

Assessing the Effectiveness of Government Communication on Public Policy in Ghana: The Case of Planting for Food and Jobs Policy

Daniel Odoom* Eric Opoku Mensah** Festus Annor-Frempong*** Christopher Dick-Sagoe****
Lawrencia Agyepong*****

Abstract

This paper examined the effectiveness of government communication on public policy in Ghana using the Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) policy as a case. Data was obtained from 412 inhabitants from the Western Region who responded to a set of questionnaires and a structured interview guide. Means, standard deviation, Mann-Whitney U-test, and Kruskal Wallis test were employed for data analysis. The study established that though respondents perceived the PFJ policy as highly relevant to job creation and food production, the overall effect of the policy on job creation was low. No significant differences existed in the views of male and female respondents regarding the perceived effect of the policy on job creation and food production. Government communication strategies to promote awareness, public dialogue, shared understanding, and public support towards the policy were all perceived as moderately effective. However, government communication activities to explain the policy details to the public, mobilize citizens and communities to support the policy, and promote positive behavior change for the policy were perceived as lowly effective by the respondents despite the differences in their ethnic backgrounds. Government press releases and press conferences on the progress of the policy were lowly effective. Though government communication at the implementation stage of the policy was effective, it was generally ineffective during the formulation, monitoring, and evaluation stages of the policy. Measures suggested to sustain the policy include increased commitment from state authorities, increased participation by all stakeholders, improved communication on the policy, grassroots ownership, and de-politicization of the policy.

Keywords: *Communication, Government Communication, Policy, Planting for Food and Jobs*

Introduction

Communication is critical to the success of every policy. Public policies find acceptance and support from the public when stakeholders effectively communicate the policies to the citizens. Communication is one avenue where policy is openly considered, often in hearings and debates, in the editorial pages of newspapers and magazines, radio and television talk shows, political weblogs, and social networking sites (Peterson, 2008; Young, 2000). Communication is the subject of public policy, most notably in laws and regulations on forms of speech, mass media, and telecommunication. It is also the object of policy, as witnessed in the efforts by government

*University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC GIJ Campus), Accra, Ghana. Email: ankahodoom@gmail.com; ** University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC GIJ Campus), Accra, Ghana; *** University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana; **** University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana; ***** University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC GIJ Campus), Accra, Ghana

and non-government agencies to inform and educate various publics about societal problems (Peterson, 2008; Young, 2000). Indeed, the democratic legitimacy of public policy depends partly on the state institutions being sensitive to the communication process surrounding the policy. The ethical force of the processes of communicating public policies, then, rests in part on a requirement that such communication needs to be both inclusive and critically self-conscious (Young, 2000).

Communication is essential to the success of all organizations, including government organizations (Mu, Li & Fu, 2018). Communicating government policies, programs, and activities has become even more critical now than ever before due to increasing citizens' expectations. This, therefore, highlights the value of government communication (Canel & Sanders, 2016; Howlett, 2009). According to Canel and Sanders (2016), government communication is a field of practice and communication studies directed to the core public in pursuing both political and civic goals. Government communication is a type of communication carried out by *executive* politicians and officials, often in a controlled way, working for public institutions that are created based on citizens' overt or covert consent and are charged to enact their will (Canel & Sanders, 2016).

In essence, government communication focuses on *executive* communication and is broadly defined as seeking not only *political* but also *civic goals*. Government communication has a political dimension, often largely controlled by the executive arm, and can focus on achieving civic goals. Government communication activities should address various complexities in terms of goals, structures, and resources (Canel & Sanders, 2016). Ho and Cho (2017) opined that due to legal restrictions, political pressures, or fiscal constraints, many governments tend to invest their limited resources in service delivery without paying attention to communication. Given the political nature of the concept, government communication is sometimes viewed as political communication (Mu *et al.*, 2018). However, government communication is different from political communication. The latter often tends to focus on political party or electoral communication, whilst the core preoccupation of government communication is towards the broader public good (Canel & Sanders, 2016; Mu *et al.*, 2018).

The field of government communication has not received considerably adequate research attention (Ho & Cho, 2017; Mu *et al.*, 2018). Very few scholars have attempted to investigate government communication activities with the target group that can affect policy performance (Ho & Cho, 2017; Howlett, 2009). Falasca and Nord (2013: 41) contended that research in the field of government communication requires much attention. In their study in Sweden, Falasca and Nord (2013: 41) concluded that the government communication activities and their strategies are still very fragmented. They are not well-organized and clearly structured. It is very difficult to coordinate a government communication strategy for the different ministries and departments as well as between political and civil servant communicators. Though attempts have been made by scholars to contribute to the literature on government communication, scholarly attention on the field of government communication is scanty, especially in the areas of policymaking and implementation (Liu, Horsley & Yang, 2012). Particularly in Africa, Johansson and Raunio (2019) asserted that there is a dearth of literature on the field of government communication in the continent. It is largely believed that much of the literature on government communication focuses on the Western world, with very little focus on Africa (Johansson & Raunio, 2019).

Policies are essential for improving organizations and the larger society. Governments across the globe have and continue to institute policies to improve the lives of their citizens. Particularly in Ghana, successive governments embark upon various policies to help make the lives of the citizens better. In recent times, policies such as Free Maternal Care, Free Senior High School (SHS), Free School Uniforms, and Free Textbooks have been implemented by successive governments to improve the lives of the citizens. Policies, including the School Feeding Policy, the Free Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy, and the Electronic Levy (E-Levy), have been instituted by the current government with the view to promoting development in the country. However, the implementation of public policies in Ghana is often met with several challenges. A case in point has been the E-Levy policy, which faced and continues to face mounting opposition from across the Ghanaian public. Again, the School Feeding and Free SHS policies have been met with various challenges, such as low public commitment and low public support, political interference, and inadequate sustainability mechanisms. Other concerns relate to low public awareness about the policy details and poor stakeholder engagement in designing and formulating these policies (Ghana News Agency, 2018; Mabe *et al.*, 2018).

The *Planting for Food and Jobs* (PFJ) policy is one notable public policy Ghana has implemented in recent history. The PFJ policy, which has been in operation since 2017, aims to increase food production and ultimately achieve food security in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2. As a flagship policy of the current government, PFJ seeks to modernize the agriculture sector to improve food production, reduce poverty, and enhance employment creation (FAO, 2020; Ministry of Food and Agriculture [MoFA], 2021). Despite the relevance of the PFJ policy, there are growing concerns about the policy. Concerns include low public awareness about the policy details, low commitment and support from the public, low stakeholder engagement, and political interference (Ghana News Agency, 2018; Mabe *et al.*, 2018). These concerns raise doubts about the effectiveness of government communication regarding the policy. This is because effective government communication should lead to increased public awareness about the policy details, public support for the policy, etc. (Mu *et al.*, 2018). Effective government communication helps to explain policies. It promotes the legitimacy of public policy decisions at all levels and helps to maintain social bonds (Pasquier, 2012). Though some studies (FAO, 2020; Pauw, 2022; Tanko *et al.*, 2019) have been done on the PFJ policy, none of these studies looked at government communication around the policy. In essence, there is no empirical evidence on the level of effectiveness of government communication with respect to the PFJ policy.

This study is motivated by the fact that there is the need to effectively communicate public policy (Pasquier, 2012) because public policies will fail if stakeholders fail to effectively communicate them to the public (Buaku, 2017). From the perspective of the Western Region, this study assessed the effectiveness of government communication on public policies in Ghana using the PFJ policy as a case. The researchers chose to focus on the PFJ policy given the potential the policy has in terms of promoting food security amidst increasing prices of food produced in the Ghanaian markets, which threatens the realization of SDG 2. The rationale for focusing on the PFJ is further strengthened by the potential the policy has in contributing to job creation in the face of increasing unemployment in Ghana, which constitutes a major threat to the peace and stability of the country.

Research Objectives

- To ascertain the views of inhabitants of the Western Region on the relevance of the policy to job creation and food production.
- To examine the perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production.
- To examine the perceptions of inhabitants on the level of effectiveness of government communication on the policy.
- To identify the measures to promote the sustainability of the policy.

Literature Review

Conceptualizing Government Communication

Communication is core to the success of every organization. At the organizational level, communication refers to the organizational mechanisms and behaviors to convey information between the various internal and external stakeholders. It helps organizations to achieve their goals (Mu *et al.*, 2018). Communication is also key to the success of government institutions. Howlett (2009, 2011) opined that communication helps the government and its actors to reach policy goals and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between governments and the various publics on whom policy success or failure relies. Government communication has, therefore, become an important component of communication approaches. As a concept, government communication is a well-planned process of releasing or withholding information or knowledge-based resources from policy target groups to influence and direct their behaviors, attitudes, and actions regarding the policy (Garnett & Kouzmin, 1997). This means that government communication activities entail organized processes of providing or keeping information or messages about planned or ongoing policy to influence and direct behaviors, attitudes, and actions in respect of the policy.

According to Pasquier (2012), government communication mainly involves all forms of activities within the public sector institutions and organizations which aim at conveying and sharing information, largely for the purpose of presenting and explaining government decisions and actions, promoting the legitimacy of these interventions, defending recognized values and helping to maintain social bonds. In the views of Canel and Sanders (2013), government communication consists of several activities and possibilities. To clearly capture the full range of

the possibilities of government communication, Canel and Sanders (2013: 4) defined it as consisting of the *role, practice, aims, and achievements* of communication as it takes place in and on behalf of a *public* institution(s). Canel and Sanders (2013) added that the primary end of public institutions in the context of government communication is towards the executive arm in the service of a *political* rationale. These are constituted based on the *people's* indirect or direct *consent* and are charged to enact their *will*.

Dimensions, Forms, and Relevance of Government Communication

Government communication is viewed from two different levels. The first is by looking at government communication in terms of what it does (its actions). The second is by looking at government communication in terms of what it is (Canel & Sanders, 2013; Howlett, 2009). Based on what it does, government communication is understood as a policy tool or instrument that is intended to give effect to policy goals. Here, government communication focuses on the use of government informational resources to influence and direct policy actions through the provision or withholding of 'information' or 'knowledge' from societal actors. Typical examples of such policy tools are information and advertising (Howlett, 2009). Again, government communication is based on what it involves what government communication actually entails. It is about what makes up government communication and how such communication manifests itself.

There are various types of government communication. First, there is government-wide communication involving the structures for communication under the auspices of heads of government or ministers. Second, there is communication emanating from the administration. While administrative communication, in theory, is highly factual, "it can also acquire a political quality depending, for example, on when the information in question is released" (Pasquier, 2012). Other types include communication activities pertaining to public policy, effectively constituting policy instruments. Also, there is institutional communication, which involves enhancing the visibility and influence of the organization, as well as crisis communication. Again, government communication research typically employs a multilevel analysis by looking at micro, meso, and macro levels in the organizational structure (Canel & Sanders, 2014; Esser & Pfetsch, 2004).

Government Communication and Public Policy

Government communication and public policies are closely related in many ways. No public policy is successfully designed and implemented without effective government communication. Government communication facilitates policy understanding toward issues. In support of this assertion, Mu *et al.* (2018) have identified three dimensions of government communication, including prior consultation, policy marketing, and policy training. Policy understanding not only focuses on the overall level of policy understanding but also distinguishes between subjective and objective policy understanding. In their research, Mu *et al.* (2018) discovered that government communication can facilitate policy understanding and that the different dimensions of government communication play varying roles in fostering different aspects of policy understanding. Only prior consultation and policy training significantly influence policy understanding, while policy marketing does not significantly affect improving policy understanding. Mu *et al.* (2018) added that the role of policy training in fostering policy understanding is stronger than that of prior consultation.

In the views of Hiebert (1981), an effective government communication framework should involve making many different decisions that fit together. The framework should ensure that decisions are made upon one or more of four different strategies: withholding, releasing, staging, and persuading. In each of these communication strategies, a variety of communication techniques can be used, each to a different effect. The framework should also cover policy considerations and political structures (Graber, 2003; Hiebert, 1981). Since the 1990s, there have been diverse efforts to develop communication capacities across various parts of government organizations. This development is informed by a natural reflection of the increased information demands from the media and the public. The development is also underpinned by an independent expansion of capacities in order to maintain influence in the public debate and keep the initiative in the political agenda-setting process alive (Falasca & Nord, 2013: 41).

Generally, two types of government communication activities can be identified. The first type concentrates on communication activities before policy implementation, including the stages of policy design and policy release. The function of this type of communication lies in better designing the policy by incorporating the practical situations of the target group and giving more useful information and assistance to the target group to help them understand the policy before

implementation. The second type deals with government communication activities after policy implementation. The purpose of this type of government communication activity is to collect data in the form of feedback on policy performance, conduct policy evaluation, and ultimately promote policy learning and adaptation (Mu *et al.*, 2018).

Ghana's Agricultural Sector: The Planting for Food and Jobs Policy

The agricultural sector of Ghana remains a significant aspect of the country's economy. For decades, the sector has played an essential role in the socioeconomic development of the country in various ways, including promoting food security, improving the livelihoods of the rural inhabitants, and an avenue for the industrial growth of the country (Abebe & Alemu, 2017). Besides, various opportunities exist in the agricultural sector for addressing unemployment among the country's large youth population. The sector also has the potential to increase domestic production of marketable, nutritious foods. Indeed, in recent decades, the issue of food security has been on the agenda of the country (FAO, 2020).

Successive governments have and indeed continue to implement policies aimed at improving the agricultural sector in view of the far-reaching impact of the sector. A critical part of the focus has been on food security. Achieving food security has become part of the country's long-term agricultural sector-specific strategic plan elaborated in Ghana's Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP I and II). Farmers and other stakeholders within the sector all have a role to play in this regard. For example, farmers need to be supported by the government and other key stakeholders. However, supporting farmers and creating an enabling environment for agricultural investment requires useful data. Decision-makers in the sector need to access quality data to enable them in decision-making and planning (FAO, 2020).

As already indicated, the implementation of the PFJ policy began in 2017. It is one key policy initiative Ghana has adopted to increase food production and ultimately achieve food security. The PFJ aims to modernize the agriculture sector to improve food production, reduce poverty, and enhance employment creation (FAO, 2020; MoFA, 2021). The policy has five modules: Planting for Crops, Planting for Export and Rural Development, Greenhouse Technology Village, Rearing for Food and Jobs, and Agricultural Mechanization Services. Notable measures

to achieve these core goals include subsidized certified seeds, subsidized fertilizer, the promotion of e-agriculture, the enhancement of market opportunities, and the provision of free extension services (MoFA, 2021).

Materials and Methods

The study was purely quantitative and was conducted using a descriptive survey design. The research focused on the perceptions of inhabitants in the Western Region, including public policies, using quantitative methods (Sledge & Thomas, 2021; Strother & Gadarian, 2022). The Western Region covers an area of about 13,842 square kilometers and has a population size of 2,060,585. The Region is in the southern part of Ghana. Its capital is Sekondi-Takoradi. There are 14 administrative districts in the Region. There are various ethnic groups in the Region, with agriculture as their predominant occupation. It is one of the regions where the PFJ policy was implemented (Ghana Statistical Service, 2023; Western Regional Coordinating Council [WRCC], 2022).

The study population was drawn from inhabitants in the Region who were 18 years or older. The inhabitants in the Region who were above were estimated at 1,614,289 (Zhuji World, 2023). The researchers relied on a convenience sampling method to select the inhabitants. The convenience sampling method enables researchers to select respondents based on their accessibility, availability, and proximity (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). According to Suen, Huang, and Lee (2014), even though the convenience sampling method is a non-probability technique, it is mostly employed in quantitative studies. The PFJ was a public policy commonly known to Ghanaian citizens, and inhabitants in the Region could have a fair knowledge of the policy. Hassan (2022) states that in the convenience sampling method, the sampling frame is restricted to the individuals who are readily available and willing to take part in the study. A total of 412 inhabitants were selected for the study based on their accessibility, availability, and willingness to participate (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Though the research results based on the convenience sampling method may not be useful in drawing generalizations for the larger population, they are still vital in providing insights into issues (Hassan, 2022).

Structured interviews and a set of questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. A structured interview was used to collect data from Ghanaians who did not have any formal education to enable them to express themselves in the English Language but had agreed and

were willing to participate in the study. The structured interview, also called a researcher-administered survey, is a quantitative data collection instrument used to collect data from respondents who cannot read or write. With this instrument, the researcher reads the questions and their corresponding answers in the survey and translates them into a language the respondent understands. The respondent then selects his or her choice based on the options provided, and the researcher ticks or underlines the option chosen by the respondent in the survey. Structured interviews are like questionnaires. However, the distinction between structured interviews and questionnaires lies in how the two instruments are administered. The former takes relatively more time to administer than the latter (Ashfaq, 2016). The research team spent a little over an hour with each interviewee who responded to a set of questions during the structured interview sessions.

For respondents who could read and write, a self-administered questionnaire was used to obtain relevant data from them. Both the structured interview and the self-administered questionnaire had the same set of items. The items were all closed-ended and were mostly on a five-point Likert Scale. Respondents who filled out the questionnaire were encouraged to complete the questionnaire for retrieval by the research team in two weeks' time. A number of them were able to complete the questionnaire within a week. After two weeks, the research team went round to retrieve the filled questionnaires from the respondents. The questionnaire and the structured interview were pilot-tested in the Central Region. Central Region was chosen because the region shares similar geographical, economic, social, and cultural characteristics with Western Region. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation were used for the descriptive analysis. However, for the inferential analysis, Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used. Mann-Whitney U-test analysis was done to determine whether differences existed between the overall mean scores of perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production for male and female respondents. Again, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to examine the differences between the ethnic backgrounds of respondents and their overall views on government communication activities and strategies on the policy. Tables and a graph were used to present the study findings to clarify the issues investigated. Ethical issues such as voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and data privacy were all

adhered to when conducting this study. Before data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from the Directorate of Research, Innovation and Development of University of Media, Arts and Communications (UniMAC Institute of Journalism Campus).

Results and Discussion

Demographic Features of Respondents

In presenting and discussing the results, the researchers first focused on the demographic features of the respondents, as shown in Table 1. It is clear from the table that 54.8 percent of the respondents were males, while 45.2 percent of them were females. This shows that more (54.8%) males took part in this study. The result on gender seems to affirm the literature (Brinkhoff, 2022), which shows that there are more male inhabitants in the Western Region than female inhabitants.

On age distribution, it can be seen in Table 1 that 8.3 percent of the respondents were below 26 years, 18.2 percent were between 26 and 30 years, whereas 31.1 percent were between 31 and 35 years. The table further shows that most (76.5%) respondents were between 26 and 40. This implies that most of the respondents were youth within the country's active labor population. Again, these age groups form a considerable proportion of the population of Ghana. It is also clear in Table 1 that most (72.1%) of the respondents had educational qualifications not below secondary level, with about 40 percent of them having tertiary education as their level of education. The finding on level of education of respondents departs from earlier study (Brinkhoff, 2022) which reported that there are more inhabitants in Western Region who are literate than illiterate inhabitants.

Table 1: Demographic Features of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	226	54.8
Female	182	45.2
Total	412	100.0
Age (years)		
Below 26	34	8.3
26-30	75	18.2
31-35	128	31.1
36-40	112	27.2
Above 40	63	15.3
Total	412	100.0

Educational level		
No formal education	38	9.2
Basic Education	77	18.7
Secondary Education	130	31.6
Tertiary Education	167	40.5
Total	412	100.0
Status		
Single	216	52.4
Married	186	45.1
Divorced	6	1.5
Widow	4	1.0
Total	412	100.0

On marital status, it is seen in the table that more than half (52.4%) of the respondents were single, while 45.1 percent of them were married. Though the majority (52.4%) of the respondents were single, a good number of them (45.1%) were married. Nonetheless, the finding on marital status contradicts a report by Sasu (2021), which suggested that more than fifty percent of Ghanaian men and women were married or in union. Finally, the ethnic background of the respondents showed that Akan is the dominant ethnic group (69.4%). This is followed by the Ewes (17%) and the Dagombas (9%) as the third largest ethnic group (Figure 1). The result on ethnic backgrounds is not surprising because the Region is predominantly Akan-dominated. However, it is gratifying to note that there are other ethnic groups who have become settlers. This shows the diversity of people in the study area, which is a common phenomenon in Ghana.

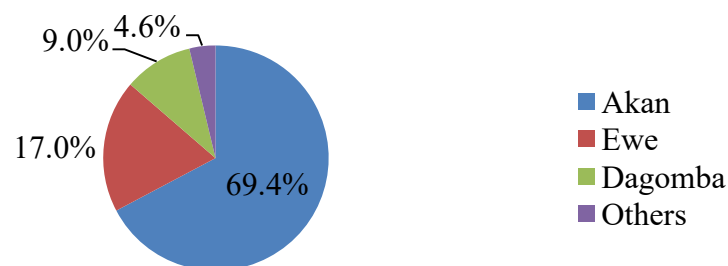


Figure 1: Ethnic composition of respondents

Research Objective One: To ascertain the views of inhabitants of the Western Region on the relevance of the policy to job creation and food production

The study first ascertained the views of respondents on the relevance of the policy to job creation and food production in Ghana (Table 2).

Table 2: Views of respondents on the relevance of the policy to job creation and food production

Module	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job creation		
Food Crops	4.18	0.52
Planting for Export and Rural Development	4.59	0.86
Greenhouse Technology Village	4.05	0.92
Rearing for Food and Jobs	4.01	0.91
Agricultural Mechanization Services	3.37	1.25
Total	4.04	0.89
Food production		
Food Crops	4.33	1.08
Planting for Export and Rural Development	4.71	0.54
Greenhouse Technology Village	3.18	0.72
Rearing for Food and Jobs	4.09	0.86
Agricultural Mechanization Services	4.05	0.90
Total	4.07	0.82

The researchers focused on the various modules under the policy and how respondents perceived their relevance to job creation and food production in Ghana. Means were calculated for the responses obtained from the fieldwork, where 4.50-5.0 represents Very High Relevant (VHR), 3.50-4.0 represents High Relevant (HR), 2.50-3.49 represents Moderate Relevant (MR), 1.50-2.49 represents Low Relevant (LR), and 1.00-1.49 represents Very Lowly Relevant (VLR). In terms of job creation, the policy was perceived as highly relevant (M=4.04). For example, the various modules such as Food Crops (M=4.18), Planting for Export and Rural Development (M=4.59), and Rearing for Food and Jobs (M=4.01) were all regarded as highly relevant to job creation. The findings on food production agree with the literature (Pauw, 2022), which found that the PFJ policy has contributed to food production in the country. The results on the relevance of the policy to food production further strengthen Fearon, Adraki, and Boateng (2015), who argued that such policies help to improve food production and security in Ghana.

Additionally, the policy was perceived as highly relevant to food production in Ghana (M=4.07). Modules including Food Crops (M=4.33), Planting for Export and Rural Development (M=4.71), Rearing for Food and Jobs (M=4.05), and Agricultural Mechanization Services (M=4.05) were all regarded as highly relevant to food production in Ghana. The findings of this study validate

that of Akologo (2018), who observed that PFJ policy is relevant to food production. The value of food production has been highlighted in SDG 2, which lays emphasis on food security as a critical strategy needed to end hunger across the globe. Despite the importance of the PFJ policy to food production and job creation, Pauw (2022) believes that the implementation of the policy can be improved upon to increase its investment returns. Overall, the results on the relevance and perceived effect of the policy on food production and job creation appear to minimize the concerns about the public choice theory, which states that elected officials and bureaucrats make decisions that only promote their interests and do not always facilitate progress in society (Longley, 2021).

Research Objective Two: To examine the perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production

The second study objective determined the perceived effects of the policy on food production and job creation in Ghana. The researchers focused on the various modules under the policy and how respondents perceived their effects on job creation and food production in Ghana (Table 3). Means were calculated for the responses obtained from the fieldwork, where 4.50-5.0 represents Very High Effect (VHE), 3.50-4.0 represents High Effect (HE), 2.50-3.49 represents Moderate Effect (ME), 1.50-2.49 represents Low Effect (LE), and 1.00-1.49 represents Very Low Effect (VLE). Table 3 shows that the overall perceived effect of the policy on job creation was perceived as low in Ghana (M=2.01). All the various modules apart from Food Crops (M=3.14) were perceived as having either low or very low effect (Table 4). Moreover, the overall perceived effect of the policy on food production in Ghana was moderate (M=2.64). In particular, the perceived effect of Food Crops (M=4.43) on food production was perceived as high. However, the perceived effect of other modules, such as Planting for Export and Rural Development (M=2.47) and Agricultural Mechanization Services (M=2.49), was low, with Rearing for Food and Jobs (M=1.38) recording a very low perceived effect on food production in the country. The results on the perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production Aberman, Kufoalor, and Gilbert (2021) found that the PFJ is contributing to job creation in Ghana.

Table 3: Perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production

Module	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job creation		
Food Crops	3.14	0.22
Planting for Export and Rural Development	2.09	1.22
Greenhouse Technology Village	2.06	0.24
Rearing for Food and Jobs	1.32	1.21
Agricultural Mechanization Services	1.45	0.21
Total	2.01	0.62
Food production		
Food Crops	4.43	1.13
Planting for Export and Rural Development	2.47	0.73
Greenhouse Technology Village	2.44	0.06
Rearing for Food and Jobs	1.38	1.32
Agricultural Mechanization Services	2.49	1.33
Total	2.64	0.91

A further inferential analysis using Mann-Whitney U-test was done to determine whether differences existed in the mean scores of perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production for male and female respondents at a significance level of 0.05 (Table 4).

Table 4: A Mann-Whitney U-test analysis of mean scores of perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production for male and female respondents

	Sex	N	Mean rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Job Creation	Male	226	217.03	54692.00	22294.00	38404.00	-2.055	.838
	Female	182	214.55	38404.00				
	Total	412						
Food Production	Male	226	217.03	54692.00	22294.00	38404.00	--2.053	.662
	Female	182	214.55	38404.00				
	Total	412						

The Z values of -2.055 and -2.053 with p-values of 0.838 and 0.662, which are higher than the alpha value of 0.05, suggest that no significant differences existed in the views of male and female respondents with respect to the overall means on perceived effects of the policy on job creation and food production respectively. This means that the gender of respondents did not affect their views on how the policy affected job creation and food production, which seems to contradict the literature (Profeta, 2020) suggesting that gender influences public policies.

Research Objective Three: To examine the perceptions of inhabitants on the level of effectiveness of government communication on the policy

The third objective focused on examining the perception of Ghanaians on the effectiveness of government communication on the policy. To address this objective, the researchers first ascertained from the respondents whether, in their views, there was government communication on the policy. With this, most (86.7%) of them admitted that the government undertook some communication activities and strategies on the policy. Only 13.3% of them were not sure if the government undertook some communication activities and strategies on the policy.

Communication Activities and Strategies

The researchers also found out from the respondents the kind of communication activities and strategies the government engaged in regarding the policy. Various communication activities and strategies were employed by the government on the policy. Specifically, awareness creation (62.5%), public education (65.5%), advocacy (53.7%), and community mobilization (52.8%) were used in communicating the policy. Other communication activities and strategies found are behavior change communication (53.4%), persuasive messages (61%), field visits (50.6%), and stakeholder engagement (51.2%). The results imply that various communication activities and strategies were used for communicating the Planting for Food Policy in the country, which contradicts earlier research (Bowen, 2010), which showed that Ghana relies heavily on newspapers and radio programs for communicating policies. The findings also reinforce Howlett's (2009, 2011) position on the importance of government communication to national policies. Government communication activities and strategies are essential in influencing public policy decisions because they help to maintain mutually beneficial relationships between governments and the various publics on whom policy success or failure rests (Howlett, 2009, 2011).

Views of respondents on the effectiveness of communication activities and strategies

Having ascertained government communication activities and strategies used on the policy, researchers further examined the effectiveness of communication strategies adopted. Here, respondents were asked to rate the level of effectiveness of communication activities and strategies government undertook with respect to the PFJ policy based on a five Likert scale of 1 to 5 [where: 4.50-5.0=Very Highly Effective, 3.50-4.49=Highly Effective, 2.50-

3.49=Moderately Effective, 1.50-2.49=Lowly Effective, and 1.00-1.49=Very Lowly Effective] (Table 5). For instance, the study revealed that communication activities and strategies to create awareness about the policy initiative were perceived as moderately effective (M=3.16).

Table 5: Respondents’ views on the effectiveness of government communication activities and strategies

Government activities and strategies	Mean	Std. Dev.
Activities and strategies to create awareness about the policy initiative	3.16	0.42
Activities and strategies to educate the public about the policy goal	4.01	1.25
Government activities and strategies to explain the policy details to the public	2.41	0.23
Activities and strategies to advocate the benefits of the policy	4.03	0.14
Government activities and strategies for mobilizing citizens and communities to support the policy	2.44	0.34
Activities and strategies to promote positive behavior change for the policy	2.12	0.82
Activities and strategies to promote public dialogue on the policy	3.02	1.36
Government activities and strategies to generate shared understanding and public support for the policy	3.42	1.33
Activities and strategies to empower citizens towards the policy	3.01	0.51
Government activities and strategies to advertise the policy to the public	2.21	0.55
Press releases and press conferences on the progress of the policy	2.00	0.43
Activities and strategies to persuade the public in support of the policy	2.01	1.16
Government activities and strategies to promote stakeholder engagement on the challenges of the policy	1.20	1.22
Government activities and strategies using new media platforms	1.03	0.14
Government communication using stakeholder engagement to promote the sustainability of the policy	1.23	1.02
The use of local media and interpersonal communication on the policy	2.01	1.32
Total	2.46	0.76

The finding on communication activities and strategies to create awareness about the policy initiative resonates well with that of Azumah (2020), who maintained that awareness creation is critical to the success of PFJ policy. Azumah (2020) further argues that there is a need for intensified efforts to create awareness about the benefits of the PFJ policy. Again, Table 5 shows that government communication activities and strategies to educate the public about the policy goal were highly effective (M=4.01, SD=1.25). The finding on government communication activities and strategies to educate the public about the PFJ policy validates earlier studies (Peterson, 2008; Young, 2000) which showed that communication helps to inform and educate various publics about policies in society. Activities and strategies to inform and educate the public on government policies are essential to the success of the overall policies. Such activities

and strategies help to promote effective provision of information on the existence of the policies (Birkinshaw & Varney, 2011; Jung, 2014).

Moreover, Table 5 shows that government communication activities and strategies to promote advocacy on the benefits of the policy (M=4.03, SD=0.14) were highly effective, supports previous studies by Birkinshaw and Varney (2011) and Jung (2014), which observed that effective government communication activities and strategies should help to explain the benefits of the public policies to the citizens. Also, activities and strategies to promote public dialogue on the policy (M=3.02), shared understanding and public support for the policy (M=3.42), and to empower citizens towards the policy (M=3.01) were all perceived as moderately effective. The result of a shared understanding of the policy is relevant because, according to Mu *et al.* (2018), government communication facilitates policy understanding.

On the other hand, government activities and strategies to explain the policy details to the public (M=2.41, SD=0.23), activities and strategies for mobilizing citizens and communities to support the Policy (M=2.44, SD=0.34), activities and strategies to promote positive behavior change for the Policy (M=2.12, SD=0.82), and activities and strategies to persuade the public in support of the Policy (M=2.01, SD=1.16) were all perceived as lowly effective. This suggests that though there were communication activities and strategies by the government on the policy to explain, persuade, mobilize citizens, and change their behaviors, they were poorly conducted. A careful look into the government communication activities and strategies around the PFJ policy indicates that professional communicators were not actively involved in the communication. It is very difficult to clearly distinguish between the communication activities of civil servants and political appointees in respect of the policy. This could largely account for the lowly effective nature of government communication activities. In places such as Norway, Figenschou *et al.* (2017), there is no clear distinction in communication involving politically appointed staff and communication experts who are civil servants and are subjected to rules regarding non-partisanship. This makes it extremely difficult to properly discharge the task of government communication. Figenschou *et al.* (2017) concluded that there is a need for the professionalization of government communication activities.

Further, Table 5 indicates that communication activities in the form of press releases and press conferences on the progress of the policy by government officials are lowly effective ($M=2.00$, $SD=0.43$). This shows that government communication via press releases and press conferences to inform the public of the progress of the policy has not been very effective. This observation deviates from Hiebert's government communication framework, which depicts that press releases are part of the techniques for communicating government policies (Graber, 2003; Hiebert, 1981). Similarly, communication to ensure stakeholder engagement on the challenges of the policy ($M=1.20$) and the use of local media and interpersonal communication (e.g., field visits) about the policy ($M=2.01$) were very lowly effective. By implication, activities and strategies to promote stakeholder engagement on the challenges of the policy and the government's usage of new media platforms on the policy were not as effective as had been expected. This result departs from that of Bowen (2010), which established that stakeholders largely rely on radio programs for communicating public policies in Ghana. The find on the use of local media and interpersonal communication agrees with Tanko *et al.* (2019), who argued that the use of local media is an important strategy to promote the success of the PFJ policy in the country.

In addition, communication using new media platforms ($M=1.03$) was very lowly effective. This implies that government communication activities and strategies using new media platforms on the policy were not as effective as the respondents had expected. The potency of the new media, including social media, in public issues and policies has been stressed by scholars (Burgess & Green, 2018; Dobson *et al.*, 2018). New media is very engaging and encourages citizens to share their opinions (Dobson *et al.*, 2018) and actively participate in creating and circulating relevant information and messages (Burgess & Green, 2018). What is more is the fact that the overall mean score ($M=2.46$, $SD=0.76$) of respondents on the effectiveness of government activities and strategies on the policy implies that they were lowly effective. The findings on overall communication align with Buaku's (2017) observation, which stated that one major challenge faced by public policies in Ghana is poor communication. Similarly, Anaszewicz and Dobek-Ostrowska (2013) found that the poor government communication hampers policies and programs of government in Poland. Inefficiency in policy communication in Poland is due to the absence of clear management structures and guidelines (Anaszewicz & Dobek-Ostrowska, 2013).

An inferential analysis was further conducted on the differences between ethnic backgrounds of respondents and their overall views on the level of effectiveness of communication activities and strategies on the policy. It is clear from Table 6 that the significance level ($P=0.062$) is higher than the alpha value of 0.05. This suggests that no significant differences existed between the ethnic backgrounds of respondents and their overall perception of the level of effectiveness of government communication activities and strategies on the policy. In short, all the respondents perceived government communication activities and strategies on the policy as very lowly effective, irrespective of differences in their ethnic backgrounds. This finding is not surprising because Azumah (2020) suggested that the government should undertake massive awareness creation on the PFJ policy to garner public support and commitment for the policy.

Table 6: A Kruskal-Wallis test of the ethnic backgrounds of respondents and their overall views on government communication strategies on the policy

Ethnic Background	N	Mean Rank	X^2	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Akan	286	165.53	8.657	3	.062
Ewe	70	148.61			
Dagomba	37	171.23			
Others	19	152.31			
Total	412				

(Statistic is significant at 0.05): $df = \text{degree of freedom};$ $X^2 = \text{chi-square}$

To conclude the issues on the third research objective, respondents were asked to indicate their overall views about the effectiveness of government communication activities and strategies at various stages of the policy. Percentages were used to analyze the views of respondents where ‘E’ represents effective, ‘N’ represents Neutral, and ‘NE’ represents Not Effective. From Table 7, respondents perceived government communication during the planning (63%) and formulation (58.9%) stages of the policy as not effective. These results show that there were concerns with government communication during the planning and formulation stages of the policy. This suggests that not much consultation was done prior to the design and formulation of the PFJ policy. This revelation falls short of previous studies (Crowley & Scott, 2017; Glenn, 2014), which identified prior consultation as vital to government communication strategies on policies.

Table 7: Views of respondents on the government communication on the policy

Stage	E	N	NE	Total (%)
Planning stage	25.5	11.5	63	100.0
Policy formulation stage	32	9.1	58.9	100.0
Policy implementation	54.7	12.3	33.0	100.0
Policy monitoring	26	10.4	63.6	100.0
Policy evaluation	19.3	8.0	72.7	100.0

Again, apart from government communication activities and strategies during the implementation stage of the policy, which the majority (54.7%) saw as generally effective, government communication activities and strategies during the evaluation stage of the policy were all seen as ineffective. This situation seems problematic because effective government communication activities and strategies help to present and explain government policy decisions and actions at all stages of the policy (Mu *et al.*, 2018; Pasquier, 2012).

Research Objective Four: To identify the measures to promote sustainability of the policy

The final objective of this study looked at measures to help sustain the policy (Table 8).

Table 8: Measures to help sustain the policy

Measure	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
Increased commitment from state agencies and authorities towards the policy	75.5	11.5	13
Adequate participation by all stakeholders	79	2.1	18.9
Improved communication on the policy goal	71.7	5.3	23.0
Improved communication on the benefits of the policy	81.7	5.3	13.0
More citizen engagement and consultation on how to sustain the policy	69.3	8.7	22.0
Supportive relationship among stakeholders of the policy	75.5	11.5	13
Grassroots ownership of the policy	69.3	8.7	22.0
Increased accountability throughout the delivery of the policy	71.7	5.3	23.0
Transparency in the implementation of the policy	81.7	5.3	13.0
De-politicization of the policy	89	2.1	8.9
Local authorities should be fully responsible for the design and implementation of the policy	59.3	18.7	22.0
Increased efforts to empower citizens towards the policy	74	7.1	18.9
More research on the overall policy	56.3	11.7	32.0

The measures include adequate participation by all stakeholders (79%), improved communication on the policy goal (71.7%), improved communication on the benefits of the policy (81.7%), and improved citizen engagement and consultation (69.3%) on how to sustain the policy. The finding on participation agrees with that of Admassu *et al.* (2002), who contend

that stakeholder participation is crucial to the sustainability of development policies and projects. Involving citizens in policies and projects starts at the planning stage when decisions are being made about the type of project required (Fowler, 2000). The finding on engagement and consultation accentuates Akologo's (2018) call for collaboration as vital in maximizing the benefits of the PFJ policy in the country. The value of the result on participation is evinced in the participation theory, which calls for the involvement of the public in decision-making processes to enhance ownership, empowerment, and self-confidence (Sen, 2012).

Other measures to sustain the policy are supportive relationships among stakeholders of the policy (75.5%) and grassroots ownership of the policy (69.3%). The finding on local ownership supports previous observations (Junne & Verkoren, 2005; Nalubiri, 2010), which suggest that grassroots ownership is essential to the sustainability of development policies and projects. Ownership entails a change from dependency to local community responsibility, strengthening local structures, securing a pool of local expertise, and suitable leading mechanisms (Junne & Verkoren, 2005). More so, transparency in the implementation of the policy (71.7%) and empowerment of citizens (74%) were seen as vital to the sustainability of the overall policy framework. The result on transparency agrees with previous research (European Commission, 2021), which identifies transparency as an essential measure to improve the implementation of the PFJ policy in Ghana. Similarly, the revelation on empowerment strengthens Nalubiri's (2010) contention that empowerment largely improves the sustainability of development policies and interventions.

Besides, increased commitment from state agencies and authorities towards the policy (75.5%) and de-politicization of the policy (89%) were seen as critical measures to sustain the policy, which agrees with previous observations (Azumah, 2020; Ghana News Agency, 2018; Mabe *et al.*, 2018) which suggest that challenges faced by PFJ policy include low commitment and political interference. Azumah (2020) suggests that curing political interference is an important step toward realizing the PFJ policy's expected benefits. Finally, citizen empowerment is seen as vital to sustaining the PFJ policy (74%). The result on citizen empowerment reflects Michael's (2004) claim that empowerment is critical to the sustainability of policies and projects. Empowered individuals and communities are likely to exercise their influence on processes that

affect them in setting their priorities and agendas (Michael, 2004). Empowerment promotes self-confidence and increases a sense of personal or group efficacy.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the findings of the study. First, the respondents saw the PFJ policy as highly relevant to Ghana's job creation and food production. The various modules, including Food Crops, Planting for Export and Rural Development, Rearing for Food and Jobs, and Agricultural Mechanization Services, were all perceived as highly relevant to job creation and food production in Ghana. However, the overall effect of the policy on job creation was perceived as low. All the various modules, apart from Food Crops, were perceived as having either low or very low effects. On the other hand, the overall perceived effect on food production in Ghana is moderate. However, the perceived effect of Planting for Export and Rural Development, Agricultural Mechanization Services, and Rearing for Food and Jobs modules was low. No significant differences existed in the views of male and female respondents concerning their overall perception of the effect of the policy on job creation and food production.

Government communication on the policy generally focused on awareness creation, public education, advocacy, community mobilization, behavior change, persuasive messages, field visits, and stakeholder engagement. Communication activities and strategies to educate the public on the policy goal and the benefits of the policy were highly effective. Also, government communication activities and strategies to create awareness about the policy initiative, promote public dialogue on the policy, promote shared understanding and public support for the policy, and empower citizens towards the policy were fairly effective. On the other hand, communication activities and strategies to explain the policy details to the public, mobilize citizens and communities to support the policy, promote positive behavior change for the policy, and persuade the public to support the policy were less effective.

Moreover, government communication in the form of press releases and press conferences to inform the public on the progress of the policy was lowly effective. Further, government communication on the policy using stakeholder engagement, new media methods, and interpersonal communication were ineffective. Apart from government communication activities and strategies during the implementation stage of the policy perceived as effective, government communication activities and strategies during the policy's planning, formulation, monitoring,

and evaluation stages were all seen as ineffective. The overall level of effectiveness of government communication on the policy was low regardless of the differences in their ethnic backgrounds. Measures to sustain the policy include increased commitment from state agencies and authorities towards the policy, adequate participation by all stakeholders, improved communication on the policy, and increased citizen engagement and consultation. Other strategies to sustain the policy are supportive relationships among stakeholders of the policy, grassroots ownership of the policy, transparency in the implementation of the policy, de-politicization of the policy, and more studies on the overall policy framework.

References

- Abebe, G., & Alemu, A. (2017). Role of improved seeds towards improving livelihood and food security in Ethiopia. *International Journal of Research-Granthaalayah*, 5(2), 338-356.
- Aberman, N. L., Kufuolor, D. S., & Gilbert, R. (2021). *Mapping the implementation process for subsidized fertilizer distribution under Ghana's Planting for Food and Jobs Program*. GSSP Working Paper 56. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.
- Admassu, M., Kumie, A., & Fantahun, M. (2002). Sustainability of drinking water supply projects in rural North Gondar, Ethiopia. *Ethiopian Journal of Health Development*, 3, 221-229.
- Akologo, S. Z. (2018). *Making the SDG Principle of "Ensure No One Is Left Behind" relevant in Ghana. A report on the assessment of Planting for Food and Jobs Programme in Ghana*. Caritas Ghana.
- Anaszewicz, M., & Dobek-Ostrowska, B. (2013). Government communication in democratic Poland: 20 years after the collapse of communism. In K. Sanders & M. J. Canel (eds.), *Government Communication: Cases and Challenges* (pp. 154-170). London: Bloomsbury.
- Ashfaq, Z. (2016). Structured Interviews. BBA8900-Research methods & approaches in business. Cogent Education.
- Azumah, S. B. (2020). *Assessing the Contribution of Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) Programme to Improved Seed Security in Ghana*. Accra: The National Seed Trade Association of Ghana
- Birkinshaw, P., & Varney, M. (2011). *Government and Information: The Law Relating to Access, Disclosure, and Their Regulation*. West Sussex: Bloomsbury Professional.
- Bowen, H. (2010). Communicating with Policymakers about Development Issues in Ghana: A Guide for the International Development Community. The Communication Initiative Network. Accessed on 08/08/23 at: <https://www.comminit.com/global/content/communicating-policymakers-about-development-issues-ghana-guide-international-developmen>
- Brinkhoff, T. (2022). Western Region in Ghana. Accessed on 08/08/23 at: <https://www.vitypopulation.de/en/ghana/admin/01western/>
- Buaku. F. (2017). Policy implementation and bureaucracy in Ghana Audit Service in the Central

- Region. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cape Coast.
- Burgess, J., & Green, J. (2018). *Youtube: Online video and participatory culture* (2nd ed). Polity Press.
- Canel, M. J., & Sanders, K. (2013). Introduction: Mapping the field of government communication. In K. Sanders & M. J. Canel (eds.), *Government communication: Cases and challenges* (pp. 1-26). London: Bloomsbury.
- Canel, M. J., & Sanders, K. (2014). Is it enough to be strategic? Comparing and defining professional government communication across disciplinary fields and between countries. In M. J. Canel & K. Voltmer (eds.), *Comparing political communication across time and space: New studies in an emerging field* (pp. 98-116). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Canel, M. J., & Sanders, K. (2016). Government communication. In G. Mazzoleni (ed.), *The International encyclopedia of political communication* (pp. 450-457). Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Comfort, LK (2007). Crisis management in Hindsight: Cognition, communication, coordination, and control. *Public Admin. Rev.*, 67, 118–197.
- Crowley, D.W., & Scott, J.T. (2017). Bringing rigor to the use of evidence in policymaking: Translating early evidence. *Public Adm. Rev.*, 77, 650–655.
- Dobson, A. S., Robards, B., & Sarah, N. (2018). Digital intimate publics and social media. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-97607-5>
- European Commission. (2021). A review of the Ghana Planting for Food and Jobs Program: 2017-2020. *Global Food and Nutrition Security*.
- Falasca, K. & Nord, L. (2013). Structures, strategies, and spin: Government communication in Sweden. In K. Sanders & M. J. Canel (eds.), *Government communication: Cases and challenges* (pp. 27-44). London: Bloomsbury.
- Fearon, J., Adraki, P. K., & Boateng, V. (2015). Fertilizer subsidy programme in Ghana: Evidence of performance after six years of implementation. *Journal of Biology, Agriculture and Healthcare*, 5(21), 100-107.
- Figenschou, T. U., Karlsen, R., Kolltveit, K. & Thorbjornsrud, K. (2017). Serving the media ministers: A mixed methods study on the personalization of ministerial communication. *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 22(4), 411-430.
- FAO. (2020). *Support to the Planting for Food and Jobs Campaign*. Accra: FAO-Ghana.
- Fowler, A. (2000). *The virtuous spiral: A guide to sustainability for NGOs in international development*. London: Earthscan.
- Frey, L. R., & Carragee, K. M. [eds.]. (2007). *Communication activism: Communication for Social change* (vol. 1), *Media and performance activism* (vol. 2). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton.
- Garnett, J.L., & Kouzmin, A. (1997). *Handbook of Administrative Communication*. New York: Marcel Dekker.
- Garnett, J.L., Kouzmin, A. (2007). Communicating throughout Katrina: Competing and complementary conceptual lenses on crisis communication. *Public Admin. Rev.*, 67, 171–188.
- Garnett, J.L., Marlowe, J., & Pandey, S.K. (2008). Penetrating the performance predicament: Communication as a mediator or moderator of organizational culture's impact on public organizational performance. *Public Adm. Rev.*, 68, 266–281.
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2023). *Populations by Regions*. Accra: Ghana Statistical Service.
- Glenn, T. (2014). The management and administration of government communications in

- Canada. *Public Adm.*, 57, 3–25.
- Hassan, M. (2022). Convenience sampling-Method, Types and Examples. Accessed on 12/08/23 at: <https://researchmethod.net/convenience-sampling/>
- Ho, ATK, & Cho, W. (2017). Government communication effectiveness and satisfaction with police performance: A large-scale survey study. *Public Adm. Rev.*, 77, 228–239.
- Howlett, M. (2009). Government communication as a policy tool: A framework for analysis. *Can. Political Sci. Rev.*, 3, 23.
- Howlett, M. (2011). *Designing Public Policies: Principles and Instruments*. Routledge: New York, NY, USA.
- Johansson, K. M., & Raunio, T. (2019). Government communication in a comparative perspective in Karl Magnus Johansson & Gunnar Nygren (eds.) *Close and distant: Political executive–media relations in four countries*, pp. 127-148. Göteborg: Nordicom.
- Jung, D. (2014). “Smart” government disclosure through a behavioral economics lens. *Public Adm. Rev.*, 74, 676–678.
- Junne, G., & Verkoren, W. (2005). *Post-conflict development: Meeting new challenges*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Langellier, K. M. (2010). Performing Somali identity in the diaspora: “Wherever I go I know who I am.” *Cultural Studies*.
- Lindenfeld, L., & Hoecherl-Alden G. (2008). The role of language education in Maine’s global economy. *Maine Policy Review*, 17(1), 54-67.
- Liu, B.F., Horsley, J.S., & Yang, K. (2012). Overcoming negative media coverage: Does government communication matter? *J. Public Adm. Res. Theory*, 22, 597–621.
- Longley, R. (2021). Representative Democracy: Definition, Pros, and Cons. Accessed on 12/08/23 at: thoughtco.com/representative-democracy-definition-pros-cons-4589561.
- Ministry of Food and Agriculture. (2021). *Planting for Food and Jobs*. Accra: MoFA.
- Mu, R., Li, Y., & Fu, Y. (2018). Can Government Communication Facilitate Policy Understanding Toward Energy Conservation? Evidence from an Old Industrial Base in China. *Sustainability*, 10: 3222.
- Nalubiri, A. G. (2010). Sustaining local NGO social intervention benefits in Uganda. Unpublished master’s thesis, University of The Hague: The Netherlands.
- Pandey, S.K., & Garnett, J.L. (2006). Exploring public sector communication performance: Testing a model and drawing implications. *Public Adm. Rev.*, 66, 37–51.
- Pauw, K. (2022). A review of Ghana’s planting for food and jobs program: implementation, impacts, benefits and costs. *Food Security* 14, 1321-1335.
- Peterson, E. E. (2008). An Introduction to Communication and Public Policy Communication and Public Policy: Proceedings of the 2008 International Colloquium on Communication.
- Profeta, P. (2020). How Women Affect Public Policy. In *Gender Equality and Public Policy: Measuring Progress in Europe* (pp. 58-82). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students* (6th ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Sen, AK (2012). Development as Capability Expansion. In J. DeFilippis & S. Saegert, *The Community Development Reader (2nd Edition)*, 320-323. London: Routledge.
- Sledge, D., & Thomas, H. F. (2021). Public perceptions of the role of government and nonstate actors in responding to COVID-19. *Risks Hazards Crisis Public Policy*, 12, 266–282.

- Strother, L., & Gadarian, S. K. (2022). Public Perceptions of the Supreme Court: How Policy Disagreement Affects Legitimacy. *The Forum*, 20(1), 87-134.
- Suen, L. J., Huang, H. M., & Lee, H. H. (2014). A comparison of convenience and purposive sampling. *The Journal of Nursing*, 61(3), 105-111.
- Tanko, M., Salifu, I., Saeed, A. S., & Aye, G. (2019). Planting for Food and Jobs: A panacea for productivity and welfare of rice farmers in Northern Ghana. *Cogent Economics & Finance*, 7:1.
- Western Regional Coordinating Council. (2022). *Profile of the WRCC*. Sekondi-Takoradi: WRCC.
- Young, I. M. (2000). *Inclusion and democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zhuji World (2023). Western Region, Ghana-statistics. Accessed on 12/08/23 at: <https://zhujiworld.com/gh/1258935-western-region/>