



ASHESI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Effects of events management on student's social life at Ashesi University College.

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS PROJECT

B. Sc. Business Administrations

By

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Undergraduate Thesis submitted to the Department of Business Administration, Ashesi University College. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science

Degree in Business Administration.

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April 2018

Declaration

I hereby declare that this undergraduate thesis is my original work and no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or anywhere else.

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Date: 18/04/2018

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision of dissertation laid down by Ashesi University College.

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Acknowledgements

I appreciate God for His mercies, favor and grace shown to me throughout this thesis capstone project.

Firstly, I acknowledge my supervisor Dr. Enyonam C. Kudonoo for tirelessly guiding me through the undergraduate thesis journey. I will never forget her selfless efforts towards a successful completion of this research.

Secondly, I appreciate Dr. Joseph Oduro Frimpong, Dr. Stephen Armah, my fellow classmates and the Business Administration Capstone coordinators for motivating me and constructively critiquing my work. I thank the Ashesi community especially the Ashesi Student Council for their help.

Lastly, I acknowledge my mother Mrs. Mlandwa for always encouraging me and believing in me when I wanted to give up.

Abstract

This research explores how Ashesi Students Council (ASC) can effectively manage campus events to improve students' social life. The purpose of this study is to unearth how ASC can use events to create a sustainable vibrant campus with socially active students. Ashesi University College has student owned campus activities where most events are organized and run by the students themselves. In as much as they are working towards creating a vibrant campus, there is still low attendance and less participation during these events. This study suggests that, effective and efficient management of events on Ashesi campus leads to more student participation and improvement of students' social life. Accordingly, extant literature is reviewed on events management to ascertain ways it can be improved to increase students' participation. Using a qualitative approach and structured interviews, data were collected from current Ashesi students, alumina and some staff to find out their perception about Ashesi ASC events, what they think must be done to improve students' participation in ASC events for them to gain the benefits therein. The study concludes with suggestions on how to use events to create a sustainable vibrant campus with socially active students with enriched lives devoid of stress.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Our survival as human's hinge on our capacity for social living. Our social lives are important influences on our mental and physical health (Cain, 2017). Our good social lives promote healthy life styles that lead to reduced levels of stress and its related diseases as mentioned by Cain (2017) in his article *Understanding Social Life*. Accordingly, Ashesi University College has put structures in place to keep its campus vibrant, and to enrich students' lives during their stay. These structures include Career Services, Office of Student and Community Affairs, Student Government, Health and Wellbeing, Citizenship Projects, Diversity and International Programs. These departments work closely with the entire students' body to execute exciting events on campus such as the Ashesi Annual Laughter Day, Global Café and Annual Career Fair. The Annual Laughter Day involves displaying funny jokes and telling jokes with the intention of entertaining the Ashesi community. Global Café is about all nationalities represented on Ashesi University College campus taking turns to display their culture, food, dances and fun facts to educate the Ashesi community about their countries. Lastly, the Annual Career Fair provides an opportunity for students to interact with company representatives, learn from them and possibly apply for internships (Welbeck, 2014). The departments mentioned above offer guidance in career, personal development, health and well-being, service and leadership to students to equip them with life skills that may help them to navigate adulthood, academic life and professional life.

On the contrary, it has been observed that participation of students in Ashesi Students Council (ASC) events including Ubora Awards, Ashesi Premier League (APL) is below expectations. A critical analysis of the situation reveals that only 30% of the students' body are engaged in such activities making their effect nonproductive. This has created the need to research into the situation to find out why students are apathetic about ASC events. This study therefore, strives to bridge this gap by researching into why majority of Ashesi students fail to participate in ASC events and what must be done to motivate them to actively participate in such activities to get the benefits therein.

1.2. About Ashesi University College

Ashesi University College started functioning in March 2002. Its mission is to educate entrepreneurial leaders in Africa; to cultivate in students, the critical skills, concern for others and the courage to transform Africa. Ashesi University College provides its students with an educational experience that fosters ethical leadership, an entrepreneurial mindset and the ability to solve complex problems. In 2011, Ashesi University moved to its new Berekuso campus after nine years of operating from rental buildings in Labone, a suburb in Accra. The new campus creates is a community where students can live, work and study together. In that light, the campus is student owned in the sense that students manage most of the activities by themselves. A student owned campus is made possible through an intense collaboration between the Ashesi Students Council (ASC) and the Office of Student and Community Affairs (OSCA) to enhance the student experience and support student led initiatives (Ashesi University College, 2017).

The Ashesi Student Council (ASC) is a student government which started functioning in the 2004/2005 academic year with the aim of creating a vibrant filled campus. It started with two

key campus events which are the first Ashesi Business Week and the graduation of the pioneer class of 2005. The student council has traditions that are observed yearly. These traditions are: Akwaaba Night, the Calabash Event, Ubora Awards, Ashesi Premier League (APL) and the Ashesi Student Council (ASC) Week. These traditions (events) are discussed briefly in the subsequent paragraphs. The aim of these traditions is to address diversified student's issues on campus to create a vibrant filled campus where students get the opportunity to distress. This research pays attention to these traditions because every Ashesi student gets the chance to experience them during their stay on campus. The Ashesi Student Council acts as 'chief servants' serving the wellbeing of the students and serve with all humility and maximum competency while creating a vibrant-filled campus for distressing.

Since an event is something that happens but not just exist, somebody must ensure to make it happen. In view of the need to ensure students' holistic academic growth, the Student Council organizes activities that enable them to become socially acceptable individuals. As part of the Student Council traditions, the yearly events held include, *Akwaaba Night, Ashesi Premier League (APL), Ashesi Student Council Week, Calabash Event and Ubora Awards.*

Akwaaba night was introduced by students in 2008. It is a night of socializing, music and entertainment, which is primarily meant to welcome the freshmen into Ashesi. It gives the freshmen and the entire student community an opportunity to get to know each other. Students initiated and run APL, which consists of six registered soccer clubs in 2011. Ashesi Students' Council dedicates a week (known as ASC Week) to students to celebrate their achievements and contributions to Ashesi every year in the second (spring) semester. Each day of the week is

represented by a dressing theme for the day. The common themes include Career Day, Alma Mater Day and Crazy Day (Quansah, 2017). The Calabash Event is a ceremony introduced by students in 2014 to welcome the freshmen and congratulate them for being accepted into the Ashesi community. Uhora Awards is an excellence awards ceremony introduced in 2010 by students. The word 'Uhora' is a Swahili word which means excellence. The award seeks to acknowledge students, staff and faculty for their achievement in, and contributions to embracing the spirit and values of Ashesi (Ashesi University College, 2017).

Anyone managing an event works with budgets, schedules, and vendors to create the best possible events for their clients (Hard, 2017). Thus, at Ashesi University College, the student council manages its own funds with oversight from university administration but determine its spending according to its own needs and priorities. Even though the Ashesi Student Council events bring the students together and offer them an entertainment break from their academic work, they still have drawbacks including less student participation in its activities.

1.2.1. The concept of Events Management

Event management is the process of using business management and organizational skills to envision, plan and execute social and business events (Hard, 2017). It involves creating and developing large scale events which may include conferences, festivals, conventions, concerts, trade shows and other ceremonies (Woodward, 2017). According to Hard, (2017), people who specialize in events management work with budgets, schedules, and vendors to create the best possible events for their clients. Woodward (2017) complements Hard's (2017) assertion by explaining that, events management involves formulating the event concept, identifying the target audience, planning the overall logistics of the event and conducting the project

management aspects of the event. From the above definitions of events management, one may conclude that events management is the application of project management skills.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Events management require an application of project management skills. The Ashesi Student Council (ASC) events take place during the semester because the University's educational system allows for such flexibility. Social events such as Akwaaba Night, Ashesi Student Council Week, Ashesi Premier League, the Calabash Event and Uboru Awards are part of what makes campus life lively and bring students together to distress. As mentioned earlier, they are observed yearly as traditions of the student life at Ashesi. Generally, students need a break from academics to promote creativity and productivity (Secco, 2013). Such a break from their academic work enables them to refresh their minds as well as explore and develop other skills to complement their academic intelligence. The break enables them to function effectively and efficiently in the courses they take, assignments and group discussions they engage in once they go back to their work. The breaks also create a vibrant atmosphere in an environment by lightening up student's moods. It is from the above that I investigate how the Ashesi Student Council events impact on students' social life.

Despite all efforts of holding campus activities such as the annual laughter day and global café meant to entertain students and to keep the campus lively and vibrant, I have observed low participation and low turnout in such events. It became a cause of concern when about 30% of the student population are seen to be actively engaging in the ASC events during my four years stay in the institution. There are no restrictions for attending the ASC events, yet when

comparing the Ashesi Student population and event attendees, one may be justified to say there is limited participation and low turnout for events. What then are the reasons why there is low participation and low turnout in events? This study seeks to unveil the causes of low participation and suggest solutions to addressing them. The outcome of a conversation between the researcher and an alumnus of Ashesi University who happens to be a past ASC member confirmed my observations. She also stated that in as much as the themes of campus events are to be maintained as part of the traditions, the events should be creatively crafted, with variations in activities during the events to bring about new twists in executing the events. Also, since Ashesi is a diverse campus with students coming from twenty-four (24) countries (*Zimbabwe, Kenya, Lesotho, Swaziland, The Gambia, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Benin, South Africa, Canada, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Ghana*) across the globe, it is essential to hold events that embrace such diversity by organizing events that cut across countries to engage majority of the student populace.

1.4. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to find out how campus events impact students' social life, the causes of low turnout during events, and what must be done to increase students' participation.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives for this study are to find out:

1. How Ashesi Students Council events influence students' social life.

2. The factors that cause the low turnout to Ashesi Student Council events.
3. What must be done to improve students' participation in ASC events

1.4 Research Questions

1. What ways do Ashesi Students' Council events affect students' social life?
2. What are the causes of low turnout to Ashesi Student Council events?
3. What must be done to improve students' participation in ASC events?

1.5 Significance of the study

This research is an opportunity of learning for student leaders. The findings of this study will play a pivotal role in contributing to the literature about events management and how it affects students' social life in Ashesi University, since it is a base study conducted on Ashesi Student Council (ASC). Moreover, it will unearth the successes achieved and challenges often encountered doing events for improvement. This research will also provide a foundation for further research on student social and personal development in Ashesi University College Campus. Finally, this research aims to contribute towards the improvement of events management of the Ashesi Student council. Such improvements will enable Ashesi University College to have a sustainable vibrant campus with socially active students who are less stressed.

1.6 Motivation

Driven by a personal motivation of maintaining a balance between academic work and social life, I decided to undertake this research. This research gives me an opportunity for me to explore and learn how an active social life contributes towards the shaping of an individual's life. It plays

a pivotal role in contributing to the literature about events management and how it affects student life. Since it is the first research of its kind on Ashesi University College, it unearths the successes achieved and challenges often encountered during events for improvement. The Ashesi Student Council has a lot of events, but this study focuses on five key traditions from 2013 to 2018.

1.7. Scope of the study

This study focuses on events solely planned and managed by students within Ashesi Student Council. The focus enables me to closely examine students' attitudes towards ASC events. This is because every Ashesi Student gets a chance to experience them and it is also easy for the researcher to trace how successful the traditions (events) have been from 2013 to 2018 (*The traditions are Akwaaba Night, the Calabash event, ASC Week, Ashesi Premier League and Ubora Awards*).

1.8. Limitations

This research pays attention to the Ashesi Students Council activities. Limiting the focus to Ashesi Student Council (ASC) events and how they affect Ashesi students' social life. Considering Ashesi's unique culture, which is different from all universities in Ghana, generalization is limited to only Ashesi.

1.9. Organization of the study.

This study is reported in five (5) chapters. Chapter one discusses the background of the study, problem statement, general as well as specific objectives to be achieved at the end of the research, research questions that guide the research and the significance of the study.

The second chapter focuses on literature review. This review examines related literature on events planning, organizational learning and social impact of events management. Such review provides a solid background for my research. The literature review is organized in themes such as organizational learning and context (Ashesi Student Council events).

Chapter three describes the methodology to be used in the research. This research adopts a qualitative approach with structured interviews as the data collecting tool. A qualitative methodology is employed because it offers an in-depth evaluation of a question that may not be easily answered through quantitative methods.

The fourth chapter provides an analysis and discussions based on the data collected for the research. This is where I report on what I discovered from my research using the above-mentioned methodology. Followed by a discussion on how the objectives were met, how the research questions were answered as well as point out clear misconceptions or other perspectives that the research has unearthed.

Chapter five provides an overview and recommendations on the findings of the study followed by the bibliography and appendix.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses a review of literature on events management as well as its impact on social life. The chapter is presented under sub-headings including, events management, organizational learning, context and the influence of social life. The literature review provides an understanding of what events management is all about, and its effect on students' social life. It discusses the relationship between events management and student's social life.

Scholars such as Vault (2016) and Korir (2012) have done an extensive work in events management and social life. They used different approaches to reveal the concept of events management, how events bring people together and the reasons why it is crucial to have an active social life especially during tertiary education. Events are known for creating a public space where people can interact and get used to each other. Event attendees have varying attendance motivations. External socialization is one of the motivations for event attendance (Crompton, & McKay, 1997; Shanka, & Alamiyo, 2012). According to Crompton, and McKay, (1997) and Shanka, and Alamiyo (2012), events management in its entirety plays a pivotal role in people's systems of life including business, social and religious. Existing literature neglects evaluation of events by clients which is the same with ASC events. This research strives to bridge this gap by seeking attendee's point of view because it will aid in making ASC events better. In addition to the missing evaluation, the measure of successes is generalized to a different population other than that of Ashesi students.

2.1. Events management

Event management is employing business management and organizational expertise to imagine, plan and implement social and business events (Hard, 2017). It involves creating and developing large scale events which may include conferences, conventions, concerts, trade shows, festivals, and ceremonies (Woodward, 2017). According to Hard, (2017), people who specialize in event management work with budgets, schedules, and vendors to create the best possible events for their clients. Woodward (2017), compliments Hard's assertion by explaining that events management involves identifying the target audience, formulating the event concept, planning the overall logistics of the event and conducting project management of the event. Events are classified according to size and type. Mega events are very large ones which target international markets where as the other types are yet to be documented. The documentation of these mega events is traced to the 20th century.

Event management, as a profession started in the early 20th century. This was when wealthy families started hiring other people to coordinate all their fancy events such as weddings and receptions (Vault, 2016). It began from the earliest royal pageants, pagan festivals and village gatherings with hands-on coordination and personal relationships as the core skill sets for those very early "managers" over thousands of years ago. ASC events are off shoots of events in the 20th century in the sense that the ASC event managers also have personal relationships that enable them to get people on board when they need them thus highlighting a relationship between what exists in literature and the ASC situation. In the case of Ubora Awards and APL, Ashesi students always commute to the venue thus showing that events management of today still borrows from the ancient events management. To buttress the commuting similarity, in the

20th century advances in transport and communication made it possible for people to travel longer distances to attend industry meetings and social events (Vault, 2016).

As people commuted to attend social events thereby attracting a lot of people to get involved paved way for events management to evolve into a full profession. Events management captures the advancement in the industry and gives highlights of the status of the industry thus making it relevant to this research. How an event unfolds largely depends on how the audience prefers it as it is stated by Korir, (2012) when he says that it is mostly unstructured and informal. For example, each year the Ashesi Student Council introduces a few new events to the student body to test if the idea is accepted or not. Some new events include having Ubor Awards as an outdoor event and introducing white Wednesday to the ASC Week. The introductions bring us to a realization that events are temporary hence highlighting what was rated as an excellent event in 2010 cannot be on the same rating in 2018. Getz (2005) adds his voice by postulating that all events are temporary. Their contributions suggest that there is no one formula of satisfying the audience or clients as people have different tastes and preferences at different times.

Because people's tastes of everything evolves it is expedient to realize that events management has a significant contribution to various aspects of life. Some of the contributions are highlighted by Getz (2007) and Dwyer et al., (2007) as they refer to events as important motivators of tourism forming part of the marketing plans of most destinations. As such, Ashesi Ubor Awards give talented students an opportunity to showcase their talents such as poetry, singing and dancing. One may take the opportunity as a marketing plan to encourage more students to attend events. However, in most cases events remain largely unstructured and informal (Korir, 2012).

Some scholars deduce that events are key elements in marketing and promoting products. Host communities, social groups and individuals take events as a source of entertainment. Even at Ashesi University College, some students show anticipation towards the events because they are their source of entertainment.

2.3 Impact of events management

The impact of events management has been grouped into six categories, which include, economic, tourism/commercial, physical, sociocultural, psychological and political (Hall, 1992). Another scholar, Derret (2003) argues that events are social activities that can have transformative effects on people. One may view the Ashesi Student Council events as social activities because they bring people together. Sometimes ASC events change people's perspective as witnessed by the researcher whose perspective of diversity got better after attending several ASC events. Literature on events has highlighted an increase in the realization of their positive outcomes (Korir, 2012). Events are noted for offering a sense of togetherness because they include all people from different backgrounds (Derrett, 2003). Interestingly, Ashesi is a diverse community whose attempt to unify its citizens is aided by the ASC events.

Development of reliable measures of social impacts can help to observe events for their social purpose. In pointing out the above-mentioned impact of event management one can conclude that organizers ought to give maximum input in events management. According to Getz (2005) events are temporary, and every event is a unique activity stemming from the blend of management, program, setting and people. More so, events encourage entrepreneurship and self-employment (Korir, 2014). This is because they are non-routine occasions that serve a purpose.

Special events are a phenomenon arising from those non-routine occasions which have personal, leisure, cultural, or organizational objectives set apart from the normal activity of daily life. The purpose of events is to entertain, enlighten, celebrate, or challenge the experience of a group of people (Shone, 2004), just like the Ashesi Student Council (ASC) week which serves to enlighten, celebrate and entertain the Ashesi students. Getz (2005), Korir (2014) and Shone (2004) bring in another perspective on the aims of any event. They suggest that an event must be unique and worthwhile therefore, cementing the fact that there is no specific structure as far as events management is concerned. However, one is forced to wonder if there is anything wrong when events management begin to have a specific permanent structure.

Literature implies that events management has no specific structure as mentioned earlier. Lill (2015), in her research evaluated the extent to which the impacts perceived by the residents in Estonia is consistent with the different event organizers' intended impacts. On the positive side people get to volunteer and learn about event organization. ASC events have been observed to offer volunteering opportunities to students to make the event happen. On the negative side, events create a lot of disturbing noise. There cannot be consistency on every impact. As a result, it is recommended that organizers and locals should evaluate in which cases changes need to be done (Lill, 2015).

Evaluating for an improvement may make events to remain attractive because events offer increased entertainment options (Allen, O'Toole, McDonnell, & Harris, 2005). However, Hall (1992) argues that events do not appeal to all social groupings, and therefore they can in fact alienate some members of the community. To probe further into alienation of the members of the

community, this research seeks to find out attendee's motivation to attend an event. Knowing the motivations and responding to it positively might help in keeping the events attractive.

Additionally, event attendance has been found to lead to more positive perceptions of the event (Derrett, 2003; Kenyon, 2002), therefore, people who attend and enjoy the event are less likely to report negative impacts of events. In addition, events have a sociocultural effect on people. They may influence the sociocultural attributes of daily routines, habits and social lives. More so the event subject may have a more direct effect on the attributes of beliefs and values.

Following that events may influence a social daily routine, there has been instances where an event host community bears more cost burdens in an event, when it is not properly organized and managed. Cost burdens happen when there are infrastructural break downs, solid waste disposal and other environmental pollutions caused by events to communities. These factors are a stumbling block towards achieving the desired result by the host community. Even though the events are part of the community's norm, the community gets to think twice before they happen (Etiosia, 2012). Fortunately, Ashesi has not experienced such damages, hence this research will allow to probe further and find out if there have been any negative impacts of the ASC events.

2.4 Student life on Ashesi University College Campus

According to Cain, (2017) in surveying how survival of human kind depends on their capacity for social life he suggests the importance of having a social life as an individual. To understand the student life on Ashesi University College campus, one may realize that departments collaborate with each other to offer guidance in career, personal development, health and well-being, service and leadership to students. However, they do not provide information on the

impact of these events on the students' social life hence creating the gap to be filled by this research. I concur with Cain (2017) and believe that social life is an important aspect in college life as it shapes an individual's thinking and life. Cain further explained that social life influences our mental health. Even though the methodology of collecting the information above is not clear, the information is still useful in the sense that it makes the gap in the literature clear for identification and filling.

Our survival as species hinges on our capacity for social living. Our social life is one of the important influences on our mental health (Cain, 2017). Social impact potentially influences quality of life for residents (Fredline, Jago & Deery, 2003). To keep Ashesi campus vibrant, there are departments that take turns to enrich the students' lives on campus. These include Career Services, Office of Student and Community Affairs, Student Government, Health and Wellbeing, Citizenship Projects and Diversity and International Programmes. These departments work hand in hand with the entire students' body to execute exciting events on campus such as the Ashesi Annual Laughter Day, Global Café, and Annual Career fair (Student Life, 2017). One may deduce that these departments offer guidance in career, personal development health and well-being, and service and leadership to students. Hence students are exposed to life skills that will help them to navigate adulthood, academia and professional life. In all these activities, one is introduced to how people connect with what happens in their environment yet left to wonder about the impact the happenings have on the people. This, links one to one of the objectives of this research which is to find out how Ashesi Student Council events promote good interpersonal relationships among students for life.

2.5 History of ASC

Through interviews and observations Ashesi University College provides a history of the Ashesi Student Council. It is noted that the council aims to create a vibrant filled campus (Amponsah, 2016). However, they do not touch on the impact of ASC events on students' social life. One is prompted to ask, "what next after creating the vibrant-filled campus?"

Ashesi Student Council plays a pivotal role in the student life. Student government is more influential to students as asserted by Grace, (1962). They accept the "governmental burdens" as opportunities to impact campus concerns (Grace, 1962), hence highlighting the importance of a student government in educational institutions. The Ashesi Student Council is a student government which started functioning in the 2004/2005 Academic year and had two key campus events. From their traditions, they aim at diversifying the experience of students on campus and creating a vibrant filled campus. The Ashesi Student Council President for 2016/2017 academic year asserts that the Ashesi Student Council acts as chief servants serving the wellbeing of the students and serve with all humility and maximum competency while creating a vibrant-filled campus (Amponsah, 2016).

2.6 Context: Ashesi Student Council events (campus social activities)

In the context of Ashesi Student Council events, this research strives to introduce the various events that bring students together outside academic work thus showing that they do have a social life. In as much as the context elaborates on the yearly events that happen on campus, it does not show evaluation of these events. The relationship between events management and

social life is also unclear in this case. Students are left ignorant of the successes and the challenges faced in carrying out events as well as their attitude towards the events. The context is made up of yearly reports on the traditions of the Ashesi Student Council and concludes that these events were introduced and managed by students. This unearths the need to evaluate events which forms part of what this research aims to address.

2.7 Influence of Ashesi Student Council on an active social life

Under the *Influence of ASC on an active life of students*, literature reviewed pay attention to the opportunities that come with having an active social life. They employed surveys and observation to deduce that an active social life enables individuals to stay connected and engaged with other people. For example the Akwaaba night fosters friendships, Uhora Awards celebrates outstanding people, APL cultivates talents and ASC week entertains and lighten the atmosphere. This literature in general points out the impact of an active social life on individuals. It also reveals the demand of employers for graduates with practical, and real-world skills (Korir, 2014). Therefore, the literature lays a foundation for this research to find out the relationship between events management and social life in Ashesi University College.

Creation of sufficient student services that are focused on the need to provide the required support for academic activity and stimulate personal, social, cultural and cognitive development, is needed (Ciobanu, 2013). People are encouraged to make the most out of their student life, move out of their comfort zones, try new things and meet new people. Baek (2016) suggests that university students' council is a good place to start with as they are valuable resource for student-led associations and initiatives. In addition, Edun (2013) echoes the relevance of social life by

saying that social life is another important way of making the most out of university life. He further explains that university life allows students to make connections because everyone knows everyone one way or another. In support of networking, John Donne's famous quote "No man is an island" highlights the significance of social life as it illustrates the importance of staying connected and engaged with other people (Anon, 2017). Social Life in University puts life in balance (Edun, 2013). Since campus events bring students together, one may conclude that these events enable connection. It highlights a link between events and social life thus laying a foundation for further probing into the relationship between events management and social life.

From observation, students have different motivations for participating in events. Some students participate in events mainly because they want to meet different people and learn practical skills. Campus involvement also affects satisfaction within an environment in the sense that some may enjoy being on campus whilst some do not depend on their campus involvement. Atchison and Books, (2008) in their research about how development of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge is now a priority for governments, emphasized the need to have practical skills in an innovative and enterprising society. They further explain that educational institutions are required by employers to produce graduates that have practical and real-world skills, and therefore, suggesting that campus involvement has impact in life. This impact has not been unearthed in literature, and thereby creating a gap that need to be explored. Thus the importance of this research.

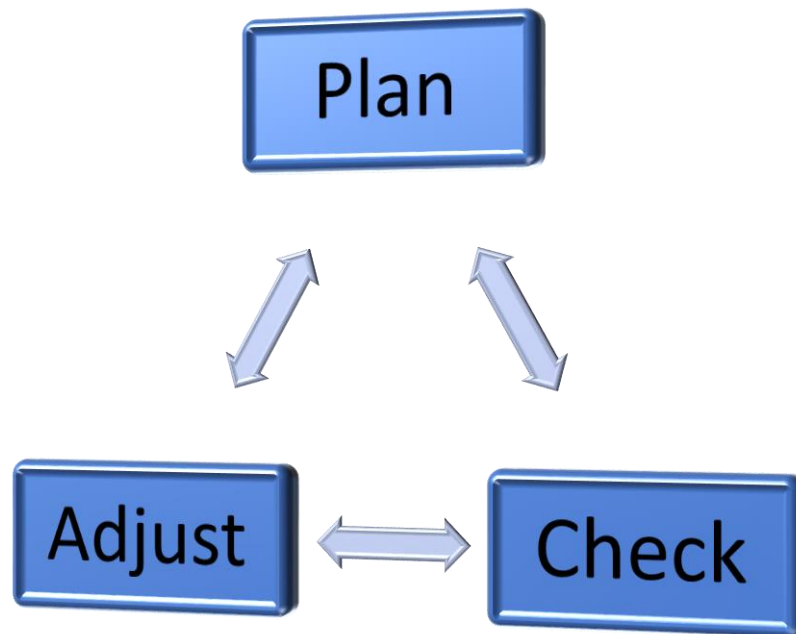
2.8 Proposed framework: Organizational Learning process

In unearthing the impact of students' involvement in campus activities during the time spent in the institution and beyond it is important to understand the organization's learning process.

Organizational Learning process explores how organizations can learn from experiences and applying experiences gained for skills acquisition (Williams, 2007, p. 8). This promotes events evaluation and aid in the examination of student's behavior towards the Ashesi Student Council events. It prompts the researcher to wonder the kind of knowledge and information she would generate after evaluating an events success?

Knowledge creation happens when knowledge is created from a unit's own direct experience. Retaining knowledge can vary with the extent of mindfulness. Williams (2007), outlines the processes of mindful transfer. These include "copy exactly" and replications without understanding, however knowledge transfer encourages to adapt the knowledge to new context (Williams, 2007, p. 8). A collective system for remembering, retrieving and distribution is encouraged within organizations (Wegner, 1996; Brandon & Hollingshead, 2004). The organizational learning process is important and beneficial to companies and organizations. It encourages organizations to stay on their toes to adapt and stay flexible in an ever-changing environment. Some may see it as a strategy for adaptation. It is important in the sense that it addresses the demands of organizational sustainability according to Smith (2012). Even though researchers have suggested the above-mentioned learning processes, I believe every organization can have completely unique learning process because organizations are different, made up of different individuals from diverse backgrounds and varying approaches to everything.

Fig. 1



Single loop learning. Source: (Friedman, 2005, p. 34)

According to Friedman (2005) suggests that the single loop is still being used without alterations.

The single loop aims to answer the question, are we doing the right things? It does not change the structure of a system but rather focusses on ways to make the activities better (Argyris, 1974). This framework is appropriate for this research because the research aims at contributing towards the improvement of Ashesi Student Council events management.

2.9 Analyzing Knowledge creation, Retention and transfer

Knowledge creation is when anything living generates any sort of knowledge that is completely new to it. Large, deep and diverse experience base plays a pivotal role in adding to creativity as it increases the number of potential paths one can search and the number of new potential new combinations of knowledge (Amabile, 1997; Rietzschel et al, 2007; Shane 2000). On the other hand, Audia and Goncalo (2007), and Benner and Tushman (2003) argue that prior experience can constrain creative thinking as it is bound to lead to drawing on familiar strategies and heuristics when solving a problem. Another interesting research examines how social networks affect knowledge creation. Perry-Smith and Shalley (2003) and Peery-Smith (2006) argue that strong network ties can constrain creativity when they are formed with similar others and they therefore limit the exposure to new information. These authors highlight that creativity can come from deep and diverse experience but also highlight the limitations of relying on experience. This therefore acts as a guideline in this research as it suggests that new knowledge creation should not depend on only experience in the events management. The literature reviewed earlier on suggests that there are always organizational principles or rules and regulations that limit creativity yet insures a holistic smooth running of an organization. Thus, this research tries to discover where ASC events fall in terms of promoting creativity and inevitable limitations.

In summary, this chapter explored related literature to reach conclusions with some suggestions. Events management remains unstructured and informal because it always changes with time and

people's preferences. There are a lot of reasons as to why people are or become socially active. It is important to realize that events bring people together and emphasize the fact that no man is an island. It inspires a different perspective which raises curiosity and interesting questions on some aspects. The literature review highlights some information gaps in the existing literature such as evaluation of events by clients as well as comparison between client expectation and what the event provides. It provides a link between events management and social life.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

In the previous chapter, it is concluded that events management remains informal and unstructured with varying reasons as to why people become socially active. Chapter 2 gave a highlight of the gap in literature, which this research seeks to fill. How the study was conducted is discussed in this part of the study. This chapter discusses the sample and sampling techniques, methods of data collection and a framework of how the analysis of the collected data were done including the tools used for the analysis. Above all, it gives the reader a better understanding of the research.

3.2 Research design

This study adopted a qualitative approach. Since this research is more geared towards ASC events, lived experiences, cultural phenomena, and social interactions, a qualitative study enabled detailed narration and provided a better understanding of the subject being investigated. Previous studies have employed mixed methods approach, but their findings are shallow on lived experiences hence a qualitative approach is advantageous to capture such information. The main interest is in analyzing a subjective meaning or social production of the issues mentioned above. Therefore a narration could be better appreciated as compared to other forms of presenting the information (*for example tables, graphs and pictures*). Key performance indicators such as attendee satisfaction, and observation were used to analyze the impact of ASC events on student's social life. A qualitative approach enabled a detailed description and a grand narrative of the Ashesi Student Council events management's successes and challenges as well the impact

it has had on students' social life. In a qualitative study, the researcher is made aware of the different opinions based on the different perspectives and multiple meanings of experiences. For example how ASC events mean having fun, opportunity to explore talents and socializing moment for different people. According to Cresswell (2003), the researcher may use strategies of inquiry such as ethnographies, case studies, narratives, phenomena or grounded theory studies usually through open-ended questions with the intention of developing themes from the data.

Exploratory and descriptive research strategies/designs are used to build theories that explain and predict natural and social phenomena (Cresswell, 2003). Exploratory research is employed for the sake of deeper understanding of the phenomenon. This research was in a way explorative because the researcher was seeking a deeper understanding of how events management can shape the lives of individuals. The research objectives and research questions served as a guide for gathering data. The research questions and research objectives enabled the researcher to know what exactly this study should focus on and inform the method of data collection most suitable for the research. Therefore, the general objective of this study is to find out how campus events impact students' social life, the causes of low turnout during events, and what must be done to increase students' participation.

The specific objectives for this study are to:

1. Explain how Ashesi Student Council events influence students' social life.
2. Identify the factors that cause the low turnout to Ashesi Student Council events.
3. Suggest ways to improve students' participation in ASC events

1.4.1 *Research Questions*

1. In what ways do Ashesi Students' Council events affect students' social life?
2. What are the causes of low turnout to Ashesi Student Council events?
3. What must be done to improve students' participation in ASC events?

Interview questions

To Ashesi University College students

1. Tell me your view about Ashesi Student Council's events? (*ASC week, Ubora awards, Calabash event, Akwaaba night, APL*).
2. How do the Ashesi Student Council events affect your student life?
3. What motivates you to attend Ashesi Student Council events?
4. What are your expectations about ASC events?
5. Assuming you are part of the events management committee, what would you do differently?
6. In your perspective, how successful have the events been since you came to Ashesi?
7. How do you envision the future of the Ashesi Student Council events?
8. Tell me more about ASC events.

To an Ashesi University College Alumni

1. Tell me about the essence of ASC events?
2. How have ASC events impacted your social life after graduation?
3. In your perspective, how successful have the events been during your stay in Ashesi?
4. With your experiences in the corporate world, what do you think should be done differently to make ASC events more interesting to increase students' participation?

3.3 Research approach

As mentioned earlier on, this study adopts a qualitative approach. It describes the Ashesi Student Council events management's successes and challenges as well as explore the impact it has on students' social life. According to Cresswell (2003), the researcher may use strategies of inquiry such as ethnographies, case studies, narratives, phenomena or grounded theory studies usually through open-ended questions with the intention of developing themes from the data. However in this study, structured interviews were employed for data collection to avoid participants straying from the focus of the research and ensuring they respond to all probes (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). This enabled me to nicely capture the interviewee's experience, observations and opinions without straying from the focus of the research.

3.4 Research Scope

This study was based in Ashesi University College students. Ashesi University College has one of the most diverse campuses in Africa, with students coming from twenty-four countries. *(These countries are: Zambia, Swaziland, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Lesotho, Swaziland, Cameroon, Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ghana, South Africa, Benin, Malawi, Mozambique, South Sudan, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Canada, and Tanzania)* It focused on the diverse students across year groups, both executives and non-executives of the Ashesi Student Council as well as the alumna. Since these people are directly involved and affected by the Ashesi Student Council events, a study on events management presented the real impact of the events management on their social lives. Some of the data were retrieved from Ashesi University College website, thus making it secondary data. The secondary data confirmed the information on the background information of Ashesi University College.

Whereas, primary data were collected from three Ashesi alumni and ten current students. The alumna will be useful in providing the information on how ASC events used to be and that would help to figure out the similarities of the ASC then and now. The current students of Ashesi University College provided information on how the events are happening now and what they would love to see happening.

3.5.1 Sampling strategy

The population under consideration was eight hundred and seventy students (870) of Ashesi University College. Out of the 870 students thirteen of them were interviewed and these were ten Ashesi University College students and three (3) available alumna. The current students were in a better position to share what is happening and how their experience with the ASC is like. The former students were able to share their past student experiences as well as from their corporate perspectives.

3.5.2 Sampling Techniques

Purposive non-probability sampling technique was used to identify individuals in the sample. A non-probability sampling involves nonrandom selection of the sample and relies on the subjective judgment of the researcher. It is a sampling technique where the chances of any member being selected for a sample cannot be calculated. According to Andale (2015), the researcher gets to choose the sample based on their knowledge of the population and the study itself. The interviewees were selected based on their availability and willingness to share their experiences. Choosing the sample allowed the researcher to get in-depth knowledge about the ASC events. In most cases, this technique divides the sample into specific groups according to

certain characteristics as per the knowledge of the researcher. A more homogeneous purposive sampling would classify the respondents based on their point of view. For instance, what used to happen during these Ashesi Student Council events, what is currently happening and what could happen in future.

3.5.3 Sample size

As mentioned earlier, majority of the population considered is in Ashesi University College where ten of them were current students and three of them were alumna thus making a total of 13 respondents. Having fewer but relevant respondents helped the researcher to have an in-depth interaction with the respondents. An in-depth interaction made it possible to have detailed information and it provided a better appreciation of the topic of effects of event management on Ashesi student social life. The appreciation is more evident in chapter 4 where the results of the research were discussed.

3.6 Data Collection

The study relies heavily on the primary data which was collected through structured interviews and the researcher's observation. Primary data is reliable in the sense that the researcher gets to collect the data herself directly from the source. Structured interviews do not suggest answers or agree or disagree with responses given. Thus, the results were not influenced by the researcher's opinions but rather based on the research. This enabled the researcher not to influence the interviewee with his/her opinions on the topic (Stuckey, 2013), thus the data collected is bound to be reliable. The researcher was already an Ashesi student which makes movement to the

respondents to be easy to conduct the necessary interviews. The timing of the study is very essential as the period within which data was collected is significant to the outcome of the research. The data was collected just after the new Ashesi Student Council executives assumed their positions and everyone was focused on the new leadership's vision.

3.6.1 Data Collection Instrument

Structured interview questions were used to collect data from the chosen sample. The structured interviews complement the researcher's observation. The observations were either declined or confirmed. Structured interviews enabled me to do a comparison of the respondents' uninfluenced responses with each other to draw conclusions. The research depended heavily on the primary data collected through structured interviews as mentioned.

3.6.2 Data Collection Procedure

Following the data collection instrument, the researcher had a face to face appointments with the participants where she sat with them on the campus hangout spaces to conduct the interview. The responses from the participants were written down manually in a note pad. Participants were given a feedback on what was captured during the interview for them to authenticate before analysis. Interviewing the alumni was quite challenging as they are out of campus and are engaged in other activities. Therefore, the researcher resorted to interviewing the Ashesi Alumna currently doing their national service at Ashesi University College as Faculty Interns. Their responses were insightful and enriched the overall data.

3.6.3 Data Preparation, Collation and Processing

Since this study is an exploratory research. Deducing from the fact that the results of structured interviews enabled me to do a comparison of the respondents' responses to draw conclusions. I identified common themes, issues and experiences that cut across the interviewee's responses. Some of the themes include motivation, expectations, psychological health and enjoyment. I was able to identify common themes through data transcription where I was writing all respondents' responses according to the question numbers and identifying the similarities and differences of responses. These are discussed in chapter 4.

3.7 Data Analysis

For analyzing the content of the study, I used the content analysis technique. Content analysis puts more focus on the actual content. It determines the presence of the certain concepts, words, themes, characters, phrases or sentences and attempts to quantify these components in an objective manner. The researcher was able to identify these concepts, words and themes through transcription of data. The advantage it has is that it looks directly at actual text within communications to get to the core aspect of social interaction. On the minus side, it was time consuming and reductive if text under consideration is complex (UT School of Information, 2013) in the sense that there is no one correct answer but everyone has their own opinion to share.

3.8 Validity and reliability

Validity is understood by the researcher to be the correctness and accuracy of the findings.

Whereas reliability could mean that if the same study was to be carried out by another person would the findings be the same. Checking for validity and reliability was a very tricky task. This is because qualitative research is largely based on subjective, contextual and interpretive data (Stuckey, 2013).

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are very vital in every research. From my perspective, ethics are societal norms that differentiate between good and bad. They help the researcher to set boundaries between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Because ethics is very important in this research population, I signed a consent form with each of my respondents that outlines that there are no risks involved in this research and names will not be disclosed for any purpose. This laid a foundation for trust, which made the respondent comfortable to share deep and helpful insights. In addition to that, Ashesi University College has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) that reviewed the methodology before the study was conducted. An Institutional Review Board is a panel of people who ensure the safety of human subjects and they also ensure that human rights are not violated. More so, they protect the institution and the researchers against any potential legal implications from any behavior that may be unethical.

3.10 Limitations

As mentioned earlier, the methodology in the research was time consuming and reductive if the text under consideration is complex according to the UT School of Information (2013). It is

noted that limitations associated with qualitative study are much related to validity and reliability. For example, some people will just tell the researcher anything not necessarily the truth. Also, it is very challenging to replicate this study because it occurs in the natural setting (Wiersma, 2002). On the plus side, it pays attention to the actual text within communications and enables one to get at the central aspect of social interaction.

This chapter provides how the research was conducted as well as the justification of why the researcher chose this methodology. It gives the reader the main focus of the research which is the population under consideration and the interviews who contributed to the findings of the research. This is also where the importance of the respondents' contribution was outlined.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Following chapter 3 which discussed the methodology employed in this research, this chapter presents the results from the structured interviews and the researcher's observations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these interviews were conducted with the current Ashesi University College Students and the university's alumna. To complement the interview responses was the researcher's observations. The responses were interesting and insightful in the sense that the ASC events management only has positive effects on the Ashesi student's social life. To better appreciate the findings, I would like to reiterate the problem statement, which states that despite all the efforts in creating a vibrant filled campus, there is still low turnout of about 30% of the student population and less participation in most of the ASC events.

4.1 Presentation of analysis

The results are outlined according to the subtopics that unearthed the lived experiences of the students of Ashesi University College and past students as well as their opinions about the Ashesi Student Council events. The results show that both the event organizers and the event attendees have parts to play to ensure success of an event.

4.2 Views on ASC events

Results show that the respondent's views are largely based on their previous experiences or their expectations of the ASC executive. The overriding view was that Ashesi Student Council events is a way of reinvigorating life on campus. It's interesting how they see the events as a psychological health booster, a platform to nurture talents and skills of students and to improve

student's social life. This confirms what is reviewed in literature which commented on how one positive social life can boost psychological health (Cain, 2017). About eight respondents indicated that the Ashesi Student Council events are good programs with well stated intentions. One of the good sides of the programs is that there has not been any bad report about ASC events. Observations show that before all the events, emails are sent to the student body stating the theme, venue and motivation statement to encourage them to attend. The experience during these events is a mixture of some boring (*such as unity concerts without physical performances*) and some interesting activities (*including eating competition and group games*) that are generally interactive. However, all respondents confirmed that attendance and participation is discouraging because, although attendance is open to all, few students show up, which affirms the significance of this research.

After probing further to find out why the low turnout, results show that students attend events in groups (friends call each other and attend the event as a group). It was indicated that turnout is not individualistic but collective where students attend in the company of others. This is because students have different preferences and they make their choices based on what they want. This could be one of the reasons why turnout to events is low. Events managers are expected to know their target audience as far as events management is concerned (Hard, 2017). The low turnout is partly because of not focusing on the target audience to address their need in the planning of the events to draw more students to the events. Interview results also show that it is mostly the first year and final year students who patronize most of the events. The first years think they are in a new environment as a result, are inquisitive about what it has for them. On the other hand, the final year students attend because they want to have memories of campus life to carry along with them after graduation.

Five respondents mentioned that the Akwaaba night is a realization of a new stage and gives a sense of belonging making most first-year students to patronize it. This shows that organizational skills in events management applied by the planners provide a sense of belonging as it blends in the freshmen with the rest of the students' body. As the name suggests, Akwaaba night, which means welcoming night draw first-year students to the event, which is aimed at making them have the feeling of belonging to the larger Ashesi community. The international students attest that the Akwaaba night experience made them have a sense of belonging in the new environment.



Fig 2. Picture showing Ashesi students across all year groups socializing during 2017 Akwaaba night.

Some students enjoy the fun and free food whilst some have a chance to dance and make new friends because the Akwaaba night provide an easy socializing moment.

On the other hand, most international students think Ubora is not so impactful and nothing motivates them to attend because to them, it is like a fashion show of which they are not interested in because they brought limited clothes to school. Ubora Awards event sometimes has a discriminating effect especially on international students even though they still attend. The discriminating effect is a result of purely Ghanaian food served, Ghanaian Jokes and music played of which international students are not familiar with hence forced to just watch in isolation.

According to respondents, the Ashesi Premier League is fun and an opportunity to distress whilst watching colleagues exhibit their skills. Some students cheer their colleagues up, while others take the opportunity to cultivate their skills especially when it comes to sports. From observation, APL gives students a refreshing activity from the school routine (*from hostel to class, to cafeteria, to the library and hostel again*) they are used to.

Ashesi Student Council events provide an opportunity to meet with new people and know how to approach them. Interview results show that events such as ASC week create fun and interesting memories, however, they said it could be made more inclusive with a lot of food. All respondents strongly believe that the events create an inclusive environment which fosters unity, but the implementation still has loopholes because organizers need to plan activities such that participation is improved since few students attend. Fortunately, authorities of Ashesi are concerned about the low turnout to events as a result the outcome of this study may be used to improve ASC events.

Interviewees showed interest in making the events better than they are currently. ASC events are meant to drive social consciousness and the zeal to experience social excellence. Interviewees are advocating for better ways of carrying out events. The first approach that came up strongly in all interviews is to collect information from students' preferences and factor it into the planning of events for improved participation. Interestingly, the current ASC president has the same view and wishes that ASC events must have a different structure every year. He says the current traditions are too rigid and unattractive because it does not adequately incorporate change and diversity. The old pattern needs modification based on students' preferences.

4.3 Effects of the ASC events on student life.

ASC events happen to be one of the major ways of having fun on campus. They give something to look forward to outside academic work and are catalysts for keeping the campus lively thus highlighting the integration of organizational skills in events management. ASC events are also meant to keep students interested in their environment. There is always music which lightens the atmosphere, the sound of giggles from attendees and free food that keep attendees captivated. The events create memories and provides friendship. Two of the interviewees are neutral towards the events and feel like they do not have any effect in their student life. The interview results show that it is mostly loners who are neutral about the ASC events. ASC events provides students with one of the few ways of meeting new people. It is an opportunity of bonding with new friends as well as making new friends. They bring students together to make them comfortable in their environment However, the respondents strongly believe that the events would be patronized more if they are more inclusive.



Fig 3. Picture showing Ashesi students playing games in between classes during 2018 ASC week crazy day.

Results show that the year group with the highest number of ASC executives tend to be frequent attendees of the ASC events. Surprisingly during the second semester of the 2017/2018 academic year, the class of 2021 is more active yet it's the class of 2019 in the executive positions.

Sometimes it is not about what students think of the event or any effect it might have on them but, just showing up because one's fellow colleague organized it and one is sure to meet his/her year group is what propels one to attend.

4.3 Motivation to attend ASC events

Interview results revealed that students derive their motivation to attend events from several things. Some obvious and some abstract. The overriding motivation was, attending because

friends are also attending. Three respondents attend the event if it is interesting to them, which is different for every individual. Whereas two people attend because everyone is invited, 7 people said because their friends are attending as a group to have fun and others attend because of how the event was advertised to students. Events management requires identifying the target audience and tailoring the event to suit their needs (Hard, 2017). Consequently, ASC event planners need to be able to holistically capture their target audience.

Free food was realized to be a great motivator especially for male respondents. (*Free food include kebab, spring rolls, fan milk products and drinks*). This brings to the fore the need for ASC to work with budgets to be able to purchase the food and still be able to hold other events since food attracts some students to the events. Some are motivated by the light atmosphere of the event which then facilitates distressing and having fun. Self-willingness in attending the events is also a factor that came up strongly during interviews. For the students who do not belong to groups on campus, they attend events when they feel like. Remarkably, some of the Ashesi Student Council executives are very strategic and tactful when it comes to motivating some students' groups of students to patronize events. For instance, some male executives admitted that they attended events organized by their serving colleagues so that the same patronage and support will be returned to them when it is their turn to organize an event. This approach was confirmed during the 2018 ASC week, where ASC executives were present in all events and it was easy to identify them because they wore their ASC t-shirts. This strategic move confirms the zeal to maintain mutual relationships whilst on campus. This confirms the application of organizational skills aspect of events management. Also, some students take

pleasure in being part of the organizing team or performing during the events and that becomes their motivation to attend the events.

According to the results of observation and interviews, loners like to attend but stand at the back to observe and have the observer's experience. They take pictures and videos for memories' sake. It was realized that the students who run businesses on campus and those actively involved in other extracurricular activities like sports and work studies are motivated by the content of the program. Normally these are the busiest people on campus and they have tight schedules. Such students expect prior notice so that they prepare according to their personal time tables.

Accordingly, the timing of events should favor majority of the target group to get more students patronizing events. The indifferent students sometimes get their motivation from the previous experiences. For example, if the previous Akwaaba Night had boring music they may not attend again thinking they will be bored like the previous time. To prevent this, research could be done to find out which type of music students enjoy most and play such music to pull the crowd.

Generally, students need a break from work to enable them to refresh their minds as indicated in the literature review of this study. Hence most students are moved by the desire to interact with fellow students and have a break from academics, therefore, they attend the events organized by the ASC. Interview results show that time conscious students were motivated by their personal free times. If the time of the event is at a convenient time for them and does not clash with their personal schedule, then they attend.

When it comes to Ubora Awards, most students are largely motivated by the venue. If it is held at a place they have not been to, or if the setting of the place is very appealing to them then they attend the event with joy. ASC executives must do their due diligence, to get the right and appealing venues for events to increase patronage. Motivation on its own from both the attendee and the organizers' sides plays a vital role to make events successful. Overall, interviewees believe there is more to life than just academics. Students look forward to nicer venues for the Ubora awards. Affording a chosen venue comes with having a budget as far as events management is concerned, and so far, the ASC have been able to change venues for Ubora Awards yet still the attendance is still discouraging. It could be better to do a venue survey with the students before selecting the venue because it might help to give the attendees what they expect and possibly boost the attendance.

4.4 Expectations towards ASC events

Different people have different expectations towards ASC events. Expectations can either boost or lower the patronage of events and has a way of making people socially active. All the respondents differed in their expectations. Personality types and individual differences play a role in patronizing events. One interviewee pointed to the fact that he is independent when it comes to having fun. He does not count on anyone to make the moment worthwhile for him but rather makes the fun in every event he attends; therefore, he does not really have an expectation but rather goes with an open mind and make the best out his time spent at the event. Nine of the students interviewed expect more fun as they believe that there are more plans in store and will be unveiled during events. The ASC executive members and those involved in the planning and organizing events largely expect to promote student engagement. Those who derive motivation

from the free food, usually anticipate more variety of food to be served during these events. Due to demanding academic work load, some students expect to spend some time with friends during the events as it is one of the few times they do so. However, attending events in the name of socializing usually cause people not to pay attention to the event's content and purpose but rather their personal interests such as catching up with colleagues through conversations. Therefore, I suggest provision must be made to factor into events time with friends to improve patronage.

With the case of international students, results show that sometimes they are so homesick and they long to hear their country music so that they also feel at home away from home hence they anticipate their country music during events. International students were indicated that the events are largely packed with Ghanaian content and activities, but they expect them to be inclusive since Ashesi University College is a diverse community. ASC event organizers need to find out the type of music international students want and factor in time for playing such music during events to satisfy their need.

4.5 What could have been done better?

In as much as the students appreciate what they have, they however wish to make it better for the future. Firstly, most interviewees suggested that publication of the events should be worked on. Thus, the public relations team should not only depend on emails and flyers only because they have not been very effective in the past. They may explore other event publicity means such as making use of the one on one conversations with the rest of the student body to communicate their messages. Those involved in extracurricular activities wish that the timing of events could blend in with other schedules and that might attract a lot of people to attend and participate

during these events. Ashesi Student Council should not just organize events and invite people, but rather identify the need and want of the students to satisfy it. Moreover, the communicating channels should be used wisely to entice and attract a large audience to participate and attend the events.

Currently, the ASC is involving the International Community, thus satisfying the wish of many international students. In the 2018 ASC events such as ASC week and APL, a lot of international students were participating hence the international community inclusion reflects positive attendance results. Female students suggested that they would love to cheer up their fellow colleagues playing soccer if only the soccer pitch was closer. The current leadership of ASC wish that the ASC positions will be taken seriously in the sense that if possible model the ASC in the line of what happens in real life. The Ashesi Student council believe that all the events should be planned in unity and diversity but most importantly have a specific structure.

4.6 Success of the Ashesi Student Council Events

Evaluating the successes of the ASC events was a challenge because there were no universal key performance indicators for all events. However, respondents express that the efforts are good, but the implementation is poor. The 2018 ASC week had new interesting activities such as “White Wednesday”, and “Jumping Castle” for crazy day, which made more staff members participate in the ASC week. It was a vibrant week with light atmosphere. The Ashesi Premier League has been able to acquire sponsorship and was reported on Joy FM radio station thus showing how successful they have been because they have external recognition. This alone is a motivation to the players. As usual, participation was not encouraging, and most students believe that success of an event largely depends on the student participation and attendance. The 2018 ASC week was very interactive.

It was surprising that some students have mixed feelings about the success of ASC events. For example, if what they are interested in was a success then the events are a success, if not then they are just indifferent. One may argue that the success of events depends on preparation, patronage and mood of the attendees. A socially active respondent pointed out that sometimes spirits are dampened in the sense that the experience does not meet students' expectations because the events are over hyped. One of the interviewees suggested that the events organizing committee should seek views from different classes rather than just planning for planning's sake or in the name of organizing an event. The overriding issue concerning the success of events is that events must be well planned to meet the needs of most students.

4.7 The future of Ashesi Student Council events

Hearing the different visions of different people for the Ashesi Student Council Events was mind blowing. The former ASC president stated that the role of ASC should not only be limited to events creation but rather push for media such as a television show. The current leadership is advocating for long-term visions and policies so that whoever comes into office may do what they choose to do but ensure it is aligned with the long-term goals of the ASC and aimed at achieving them. He suggested collaborating with other schools and possibly countries in the long term to make events worthwhile. Most interviewees consider the same traditions to be maintained but the need to introduce new activities often to increase patronage.

It came to light that ASC event organizers do not have professional training as far as events management is concerned. They are just ambitious and are driven by their zeal to explore their creativity. There are a lot of creative team player students who do not have a chance to serve

under ASC even though they have great ideas on how to carry out certain events. That brought about the suggestion that ASC executives should give students with the know how the opportunity to be involved in planning of events. It would be more interesting if there are ways of organizing inclusive events with the international community. Above all, most interviewees are desirous of solutions to the problem of participation.

This chapter discussed the Ashesi community's desire of addressing a common goal which is finding sustainable ways of making students' life on campus better than it is currently.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this research was to investigate the effects of events management on students' social life at Ashesi University College. This chapter is a conclusion to the entire study. The chapter addresses the information gaps filled, the objectives fulfilled, limitations encountered, recommendations as well as proposed further research. Attention has been paid to answering the research questions for the study. To have a better understanding of the conclusions, it is best to recall the research objective and research questions because these inform the conclusions. The research objectives and questions to this study are:

Specific objectives

The specific objectives for this study are to find out:

1. Explain how Ashesi Student Council events influence students' social life.
2. Identify the factors that cause the low turnout to Ashesi Student Council events.
3. Suggest ways to improve students' participation in ASC events

Research Questions

1. In what ways do Ashesi Students' Council events affect students' social life?
2. What are the causes of low turnout to Ashesi Student Council events?
3. What must be done to improve students' participation in ASC events?

5.1 Addressing the Research Questions.

1. In what ways do Ashesi Students' Council events affect students' social life?

In response to this question, it was realized that there are two main groups of students, which consist of the indifferent students and the adventurous ones. The indifferent students do not really care about what is going on around them they just mind their own business where as the adventurous ones always want to find out what is new or what is happening around us on campus. It is interesting how they see the events as the psychological health boosters as well as a platform to nurture their talents and skills. Thus, confirming discoveries on the literature review on how a social life can boost psychological health. Most respondents assert that Ashesi Student Council events are good programs with well stated intentions. For example, the Akwaaba Night gives a sense of belonging especially to the international students who may be experiencing culture shock. The experience during these events is a mixture of some boring and some interesting activities that are generally interactive. Even though the respondents were advocating for a new twist in the way in which the ASC events are carried out, one may note that these events bring more good than harm to the student's social life because all the effects of ASC events are positive.

1. What are the causes of low turnout to Ashesi Student Council events?

As discussed in the previous chapter, motivation for different people varies though some are more effective such as food and attending because friends are attending. However, the attendance sometimes depends on how the event was advertised to students. The advertisement then gives birth to the juxtaposition of the expectation and the experience where most of the times the attendees' spirits are dampened in the sense that the experience does not meet their

expectations. On the other hand, it was noticed that some of the Ashesi Student Council executives are very strategic when it comes to deriving their motivation. This has to do with especially the male executives who admit that they attend events organized by their serving colleagues so that the same favor and support will be returned to them when it is their turn to hold an event. It was noted that most attendees are those whose class mates are in the ASC executive committee. Some students take pleasure in being part of the organizing team or performing during the events and that becomes their motivation to attend the events. One may deduce that both the attendees and the event organizers play a part in the motivation process because it is not a one-sided act. Organizers should have a pulling effect and the attendees a pushing effect for attendance to be boosted.

2. What must be done to improve students' participation in ASC events?

The current leadership of the ASC suggest the need to go back to the drawing board to put strategies in place during planning of events to improve attendance. The planning process could include being all-encompassing, catering for as many needs of diverse groups of students on campus as possible. In as much as they plan, the organizing committee should consult other students so that they hear their views and incorporate them into the planning of events to enable ASC satisfy students' needs as much as possible. There is a strong belief that satisfying most students' need may ignite a better appreciation of the ASC events and boost attendance and participation. However, the efforts should come from both the attendees and the event organizers even though the organizers play a pivotal role.

Recommendations

It is important for ASC to continuously seek feedback and opinions of the entire student body.

As time changes, people's appetites for things change too. Continuous feedback from the entire student's body would help ASC events to be appreciated better. The single loop learning model could be used to attain constructive ideas in the design and implementation of events for the next event.

The single loop learning process as depicted in *Figure 1* does not change the structure of an organization but rather seeks to make the existing structure better. Accordingly, ASC could use this loop for example to analyze the 2017 Uboru Awards to find out what worked well and what did not work well and find ways to improve on the next Uboru Awards event.

It is expedient to strive for inclusiveness in all the events if maximum participation is expected. Although it is difficult to center entertainment around everyone, factoring in the as many needs as possible of the diverse population on campus may make ASC events more attractive to a majority of students on campus.

It is also important to have a long-term goal that serves as a road map to every leadership team that comes into office. This road map may change with the changing trends and needs of students.

This research introduces new information in the literature about events management because most of the documented events management activities were done by professionals. It provides an evaluation of ASC events and suggested ways they could be improved to increase patronage. However, the limitation with the evaluation is that there are no universal key performance indicators to measure the success of ASC events because each event is unique. It is however noted that the efforts are good and appreciated yet the implementation needs improvement. Despite the shortfalls in implementation, the effects of events on Ashesi students' social life remains positive.

This study uncovered Ashesi students' motivation to attend events as well their expectations and their hope to see ASC improve. The low turnout to events and possible reasons for the low turnout are shared in the findings of the research. The research would help the ASC event planners to factor the concerns raised in their planning to meet expectations of the attendees. Further research could dwell on the successes of the ASC events.

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