and interactions, according to Small and Sage (2006), while staff with smart connections share knowledge freely and categorically.

Kolberg's (1981) theory of moral growth outlines the six phases of an individual's moral development in response to society's benefit. The first three stages focus on family and friend relationships, while the fourth stage attempts to describe "what makes up a healthy society." Individuals are able to think on the case from a wider viewpoint by contemplating what is right and fair for the world, according to this principle. Public officials are able to explore the inconsistencies of their beliefs and attempt to address their points of dissatisfaction with society by deeply focusing on the ethics and morality of their culture. At this point, the most important aim is to keep a civilization running smoothly at all costs. This theory, in particular, provides a thorough description of the social environment and how it influences employee ethical behavior.

Empirical Studies

Surveys of community-wide patterns in the incidence of positive and negative experiences over environmental gradients have yielded empirical findings (Callaway 2007, Maestre et al., 2009). Andrew (2013) investigated how organisational atmosphere influences employees' behavioural competence in comparison to their overall job efficiency. Huhtala (2012) has looked at various types of personal job cultures associated

with managers and discovered that personal interests affect different ethical organisational cultures. According to the findings of the report, organisational cultures affect employees' ethical behavior, which benefits the business.

Bribery, bullying, whistleblowing, racial profiling, and sexual harassment are the most important ethical problems in organisations, according to a study published in 2010 by developing countries (Webley, Basran, Hayward & Harris, 2011). Geriesh (2003) analyzed organisational culture and false financial reporting in a study of rational decision-making studies and discovered that businesses with a history of corporate criminal practices are more likely to issue misleading financial statements.

According to the literature studies, ethical behavior has a close link to the workplace's organisational culture. According to the research, organisational culture, such as leadership and code of ethics, has an impact on how workers act. According to these findings, corporate culture has a significant impact on the ethical conduct of this intelligence service's employees. Geriesh (2003) analyzed organisational culture and false financial reporting in a study of rational decision-making studies and discovered that businesses with a history of corporate criminal practices are more likely to issue misleading financial statements. In addition, the literature identifies some of the flaws in previous research on organisational culture and its effect on employee ethical behavior. It demonstrates the paucity of research in the field of public security organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the thesis adds to the management literature by analyzing a main security entity and the effect of organisational culture on employee ethical behavior.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Using a case study of a national protection department and a pragmatist science theory, this study used qualitative research methods to investigate the impact of corporate culture on employee ethical behavior. According to Creswell (2009), a qualitative analysis methodology is a system of procedures for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on texts, image evidence, and people's impressions by examining participant's perspectives and information. Via semi-structured interviews, the qualitative approach was chosen primarily to illustrate the true nature of the research challenge. Through the background, socioeconomic, and political background that existed within the studied setting, the qualitative analytical case study enabled the researcher to consider the participants' perspective of the research issue (Ruona, 2005).

Sampling Technique and Size

The staff of the assigned protection department became the researcher's target population. For the report, selected members of the intelligence service were interviewed. The purposive sampling technique was used to select these individuals. Purposive sampling is described as the selection of specific groups, people, or case studies for a specific reason rather than at random (Amin, 2005). This approach was chosen in order to achieve a better interpretation of the analysis (Amin, 2005). The participants were chosen by the researcher based on their relevance, expertise, and awareness of the research subject. As a result, the study's sample size was reduced to eighteen (18) participants. Many of the participants were selected based on how long they had worked with the security firm. Employees with ten years or more of experience were ultimately chosen based on their understanding of the research questions raised by this report.

Data Collection Methods

Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary data collection method in this report. The researcher gathered a lot of knowledge from social experiences by follow-up questions from the

researcher and additional answers from participants using the semi-structured interview guide. Journals, published materials, and books were used as secondary data sources. Interviews were conducted in participants' workplaces and lunchrooms. Participants' body posture was often studied in order to verify the veracity of their claims.

Data Analysis

A constant comparative analysis approach was employed to analyse the difference and similarities in the information from participants. A constant comparative analysis provided the researcher the opportunity to examine the themes by looking into familiar terms, relationships, and theoretical concepts. The constant comparative analysis allowed the researcher the chance to examine themes or patterns of cultural meaning, coding, and categorising data in order of themes.

Findings

The information gathered from the eighteen participants in the public security agency's interview was addressed in this segment. Five senior administrators, six mid-level managers, and seven lower-level staff were among the participants. The study's conclusions were linked to each of the three research questions. Major studies were supported by citations to quotations from participants. To ensure orderly presentation, emphasis, and accuracy of the evaluation of organisational culture and its effect on employee ethical behavior, the researcher ignored comments that deviated from the study issue.

This portion of the paper used a semi-structured approach to analyze the primary comments from participants. The way and style of behavior that exists in every organisation is referred to as organisational culture. The organisational culture reinforces the attitudes, norms, and principles that govern how things are done in the workplace in several respects.

The type of environment and behavior that prevails in every workplace is often dictated by organisational culture. As a result, eighteen participants were recruited from a public protection department in three separate districts in the Greater Accra Region for this report. These three districts, which had around 500 security staff, were the largest in this geographical area. Based

on the style of culture practiced in the organisation, the researcher looked at the disparities and parallels in ethical behavior of security personnel. Participants' statements were grouped in order of relevance and how well they answered the study questions. To ensure confidentiality, participants are identified with labels, "P01 to P18". Participants are categorised according to "P01 to P05" as senior managers, "P06 to P11" as mid-level manager, "P12 to P18" as lower-level managers. Key statements from participants are highlighted in this section below.

RQ 1. What types of organisational culture exists in organisations?

Organisational culture determines the kind of behaviour that is exhibited by any employee; hence it is vital in every organisation as it directs how people behave through norms, values, and attitude. One senior manager, a female, who had been in one of the districts for ten years stated that "all ideas and suggestions by security personnel are valued as a way of instilling confidence in the employees. The culture that prevails in the workplace is participative with involvement of employees in the operations of the department. This type of culture encourages and influences ethical behaviour among employees" (Participant 02). A senior level manager who had been with the institution for twelve years asserted that

"the institution has norms and values that are presented to everyone who comes into the organisation. This manager also mentioned that employees have the right to express themselves freely without victimisation from their superiors. To me, this enhances collaborative behaviour and teamwork" (Participant 04). One male mid-level manager posited "that organisational culture in the institution allows for flexibility and openness on how employees provided ideas and suggestions to managers. There is humility and common understanding among our managers to listen to everyone. This is to ensure teamwork and foster cooperate spirit in the workplace" (Participant 07). One lower-level employee, a female who had been in the organisation for eleven years opined that "there is room for continuous development of employees, rewards are given when an employee exceeds or meets expectation and punishment are also given for misconduct" (Participant 15). A lower-level employee, female who joined the organisation fourteen years back emphasized: "I was given the values and norms of the institution during my orientation, which I follow still to this day. You dare not go wayward because you will be punished severely" (Participant 13). One lower-level employee indicated that "communication from staff of all levels were effective. There are absolutely no favours for one person against the other. The rules are black and white and this make our department one of a culture of collaboration and participation" (Participant 18).

There were contrary opinions to the positive views expressed. Several of the lower-level employees asserted that "communication was good but sometimes ineffective since our superiors often delay in relaying information to employees on time". Based on the information provided by participants, there was the general understanding that the culture of the organisation was one of collaboration and teamwork.

RQ 2. What impact does organisational culture have on ethical behaviour?

Participants revealed that organisational culture is characterized by traits, habits, and how a person collaborates with another person or group. Participants understood that organisational culture does have a great impact on the outcome of one's ethical behaviour whether good or bad. In this vein, one senior manager indicated that,

> poor organisational culture can result in unethical behaviour from employees. It is also caused by poor leadership behaviour such as paying less attention to employees and not giving time to concerns that are brought to superiors by lower-level employees. Specifically, organisational culture embodying such leadership attributes tends to inhibit communication and create unethical behaviour among employees. (Participant 05)

Another senior level manager, who had been in the department for a decade stated that "strong value systems exist in the organisation; it basically drives the organisation; hence, unethical behaviour is no excuse and would strictly be dealt with. The organisational culture in the institution has impacted employee's ethical behaviour for good. The rules are clear and employees have a recourse to seek for clarification if there is anything that confuses them" (Participant 01). A mid-level manager, a female who had been in the organisation for twelve years stated that "there is some sort of checks and balances in the organisation to ensure good behaviour among ourselves because we acknowledge the laid down values such as honesty and integrity" (Participant 08). Another mid-level manager stated that,

> the organisational culture has been beneficial to their personal growth. In my previous institution where I started working, the organisational culture was not as strong as it is here, hence everyone was free to do what they liked and come to work at any time. Basically, the system promoted unethical behaviour but since joining this institution, I have noticed the difference here and for me it has helped me grow and also appreciate good ethical behaviour (Participant 09).

A lower-level employee also revealed that, the culture of this department "encourages everyone to stick to the rules and regulations of this workplace. As such, every personnel do the best to stay out of trouble and problem. And this has mentored us with ethical behaviour" (Participant 19). Another lower employee mentioned that, "we do what is

right because we want to be law abiding and show civility to the public who we serve to protect and provide security daily" (Participant 17). A review of the statements provided by participants indicates that there are laid down rules and measures that guide the culture of this security agency and these measures have enhanced ethical behaviour among personnel in this security agency.

RQ 3. What are some of the challenges creating ethical lapses among employees in this security agency?

Organisational culture and ethical behaviour can create ethical lapses at the workplace among certain employees. A senior level manager mentioned that "ethical behaviour influences how we are perceived in the society and the deed of one person often is judged among us" (Participant 05). A senior level manager asserted that "employing good ethical practices enhances the relation between the institution, the community and country but can cause other employees to perform with unchecked authority which can cause ethical lapses" (Participant 03). Another senior level manager stated that,

> strong culture in this organisation has contributed to higher productivity, has added value but has made other senior rank officers arrogant and nonconforming to simple courtesy of respecting their lower rank employees. Every one of us ensures that we put out the best of performance and create a positive impact in our community and to the public; however, there has been deviant behaviour which is often corrected through disciplinary measures (Participant 01).

A mid-level manager who was due for promotion as a senior level employee stated that,

> the strong organisational culture has assisted in my progress; I get motivated when I do well which in turn encourages me to continue to perform ethically but I also observe some of my colleagues performing poorly by their actions and behaviour which brings the image of this organisation into disrepute. Most of the credit I get is also because of good teamwork. The organisation encourages teamwork and organisational culture which insists on appreciating employees when they perform creditably. So, the organisation has stringent measures that tend to ensure that unruly behaviour is addressed (Participant 10).

A lower-level employee, female, with eleven years experience stated that "the organisation has cultural values that create excitement and motivation at the workplace. Indeed, what makes us stand out is our strong cultural values which promotes good ethical behaviour and this in turn ensures that tasks and responsibilities are executed effectively and efficiently. So, some of the ethical lapses that occur are addressed with policies to prevent such occurrence of behaviour" (Participant 18). The findings from participants revealed that the culture of the organisation had a great impact on employee's ethical behaviour and ultimately that, this security agency had code of conduct that addressed the behaviour of unruly and unethical employees. Most employees mentioned that rules, honesty of leadership and teamwork that prevailed within the workplace encouraged employee ethical behaviour.

Conclusion

From the findings, it is gathered that strong organisational culture of the institution is one of the main factors for ethical behaviours shown by the institution. Organisational culture and ethical behaviour have contributed to the productivity level of the institution. It has also ensured efficiency in the delivery of work and employee job satisfaction through motivation and promotion which is highly valued in the institution. It was discovered from the study that, not every behaviour was affected by the organisational culture even though some part of employee behaviour has a strong dependence on culture. Several of the employees stated the inherent norms, values and beliefs with the organisational culture as contributing significantly to the level of ethical behaviour. Likewise, the ability to enforce disciplinary actions on employees who go

contrary to the code of ethics of the agency also prevents ethical lapses among employees.

Significantly, organisational culture has strong influence on the ethical behaviour because of the satisfaction derived from the culture of teamwork and cooperation among employees which leads to improved productivity. Based on the findings derived from the interviews, the research concludes that there is a positive and significant relationship between organisational culture and ethical behaviour which sustains higher job performance.

Recommendations

This study indicates that organisational culture cannot be ignored; hence, constant checks with values and norms and how they are affecting ethical behaviour should be considered. This study also recommends that leadership should be at the forefront of ensuring that there is a culture of honesty, respect of others, truthfulness and teamwork that goes a long way to promote ethical behaviour and increased employee performance.

Further Research

Future study should utilise a larger sample size with a quantitative approach to examine the numerous security agencies in the government of Ghana. Using a quantitative approach with a large sample will reveal several findings that will help understand the other side of organisational culture and its impact on ethical behaviour. A focus group methodology can also be employed to analyse the ways organisational culture affect employee ethical behaviour. A review of some of the private security agencies should also be conducted to find out the impact of organisational culture on ethical behaviour, because the behaviour of employees in both the public and private sectors of Ghana has a significant effect on the economic development of the country.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Richard Afedzie, Ph.D.

Lecturer, Department of Management Studies, Faculty of Business Administration
Telephone: 0546410568
Email: rafedzie@pentvars.edu.gh