

**Qualitative research: Surveillance Measures in the Ghanaian  
Workplace Context: How Culture Differences Influence Acceptance  
and Effectiveness.**

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines employees' perspectives on the utilisation of electronic workplace surveillance as a performance management tool, with a specific focus on the multicultural environment of Kotoka International Airport (KIA) in Ghana. With the rapid rise of surveillance technology in the modern workplace, electronic surveillance has become increasingly common. However, its impacts on employee performance, identity, and workplace dynamics remain contested (Determann & Sprague, 2011). This research investigates how electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM) shapes employee behaviour, stress levels, productivity, and the overall cultural and relational dynamics in a highly diverse organisational setting.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do employees in Ghana perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace?
2. How do employees perceive the influence of electronic surveillance on their performance management?
3. How do local cultural differences in Ghana influence employee performance management strategies and outcomes in a globalised organisation?

To address these questions, the study employs a qualitative case study approach, using semi-structured interviews with frontline and supervisory security staff at KIA. Participants were selected purposively to capture a range of ethnic, linguistic, and positional perspectives. The data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), allowing for the identification of key themes and sub-themes grounded in the participants lived experiences. This interpretive method ensured that

the subjective realities of employees were central to understanding how ESPM functions in a non-Western workplace.

Theoretically, the thesis adopts a hybrid framework that integrates post-Foucauldian theories of surveillance—particularly governmentality—with symbolic interactionism, most notably Cooley’s (1902) concept of the Looking-Glass Self. This combined framework enables the study to move beyond deterministic accounts of surveillance as mere control mechanisms by exploring how employees interpret and negotiate surveillance based on cultural identity, perceived fairness, and social feedback. The research introduces the notion of a “hall of mirrors”, where performance feedback loops are shaped by overlapping gazes: technological systems, managerial judgments, tribal affiliations, and institutional standards rooted in Western managerialism.

Key findings reveal that employees often experience surveillance as intrusive and culturally insensitive, especially when it conflicts with communal norms and linguistic or ethnic identity. Employees reported that surveillance contributed to feelings of stress, alienation, and disengagement, particularly when they perceived favouritism or tribal bias in how data were interpreted by supervisors. In contrast, employees working in areas with more autonomy or lower levels of electronic monitoring reported higher morale, greater trust, and better collaboration.

This study makes an original contribution by situating surveillance in a non-Western, postcolonial context, addressing a critical gap in the literature. It challenges the assumption that surveillance universally enhances performance, instead demonstrating that its effectiveness is deeply dependent on perceptions of fairness, cultural sensitivity, and social equity. The research also underscores the need to

decolonise surveillance studies, advocating for a shift away from Western-centric models to frameworks that acknowledge the socio-cultural and political nuances of the Global South.

Real-world implications include the need for organisations—especially those operating in multicultural or transnational contexts—to adopt more culturally inclusive surveillance and performance management systems. Recommendations include integrating local values into performance reviews, training managers to recognise and mitigate bias, and designing ESPM practices that align with both global standards and local cultural realities. By doing so, organisations can foster more equitable, ethical, and productive workplace environments that enhance both employee wellbeing and institutional effectiveness.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

In an era of rapid technological advancement, the workplace structure has undergone profound transformations, particularly with the integration of surveillance systems into organisational environments. The widespread use of surveillance technologies such as closed-circuit television (CCTV), digital monitoring tools, and electronic performance tracking has sparked significant debate. These systems are often implemented to enhance security, productivity, and efficiency. However, the increasing reliance on electronic surveillance raises critical questions about its impact on employees, the organisation's most vital resource.

Today, employees are subjected to closer surveillance than ever before, a trend that reflects the shift from an industrial society to an information society (Lyon, 2013). Initially developed for military purposes during World War II, surveillance technologies were introduced into business environments in the 1970s, resulting in significant changes to organisational structures (Büyük & Keskin, 2012). These technologies now encompass a variety of methods, including email monitoring (Lyon, 1994; Lyon & Zureik, 1996; Brin, 1998), internet browsing tracking (Botan & Vorvoreanu, 2000; Fitzpatrick, 2002), CCTV surveillance (Smith, 2007), employee movement tracking via ID cards (Stanton & Weiss, 2000), and keystroke logging (Young & Case, 2004). Additionally, electronic surveillance systems now play a critical role in performance management by gathering data on employees' work patterns and behaviours.



This thesis examines the intricate relationship between electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM) and employee perceptions in a multicultural, non-Western workplace setting—specifically, Kotoka International Airport (KIA) in Ghana. The study examines how employees interpret and respond to surveillance practices, particularly in environments where these dynamics are poorly understood. By focusing on KIA, this research addresses the gap in current literature regarding the subjective experiences of employees under surveillance, especially in non-Western contexts with strong collective cultures.

This study further examines how surveillance practices intersect with cultural and tribal dynamics, influencing employee stress, productivity, and perceptions of fairness. In doing so, it aims to contribute to the broader body of knowledge on workplace surveillance by offering insights into how such systems impact employee behaviour in culturally diverse environments. Ultimately, this thesis aims to advance discussions on the implications of surveillance technologies, not just as control and governance tools but also as mechanisms that shape human interactions, agency, and workplace dynamics.

## **1.2 Conceptual and Operational Definitions**

### **1. Workplace Surveillance**

#### **Conceptual Definition:**

Workplace surveillance refers to the systematic and deliberate observation, recording, and analysis of employees' activities, communications, and behaviours by employers, often through technological means. Its primary aim is to monitor employee productivity, ensure compliance with organisational policies, safeguard organisational assets, and maintain security (Ball, 2010; Lyon, 2007). Surveillance in the workplace may manifest

in various forms, including electronic monitoring, closed-circuit television (CCTV), biometric systems, and data analytics tools. This practice reflects power dynamics within the employment relationship, whereby employers exercise oversight and control over workers' performance and conduct (Foucault, 1977; Zuboff, 1988).

The concept also implicates broader privacy, autonomy, and trust issues, particularly in settings where surveillance is continuous and embedded in everyday work practices. As Lyon (1994) notes, surveillance is a technical process and a social and political mechanism that shapes how workers experience authority and compliance in the modern workplace.

#### Operational Definition:

Workplace surveillance can be operationalised through the use of specific technological tools and monitoring practices, such as:

*Electronic Surveillance:* Monitoring of computer use, email content, internet browsing, and telephone conversations through software applications (Ball, 2010).

Video Surveillance (CCTV) involves using video cameras to observe employee activities in real time or through recorded footage, often for security and behavioural monitoring (Smith, 2007).

*Biometric Systems:* Fingerprint scanners, facial recognition, or iris detection systems are used for attendance tracking and access control (Ajana, 2013).

*Data Analytics Tools:* Deploying algorithms to analyse work-related data, such as keylogging, productivity tracking, and behavioural pattern recognition (Zuboff, 1988; Moore, 2018).

## **2. Censorship**

### Conceptual Definition:

Censorship in the workplace refers to the restriction or suppression of employee expression, behaviour, or communication by employers, particularly when deemed harmful, unproductive, or contrary to organisational interests. It often occurs through mechanisms that limit or shape what employees can say, do, or share, either explicitly through policy or implicitly through surveillance and monitoring (Millar, 2009; Fuchs, 2014). In digital workplaces, censorship can extend to monitoring and controlling online communication, social media use, and internal dissent, reflecting the employer's attempt to enforce conformity and prevent reputational or operational risks.

According to Fuchs (2014), such censorship is not merely about blocking content but about controlling meaning and disciplining workers to internalise organisational norms, especially in environments where surveillance creates a “panoptic” effect that encourages self-censorship and behavioural regulation.

### Operational Definition:

Operationally, workplace censorship may be manifested through the use of surveillance technologies to encourage self-regulation among employees. This includes:

The deployment of electronic surveillance tools creates a psychological effect of being constantly watched, prompting employees to modify their behaviours or attitudes to align with organisational expectations (Ball, 2010; Lyon, 2007).

The implementation of content-filtering software and communication monitoring tools to block or flag discussions deemed inappropriate, critical of management, or disruptive to workplace cohesion. Implicit censorship results from performance

evaluations penalising non-conforming speech or behaviours, discouraging open dialogue and fostering a culture of silence and conformity (Foucault, 1977).

### **3. Employee**

#### *Conceptual Definition:*

An employee is an individual whom an organisation or employer hires to perform specific tasks or duties in exchange for compensation, typically in the form of wages or a salary. This relationship is governed by a formal or informal contract that defines roles, responsibilities, and expectations (Dessler, 2020; Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Employees are integral to organisational functioning and are subject to internal policies, managerial oversight, and performance evaluation.

#### *Operational Definition:*

In the context of this study, an employee refers specifically to airport aviation security personnel employed at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) in Accra, Ghana. These individuals ensure passengers, baggage, facilities, and staff safety through physical checks, electronic screening, and surveillance monitoring. Their roles are subject to both organisational expectations and international aviation security regulations.

### **4. Performance Management**

#### *Conceptual Definition:*

Performance management is a strategic and continuous process used by organisations to monitor, evaluate, and improve individual and team performance in alignment with organisational goals. It involves setting clear expectations, providing ongoing feedback, conducting formal appraisals, and using performance data to support employee development, reward systems, and decision-making (Aguinis,

2013; Armstrong, 2021). The ultimate aim is to enhance efficiency, accountability, and organisational effectiveness while fostering employee engagement and growth.

Performance management frameworks consider multiple dimensions such as competency, productivity, goal attainment, collaboration, and adherence to values. According to Armstrong (2021), effective performance management aligns personal objectives with organisational strategy and enables both corrective action and recognition of achievement.

#### Operational Definition:

Within this study, employee performance management is operationalised through Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM) at Kotoka International Airport. The process includes:

**Defining Precise Objectives:** Establishing clear, measurable, and time-bound performance goals that employees are expected to meet, especially in high-security and time-sensitive environments like airport terminals.

**Performance Appraisal:** Conducting systematic evaluations using electronic data (e.g., CCTV footage, biometric clocking records, activity logs) to assess employee compliance, punctuality, vigilance, and adherence to protocols.

**Decision-Making and Planning:** Using insights from surveillance-based assessments to inform decisions on staff promotions, role reassignments, salary adjustments, disciplinary actions, and training interventions, ensuring that human capital aligns with institutional efficiency and safety requirements.

## **5. Workplace**

#### *Conceptual Definition:*

A workplace is any physical or virtual location where individuals engage in tasks or activities as part of their employment responsibilities. It encompasses environments in which labour is organised, managed, and performed, ranging from offices and factories to remote and digital platforms (Bratton & Gold, 2017; Kalleberg, 2011). The workplace is also a site of social interaction, power relations, and productivity, where organisational policies—including surveillance—are enacted and experienced.

*Operational Definition:*

In the context of this study, the workplace refers specifically to the operational premises of Kotoka International Airport (KIA) where airport security personnel are assigned. This includes physical locations such as:

- Luggage screening and scanning rooms
- Passenger security checkpoints
- Terminal 2 and Terminal 3 platforms and corridors
- Staff entry and biometric clock-in/out stations

These spaces are equipped with various surveillance systems designed to monitor, regulate, and support performance management in a high-security aviation environment.

## **6. Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM)**

*Conceptual Definition:*

Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM) refers to integrating digital surveillance technologies into the formal processes of evaluating, supervising, and managing employee performance. It involves the use of tools such as biometric

systems, video surveillance, keystroke monitoring, and behavioural analytics to generate real-time data that informs managerial decisions regarding productivity, compliance, and accountability (Ball, 2010; Smith & Huntoon, 2014). ESPM is rooted in a logic of datafication, where human activity in the workplace is continuously recorded, quantified, and assessed to align with organisational objectives (Moore, 2018; Zuboff, 1988).

This approach to performance management introduces a heightened level of transparency and objectivity, but also raises concerns about employee autonomy, workplace stress, and ethical boundaries (Lyon, 2007; Foucault, 1977).

#### *Operational Definition:*

In this study, ESPM is operationally defined through the use of specific digital monitoring systems deployed at Kotoka International Airport, including:

Biometric Clocking Systems for tracking staff attendance and punctuality.

Keylogger software and access control logs are used to monitor computer activity and secure system usage.

Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) for continuous visual monitoring of employee movement and behaviour in critical areas such as terminals, baggage zones, and screening checkpoints.

Managers use Digital Data Analytics to evaluate protocol adherence, detect inefficiencies, and make informed decisions about performance-related actions such as feedback, promotions, or disciplinary measures.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

While surveillance technologies are often implemented to enhance organisational efficiency, security, and performance, there is a significant gap in understanding how these technologies impact employees' subjective experiences under constant monitoring. In culturally diverse environments, questions arise about how workers perceive and respond to surveillance systems that monitor and evaluate their performance. This research seeks to address a key issue: How do employees in a multi-ethnic workplace, such as Kotoka International Airport in Ghana, experience, interpret, and react to the use of electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM)?

The intrusive nature of modern surveillance is often seen as infringing on employee privacy and autonomy, with many perceiving it as a mechanism of control by management (Cohen, 2010) in countries like Ghana, where there is a relative lack of robust legal protections for employee rights against excessive workplace surveillance, the power dynamic shifts further in favour of employers. Companies often justify these practices as necessary for safeguarding resources and ensuring a safe working environment (Watkins et al., 2007). However, this imbalance can give rise to ethical concerns, particularly in environments where cultural and tribal affiliations significantly influence workplace relationships.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in legal disputes filed by employees against employers over the unethical use of electronic surveillance and the misuse of personal data. For instance, high-profile cases in Europe and North America have resulted in legal rulings that uphold employees' rights to privacy and transparency in surveillance practices. The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in *Bărbulescu v. Romania* (2017) ruled that an employer's monitoring of an employee's private messages without prior notice violated Article 8 of the European Convention



on Human Rights, setting a precedent for ethical surveillance in the workplace. Similarly, lawsuits under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and national privacy laws in the UK, Canada, and the US have held organisations accountable for failing to inform employees about surveillance mechanisms or collecting disproportionate personal data (Ball, 2021; Sanchez & McDonald, 2020).

However, the negative consequences of workplace surveillance extend beyond legal challenges. Empirical studies show that constant monitoring erodes trust between employees and employers, leading to lower job satisfaction, increased psychological stress, and reduced organisational commitment (Ball, 2010; Martin & Freeman, 2003). Surveillance perceived as excessive or punitive can create a workplace climate of suspicion and fear, undermining employees' sense of autonomy and psychological safety (Jeske & Santuzzi, 2015). This erosion of trust often leads to diminished morale, workplace disengagement, and declining productivity—ironically counteracting the objectives of surveillance-based performance management systems (Moore, 2018; Lyon, 2007).

Thus, while electronic surveillance is often implemented to enhance accountability and efficiency, it may result in counterproductive outcomes without ethical safeguards, transparency, and cultural sensitivity. As research suggests, the psychosocial costs of surveillance, particularly in diverse and multicultural workplaces, must be weighed against its operational benefits (Ball, Di Domenico & Nunan, 2016).

#### **1.4 Study Boundaries and Contextual Setting**

This research is situated at Kotoka International Airport (KIA), Ghana's main international gateway. To appreciate the context of electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM) at KIA, it is essential to understand the broader

national, geographical, operational, and global border control landscape in which the airport operates. This section provides a contextual backdrop, exploring Ghana's socio-cultural profile, KIA's institutional function, international border surveillance and employee reception practices.

### **National and Socio-Historical Overview of Ghana**

Ghana is located in West Africa, bordered by Côte d'Ivoire to the west, Burkina Faso to the north, Togo to the east, and the Gulf of Guinea to the south. With a landmass of approximately 238,533 square kilometres, Ghana is subdivided into 16 administrative regions and 261 metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

As of 2021, Ghana's population exceeds 33 million and comprises more than 100 ethnic groups, including Akan, Mole-Dagbani, Ewe, and Ga-Dangme. Over 80 languages are spoken throughout the country, with English serving as the official language due to British colonial legacy. However, local languages such as Twi, Ewe, Dagbani, and Ga dominate interpersonal and informal communication (Owu-Ewie, 2006). The country's colonial history—from pre-colonial kingdoms such as the Ashanti and Dagbon through to British colonisation as the Gold Coast—continues to influence governance structures and societal organisation. Ghana achieved independence in 1957, becoming the first sub-Saharan African country to break from colonial rule (Gyimah-Boadi, 2001).

These historical and linguistic diversities shape workplace dynamics, especially in sensitive institutions like airports, where cooperation across ethnic and linguistic lines is crucial. This diversity complicates the implementation of standardised surveillance

systems, which often do not account for the cultural and tribal nuances embedded in daily workplace interactions.

### **Kotoka International Airport (KIA): Geographical and Operational Profile**

KIA is located in Accra, the capital of Ghana, approximately 10 km from the city's central business district. Positioned within the Greater Accra Region—the smallest by area but the most populous—KIA serves as the country's principal entry and exit point. Its coordinates place it on the Greenwich Meridian (0° longitude) and around latitude 5.6°N (Ghana Airports Company Limited, 2023).

As Ghana's primary international airport, KIA is managed by the Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL) and supports regional and international travel. As of 2022, it processed over 2.8 million passengers annually, reflecting its strategic importance as a hub in West Africa. KIA has three terminals:

**Terminal 1** (now used for executive and private flights),

**Terminal 2** (previously used for domestic and regional flights), and

**Terminal 3**, a modern facility commissioned in 2018, now handles all international commercial flights.

Terminal 3 is equipped with biometric identification systems, CCTV surveillance, automated immigration checkpoints, and baggage monitoring tools. These make KIA a fitting case study for examining how digital surveillance interacts with employee experiences, particularly in a multicultural setting.

### **Border Control Surveillance Systems - Global Practices and Employee Perceptions:**

Globally, border control systems are central to national security frameworks, with airports serving as frontline sites for surveillance. These systems typically include CCTV networks, biometric recognition, automated passport control, X-ray scanning technologies, behavioural detection officers, and digital databases that track individuals across jurisdictions (Lyon, 2007; Amoore, 2006). Such technologies are designed to screen for illegal migration, contraband, terrorism threats, and identity fraud.

For instance, the US Department of Homeland Security employs the US-VISIT system, which collects biometric data such as fingerprints and facial images from travellers (Ajana, 2013). In the UK, the eBorders programme similarly integrates surveillance and data analytics to monitor passenger movements across borders (Gates, 2011). In the European Union, the Schengen Information System (SIS II) and Entry-Exit System (EES) aim to maintain a balance between mobility and security by tracking cross-border movements.

While these systems enhance national security and operational efficiency, they also pose challenges regarding privacy, job satisfaction, and morale among border workers. Employees often express ambivalence about their roles in implementing surveillance, especially when systems are perceived as control tools rather than support (Ball, 2010; Smith & Lyon, 2013). In some cases, border staff report high levels of occupational stress due to constant scrutiny—not only of passengers but of themselves—as digital tools now monitor their performance, decision-making, and conduct (Zureik & Salter, 2005).

This has led to concerns about “dual surveillance”—where employees, while surveilling travellers, are themselves subjected to monitoring, resulting in feelings of

distrust and reduced autonomy (Feldman & Mandinach, 2005). These sentiments are often intensified in multicultural or postcolonial environments like Ghana, where historical sensitivities to authority and surveillance may compound employee resistance or emotional fatigue.

### **Contextualising KIA within Global Surveillance Trends**

The case of KIA reflects these global trends but also introduces unique challenges. Ghana's efforts to meet International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and International Air Transport Association (IATA) security standards have led to installing surveillance technologies comparable to those used in Western airports. Yet, the successful integration of these technologies at KIA hinges on local cultural acceptance, language accommodation, and sensitivity to tribal dynamics among employees.

The multicultural workforce at KIA includes individuals from multiple ethnic groups and language backgrounds, and this affects how policies, especially those involving personal monitoring, are interpreted and internalised. Unlike more homogenous workforces in Western airports, the staff at KIA bring varied understandings of authority, privacy, and workplace norms, requiring nuanced management strategies and culturally adaptive communication.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This qualitative research addresses the insufficient exploration of subjective perceptions and responses to surveillance, especially in under-researched non-Western contexts. Through a case study of airport surveillance practices, this research offers valuable insights into how individuals perceive and engage with surveillance systems in settings often overlooked in global discussions. This text marks a deviation

from the numerous ongoing discussions and studies conducted by researchers such as Ball (2010), Hansen (2004), and Wen and Gershuny (2005), among others, who have explored the topic of surveillance, which is particularly important to businesses.

Gaining insight into employee opinions about surveillance is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it clarifies the ethical implications and privacy concerns inherent in using surveillance technology in the workplace. Furthermore, it offers valuable insight into the psychological consequences of electronic surveillance-based performance management on employee morale, trust, identity, and resistance in culturally diverse environments, informing initiatives aimed at promoting a harmonious work environment. Furthermore, this research contributes to the growing discussion on workplace surveillance, offering practical suggestions for organisational policies and management practices that address the conflicts between implementing globalised surveillance practices and prioritising employee well-being and cultural sensitivity.

The study thesis also examined employees' perception of workplace electronic surveillance-based performance management in the face of globalisation in the aviation sector. The research places employees at the centre of organisational research, acknowledging their perceptions, concerns, and experiences regarding workplace surveillance. It contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how surveillance practices affect individuals within the workplace.

Understanding how employees perceive surveillance in a cross-cultural environment offers significant benefits for designing more effective and culturally responsive performance management strategies. Integrating Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) concepts into this analysis provides a comprehensive framework to explore both macro-level power dynamics and micro-

level subjective experiences of surveillance. In cross-cultural environments, employees' responses to surveillance can vary based on cultural norms around authority and control. For example, employees in hierarchical, collectivist societies are more likely to accept surveillance as part of the broader authority structure. At the same time, those from more individualistic cultures might resist or question its legitimacy (Hofstede, 2001). Understanding these cultural differences can help managers tailor surveillance strategies that align with employees' cultural values, ensuring more effective performance management by reducing resistance and fostering compliance. In a collectivist culture like Japan, surveillance may be perceived as a means of maintaining social harmony and ensuring that individual behaviour aligns with group norms. Employees will view surveillance as a tool that supports collective success and are more likely to comply with performance expectations. Conversely, surveillance might infringe on personal autonomy in a highly individualistic culture like the United States, leading to resentment or attempts to bypass monitoring systems (Hofstede, 2001). Managers in these environments would benefit from understanding these perceptions to develop surveillance practices that either emphasise collective goals or offer greater transparency and autonomy to foster trust.

In cross-cultural settings, the Symbolic Interactionist concept of the Looking-Glass Self becomes a valuable tool for understanding how employees internalise the judgments of the surveillance gaze, which can vary depending on their cultural backgrounds. Employees in collectivist cultures tend to view themselves as being evaluated based on their contributions to the group. In contrast, individuals in individualistic cultures tend to focus on how surveillance affects their reputation or autonomy. Understanding these subjective interpretations can help organisations develop performance management strategies that are more culturally attuned, improving engagement and

motivation. In an airport security environment, an employee from a collectivist culture will likely interpret surveillance as a mechanism for maintaining group safety and may view themselves as contributing to the collective good. This perception will lead to higher compliance with performance expectations. On the other hand, an employee from a more individualistic culture will likely focus on how surveillance affects their image or sense of freedom at work, potentially feeling constrained or untrusted by constant monitoring. By recognising these differences, managers can adjust performance feedback and evaluation processes to better resonate with employees' cultural expectations and self-concepts, fostering more positive attitudes toward surveillance and higher performance (Lyon, 2007).

Additionally, this study offers practical implications and recommendations for organisations that balance surveillance needs with employee well-being. By integrating Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist frameworks, organisations can better understand how surveillance interacts with power structures and individual identity in cross-cultural environments. Foucault's theory helps explain how surveillance creates systems of control that individuals navigate. At the same time, symbolic interactionism focuses on how individuals interpret their place within these systems and how they adjust their behaviour in response to perceived surveillance.

### **1.5 Thesis Structure**

The structure of this thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction, which addresses this research study's purpose and problem statements. Chapter one further addresses the scope of this qualitative research by discussing the lack of existing primary research on employee perceptions of workplace electronic



surveillance in a multicultural environment, such as Ghana, and its effects on performance management.

In Chapter 2, we discussed existing literature on workplace electronic surveillance. This chapter examines the diverse interpretations of workplace surveillance. It further discusses the historical evolution of workplace surveillance, its benefits and barriers, including privacy invasion and erosion of trust. Moreover, Chapter Two discusses surveillance theories by Michael Foucault, David Lyon, Haggerty Ericson, Ball, and Zuboff. The commodification of employees through surveillance. Chapter two further explores the literature on the effects of colonisation, communication, African time Culture, and ethnic differences on workplace electronic surveillance. It finishes by examining symbolic interactionism as a theoretical framework for surveillance-based performance management.

Chapter Three discusses and explains the qualitative research methodology applied in this study. This chapter examines existing research concepts in workplace surveillance, the participant selection process, and data collation methods, which are conducted through sub-structured interviews. Chapter Three provides further justification for the use of qualitative research as the research perspective for this study. It also details the approach for analysing collected data and extracting meaningful insights through an interpretive approach.

Chapter Four analyses and discusses the findings from the data collected through interviews with participants and existing literature on employee surveillance at Kotoka International Airport in Ghana. This Chapter discusses and analyses the findings under the first two three themes. The first theme discusses employees' general perception of electronic surveillance at KIA. The second theme examines employees' perceptions

of electronic surveillance-based performance management at KIA, with a focus on the differences between Terminals 2 and 3. These themes were discussed and linked to theories explored in Chapter 2.

Chapter Five provides an in-depth examination of these three, exploring the impact of culture on employees' perceptions of electronic surveillance-based performance management. This theme was further discussed under subheadings to give a clearer understanding of participants' perspectives.

Chapter Six summarises and concludes the research. It further addresses the proposed research questions and outlines the contribution to knowledge, limitations, evaluation, and recommendations that this research offers. It also suggests that the findings of this qualitative research could influence future studies.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

While there is extensive research on workplace surveillance in developed countries (Ball, 2010; Lyon, 2007; Zuboff, 1988; Ball, 2020; Ajunwa, 2023), there remains a significant gap in understanding how surveillance affects employee perceptions of performance evaluation in developing countries, such as Ghana. Much of the scholarly literature has focused on Western contexts—primarily Europe and North America—with limited attention given to the unique socio-cultural dynamics that shape employees' experiences in non-Western settings (Ajunwa, Crawford & Schultz, 2017; Moore, 2018). This gap is especially critical given the increasing use of electronic surveillance systems in the workplace, which were introduced in countries like Ghana primarily after the September 11, 2001, attacks, driven mainly by the security protocols of multinational corporations operating in the aviation and logistics sectors (Dagbanja, 2016). These systems are now integral to workplace management, yet little is known about how they influence employee behaviour, perceptions of fairness, or performance in culturally diverse environments where tribal affiliation, language, and power distance play important roles (Ball & Wilson, 2000; Kuada, 2010). To address this gap, the literature review of this thesis will be divided into three key sections, each contributing to a comprehensive understanding of workplace surveillance in the context of Ghana's Kotoka International Airport. The first section will provide an overview of the background and history of workplace surveillance, tracing its evolution from a broader sociological perspective to its specific applications in organisational

settings. It will explore the diverse interpretations of surveillance, examining how different forms of electronic monitoring, such as CCTV, email monitoring, and performance tracking, are conceptualised and realised in the workplace. This section will lay the groundwork for understanding the role of surveillance in contemporary organisational life, setting the stage for a more nuanced examination of its effects on employee perception and behaviour.

The second section will explore the interplay between micro and macro-level factors, particularly the global influences that shape surveillance practices in Ghana. A key focus will be on the engagement between Ghana and foreign actors, especially China, whose technological and economic presence has introduced new forms of electronic monitoring into Ghanaian workplaces. This section will contextualise workplace surveillance within the broader framework of geopolitical relationships and technological diffusion, providing insight into how external influences shape local practices.

The third section will focus on developing a theoretical framework for this study by integrating Post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist theories. The Post-Foucauldian lens will help analyse surveillance as a tool of power, control, and governance within the workplace, emphasising the structural forces that shape employee behaviour. Meanwhile, symbolic interactionism, particularly the "Looking-Glass Self" concept, will offer a complementary perspective by exploring how individuals interpret and respond to being monitored, focusing on human agency, self-perception, and the micro-level interactions that influence their experiences. This section will bridge the gap between these theoretical approaches, providing a comprehensive understanding of how employees navigate the surveillance systems to which they are subjected.

Finally, this review will conclude by formulating research questions derived from the analysis of existing literature, ensuring that the empirical inquiry addresses both macro-level surveillance dynamics and the micro-level subjective experiences of employees in a non-Western, multicultural workplace setting. Through this structure, the literature review will establish the foundation for exploring how electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM) impacts employee perceptions, stress, productivity, and intergroup dynamics at Kotoka International Airport.

## **2.1 Overview of Workplace Surveillance**

The use of the term “overview” is deliberate and intended to convey the same sentiments that Lyon expressed: we are all, in a sense, implicated in surveillance, both as watchers and as watched (Lyon, 2007, 2013). In the mid-1990s, surveillance was primarily used as a narrative device to create tension and intrigue in the genres of thrillers and science fiction films (Petersen, 2012). However, the phrase has been widely employed in many everyday contexts nowadays. Nevertheless, the precise delineation of surveillance remains ambiguous. The concept of surveillance appears to have undergone a transformation that extends beyond its conventional understanding, as depicted in everyday language and dictionary definitions. The idea of "surveillance" encompasses the practice of closely monitoring individuals or objects to prevent or detect illicit behaviour (Albrechtslund, 2008). However, it is essential to acknowledge that contemporary surveillance technologies are frequently employed in a non-discriminatory manner, encompassing all individuals across various contexts, including time, place, networks, and communities (Marx, 2002). According to prominent surveillance scholar David Lyon, surveillance can be defined as the deliberate, methodical, and regular scrutiny of individual particulars to exert influence,

control, safeguarding, or guidance (Lyon 2007: 14). Similarly, Haggerty and Ericson (2000: 3) characterise surveillance as the gathering and examination of data concerning populations to govern their behaviours. Nevertheless, it is essential to delve further into the perspectives provided by the complex field of surveillance studies to comprehend the implications of surveillance fully.

Surveillance, despite having historical origins in ancient social practises, has emerged as a prominent and fundamental aspect of contemporary society during the last four decades (Ball, Haggerty, and Lyon 2012). Alongside technological progress, significant transformations in material, corporate, and political systems have brought about subsequent societal shifts in power dynamics, identity formation, institutional behaviour, and interpersonal interactions due to the emancipation of human senses from past limitations (Ball, Haggerty, and Lyon 2012: p1; Lyon, 2002: 4). Academic research in surveillance aims to shed light on the characteristics, effects, and consequences of networked surveillance and its role in shaping social order. This is achieved via the use of empirical, theoretical, and ethical investigations as defined in this study of workplace surveillance.

The academic discourse surrounding workplace surveillance in the 1980s was significantly influenced by the publication of "The Electronic Supervisor: New Technologies, New Tensions" by the US Office of Technology Assessment in 1987. The statement raises concerns about the excessive surveillance capabilities afforded to employers by information technology, which surpasses the requirements for organising work processes. The concept of workplace surveillance refers to the deliberate monitoring, recording, and tracking of workers' performance, conduct, and personal attributes by management as an integral component of the overall organisational process (Ball, 2010). This research aims to examine the effect of

workplace surveillance on employees' perceptions of performance management. Hence, examining previous surveillance paradigms, models, and advancements is a technique used to enhance understanding of the research's implications.

In this study, we provide a concise and structured analysis of key surveillance ideas, examining their historical development and emphasising the unique characteristics of modern surveillance systems in the workplace. In this context, we will first analyse the phenomenon of disciplinary power as presented by Foucault and the power dynamics of surveillance beyond Foucault's concepts of panopticism by exploring the works of David Lyon. This is then followed by a discussion of contemporary surveillance, examining the work of Haggerty and Ericson's *Surveillant Assemblages*, which marks a departure from focusing on the physical person to their digital footprints and activities. We will further examine the shift from social surveillance to organisational surveillance by concentrating on Zuboff's concept of surveillance capitalism.

### **2.1.1 Panopticism and Disciplinary Power**

Bentham's Panoptic paradigm, often overlooked in surveillance studies, is rehabilitated by Foucault's analysis. Foucault's interpretation extends Bentham's work into a broader perspective on power relations and networks in modern societies, making it crucial to investigate why his analysis resonates in various disciplines.

Foucault critiqued the Panopticon, based on Bentham's analysis of prison architecture, to explore power and government structures. He argued that modern societies, since the 18th and 19th centuries, have experienced a capillary form of power that affects individuals' actions, attitudes, discourses, learning processes, and everyday life (Foucault 1980, p. 39). The Panopticon penal system of government has become pervasive and functional in modern society. Foucault argues, with strong examples,

that these systems are all the more potent for being so pervasive and invisible; they are embedded in the very fabric of everyday existence.

Institutions, including schools, armies, hospitals, and factories, are examined to demonstrate how Panoptical methods of surveillance and control have permeated the everyday actions of life. When everyone is possibly being watched, individuals will learn to manage and value themselves, making discipline a kind of power, a tactic, and a technological innovation. In light of the rise of technocratic forms of government, Foucault referred to this civilisation type as the "disciplinary" or "disciplined" society. However, the transition from a sovereign society to a disciplined society represents a change in both approach and object, from populations to individuals. Sovereign practises seek to primarily affirm control over a territory and secure the loyalty of subjects in a somewhat static and rigid manner through binary prohibitions.

In feudal and sovereign societies, power was crucial in structuring people and land for long-term sustainability. Early predictive modelling enabled rulers to make informed decisions based on historical data, such as crop yields and the spread of famine or disease, by stockpiling food, increasing trade with neighbouring states, or restricting travel within their borders. (Foucault, 2007). After all, the term *statistics* refers to official government data. It is clear who has authority in a sovereign society since phrases like "by decree of the King" refer directly to the sovereign. Power is diffused and cloaked in the many conformity mechanisms that permeate the disciplined society. Due to these factors, discipline is not only a tool of the State, but rather, it extends beyond the state's borders, connecting with other institutions and altering how they interact (Deleuze, 2006). Although this authority functions somewhat independently of the state's judicial and governmental machinery, it still relies on these institutions and



the state as it acts through them. "The state, correctional institutions, and medical institutions need to be regarded as coagulations of practices" (Valverde 2008, p. 18).

According to Foucault, normativity is a by-product of the disciplinary process. *Processes* here imply things like training and repetition that lead to ingrained routines and established procedures. The norm plays a pivotal role in normative processes. It is the goal to which all others must aspire and the standard to which all others must comply. To be considered normal is to adhere to the standard, putting one in the position of the supposed universal subject who is invisible since they are not marked by differences that are seen as abnormal. When compared to what is considered normal, the aberrant is seen as flawed and unworthy (Foucault, 1977). Disciplining the body is the ideal of governance because it leads to bodies that are "docile" or subservient to authority (Foucault, 1991b). Discipline is a kind of normative order imposed on the body. According to Foucault, technology is at the centre of processes that discipline the body (Foucault 2007).

Foucault contrasted the rising trend of individualisation in feudal and sovereign cultures with the falling process in disciplinary societies (Foucault, 1980). He describes how, under the latter, the state of society as a whole, such as its total productivity or health, was an aggregated, communal concern rather than an individual one, allowing people to diversify and grow within the confines of collective ideals. Disciplined societies' administrative systems focus on individual behaviours, comparing people to ideal standards. This shift redirects attention from sovereign authority as the primary arbiter and power holder to institutions such as schools and hospitals, which monitor citizens' actions. People adopt fictitious representations and must be held accountable to this ideal, resulting in a homogenisation of behaviour.

Assessments are crucial in maintaining and enforcing norms in various organisations, serving as a mechanism and indicator of disciplinary societies. They measure the strength of discipline by comparing test takers to a standard, which is instilled through bureaucratic processes and prescribed operations. The military provides comprehensive training and testing on the use of firearms, as do hospitals and schools on the proper use of medical equipment and methods. The result of various forms of discipline is the creation of individuals who are submissive. This results in societies that are even more predictable and plannable, in which obedient bodies have become informational rather than communicative components. This is where the parallel with Bentham's jail design becomes apparent: it's a one-way street where prisoners will be shaped and reshaped at will. The development of scientific procedures for registration, record-keeping, and norming through inspections, then, is a key factor in the emergence of modernity in the form of disciplinary societies. Submissive people are regulated not as actors with whom they interact but as malleable units of data. This moulding and reshaping occur as a direct consequence of the public display of people's competencies in the form of assessments and the documentation of their development. The entanglements of power also give rise to dispersed points of resistance that have no source save power itself, which they oppose —a notion that Foucault briefly discusses but does not elaborate upon (Foucault, 1998).

As a result of what has been said above, a method of thought has been named panopticism, in which the notion of the Panopticon is used as a metaphor to depict this occurrence. Foucault's theory of a systematic and impartial observer having disciplining authority rang true in light of the proliferation of CCTV cameras. A continual gaze, which, like the watcher in the watchtower, will be able to see everything, is keeping a close eye on everything. Citizens in public spaces will be shaped into

conforming to the norm through the formation and internalisation of doing good, facilitated by the use of cameras. As in Bentham's jail model, the film will be preserved, making the observer "omnipresent" not only in place but also in time. Perhaps the widespread interest in Foucault's ideas might be attributed to the seeming accuracy of his interpretation of CCTV.

However, there are aspects of CCTV and other types of electronic surveillance that cannot be accounted for by the Panoptical model simply because society and its institutions have undergone significant transformations under the impact of ICT, unlike those in Foucault's study. Foucault's discussion of control societies, which will emerge as a consequence of new technologies and their associated systems of monitoring, provided the groundwork for moving beyond the disciplinary society. Foucault described a path towards de-individualization and dehumanisation in totalitarian countries. This means that in a controlled society, individuals are not targeted directly as human subjects but rather through representations. In contrast, the normative and behavioural disciplinary infrastructures of schools and hospitals still involve the recognition of individuals as human subjects through the representative norm in particular settings. A system in which representations interact and make internal decisions rather than centralised, formal institutions is at work. Therefore, control societies not only practise a distinct style of government but also serve as a schism in our understanding of surveillance and the communities it produces.

### **2.1.2 Surveillance as a Phenomenon**

Surveillance encompasses more than simply technological or organisational aspects; it also extends to include a broader social phenomenon. The pervasive nature of this surveillance extends throughout contemporary society, transcending various settings

and circumstances, including the modern workplace (Lyon, 2007). Lyon uses Michel Foucault's theoretical construct of the panopticon, which involves the implementation of surveillance as a means to assert dominance and regulate the behaviour of people. Within the workplace setting, it becomes apparent that the persistent awareness of being under surveillance can foster a sense of self-regulation and adherence to established norms among workers (Bauman and Lyon, 2013).

The presence of surveillance in the workplace is often seen as an accepted and unquestioned aspect of the professional environment. It is anticipated that employees expect managers to gather data on their work-related tasks, establish goals for them, and oversee and assess their performance (Lyon, 2007). The normalisation of surveillance practises has extended to several domains of modern life, such as the workplace. In contemporary organisational contexts, the incorporation of this element has become a normative aspect of both structural frameworks and operational procedures (Lyon, 2018). The process of normalisation will provide both anticipated and unanticipated outcomes in terms of employee conduct and attitudes. Lyon demonstrates a heightened focus on the significance of data within present-day surveillance methodologies (Lyon, 2007). Within the organisational setting, this pertains to the acquisition and examination of diverse data types, including digital footprints, interpersonal exchanges, and behavioural tendencies. The use of a data-driven strategy has significant potential as a means for companies to have influence and oversight over their staff. In the conventional approach, managers employ a dyadic method, whereby they monitor employees' actions to verify that the company's desired outcomes are being achieved (Lyon, 2001). Additionally, the widespread use of surveillance measures has the potential to infringe upon people's right to privacy and limit their ability to make autonomous decisions (Lyon, 2014). Lyon recognises the

potential repressive characteristics inherent in surveillance while concurrently emphasising the ability of individuals and groups to engage in resistance and contestation against such practices. This occurrence might manifest in several ways, including the adoption of privacy-enhancing behaviours or the engagement in collective action aimed at countering intrusive surveillance methods. Heightened regulatory supervision and enhanced responsibility within the domain of workplace surveillance are needed. The establishment of legal frameworks and ethical principles is necessary to ensure transparency, fairness, and alignment with the rights and interests of workers in surveillance practices (Lyon, 2001).

Although David Lyon's viewpoint on workplace surveillance has had a significant influence on the discourse surrounding surveillance, it has not been immune to criticism. Marx (2002) argues that Lyon's use of Foucault's panopticism and power dynamics paradigm will engender an undue focus on the notion of perpetual and all-knowing surveillance. The statement above does not consistently align with the intricate and diverse manifestations of surveillance observed in actual workplace environments. He further posits that Lyon's perspective tends to exaggerate the prevalence and significance of surveillance, which can result in a sense of helplessness regarding the protection of personal privacy (Marx, 2002). Lyon's perspective of normative assumptions about privacy and autonomy is not universally applicable to all persons or cultural circumstances. Diverse cultural backgrounds and individual viewpoints might lead to differing interpretations of the definition of permissible levels of surveillance (Monahan, 2011). Lyon adopts a deterministic perspective on technology, in which surveillance devices are viewed as inherently coercive and exerting control. This approach will not fully acknowledge the possible

advantages and constructive use of surveillance within specific organisational settings (ibid).

In the context of organisational surveillance, Lyon was criticised for his failure to adequately recognise the legitimate requirements and concerns within organisations that justify the implementation of surveillance techniques. Ball (2010) opines that the use of surveillance practises will be required to ensure workplace security or regulatory compliance. Mann (1997) also argues that Lyon fails to sufficiently acknowledge the ability of people to participate in "sousveillance" - a kind of surveillance initiated by citizens from the bottom-up as a means to counteract the prevailing top-down surveillance practises. Hall (2015) suggests that Lyon's emphasis on digital surveillance may overshadow the importance of other types of surveillance, including physical and geographical surveillance. She advocates for a broader comprehension of surveillance practices.

### **2.1.3 From Individual Surveillance to Data Surveillance**

Kevin Haggerty and Richard Ericson, early critics of Michel Foucault's Panopticon analogy, argue that it's crucial not to overexpand the metaphor's original boundaries to comprehend the diverse forms of contemporary surveillance, as they assert in their influential paper, "The Surveillant Assemblage." They suggest the creation of new analytical frameworks to tackle the evolving surveillance landscape, which has undergone significant changes since Bentham's Panopticons in the 18th century, to networked societies in the 1960s, marking a departure from the metaphorical foundations of Panopticons. Firstly, it is essential to note that the panoptic model was highly compatible with the notion of disciplinary societies. In such societies, surveillance plays a crucial role in facilitating the cultivation of productive souls. This

involves both the suppression and constructive development of individuals' present identities, instilling within them the demands of industrial capitalism (Haggerty, 2006). Furthermore, the strategy disproportionately targeted the underclass and disadvantaged, neglecting mainstream populations. Surveillance was previously limited to enclosed spaces in correctional, healthcare, educational, and industrial settings, ignoring the mainstream. Surveillance was primarily attributed to human agency, as evidenced by the deliberate construction of structures designed to enhance human visual capabilities. Haggerty and Ericson (2000), drawing inspiration from Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualisation of assemblages and the notion of control societies, introduced the concept of surveillant assemblage as a novel framework for analysing contemporary surveillance practises.

Assemblages refer to a diverse collection of disparate things that are unified by their collaborative functioning as a cohesive organism, as expounded upon by Deleuze and Guattari (Haggerty and Ericson 2000). Assemblages are distinct structures that consist of various streams of phenomena, including human beings, signals, chemicals, information, and organisations. They can be seen as structures that incorporate different sensory and informational inputs, such as sound, smell, sight, and data. The solidification of assemblages occurs when the dynamic flows of inputs become contained within them, which is crucial for organising ideas and guiding individuals or groups in their actions (Wood, 2013). Surveillance assemblages are devices that capture and transform data into reproducible events, as observed by Haggerty. Contemporary surveillance is dynamic, lacking stability, and challenging to attribute to specific institutions or governmental bodies, making it difficult to implement effective countermeasures. The term "rhizomatic," derived from the works of Deleuze and Guattari, refers to the adaptable nature of surveillance, its ability to dismantle

hierarchical structures, and its potential for revitalization. The perspective on workplace surveillance can be used to analyse the distribution and interconnectedness of surveillance practices within an organisation, as individuals are increasingly defined as consumers, often to the exclusion of other roles or identities. The active enticement of individuals characterises this phenomenon into participating in the market economy. Therefore, modern surveillance practices are increasingly used to control consumption patterns, restricting individuals' access to specific locations and information and leading to the withholding of societal benefits, such as improved credit scores or expedited customs clearance.

Electronic surveillance systems often regulate human entry into restricted spaces and generate comprehensive consumer profiles by analysing historical behaviours and preferences. The process involves de-territorialization and reassembly, where the body is physically separated from its environment through dissection or abstraction and then relocated through data transfers to a different location. A de-corporealized entity is generated, with enhanced mobility and quantifiability compared to its physical form, and afterwards reconstructed as the well-recognised '*data double*' (Haggerty and Ericson, 2000, p. 611). The data double, a concept that extends an individual's identity beyond physical representation, is not a requirement for precise replication. It serves the interests of various systems that manage and utilise resources, both tangible and digital, about persons. This argument is based on the capitalist notion of surplus value, which refers to the excess of information that serves the interests of various systems governing the management and utilisation of resources (Marx, 2018). The concept of duplicated entities is explored in decentralised computation hubs, where they are analysed for governance, trade, and regulation. The idea is that individuals can generate income from their data through everyday activities, such as using credit



cards, browsing the internet, using smartphones, participating in professional activities, and walking.

Haggerty's 2006 publication, "Tear down the walls: On Demolishing the Panopticon," critiques the concept of the surveillant assemblage and provides alternative perspectives on contemporary surveillance, differing from his 2000 article co-authored with Ericson. Haggerty (2006) highlights the expanding scope of surveillance objectives, including deterrence, consumption, entertainment, health promotion, education, governance, accountability, child-rearing, and military conquest, thereby challenging the notion that surveillance serves a singular, unified purpose, such as social control. This is because these applications are not always preconceived but instead arise as a consequence of innovative ideas from individuals who perceive novel potentials within systems initially designed for entirely distinct intentions.

Surveillance, despite its potential for entertainment and self-formation, continues to contribute significantly to the creation and maintenance of social inequalities, according to Haggerty. Despite the increased scrutiny of those in power through visual and documentary means, the level of surveillance still surpasses any earlier age in history. Haggerty highlights the limitations of surveillance studies that primarily focus on individuals, including both physical and non-physical aspects, and fails to consider incidental human involvement in practices such as satellite imagery, which mainly observe the Earth and its environment. Finally, Haggerty highlights the notable observation that several prominent surveillance initiatives need confidentiality for their effectiveness. A prime illustration of this phenomenon is dataveillance, a practice that involves tracking individuals' conduct by tracing the vaster digital footprints generated by their acts. In light of recent developments in contemporary surveillance, a somewhat altered conceptualisation of the surveillant assemblage, initially proposed

by Haggerty, emerges. This revised perspective adopts a more impartial approach towards understanding surveillance and its associated effects.

The present study examines the configurations and characteristics of surveillance systems in contemporary workplaces, highlighting a notable shift towards a quantitative methodology in monitoring human beings and other observed events. There has been a shift in focus from directly surveilling and controlling individuals to surveilling and controlling their digital footprints, which consist of the data they leave behind and then reassemble based on their intended purpose. The proliferation of data in cyberspace is characterised by its unregulated movement across several databases, which facilitates the interconnection of these disparate sources of information, referred to as "leaky containers" by Lyon (2001). Haggerty noted, however, that studies of surveillance often overlook surveillance methods that will be seen as advances for society at large. It is essential to view the concept of expanded networked control not just as a negative one, but also as one that may provide opportunities for enjoyment, counter-power, and de-territorialized forms of resistance (Haggerty et al., 2000).

#### **2.1.4 Surveillance Capitalism**

The neo-Marxist school of thought is developing a conceptual framework for surveillance, similar to Haggerty and Ericson's concept of the surveillant assemblage. This framework offers a more comprehensive understanding of surveillance as a dominant characteristic of capitalist society. The term "surveillance capitalism" was introduced by Bellamy and McChesney (2014) and popularised by Zuboff (2015)-2016. Zuboff (2015) is developing a comprehensive theory that outlines social and economic-political relationships within society, revealing distinct interpretations and

methods of power exercise within this system, encompassing various aspects of society. Price (2014) highlights the significant strength of the current surveillance complex, driven by an economic interest in metadata, which hinders substantial reforms. Therefore, a comprehensive theoretical framework is needed to understand the underlying reasons for this phenomenon.

Over the past decade, surveillance capitalism has emerged as a distinct form of capitalism, focusing on profit generation through one-sided surveillance and manipulation of human activity. This modern form operates under a logic of accumulation, ideally suited for a networked society, with the primary goal of proactively influencing and modifying human behaviour to generate revenue and maintain market dominance. According to Zuboff's thesis on surveillance capitalism, a paradigm shift in capitalism has occurred, ushering in a new age characterised by a prevailing logic of accumulation. The current surveillance initiative, which is profitable, undermines and distorts the traditional evolutionary processes of capitalism, such as supply and demand, which have historically facilitated market democracy and addressed the needs of individuals and communities. Surveillance-based capitalism, on the other hand, disregards these needs and interests (Zuboff, 2015). The novel economic paradigm focuses on forecasting future events and capitalising on them by commercialising the real-time experiences of individuals. This involves directly influencing and modifying their actions to generate financial gains, facilitated by big data, as seen in various workplaces today. The market's transparency and comprehensibility have improved significantly since the advent of classical liberalism, thanks to the systematic recording of daily transactions, making Google an exemplary example of contemporary business strategy and economic rationale.

Zuboff (2018) identifies four key components of capital accumulation, as explained by Google's Chief Economist Hal Varian, relating to computer-mediated transactions and their applications. Surveillance capitalism's formal indifference and structural independence are demonstrated by its fervour for considerable data extraction and analysis. The lack of dialogue and consensus in data extraction reflects the inequitable nature of the process. At the same time, the absence of mutual structural connections between the organisation and its demographics leads to functional autonomy, distinguishing it from the 20th-century corporate model. Google utilises algorithms for its services and collaborates with advertisers and intermediaries to generate revenue. At the same time, surveillance capitalism employs extensive data analysis to anticipate and manipulate consumer behaviour, eliminating the need for customer participation and promoting a surveillance-centric architecture.

Surveillance capitalism involves real-time surveillance and technology-driven enforcement of contractual commitments, unlike the oppressive prison system of the Panopticon, which operates under a contractual surveillance and enforcement system. The widespread presence of data in human habitats has led to increased opportunities for observation, interpretation, communication, influence, prediction, and modification of actions. According to Zuboff (2015), the possession of tools for behavioural modification has become the primary source of power, preceding tools for production. Furthermore, customised services cater to individual preferences, delivering information in advance, sometimes beyond user awareness. This leads to knowledge and authority disparities, and the technological infrastructure facilitates ongoing experimentation and integration into consumers' daily routines. Continuous experiments are essential for establishing causality in data-driven outcomes. Facebook's manipulation of user emotions is an example of this, as the current market

dynamics paradigm views behaviour as subjected to commodification and monetisation, highlighting the importance of continuous experimentation (ibid).

Cohen (2019) suggests that Zuboff's emphasis on surveillance capitalism will overlook other crucial aspects of workplace surveillance, such as security, safety, and regulatory compliance, and will be influenced by technological determinism, which overemphasises the inherent properties of digital technologies. Zuboff's perspective on surveillance measures overlooks key socio-political, economic, and organisational factors. It will not consider legitimate organisational needs and concerns, such as workplace security or regulatory compliance. While theoretical insights are valuable, practical guidance on ethical and effective surveillance practices will be lacking. More specific recommendations on balancing organisational needs and employee rights could be beneficial (Michaelson et al., 2009).

Zuboff's perspective suggests that further theoretical exploration is necessary to comprehend the intricacies of surveillance capitalism fully. She argues that surveillance is crucial in the contemporary framework for wealth accumulation and has ramifications that extend beyond personal privacy. Zuboff believes this phenomenon challenges democracy principles by eroding individual autonomy across various domains, including personal, social, political, and governmental sectors, thus posing a significant challenge to modern liberal frameworks.

## **2.2 Workplace Surveillance in Ghana**

Culture, in general, is a complex mix that shapes society by influencing the way its members think, behave, like, and dislike, among other things. This is mainly referred to as the way of life of a group of people, whether small or large. The workplace culture in Ghana is, to a large extent, dependent on the broader culture of its people, ethnic

antecedents, traditional exchange practices, exposure to modern business modules through foreign investments and the adoption of technology in work scenarios. This is exemplified by the cultural complexities resulting from differences in languages and traditions, as well as the adoption of emerging business trends (Avendal, 2011). Commercial cities in Ghana, such as Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Cape Coast, and Tamale, have adopted modern work practices, but they were once remote farming communities that relied on colonial infrastructure. Postcolonial rule and Ghana's independence in 1957 led to a shift from merchandising to industrialisation and the establishment of state-owned agencies in the 1960s (Kwarteng and Sosu, 2017). This led Ghana to experience an increase in direct foreign investment and the modernisation of its service and manufacturing sectors during the Fourth Republic (Asiamah et al., 2019). Upon independence, the Ghanaian economy was severely underdeveloped, with over 80% of the population primarily engaged in agricultural activities, resulting in low productivity due to outdated practices (Alagidede et al., 2013). The existing industrial sector was an exploitative one, led by the British. The mining sector, in particular, often employs forced and crude work practices (Donkor, 2019). In the second half of the 20th century, Ghana underwent significant cultural and political transformations, culminating in the emergence of a new working middle class in the 1990s. This cultural subgroup made substantial contributions to Ghana's modernisation, socioeconomic development, and political growth. Ghana has transformed from a rural, agricultural-based state to a modern, industrialised, and service-oriented country, resulting in a dualistic work culture with a traditional agricultural economy coexisting with a high-level, development-oriented industry and service economy. (Kwarteng and Sosu, 2017).

The rise of multinational corporations, IT-enabled industries, outsourcing firms, and international business practices is influencing the Ghanaian goods and services sector. Emphasis is placed on the performance of information technology, software, outsourcing, and back-office services, as well as other international business and labour practices. (Kotoua and Ilkan 2017). Likewise, globalisation, with its increasing intercontinental and interstate transactions in the manufacture and marketing of goods and services, has promoted the migration of businesses to low-labour-cost countries (Turienzo and Lampón, 2022). This globalisation phenomenon deserves credit for offering more privileged and well-appreciated opportunities for high-quality employment in developing nations such as Ghana. Ghana's adoption of new developing technologies, quick restructuring of its market space, and implementation of internationally competitive policies have aided in the faster growth of its economy to a low-middle-income state (Aryeetey and Kanbur, 2017). However, there are perceived challenges in this sudden shift in Ghana's work culture. Ghanaians are accustomed to working for themselves and/or in state-owned industries, where the time and supervisory structure are not rigid, and now face factors such as privatisation, flexibility in working hours, and new labour management practices and approaches.

Modern employee management patterns in technology-reliant workplaces, particularly among service providers and those utilising electronic surveillance, pose significant challenges. While the parameters for restricting and deploying surveillance will vary, performance and behaviour surveillance are increasing in Ghanaian workplaces, particularly in the goods and services sector (Odartey-Wellington, 2014). Several scholars and critics of workplace surveillance have argued that the increasing accessibility and affordability of surveillance technologies should not automatically justify their implementation in organisational settings. For example, Ball (2010) and

Lyon (2007) caution that employers often adopt surveillance tools focusing on control and productivity, without fully considering their ethical implications or the potential harm to employee morale and trust. Similarly, Ajunwa (2023) warns that many organisations implement monitoring systems based on cost-benefit analyses that prioritise business efficiency while neglecting workers' psychological and legal ramifications.

These critics emphasise that surveillance technologies are not inherently problematic; instead, how they are used—often without transparency or consent—raises concerns. As Zuboff (1988) and Moore (2018) argue, technology is a neutral data collection and analysis instrument. Still, when integrated into hierarchical management structures, it can become a tool of domination and dehumanisation. Thus, these scholars advocate for a more reflective and responsible approach to surveillance implementation—one that critically examines what the technology can do, whether it should be used, and under what conditions.

However, modern technology has shifted from simple surveillance techniques to monitoring employees, necessitating a change in management styles. Current management concepts emphasise responsible, competitive employees, teamwork, collaboration, and an open, participatory work culture driven by internal incentives and competitiveness (Holland et al., 2015). In recent years, there has been an improvement in the management ideologies implemented in Ghana's goods and services sector, which are based on flat structures, minimal bureaucracy, transparency, flexibility, and employee empowerment. However, employees in the service industry still face challenges from these new, improved management practices due to high global business standards, which have direct surveillance control over employees and the work process (Ball, 2010). Graham Sewell et al. (2012) term this



process an 'electronic panopticon', where a nonhuman eye permeates architectural and spatial constraints to cast its disciplinary gaze at the heart of the labour process. The effects of the gaze on employees are at the very centre of employees' concerns at the Workplace (Sewell and Barker, 2012).

The Ghanaian government's introduction of Executive Instrument 63 (E.I 63) has sparked outrage among the populace, civil society, and political factions. This Executive instrument was passed in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic by the New Patriotic Party government. The E.I. 63 grants the President of the Republic of Ghana the power to order or request information about its citizens from operators or providers of electronic communication networks or services. Currently, the National Communications Authority (NCA) is using E.I. 63 to obtain phone records and mobile money data of Ghanaians, raising concerns for the Member of Parliament of South Tong Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa (Darko, 2020) about how the government of Ghana is spying on the activities of its citizens Samson Lardi Anyenini, a private attorney, believes that section 100 of the E. I 63 could grant the president the power to manage telecommunications operations, a power he feels is not lawful or constitutional. This could lead to telecommunication providers being required to disclose private transactions to the state (JoyNewsfile, 2020). Based on this development, Ghana is reportedly adopting a Chinese-style governance approach, where the government closely monitors its citizens to detect signs of disloyalty. The nation has recently started documenting political inclinations, social associations, and consumer transactions. The Chinese government's social credit system aims to create a comprehensive "citizen score" by integrating data from multiple sources.

In recent times, Chinese companies have been increasingly entering the African telecommunications and surveillance technology market, offering governments soft

loans for equipment purchases and promising to manage and set up these systems. Huawei, a Chinese telecommunications giant, has helped Kenya install 1,800 high-definition (HD) cameras and 200 HD traffic surveillance systems in Nairobi. In 2018, the Guangzhou-based developer Cloud-Walk signed a controversial deal in Zimbabwe to manage a large-scale facial recognition program in collaboration with state security. This raises surveillance concerns due to China's use of technology for social control, particularly among Uyghur Muslims in the Xinjiang region. (Mitchell and Diamond, 2018).

Given the substantial Chinese investment in Ghana and the presence of Chinese citizens within the country, there exists a potential inclination for China to expand its Surveillance capabilities or exert influence over Ghana to encourage the adoption of its surveillance practices.

### **2.2.1 Globalization and Work Culture in Ghana.**

The process of globalisation has resulted in an unparalleled increase in international travel, therefore converting airports into vibrant hubs of worldwide interconnectedness. Ghanaian airports, such as Kotoka International Airport, strategically located, have become not only entry points to the country but also to the broader global community. The increasing number of passengers from diverse cultural backgrounds necessitates a fundamental shift in how employees interact with them (Tomlinson, 1999). A rise in the number of foreign travellers presents airport staff with communication difficulties. Language difficulties, differing communication styles, and various expectations are essential factors in everyday encounters. These problems underscore the importance of employing effective communication strategies to ensure seamless operations and a favourable passenger experience (Gudykunst and Kim, 2003).

Globalisation necessitates that airport personnel adeptly navigate a diverse cultural landscape, interacting with passengers, colleagues, and stakeholders from different regions worldwide. Developing the capacity to comprehend and appreciate various cultural subtleties becomes essential for promoting constructive engagements (Hofstede, 2001). Cultural sensitivity training programmes are crucial for providing workers with the necessary abilities to navigate varied environments (Bennett, 1993). Technological improvements have revolutionised airport operations, and globalisation is directly linked to this (Castells, 1996). The advent of advanced communication technology, online booking platforms, and computerised check-in procedures has fundamentally transformed the dynamics of employee relationships. Airport staff must possess the adaptability to keep pace with technological advancements to provide adequate services.

The process of globalisation has significant economic consequences that directly affect the workforce employed at airports in Ghana. Enhanced global commerce and travel are drivers of economic expansion, but they also present obstacles, such as unpredictable demand, which requires airports to utilise agile and adaptive operational and personnel management solutions (Stiglitz, 2003; Rodrik, 2011).

### **2.2.2 Challenges of Globalization in Ghanaian Airports.**

The Kotoka International Airport in Accra, along with other airports in Ghana, serves as a meeting point for many cultures due to the country's extensive history and the process of globalisation. Although the presence of many cultures at the airport enhances its atmosphere, it also presents a variety of challenges in terms of relationships between employees from different cultural backgrounds.

A significant obstacle faced in cross-cultural employee relations in Ghanaian airports is the presence of communication obstacles. Varied linguistic abilities, diverse accents, and differing communication approaches among staff and travellers might result in misinterpretations, perplexity, and operational inefficiencies. Efficient communication is crucial for guaranteeing seamless operations and delivering an excellent experience for travellers (Gudyknust and Kim, 2003). The presence of cultural diversity in Ghanaian airports may lead to misunderstandings due to variations in cultural norms, beliefs, and behaviours. Employees will perceive behaviours or gestures in different ways, resulting in inadvertent disputes. To address these disparities, airport personnel need to possess a heightened level of cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Cross-cultural encounters can expose discrepancies in assumptions about hierarchy and decision-making procedures (Trompenaars, 2011). Certain cultures place a higher value on hierarchical systems, while others adopt a more egalitarian stance. Managing these disparities will be challenging, potentially leading to frustration and inefficiency in the decision-making process (House et al., 2004). Implementing changes or new regulations will face opposition, especially if they conflict with workers' cultural norms or habits. The airport's ability to remain competitive and efficient will be impeded by opposition to adopting global standards or integrating new technology (Armenakis et al., 2002).

The following discussion and analysis outline the inherent challenges of Ghanaian culture and globalisation on employee performance in the workplace.

### **1. Time Culture**

The concept of time culture, which refers to the prevailing cultural norms and attitudes towards timeliness and time management, has been a persistent problem in Ghana.

This study examines the historical context of a time-deficient culture in Ghana, analysing the impact of cultural, economic, and social factors on attitudes towards time over the years.

### *Colonial Legacy on Time Culture in Ghana*

The legacy of British colonialism in Ghana has had a profound impact on contemporary perceptions and practices of time, particularly the development of what is often described as a "deficient time culture." Scholars argue that the imposition of Western concepts of linear and mechanical time during the colonial period disrupted pre-existing indigenous temporal systems, which were more cyclical, fluid, and socially oriented (Mbiti, 1990; Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991).

During British colonial rule, strict time discipline was enforced to serve the administrative and economic interests of the empire. The colonial regime relied on rigid timekeeping practices to streamline bureaucracy, regulate labour, and maintain control over local populations (Nugent, 2004; Cooper, 1996). These temporal structures were not organically integrated into local cosmologies but rather introduced as part of broader mechanisms of colonial governance and domination. As Nkrumah (1965) argued, colonialism did not just occupy territories—it reordered consciousness, including how time was understood and experienced.

In Ghana, this colonial imposition of punctuality and clock-time systems clashed with indigenous conceptions of time, which traditionally emphasised adaptability, seasonality, and community engagement over precision and individualism (Gyekye, 1996; Awuah-Nyamekye, 2012). This temporal conflict has had long-term effects. Although independence was achieved in 1957, the socio-cultural aftermath of

colonisation has persisted, influencing attitudes toward time management in both public institutions and private life.

Ekeh (1975) notes that postcolonial African states inherited dual public and civic cultures—one rooted in colonial administrative rationality and another grounded in Indigenous communal traditions. This duality is observable in Ghana's time culture, where formal institutions promote Western-style punctuality (especially in business and education). At the same time, informal social settings often adhere to more relaxed temporal expectations.

In the education sector, for instance, colonial-style British schooling systems imposed a high premium on timeliness and scheduling, which were viewed as tools for discipline and moral reform (Akyeampong, 2001). However, the rigidity of these imported norms often failed to resonate with Ghanaian communities' lived realities and social rhythms. As such, there remains a noticeable dissonance between formal expectations of punctuality and informal cultural practices.

Even today, the concept of "African Time" continues to structure daily life and public discourse in Ghana. This term, often invoked humorously but critically, refers to the tendency for events and engagements to begin later than scheduled. Scholars such as Nyamnjoh (2002) and Mlama (2005) argue that this approach is not simply a symptom of inefficiency or disorganisation but reflects a worldview where time is relational and subordinated to human interaction and social harmony.

In Ghanaian culture, interpersonal relationships are often prioritised over abstract schedules. The value placed on community cohesion, respect, and hospitality can supersede strict adherence to timeframes, particularly during social and communal gatherings (Ampofo, 2001). In these contexts, arriving "on time" may be perceived as

less important than coming in the right spirit, when one is mentally and socially ready to participate.

Nevertheless, the persistence of this relaxed time culture in professional environments, such as the civil service, transportation, and even airport security, can conflict with global business standards and performance management expectations. In sectors increasingly influenced by international benchmarks, such as aviation and border control, the tension between local temporal orientations and globalised work cultures creates practical and cultural challenges (Kuada, 2010).

Understanding this tension requires a nuanced appreciation of Ghana's postcolonial context, where colonial legacies, global pressures, and indigenous value systems intersect. Rather than framing "African Time" solely as a deficit, scholars advocate for a more critical and culturally sensitive approach that considers the historical, social, and political forces shaping time discipline in Ghana (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991; Mbembe, 2001).

The cultural beliefs about authority and hierarchy in Ghana also influence how time is perceived and valued. Occasionally, people perceive timeliness as a sign of deference towards authority figures or individuals in positions of influence. Consequently, there can be opposition to strictly following timetables, especially when hierarchical connections are emphasised. This cultural dynamic might lead to a dearth of promptness and responsibility in fulfilling deadlines or appointments. Despite diligent efforts to foster timeliness and efficient time management, cultural norms and values sometimes resist change. "African Time" is deeply ingrained in Ghanaian culture and reinforced through socialisation and daily interactions. Attempts to introduce Western-

style timekeeping systems will encounter opposition or be seen as a deviation from traditional customs (Opoku-Agyemang, 2016).

Ultimately, cultural factors have a substantial impact on the continuation of a negative time culture in Ghana. The notion of "African Time," in conjunction with cultural norms that prioritise social connections and deference to authority, leads to a relaxed approach towards timeliness and adherence to timetables. To effectively address the issue of poor time management culture, it is necessary to have a nuanced understanding of the cultural factors at play and to devise measures that both respect Ghanaian cultural traditions and encourage punctuality and effective time management (Opoku-Agyemang, 2016).

#### *Bureaucratic Inefficiencies on time culture in Ghana*

The presence of bureaucratic inefficiencies in government institutions and administrative procedures significantly contributes to the perpetuation of a hostile work culture in Ghana. This article examines the intersection between bureaucratic inefficiencies, such as excessive paperwork, delays, and a lack of accountability, and cultural norms and economic realities, which exacerbate the problem of poor work culture.

The presence of bureaucratic inefficiencies in government institutions and administrative procedures is a significant factor in perpetuating a culture of poor performance in Ghana. This article examines how bureaucratic inefficiencies, characterised by excessive administrative procedures, delays, and a lack of accountability, intersect with cultural norms and economic realities to exacerbate the issue of a deficient time culture. A lack of accountability and transparency within governmental institutions often exacerbates bureaucratic inefficiencies. The lack of



well-defined lines of duty and systems for ensuring that officials are held responsible for delays and inefficiency further weakens efforts to foster timeliness and effective time management. In the absence of repercussions for failing to meet deadlines or causing extended delays, there is less motivation for government personnel to prioritise efficiency and timely delivery of services (Adinyira, 2013).

The presence of bureaucratic inefficiencies in Ghana has a notable influence on economic operations. Obtaining permissions, licences, or approvals will be time-consuming, which can impede corporate operations and investment prospects. This can result in missed deadlines, increased costs, and decreased income. The inherent unpredictability of bureaucratic procedures acts as a deterrent to entrepreneurship and innovation, thereby impeding economic growth and development. It also intersects with Ghanaian cultural norms and views regarding time. The notion of "*African Time*," which is defined by a flexible and laid-back attitude towards timeliness, is further strengthened by bureaucratic delays and administrative inefficiencies. Individuals will develop a tolerance for delays and extended waiting periods, which in turn reinforces a negative time culture in both official and informal contexts (ibid).

Efficiently addressing bureaucratic inefficiencies is crucial for improving timeliness and effective time management in Ghana. Implementing digital solutions, enhancing transparency and accountability, and optimising administrative procedures will effectively minimise delays and improve efficiency inside government organisations. Furthermore, it is essential to make concerted efforts to foster a culture of responsibility and expertise among those in public positions. This is essential in creating an atmosphere that is more favourable for the practice of being prompt and effectively managing time.

## **2. Maintenance Culture**

The history of inadequate maintenance practices in Ghana is complex, shaped by a range of variables, including political instability, economic difficulties, social attitudes, and institutional shortcomings. Below is a concise summary of the significant aspects of this historical account, along with corresponding sources.

### *Colonial Legacy on Ghanaian Maintenance Culture*

The history of inadequate maintenance practices in Ghana is closely linked to its colonial heritage, in which infrastructure was often built and operated with a primary emphasis on satisfying colonial objectives rather than ensuring long-term viability. The British colonial administration in Ghana, formerly known as the Gold Coast, implemented a system that prioritised resource extraction while neglecting the need for infrastructure maintenance. During the colonial period, infrastructure such as trains, roads, and ports was constructed to facilitate the exploitation of natural resources, primarily gold, cocoa, and lumber, for sale to the colonial metropole. The focus was mainly on expeditiously and effectively constructing infrastructure to support the economic objectives of the colonial powers, with little regard for the future maintenance needs of these assets. A significant aspect of Ghana's colonial heritage is the development of railway systems. The British colonial authority constructed railroads to facilitate the transportation of commodities from inland regions to coastal areas for export. Nevertheless, after attaining independence, the maintenance of these railroads was disregarded due to insufficient funding and specialised knowledge, resulting in their progressive deterioration and eventual abandonment (Domfeh, 2008).

Moreover, colonial practices often marginalised Indigenous populations and deliberately prevented them from participating in decision-making processes concerning the creation and maintenance of infrastructure. The absence of responsibility and engagement in maintenance efforts led to a disconnection between the Indigenous community and the infrastructure constructed by the colonial authority. The colonial past also shaped Ghanaians' ideas regarding maintenance. Even after gaining independence, the belief persisted that colonial rule was responsible for the infrastructure rather than the local populations. This mindset fostered a culture of reliance, where the task of maintenance was viewed as the obligation of others rather than a shared responsibility (Domfeh, 2008).

In brief, the enduring influence of colonialism has profoundly shaped the culture of maintenance in Ghana. The neglect of maintenance efforts will be attributed to the prioritisation of colonial interests, disregard for long-term sustainability, marginalisation of local populations, and the preservation of a culture of reliance. It is essential to confront the lasting effects of colonialism to foster a transition towards a culture that emphasises proactive maintenance and sustainable infrastructure development in Ghana.

#### *Economic Constraints and Dependency on Aid*

Persistent economic constraints and a reliance on external aid for infrastructure development significantly influence the inadequate maintenance practices in Ghana. Over the decades, macroeconomic instability—characterised by inflation, currency depreciation, high debt servicing costs, and limited fiscal space—has weakened the government's ability to allocate sufficient resources toward routine infrastructure maintenance (World Bank, 2020; IMF, 2022). Maintenance budgets are often among

the first to be cut when public finances come under pressure, as governments prioritize immediate political or social needs over long-term asset sustainability (Grimsey & Lewis, 2017).

Since independence in 1957, Ghana has undergone multiple episodes of economic difficulty, including structural adjustment in the 1980s, debt crises in the 1990s and early 2000s, and more recent debt sustainability concerns. These constraints have directly impacted the country's capacity to fund infrastructure upkeep, especially in sectors like transport, health, and water services (Aryeetey & Baah-Boateng, 2016). Infrastructure is frequently built with significant external financing, but the maintenance phase is left underfunded due to inadequate revenue mobilisation and weak institutional planning (AfDB, 2019).

Furthermore, Ghana's **reliance on foreign aid and donor-funded projects** often results in poor alignment between project implementation and long-term national maintenance strategies. Development assistance is typically directed toward new capital-intensive projects, which are politically attractive, rather than toward recurrent spending like maintenance (Whitfield, 2009; Gavas & Gulrajani, 2022). Aid-dependent infrastructure initiatives sometimes fail to cultivate local ownership, capacity, or accountability, as external agencies lead both design and implementation. This top-down approach can create a sense of detachment among local authorities and communities, weakening their incentive to maintain infrastructure assets (Killick, 2010; Amanor, 2020).

Moreover, many aid-funded projects are subject to short-term planning cycles that prioritise visible outputs—such as roads, schools, or health centres—while neglecting the life-cycle costs of operation and maintenance. As noted by the African

Development Bank (2019), this results in a growing infrastructure maintenance deficit that undermines service delivery, increases long-term costs, and contributes to asset deterioration. The lack of robust post-project monitoring mechanisms further exacerbates this challenge, as many projects are handed over to local entities without the financial or technical capacity to sustain them.

In sum, the interplay between Ghana's economic constraints and continued dependence on foreign aid creates systemic weaknesses in infrastructure sustainability. Without strategic reforms that focus on building local fiscal capacity, enhancing domestic resource mobilisation, and embedding maintenance planning in project design, the infrastructure sector will continue to suffer from underperformance and accelerated deterioration.

#### *Societal Attitudes and Institutional Weaknesses*

The prevalence of inadequate maintenance practices in Ghana is closely tied to cultural attitudes and institutional deficiencies. Commonly, society tends to view maintenance as the exclusive duty of the government, resulting in a deficiency of community involvement in maintenance endeavours. However, the presence of institutional problems, such as corruption, inefficiency, and a lack of capacity within maintenance agencies, hinders the implementation of efficient maintenance methods. In Ghana, there is a common belief that the government is solely responsible for maintaining infrastructure, which is reflected in societal views. This notion promotes a culture of reliance, where residents expect the government to address all maintenance requirements without active community involvement. Consequently, individuals often lack a sense of ownership and responsibility, resulting in the neglect and degradation of infrastructure (Adinyira, 2013).

Additionally, conventional cultural beliefs and customs might also lead to a lack of emphasis on proper maintenance practices. Occasionally, there is insufficient recognition of the significance of routine maintenance, resulting in a mentality that favours immediate benefits at the expense of long-term viability. In addition, socio-economic inequalities will exacerbate the difficulties in maintaining infrastructure, with marginalised populations being most severely affected by inadequate maintenance. Institutional shortcomings further compound the issue of insufficient maintenance culture in Ghana. Corruption within maintenance agencies can misallocate funds away from crucial maintenance efforts, leading to further degradation of infrastructure. Bureaucratic inefficiencies will cause delays in maintenance initiatives, which can worsen the situation and lead to higher expenditures in the future. Inadequate technical proficiency and limited capacity within maintenance agencies may impede the development and execution of efficient maintenance programmes (Adinyira, 2013).

To effectively tackle the issue of inadequate maintenance culture in Ghana, it is necessary to address both the prevailing social attitudes and the existing institutional inadequacies. To encourage a transition towards a culture that prioritises proactive maintenance and sustainability, it is essential to include and actively engage all stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organisations, and local communities. Furthermore, it is crucial to prioritise initiatives aimed at enhancing institutional capacity, promoting openness and accountability, and combating corruption to facilitate the efficient maintenance of procedures.

### *Environmental Factors and Climate Change*

Environmental conditions and the consequences of climate change greatly influence the maintenance culture in Ghana. The nation's equatorial environment exposes its

infrastructure to a range of challenges, including intense precipitation, flooding, and high humidity, all of which can accelerate deterioration. Inadequate maintenance methods exacerbate the effects of these environmental conditions, leading to further degradation of infrastructure. The tropical environment of Ghana presents significant challenges for maintaining infrastructure. Intense precipitation, especially during the rainy season, will lead to erosion, landslides, and damage to infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and drainage systems. Flooding is a frequent event in several regions of the nation, resulting in damage to infrastructure and disturbance of transportation networks (Agyei-Mensah, 2012).

In addition, the impacts of climate change, such as more frequent and severe extreme weather events, worsen the difficulties in maintaining infrastructure in Ghana. Climate change will modify the behaviour of natural systems, leading to increased susceptibility of infrastructure to damage and deterioration due to rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns. Insufficient maintenance methods exacerbate the influence of environmental conditions on infrastructure in Ghana. Unattended drainage systems have the potential to accumulate debris, which can exacerbate flooding during periods of intense rainfall. Unmaintained roads are more prone to erosion and deterioration, resulting in higher maintenance expenses and posing safety risks to drivers (Ibid).

Moreover, the absence of proactive maintenance planning and investment in climate-resilient infrastructure renders Ghana's infrastructure inadequately equipped to withstand the impacts of climate change. In the absence of proper maintenance, infrastructure assets experience accelerated deterioration, necessitating more frequent repairs and replacements, which in turn place further demand on already constrained resources. It is essential to make a collaborative endeavour to enhance maintenance practices and construct climate resilience. Engaging in proactive

maintenance, which involves conducting regular inspections, repairs, and improvements, will effectively reduce the influence of environmental conditions on infrastructure. Incorporating climate resilience factors into maintenance planning and infrastructure design may enhance Ghana's infrastructure's ability to withstand the challenges presented by a changing environment (Agyei-Mensah, 2012).

### **2.2.3 Gaps in Existing Literature**

Upon reviewing the literature on workplace surveillance, a potential gap was identified regarding workplace employee surveillance, which includes cross-cultural perspectives. Workplace surveillance practices may vary significantly across cultures. Exploring how cultural differences influence the acceptance and effectiveness of surveillance measures is an interesting area for this study to investigate.

### **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

Surveillance technologies and practices have increasingly come under scrutiny in academic literature, mainly through the lens of post-Foucauldian theories of power and control. This body of work, rooted in Michel Foucault's ideas of disciplinary power and governmentality, has been instrumental in understanding how surveillance operates as a tool of governance and social control. Foucault's concepts emphasise how institutions use surveillance to regulate and normalise behaviour, making subjects compliant with societal norms. Post-Foucauldian scholars have built on this foundation, exploring how surveillance technologies manage populations, reinforce power structures, and perpetuate social inequality.

Despite the strengths of this literature, it has been critiqued for its limitations in addressing the role of human subjectivity and agency. While post-Foucauldian frameworks excel at revealing how power operates from above through systemic



structures, they often overlook the lived experiences of individuals subjected to surveillance. Specifically, they offer limited insight into how individuals interpret, negotiate, and sometimes resist the surveillance practices they encounter in their daily lives.

This thesis seeks to creatively address this gap by supplementing post-Foucauldian analyses with symbolic interactionist theories. Symbolic interactionism, a sociological framework that focuses on how individuals create and interpret meaning through social interaction, offers a valuable lens for exploring the subjective dimensions of surveillance. While Foucault provides a top-down view of how surveillance operates as a mechanism of control, symbolic interactionism shifts the focus to a bottom-up perspective—examining how individuals understand and react to being surveilled and how they actively engage with or resist these practices.

This section expands upon the conceptual frameworks and provides the reader with an overview of symbolic interactionism and its relevance to the present investigation. This section will establish meaningful connections between the theoretical viewpoints, highlighting their strengths and perceived limitations.

### **2.3.1 Symbolic Interactionism**

According to Meltzer et al. (1975), Symbolic Interactionism is considered challenging to delineate as a distinct theoretical framework within the field of sociology. Recent research has shown that the implementation of Symbolic Interaction in the workplace can facilitate an understanding of how employees perceive and interpret their work interactions (Smelser and Swedberg, 1994). This suggests that the theoretical perspective of Symbolic Interaction has gained clarity and is now being applied in various research domains. For instance, Symbolic Interactionism has been used in the

field of design and architecture to understand the connections between building design and the meanings conveyed to those residing in or near these structures (Molana & Adams, 2019).

While many sociologists view Symbolic Interactionism as a cohesive framework, several divergences have emerged in the interpretations of its fundamental ideas over time (Aksan et al., 2009). This section examines the various manifestations of these variations and offers insights into the divergences and rationales that have emerged over time following the establishment of Symbolic Interactionism. The provided information will serve as a foundational framework for this investigation and will guide the study's focus, maintaining a concentrated focus on the most relevant variations throughout its duration.

Symbolic Interactionism has three major assumptions: 1) 'Humans respond to objects based on the meaning that objects possess for them'; 2) 'Meanings come from communication between people'; 3) 'These meanings are modified through communication and interpretation' (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013, p.460.). This phenomenon will be perceived subjectively, whereby I view a rock as a utilitarian object for holding down papers. Still, another individual will perceive it as an ornamental element suitable for enhancing the aesthetic appeal of a garden. The rock's significance is derived from its tangible attributes and its potential practical applications. Nevertheless, during a discussion about the rock, my perspectives have the potential to change, leading to a possible reevaluation of my associations with the rock. This might occur, for instance, if my interlocutor highlights additional advantageous attributes of the rock that were previously unknown to me. The interpretation ascribed to an item is contingent upon several factors, and this will not hold for comparable things or even for the same object under different circumstances

or at other times. These examples illustrate how an item will be subject to varying perceptions, hence influencing its associated meaning. Irrespective of the theoretical framework, Symbolic Interactionism is characterised by a set of assumptions that are widely accepted (Mead, 2015; Blumer, 1969; James, 1918).

The theoretical framework emphasises the importance of an actor's perception of stimuli, the role of communicative relationships in shaping meaning, and the potential for meaning to evolve through interactions. It also suggests that reality is subjective and varies according to individual perception, highlighting the concept of no absolute truth. The statement emphasises the complexity of research inquiries and the fundamental principles of symbolic interactionism, which require collecting evidence from various sources and using triangulation techniques to determine meaning, stressing the need for a methodological approach (Wiley, 2014). This implies that the present study does not provide definitive conclusions but rather illuminates the subjective interpretation of the stimuli. Consequently, if a different researcher were to conduct the same investigation, the results would likely diverge significantly. The consequences of validity and reliability are relevant to this matter. However, from a symbolic interactionist perspective, this is considered acceptable and anticipated (ibid). Regarding my research, I have effectively handled the implications of validity and reliability by cross-referencing several qualitative data sets. A more comprehensive explanation of this will be found in the methods chapter.

### **2.3.3 Types and Implications of Symbolic Interactionism**

This research examines various classifications of Symbolic Interaction, with a focus on their nuanced distinctions. Warshay (1971) delineates eight discrete typologies of Symbolic Interactionism, elucidating the theorists responsible for these variations and

highlighting the fundamental disparities that set them apart. The aim is to clarify and establish a stance by discussing the selected one's application to different contexts. These include (1) the Blumer school, which focuses on subjective aspects and is associated with scholars such as Blumer and the early Strauss; (2) the Iowa school, which emphasises self-theory and utilises a positivistic methodology, with notable contributors including Kuhn, McPartland, Couch, Stewart, Garretson, Mulford, and Salisbury; (3) Interaction with de-emphasis on language; (4) Role theory with emphasis on cognition; (5) Dramaturgical school; (6) field-theory; (7) Existential brand; (8) Ethnomethodology, stressing the complexity and fluidity of the web of social life. This section focuses on the differences in symbolic interactionism, primarily arising from methodology, and highlights the Chicago and Iowa schools as prominent schools. It aims to examine the nuanced distinctions between these well-known schools. However, I will be using the "Looking-Glass Self" concept, which is most closely associated with the Chicago School of thought within symbolic interactionism and align it with the specific topic of my study.

Symbolic Interactionism's main branches were identified by Mead, Blumer, and Kuhn, all from the Chicago School, who believed in the "Meadian tradition" and the ability of actors to create and modify experiences through their past experiences. The Iowa school, influenced by Kuhn's contributions, is based on a scientific foundation, viewing interaction and behaviour as intentional actions influenced by prior events and anticipated actions (Katovich et al., 2003, p. 125). To discern the distinctions between the two, it is essential to examine the individuals who influenced each respective school.

Faris (1967) identifies the Chicago school as a "pure science" institution, while Musolf (2003) suggests it discussed alternative techniques for natural and cultural sciences,

with three interconnected subjects illustrating the diversity of methodologies. The effectiveness of phenomenological and operational methods in studying human behaviour is influenced by several factors, including the benefits, appropriate observation procedures, and the selection of suitable concepts for analysing human conduct (Meltzer et al., 1975). Both Mead and Kuhn, founders of the two schools, share an interest in understanding human cognition and interaction, but their methods differ significantly. Mead focuses on subjective experiences, while Kuhn emphasises scientific methodology and systematic, objective measurement (Kuhn, 1964). Mead's rejection of this theory and his subsequent argument against it provides a further methodological distinction. Mead argues against the inclusion of 'variables' in social research, contending that these variables contribute to a kind of human conduct characterised by "static, stimulus-response" patterns (Mead, 1934). Kuhn developed the 'Twenty Statement Test' (TST) to standardise data collection on human behaviour, addressing differing perspectives. This technique converts Symbolic Interactionism principles into measurable variables, allowing for the empirical testing of propositions.

The Iowa School and Chicago School differ primarily in their primary objectives. The Iowa School focuses on Symbolic Interactionism through a scientific approach, while the Chicago School emphasises theoretical viewpoints. In his seminal work published in 1960, Kuhn argued for the legitimacy of a test technique by examining its inherent logical process and establishing correlations between test results and individual behaviour, highlighting two key aspects. The notion of empirical testing is inherently contradictory to the subjective understanding of truth often associated with Symbolic Interactionism. However, Kuhn used this approach to enhance the scientific nature of Symbolic Interactionism. In this research, I will be adapting the "Looking-Glass Self" concept of symbolic interaction.

### **2.3.4 Habit, instinct, emotions and self**

Symbolic Interactionism encompasses a group of scholars who place significant focus and stress on the concepts of Habit, Instinct, Emotions, and Self. Dewey (1922) discusses the concepts of Habit, Instinct, and Self, whereas Mead (1934) uses other terms such as Motivation and Emotion. Given the clear presence of these themes in the body of literature and the discussions by major theorists, it would be unwise to disregard the significance of these themes within the theoretical framework and their potential implications for this research. Based solely on the lexical content, one can envision how these terms will impact the interpretation of interactions. For instance, the term "instinct" implies a limited cognitive engagement and a greater reliance on reactive behaviour. Conversely, the term "emotion" indicates a potential for meaning to vary from one moment to another. The subsequent portion of this chapter will discuss each of these topics and the relevant literature.

#### *Habits*

Habits, as discussed by Dewey and James (1918), are learned inclinations towards specific patterns formed within social structures. In the workplace, these habits significantly shape how employees interpret actions, objects, and stimuli. The social environment of the workplace, including organisational norms and peer influences, plays a crucial role in the formation and reinforcement of these habits. Employees' habitual behaviours, influenced by their social interactions, impact their responses to various workplace situations and their interactions with colleagues.

#### *Instincts*

The concept of instincts, primarily innate behaviours, contrasts with learned habits. In a workplace setting, instinctual behaviours might manifest in employees' immediate

reactions to certain situations without cognitive engagement (Mead, 1934). For instance, instinctual responses to perceived threats or challenges can influence how employees interact with one another, potentially leading to conflicts or increased stress. Understanding these instinctual behaviours can help in creating strategies to manage such reactions and improve workplace dynamics.

### *Emotions*

According to James (1918), it is proposed that emotional reactions primarily manifest inside an individual's own body, whereas instincts persist within the context of their connections with other objects. Emotions play a critical role in shaping workplace interactions. Emotional responses, such as anger, love, or frustration, influence how employees perceive and react to their environment and colleagues. Emotions can drive the formation of interpersonal relationships, with employees gravitating towards those who share similar emotional and cognitive interpretations of events. Moreover, emotions impact the salience and conduct of employees, affecting their engagement, productivity, and overall job satisfaction. Recognising and addressing the emotional aspects of employee interactions can lead to a more harmonious and productive workplace. This observation also demonstrates that individuals' interpretations of various inputs, behaviours, and events will be modified as a result of their emotional attachment. The concept being discussed has the potential to enhance individuals' comprehension of their perceptions, as it requires interviewers to cultivate an understanding of the emotional state of the interviewees.

### *Self*

'Self' is seen as a distinct entity inside the body, but with a certain degree of separation. The human body lacks a unified perception of itself as a cohesive entity. Still, instead,

the individual's subjective understanding of sensory input is attributed to the concept of self (Mead, 1934). The idea of self, as understood in symbolic interactionism, encompasses the subjective understanding of one's identity and the perception of sensory input. In the workplace, this self-concept influences how employees perceive their roles and interactions with others. The attributes of self, such as reflexivity and agency, allow employees to interpret and assign meaning to their experiences. This interpretation shapes their behaviour and interactions, contributing to the overall workplace culture. A strong sense of self can empower employees to engage more positively and constructively with their colleagues and tasks.

In conclusion, integrating habits, instincts, emotions, and the self into the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism offers valuable insights into employee interactions in the workplace. These concepts underscore the significance of recognising the social, emotional, and cognitive factors that shape how employees perceive and interact with their environment and colleagues. By considering these elements, organisations can develop strategies to enhance employee engagement, cohesion, and productivity, leading to a more positive and effective workplace environment.

#### **2.3.4 The Relationship between Language and Society**

George Herbert Mead's "Mind, Self, and Society" (1934) is a foundational text in the field of symbolic interactionism, providing a detailed examination of the development of the self and cognitive processes. Mead posits that the development of the mind is rooted in the stimulus-response mechanism, where thinking involves anticipating and eliciting desired reactions from others. This interactive process reflects a social attitude that underpins collective social organisations, with vocal gestures being particularly



significant due to their consistent interpretation by both the sender and receiver (Mead, 1934).

Mead emphasises that the mind emerges with the advent of language, which facilitates inner conversation and thought. He asserts that the social process precedes individual self-awareness, highlighting that meaningful communication and cognitive development are inherently social. The emergence of significant symbols, primarily through language, enables individuals to accurately perceive and engage with the external social context in their behaviour (Mead, 1934).

The development of language and significant symbols is critical in Mead's framework, as these symbols evoke uniform responses within a social group, fostering shared attitudes towards objects. The interpretation of gestures depends on the consistent reactions they elicit from others, underscoring the social nature of meaning. This shared realm of communication, or discourse universe, is essential for gestures to have significance, highlighting the role of social experiences in constructing meaning (Mead, 1934).

Mead's theory diverges from classic behaviourism by allowing varied responses to stimuli, enhancing the understanding of symbolic interactionism. However, critics such as Collins (1988) and Joas (1985) argue that Mead's theory is limited in its practical application of language. They contend that his focus on symbolic interactions and simple expressions overlooks the complexity of syntax and semantic fields, as well as the diverse pragmatic uses of language. Despite these limitations, Mead's work remains instrumental in the study of symbolic interactionism, offering profound insights into the social origins of the mind and self.

### **2.3.5 Looking-Glass Self – Concept**

The Looking-Glass Self, a concept developed by Charles Horton Cooley, is a key idea in symbolic interactionism that describes how individuals build their self-identity through social interaction. It is based on the idea that people shape their self-concept by imagining how others perceive and evaluate them and then adjusting their behaviour accordingly. In the context of surveillance, applying the Looking-Glass Self can provide valuable insights into how individuals modify their behaviour when they are aware of being watched or believe they are under observation.

The Looking-Glass Self refers to the process by which individuals form their self-concepts based on their perceptions of how others view them. Cooley (1902) theorised that people develop their sense of self through social interaction, which involves three key stages:

1. Imagining how we appear to others;
2. Imagining how others judge us based on our appearance;
3. Developing feelings about ourselves based on our perception of others' judgments.

In a surveillance context, these processes unfold as individuals interact with surveillance technologies and the agents behind them (in this case, security personnel at Kotoka International Airport), influencing how they perceive themselves and behave. This symbolic interactionist perspective emphasises the micro-level interactions between individuals and the broader surveillance system, offering insight into how surveillance influences self-identity and social behaviour.

I have explained below how to apply the three components of the *Looking-Glass Self* in Surveillance relevant to this study.

1. *Imagining How We Appear to Others*: When individuals are in a surveillance environment—such as an airport with CCTV cameras and security checkpoints—they become acutely aware of how they are perceived by those watching them. At this stage, individuals mentally visualise how they appear to the surveillance system's gaze, often adjusting their behaviour to conform to perceived expectations. Goffman (1959) extends this idea by explaining how individuals engage in impression management, consciously presenting themselves in ways that they believe will be viewed favourably by others. In a surveillance context, this might involve behaving in a manner perceived as non-threatening or law-abiding, even if the individual has no intention of wrongdoing.
2. *Imagining the Judgment of Others*: After imagining how they appear, individuals project the likely judgment of the observers. In surveillance contexts, this judgment can be particularly charged, as individuals will feel that they are being scrutinised for signs of criminality, deviance, or non-compliance. For instance, studies have shown that individuals from marginalised communities often feel disproportionately shrivelled, leading to heightened anxiety and fear of being profiled (Monahan, 2010). This second stage of the Looking-Glass Self process emphasises how individuals internalise the judgments they anticipate from those controlling the surveillance system, shaping their responses.
3. *Developing Feelings About Ourselves*: Ultimately, individuals develop emotions based on how they perceive themselves being judged. Favourable judgments (e.g., feeling seen as cooperative or compliant) can lead to feelings of security or pride. In contrast, negative judgments (e.g., fear of being seen as suspicious) will lead to anxiety, shame, or resistance (Lyon, 2007). For example, passengers passing through airport security may feel anxious about being

perceived as suspicious, even if they have done nothing wrong, leading them to adjust their behaviour in a hyper-compliant manner (Martin, Van Brakel, & Bernhard, 2009). This emotional response reveals the internalisation of surveillance as a form of social control that shapes individual psychology and identity.

While much of the surveillance literature is influenced by Foucauldian frameworks that focus on panopticism and the disciplining effects of surveillance on populations (Foucault, 1977), symbolic interactionism—primarily through the concept of the Looking-Glass Self—introduces a complementary perspective that focuses on individual subjectivity and agency. Foucault's model provides a macro-level analysis, emphasising how surveillance systems function to enforce compliance and regulate behaviour from a top-down perspective. In contrast, symbolic interactionism shifts attention to how individuals actively interpret, negotiate, and respond to these surveillance systems in their daily lives (Ball, 2009).

By focusing on the subjective experience of being watched, the Looking-Glass Self concept reveals that individuals are not simply passive recipients of surveillance. Instead, they are active participants who constantly assess how they are being viewed and modify their behaviour accordingly. This dynamic interaction between the individual and the surveillance system highlights the social construction of self-identity in response to surveillance, a process often overlooked in purely structural analyses.

#### **2.3.5.1 Applying the Looking-Glass Self to Surveillance Contexts**

In practical surveillance environments, such as airports, shopping malls, or public spaces, the Looking-Glass Self plays a crucial role in shaping how individuals perceive themselves and their behaviour. For example, passengers in an airport will adjust their

behaviour to project an image of calmness and compliance because they imagine that security personnel are watching for signs of nervousness or suspicious activity. This imagined surveillance gaze leads individuals to engage in self-regulation (Lyon, 2001), demonstrating how surveillance is internalised at the level of individual psychology.

Moreover, the emotional and behavioural responses of individuals subjected to surveillance are shaped by their social positions and cultural backgrounds. Minority groups, for instance, will be more sensitive to the gaze of surveillance technologies due to past experiences of racial profiling or discrimination (Monahan, 2010). The Looking-Glass Self helps explain how these groups internalise and respond to surveillance in ways that differ from those of majority populations, highlighting the importance of identity and social context in surveillance studies.

The integration of the Looking-Glass Self into the theoretical framework of this thesis on surveillance offers a significant contribution to understanding surveillance practices. By focusing on the micro-level interactions between individuals and surveillance systems, this concept allows for a deeper exploration of how surveillance shapes not only behaviour but also self-perception and identity formation. This symbolic interactionist analysis enriches the Foucauldian view of surveillance by emphasising the agency of individuals in interpreting and responding to the gaze of surveillance technologies.

Through the lens of the Looking-Glass Self, surveillance is not only a top-down mechanism of control but also a social process in which individuals actively engage, negotiate, and adapt to their perceptions of being watched. This theoretical approach broadens the scope of surveillance studies, offering insights into the lived experiences

of those under surveillance and the complex ways in which surveillance technologies interact with social identities, emotions, and self-concepts.

By incorporating these theoretical insights, the thesis provides a more comprehensive analysis of surveillance, integrating the macro-level dynamics of control with the micro-level processes of identity formation and behaviour modification.

### **2.3.6 Symbolic Interactionism as a Methodological Framework**

Symbolic Interactionists generally employ five primary approaches, including field methods, ethnography, participant observation, interviewing, and life history methods, as well as visual methods (Gecas, 2003). There are notable differences between Blumer and Kuhn in their methodological perspectives. Blumer advocated for a unique approach to studying human behaviour, while Kuhn emphasised the importance of methodological unity across scientific disciplines. Blumer aimed to improve societal comprehensibility, while Kuhn aimed to enhance societal predictability.

Blumer and Kuhn's research on cognitive processes in interactions with others, surroundings, and external stimuli led to divergent perspectives due to contrasting methodologies and procedures, resulting in the emergence of two distinct schools of Symbolic Interactionism. Kuhn operationalised the core principles of Symbolic Interactionism and decided to either reconceptualise or reject techniques and notions that he considered non-empirical (Kuhn, 1964). Blumer's research centred on the concept of "Sympathetic Introspection" as a means of conducting "critical qualitative inquiry", which formed the foundation of his methodological assumptions (Blumer, 1986). This approach diverges from Kuhn's methodologies since it requires the researcher to mentally place oneself in the same circumstances as the subjects under

investigation rather than relying on a common framework that aligns with Kuhn's perspective of predictable behaviours.

Both approaches can be classified as empirical research since they rely on observations and experiences as a basis for establishing facts. However, Kuhn's approach seems to strive for the quantification of these observations and experiences, thereby transitioning from a qualitative to a quantitative methodology. House (2018) suggests that both qualitative and quantitative research approaches should be considered on a continuum rather than distinct opposites. She emphasises the importance of engaging in the dichotomy debate, stating that qualitative research aims to understand human conduct, while quantitative research elucidates human behaviour. The study's objective is to gain insight into participants' perspectives rather than explaining the outcomes of their activities.

### **2.3.7 Symbolic Interactionism relevance to this study**

Symbolic Interaction is a valuable framework for examining this research, as it involves conceptualising truth and developing scientific procedures for data collection and validation. Conducting interviews with participants to establish connections between their knowledge, beliefs, and experiences acquired through stimuli or interactions can be gratifying. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding and critical examination of employees' perceptions of their interactions with surveillance, colleagues, and management, utilising the interactionist perspective on reality, as multiple versions of truth will exist, allowing for a more rigorous study. When considering the perception of workplace surveillance, supervisors appear to be more tolerant of it than junior employees, leading to a connection between the fundamental

concepts of Symbolic Interactionism and the perception of truth through the interpretation of meanings derived from social interactions (Blumer, 1986).

Symbolic interactionism emphasises the process by which people shape their identities and interpret the world through interactions that utilise symbols, such as words, gestures, and actions. The commodification of individuals, as noted by Foucault, Lyon, Haggerty, and Zuboff, will have a detrimental impact on their sense of identity, causing them to view themselves primarily as instruments for production rather than as multifaceted individuals with distinct experiences and needs. Regarding the treatment of employees as commodities, it conveys symbolic significance. It conveys the message that their worth is only determined by their economic input, resulting in dehumanisation and a decrease in their self-esteem. In the context of a workplace, power dynamics, as posited by Deleuze and Foucault, will be seen as symbolic manifestations of authority and control. Employees derive meaning from these symbols and interpretations, enabling them to comprehend their positions, duties, and interactions with supervisors and peers.

Symbolic interactionism in this study places a significant emphasis on the role of interactions and connections in influencing individual experiences. Engaging in employee control through surveillance will result in strained relationships, a lack of trust, and lower levels of job satisfaction. Employees will react to such treatment by adapting their interactions or exploring alternative methods to express their individuality. The capacity of individuals to understand and negotiate meaning is recognised in symbolic interactionism. When workers are treated as subjects or confronted with power disparities, they will adopt several techniques to demonstrate their identity or fight being reduced to simple objects of trade. This will include actively pursuing meaningful contacts, establishing informal support networks, and advocating



for improved working conditions. Symbolic interactionism emphasises that individuals develop a self-concept through interactions with others and the feedback received. In the workplace context, employees might assert their autonomy or expertise to challenge power imbalances, thereby altering their perceptions of themselves and others in the process. Symbolic interactionism focuses on micro-level interactions. In the workplace, face-to-face interactions between employees and supervisors provide opportunities for negotiating power dynamics. Employees might use gestures, language, and nonverbal cues to express their autonomy, assertiveness, or dissent, influencing how power is experienced and exercised.

Symbolic interactionism also discusses how labels and identities are shaped through social interactions. An employee who has experienced a privacy breach might feel labelled as "vulnerable" or "exposed." These labels can influence how they perceive themselves and how they interact with others, potentially leading to withdrawal or changes in behaviour. The emotional responses triggered by a privacy breach can influence subsequent interactions. Employees may experience anger, resentment, or embarrassment, which can impact their interactions with colleagues, supervisors, and the organisation as a whole. These emotions shape the meanings they attach to their workplace environment.

Empirical data indicate that employee perceptions of workplace surveillance and performance evaluation vary. Consequently, the comprehension derived from interactions, actions, and other stimuli will inevitably vary across individuals.

### **2.3.8 Symbolic Interactionism – the critiques and criticism**

Symbolic Interactionism has faced several critiques, which I will now address to provide a rationale for the continued relevance and efficacy of this theoretical

approach. Additionally, I will explore potential strategies for overcoming these challenges. One criticism is that Mead's framework is too hazy and nebulous and that it is not used consistently as is needed for a scientific explanation. To this, Meltzer adds that Mead's theory has significant omissions and, in some cases, misses some crucial aspects of the human condition, such as the "emotional and unconscious elements in human conduct" (Meltzer, 1972). This viewpoint is corroborated by Brittan, who further posits that Symbolic Interactionism has historically downplayed or neglected the significance of unconscious and emotional aspects in shaping the interaction process (Brittan, 1973). Brittan (1973) asserts that Symbolic Interactionism is prone to an unjustifiable devaluation of the psychological aspect, so depriving human wants, motivations, intents, and ambitions of their significance. This viewpoint is corroborated by Brittan, who further posits that Symbolic Interactionism has historically downplayed or neglected the importance of unconscious and emotional aspects in shaping the interaction process.

Symbolic Interactionism is a theoretical perspective that posits the acquisition of truth through the process of individuals attributing meaning to stimuli encountered in their social environment. However, it has been criticised for its limited attention to the unconscious aspects inherent in social interactions (Britain, 1973). In addition, Britain also identifies the notions of "obsession with meaning" and "overemphasis on the situation" as possible critiques of the theory. The devaluation of psychology pertains to the phenomenon whereby motivations and intents have been excessively symbolised and erroneously treated as simple manifestations of culturally established categories. This proposition posits the need to develop a clear distinction between human desires and societal realities. There exists a potential risk of conflating psychological and social elements when assuming that society is comprehensively

understood as the collective sum of individual interpretations (Britan, 1973). The concept of "the obsession with meaning" becomes more significant when we fully embrace symbolic determinism, replacing one type of social determinism with another. Harrel (1967) suggests that it's not advisable to separate symbols from the tangible world, as they should not replace the actual world and experiences acquired within it.

Another critique of Symbolic Interaction is its excessive emphasis on interpreting observed interactions, which may divert attention from the intended focus or undermine the genuine meaning inherent in real-life situations. Brian argues that interactionism scholars prioritise the interpretation of meaning derived from observable behaviours of individuals in social interactions. Hence, the discussion should be limited to exterior behaviour rather than delving into the profound ideas and emotions that give rise to such acts.

Symbolic interactionism, particularly in its emphasis on the self and human agency, has also been criticised for potentially overemphasising individualism, a characteristic that reflects its American intellectual roots. Critics argue that this individualistic focus will limit its applicability to non-Western societies, where collective identities and shared cultural values often take precedence over individualism (Li, 2018).

However, symbolic interactionism can be adapted and defended against this critique through its flexible conceptual framework, which allows for the analysis of both individual and collective interactions. Below, I outline several defences that address how symbolic interactionism can be applied in more collectivist, non-Western contexts.

### *Recognition of Social Context in Symbolic Interactionism*

Symbolic interactionism does not operate in isolation from the broader social and cultural context; instead, it actively acknowledges the social environments in which

individuals are embedded. The core premise of symbolic interactionism is that meaning is created and negotiated through social interaction, and this process is shaped by the norms, values, and symbols of the culture in which individuals live (Blumer, 1969).

In non-Western societies, where collectivist values dominate, symbolic interactionism can be applied to analyse how individuals construct their identities about shared cultural norms and group expectations. As Joas (1996) argues, the theory is not inherently individualistic. Still, it can be modified to emphasise how social roles and collective identities are formed through interactions within a specific cultural and historical context. Therefore, in collectivist societies, the interactions between individuals and their familial, communal, and societal networks would take precedence over individual autonomy. This makes symbolic interactionism adaptable to non-Western settings, where collective interactions significantly shape identity formation.

In non-Western societies, symbolic interactionism could be used to explore how individuals understand their roles in extended family systems or communal institutions. Rather than focusing solely on personal identity formation, the theory can help analyse how individuals perceive themselves through the lens of family or community roles, thereby emphasising collective self-perception rather than isolated self-concepts. For instance, in rural African communities, individuals often define themselves in terms of their roles within their families or tribes, reinforcing a group-oriented identity that symbolic interactionism can account for (Osei-Hwedie & Rankopo, 2008).

### *Symbolic Interactionism's Flexibility in Addressing Social Roles and Group Identities*

Herbert Blumer (1969), one of the key figures in symbolic interactionism, argued that symbols and meanings are not static but are continuously shaped through interaction.

While much of symbolic interactionist research emphasises how individuals negotiate their self-identity, the theory also supports the idea that social groups, institutions, and communities play a fundamental role in shaping these interactions. In non-Western settings, where group membership and social cohesion are paramount, symbolic interactionism can be applied to study group-based identities and collective consciousness.

In collectivist cultures, the symbols and meanings that arise from interaction are likely to be more communally oriented, with individuals constructing their identities through group membership, shared rituals, and collective social roles. Symbolic interactionism enables the analysis of how individuals derive meaning from collective experiences and how their sense of self is not separate from but deeply intertwined with the social groups to which they belong (Mead, 1934).

In many Asian cultures, where Confucian values emphasise family loyalty, social harmony, and respect for hierarchy, symbolic interactionism can be employed to understand how individuals negotiate their place within family structures and societal hierarchies. This adaptation of symbolic interactionism acknowledges that group-oriented meanings are central to the construction of identity rather than purely individualistic perceptions of the self (Chen, 2004).

#### *Adaptation to Collective Cultures through Role-Taking and Shared Meaning*

One of the strengths of symbolic interactionism is its concept of role-taking—the process by which individuals assume the perspective of others to understand how they are perceived. This process is not limited to individualistic concerns but can also encompass the perspectives of collective entities, such as communities, clans, or religious groups. In collectivist cultures, role-taking often involves considering group

expectations, norms, and collective goals rather than solely individual desires or opinions (Turner, 2011).

Symbolic interactionism, therefore, is equipped to analyse how individuals internalise collective expectations and assume social roles that are culturally or communally defined. It allows for the exploration of how group norms shape individuals' behaviours, aspirations, and identities, aligning well with the communal emphasis in non-Western societies.

In societies with strong religious traditions, such as some Middle Eastern communities, symbolic interactionism can be employed to analyse how individuals take on roles as members of a religious group. Through role-taking, individuals will internalise the collective religious norms and symbols, shaping their behaviours and identities in line with shared spiritual values. This communal role-taking can lead to a stronger identification with group-based symbols rather than personal, individualistic interpretations of the self (Ahmed, 2018).

### *Collectivism and Interactionism: Emphasizing Interdependence*

Symbolic interactionism inherently focuses on the social construction of reality, which aligns well with the interdependence emphasised in collectivist societies. Contrary to the critique that symbolic interactionism is overly individualistic, it enables the exploration of how ongoing interactions with others shape individuals' sense of self. In collectivist societies, these interactions are often shaped by the expectations of the family, clan, or community, and symbolic interactionism can offer insights into how individuals' self-concepts are intertwined with their collective identities.

For instance, symbolic interactionism enables researchers to examine how individuals in non-Western societies perceive their relationships with community members and derive meaning from collective experiences (Georgas et al., 2006). This framework acknowledges that the self is not a fixed entity but is constructed through reciprocal interactions with others, which can include collective consciousness and group norms.

In many African societies, the philosophy of Ubuntu, which emphasises communal interdependence and shared humanity, resonates with the symbolic interactionist emphasis on social relationships shaping identity. Ubuntu, often encapsulated by the phrase "I am because we are," emphasises the importance of community and collective well-being in shaping the self. Symbolic interactionism can be adapted to explore how individuals under the Ubuntu philosophy develop their identities through community-based interactions, focusing on shared meaning and collective identity (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013).

Symbolic interactionism's critique of being too focused on individualism is rooted in its early development within American intellectual contexts, where individualism is highly valued. However, this critique can be addressed by recognising the theory's flexibility and capacity to explore collective identities and social roles. Symbolic interactionism is adaptable to collectivist, non-Western societies, where it can be used to study the social construction of identity within the framework of community, family, and other collective units. By focusing on role-taking, shared meanings, and social interactions, the theory can effectively contribute to understanding how individuals in collectivist cultures negotiate their identities about the collective whole.

### **2.3.9 Limitations of Symbolic Interactionism to this study**

Previous objections to Symbolic Interactionism have been identified. Still, I contend that these concerns have been effectively mitigated by my chosen methodological approach, hence minimising any substantial influence on the overall argument. As previously mentioned, some individuals hold the belief that there is a lack of adequate techniques for gathering data. However, I have addressed this concern by utilising a practical set of data collection processes, which are aligned with the principles of Symbolic Interactionism theory. This approach allows for the extension of Symbolic Interactionism from a theoretical framework to a methodological approach. I have undertaken this action not only to refute the notion above but also as a means of cross-referencing and establishing a comprehensive system to prevent the oversight of significant data. A recurring concern that regularly emerged was the gap between the two schools of Symbolic Interactionism.

The strength of Symbolic Interaction lies in its micro-empirical analysis. It is weaker at describing and explaining medium or meso (intermediate) institutional and macro levels of analysis. For this reason, I will supplement symbolic interactionism with data and arguments drawn from the surveillance literature of Lyon, Haggerty, et al. to provide institutional, national, and geopolitical contexts for your analysis.

## **2.4 Research Questions**

The literature analysis highlighted numerous recurring themes. Nevertheless, two prominent elements were emphasised. Every subject encompasses a solitary sub-theme, all of which pertain to the psychological and perceptual meaning of surveillance and how individuals respond to these surveillance techniques. The research aims to understand and answer the question of how employees perceive their performance as being impacted by the proliferation of surveillance technologies.



The following research question aims to establish the groundwork for a more in-depth and detailed investigation.

RQ1: How do employees in Ghana perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace?

RQ2: How do employees in Ghana perceive the influence of electronic surveillance on their performance management?

RQ3: How do Local cultural differences in Ghana influence employee performance management strategies and outcomes in a globalised organisation?

## **2.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have outlined and critically analysed the key literature and theoretical perspectives that form the foundation of this study. The review has provided a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of workplace surveillance, with particular attention to its implications for performance management in diverse cultural contexts, such as at Kotoka International Airport in Ghana. This literature review has explored how electronic surveillance, initially introduced to enhance productivity and security, can have unintended consequences for employees, mainly when cultural dynamics and individual perceptions of fairness are involved.

The chapter examined how existing scholarly work on workplace surveillance is predominantly centred on Western contexts, highlighting a critical gap in research concerning non-Western environments, where social, cultural, and political factors shape unique experiences of surveillance. By focusing on Ghana, this study contributes to a more inclusive understanding of how employees in developing countries perceive and respond to surveillance technologies in their workplaces.

The theoretical framework for this study is rooted in two primary perspectives: Post-Foucauldian theories and Symbolic Interactionism. Post-Foucauldian analyses, particularly Foucault's concept of governmentality and the panopticon have been instrumental in examining the power dynamics and control mechanisms embedded in surveillance systems. However, this research also integrates Symbolic Interactionism, precisely Mead's (1934) concept of the "looking-glass self," to emphasise human agency and subjective interpretations of surveillance. The combination of these frameworks allows for a more nuanced understanding of how employees navigate, resist, and internalise the effects of electronic workplace surveillance.

By blending these theoretical approaches, this chapter demonstrates the relevance of both macro-level structural forces, such as power and control, and micro-level individual experiences in understanding the impact of surveillance on employee behaviour, stress, and productivity. Symbolic Interactionism, as both a theoretical and methodological framework, has shaped the approach to data collection, mainly through the use of semi-structured interviews, to capture the subjective and lived experiences of employees under surveillance.

As a researcher, my positionality in this study is shaped by a qualitative perspective that seeks to understand, rather than explain, human behaviour. This approach aligns with House's (2018) distinction between understanding and explanation and has informed the choice of methodologies used in this research. The objective is not to provide deterministic explanations but to explore the perceptions and meanings that employees attribute to their experiences with surveillance.

In conclusion, this chapter has laid the groundwork for the study by presenting the critical themes, theories, and gaps in the literature that guide the research. It has underscored the importance of integrating both structural and interpretive perspectives to provide a holistic understanding of workplace surveillance, particularly in culturally diverse and under-researched environments like Kotoka International Airport. The following chapters will build upon this foundation by applying these theoretical insights to the empirical data gathered, ultimately contributing to the broader discourse on surveillance, power, and performance management.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter establishes a coherent connection between epistemology, theoretical perspectives, research strategies, and methods, aligning with the study's overarching objectives. Drawing from Hart's (1998) criteria for academic rigour, the chapter demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of research methodologies, principles, and concepts relevant to the exploration of electronic surveillance in the workplace. It begins with an overview of the study's design and structure, ensuring clarity on how the research unfolds.

A discussion on the reliability and validity of the findings follows, providing a robust academic foundation for interpreting the data. A key focus of this section is the role of subjectivity and reflexivity, not only in shaping the data but also in influencing the entire study. Reflexivity, as Lynch (2000) asserts, is often regarded as a methodological strength that enhances insight and awareness. In this study, reflexivity is crucial in addressing the researcher's positionality, particularly in contexts involving sensitive topics such as surveillance, cultural bias, and employee performance evaluation.

After outlining the epistemological and ontological stances, the chapter presents the theoretical perspectives that guide the research. Symbolic interactionism and post-Foucauldian theories are applied to understand the nuanced dynamics of employee surveillance, aligning with the objectives of examining how surveillance systems impact employee perceptions and productivity. The motivations behind the research and any potential axiological concerns are also discussed, providing transparency about the values and assumptions that underpin the study.

The chapter proceeds to detail the primary data collection methods, with an emphasis on semi-structured interviews. A comprehensive guide on conducting these interviews in a multicultural workplace setting is provided, highlighting the importance of face-to-face engagement to capture subjective experiences effectively. This is followed by a discussion on the selection of research participants, including both employees and supervisors at Kotoka International Airport, as well as the development of interview questions in line with the research objectives.

Finally, the chapter addresses the processes of data collection, transcription, coding, and analysis. Each stage of data processing is meticulously explained, ensuring a clear path from raw data to thematic insights while maintaining the rigour required for qualitative research. The methods outlined in this chapter lay the groundwork for a thorough investigation into how employees perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace, particularly within a non-Western, multicultural context.

The study topics outlined in Chapter Two focused on the influence of surveillance on employee performance management. To get answers to this overarching question, it was necessary to use semi-structured interviews to gather data from security personnel at the Kotoka International Airport guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How do employees in Ghana perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace?

RQ2: How do employees in Ghana perceive the influence of electronic surveillance on their performance management?

RQ3: How do Local cultural differences in Ghana influence employee performance management strategies and outcomes in a globalised organisation?

Interview questions were framed and categorised under each sub-research question. This made it easier for the researcher to identify and align the themes that emerged during the in-person interviews with the research questions (See Table 3.1). Sub-themes were also recognised by relating the data to the literature discussed in Chapter Two.

**Table 3. 1**

**A description of how themes were related to research questions.**

Research Questions	Themes	Sub-themes
1. Employee Perception of Surveillance Systems at the Workplace (KIA).	Theme 1: Employees' perceptions of electronic surveillance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous experience and its influence on current perception of workplace surveillance.</li> <li>• Power and Control.</li> <li>• Privacy and trust</li> </ul>
2. Employee Perception of How Workplace Surveillance Influences Performance Management.	Theme 2: Surveillance as an appraisal tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commodifying of Employees.</li> <li>• Level of employee trust in the appraisal process</li> </ul>
3. Employee reaction or reactance towards workplace surveillance and performance management tools.	Theme 3: Employee Reactance or Resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions and Power Dynamics.</li> <li>• Responses and Adaptation</li> <li>• Perception of autonomy and Control</li> </ul>

### **3.1 Philosophical Underpinnings**

Eisner (1992) and Pring (2000) criticise researchers who adopt extreme philosophical stances, noting that such rigid approaches often result in a "false dualism." In line with this, Creswell (2003) advocates for a more moderate and practical approach when selecting a philosophical orientation in research, and Hammersley (2008) argues that the choice between qualitative and quantitative methods should be guided by the specific context and research objectives rather than strict adherence to a particular philosophical worldview. While I acknowledge these perspectives, I have chosen a qualitative approach for this study, as it aligns most closely with the complex and situational nature of workplace surveillance and performance management, especially in a multicultural environment like Kotoka International Airport in Ghana.

This research focuses on exploring subjective experiences; therefore, I have adopted an interpretivist philosophy. Interpretivism is well-suited to criminological and social research, where understanding human actions, motivations, and social contexts is paramount. In line with the study's objectives, the interpretive approach has enabled the collection of "thick description," a hallmark of qualitative research (Minichiello et al., 2008). This involves capturing the nuanced and detailed aspects of human behaviour—goals, meanings, contexts, and circumstances—that are critical to understanding employees' perceptions of electronic surveillance and its impact on their performance evaluation.

From an ontological perspective, my approach is primarily shaped by constructivism, which holds that social realities are actively constructed by individuals rather than being fixed and objective. This resonates with Bryman's (2001) view that social phenomena and their categories are not external entities but are shaped by the

individuals involved through interaction. In the context of workplace surveillance, the social categories that emerge, such as perceptions of fairness or control, are co-constructed by employees and supervisors within specific cultural and organisational environments. This approach is crucial for understanding how employees at Kotoka International Airport interpret and navigate surveillance technologies within the broader social and cultural framework.

The constructivist ontology aligns with the symbolic interactionist theoretical framework of this study. Symbolic interactionism emphasises how individuals create and interpret meanings through social interactions, particularly within structured environments such as workplaces. In this study, I follow the reasoning of scholars such as Schatzki (2001, 2002), who argue that understanding a social phenomenon requires a close examination of the contextual factors that shape it. This approach has enabled me to analyse how employees perceive surveillance not just as a mechanism of control but as a complex social process influenced by cultural, organisational, and interpersonal dynamics.

The primary data collection method employed in this research—semi-structured interviews—further reflects the interpretive and interactionist philosophical stance. I see the interview process as a dynamic form of social interaction where meaning is co-created between the interviewer and the participant. Holstein and Gubrium (1995) describe interviews as "active processes" in which both parties are engaged in constructing knowledge, and this perspective has informed my approach to data collection. The interviews conducted for this study were not neutral or mechanical data-gathering exercises; instead, they were dialogical encounters shaped by the specific contexts and backgrounds of both the interviewer and interviewees, as Fontana and James (2005) suggest.



Throughout the research process, I maintained reflexivity, consciously reflecting on how my positionality—shaped by my personal and academic background—might influence the study. As Creswell (2003) emphasises, qualitative research is inevitably interpretive, with the researcher's perspectives and experiences shaping the analysis. I remained aware of this throughout, acknowledging that complete neutrality is impossible and that my subjective lens influenced my interpretations.

In conclusion, the philosophical underpinnings of this study are grounded in interpretivism and constructivism, providing a flexible and human-centred framework for understanding the perceptions and experiences of employees under workplace surveillance. This philosophical stance is not only appropriate for the complex, multicultural environment of Kotoka International Airport but also resonates with the broader theoretical framework that integrates symbolic interactionism and post-Foucauldian theories of power and control. This approach has enabled a thorough examination of the human dimensions of surveillance, yielding valuable insights into how employees navigate and resist these systems within their respective cultural and organisational contexts.

### **3.2 The Relevance of the Qualitative method to this study**

In the context of this research, a qualitative methodology has been chosen due to its effectiveness in exploring complex social phenomena, such as workplace surveillance, and understanding the intricate perceptions and experiences of individuals. Unlike quantitative approaches, which focus on numerical data, qualitative research allows for a detailed examination of specific instances, providing deep insights into how employees at Kotoka International Airport perceive and interact with surveillance technologies.

As Neuman (2006) suggests, qualitative methods, especially case studies, help bridge the gap between individual actions (micro-level) and larger social structures and processes (macro-level). This is particularly relevant to the current research, which aims to investigate how surveillance impacts employee performance evaluation within the organisational and cultural context of Ghana. By selecting a specific group of airport security staff for in-depth analysis, the research enables a comprehensive exploration of their lived experiences with surveillance technologies, highlighting broader issues of control, power dynamics, and employee autonomy within their professional environment.

Drawing on Merriam's (1998) distinction between descriptive and interpretive qualitative research, this study adopts an interpretive approach. While it offers a detailed description of how surveillance is implemented and perceived, it also seeks to connect these observations to broader theoretical concepts, such as symbolic interactionism and post-Foucauldian theories. The research goes beyond mere description to analyse how surveillance shapes power relations and employee behaviour, contributing to the theoretical understanding of workplace surveillance in non-Western contexts. Merriam's (1998) notion that interpretive research helps to validate or challenge pre-existing theoretical assumptions is critical here, as this study aims to assess the applicability of Western surveillance theories in Ghana's socio-cultural context.

In addition, as Kemmis (1980) highlights, qualitative research, particularly case-study research, is well-suited to investigating the cognitive and cultural dimensions of a given issue. In this study, the interviews with airport security staff offer insights into their beliefs, values, and emotions regarding surveillance, revealing how these factors influence their perceptions of performance management. This approach enables a

more nuanced understanding of surveillance as not just a technological tool but a socio-cultural process that affects both individual and collective behaviours.

The symbolic interactionist framework employed in this research aligns well with the qualitative method. Symbolic interactionism focuses on how individuals create and interpret meanings through social interactions. By conducting semi-structured interviews, this study captures how employees interpret surveillance technologies, negotiate their presence, and respond to the impact of these technologies on their professional roles. The interviews offer a rich source of data on how surveillance is experienced in everyday work life, enabling an exploration of how broader socio-cultural norms and organisational structures influence these experiences.

However, as Bassey (1999) and Stake (2010) argue, qualitative research is not without its limitations. It can be labour-intensive, expensive, and prone to bias due to the selective nature of data collection and analysis. Moreover, it will lack generalizability, as it focuses on specific instances or groups of individuals. Yet, by maintaining reflexivity throughout the research process—being aware of my positionality and potential biases—these challenges can be mitigated. Creswell (2003) emphasises the importance of self-awareness in qualitative research, acknowledging that the researcher's perspectives inevitably shape the analysis. In this study, I have aimed to remain critically aware of how my background and assumptions might influence the data collection and interpretation processes.

In summary, the qualitative method is particularly suited to this study's objectives of exploring employee perceptions of surveillance within a culturally specific context. It allows for a deep, interpretive understanding of how surveillance technologies impact not just individual behaviour but also broader organisational practices and power

relations. Despite its potential limitations, the qualitative approach offers valuable insights that quantitative methods may overlook, making it an essential strategy for understanding the human dimensions of workplace surveillance in complex, multicultural environments.

### **3.3 Research Strategy**

This research was to explore and illuminate key behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions in the context of workplace surveillance and performance management. A qualitative methodology was selected due to its strength in providing rich insights into how individuals construct meaning in diverse social settings, such as the workplace (Neuman, 2006). The primary data collection method employed was semi-structured interviews, an effective tool for capturing individuals' direct viewpoints on the research focus. Davies (2007) emphasises that interviews are well-suited to convey the complex and nuanced nature of participants' lived experiences, particularly in a context like workplace surveillance. Through this approach, the researcher can gain deep insight into the values, attitudes, beliefs, and interests of participants, enabling a detailed exploration of the phenomena being studied.

This strategy aligns with the theoretical framework of the study, which integrates post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist theories. From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, surveillance in the workplace is viewed as a mechanism of power and governance, shaping employee behaviour through constant monitoring. This research method enables an exploration of how employees perceive this power dynamic, mainly how surveillance affects their self-discipline, anxiety, and performance under the gaze of electronic monitoring systems.

Simultaneously, the use of semi-structured interviews is deeply aligned with symbolic interactionism, precisely Mead's (1934) concept of the "looking-glass self." This theory suggests that individuals form their self-perceptions based on how they believe they are viewed by others—in this case, by supervisors and the surveillance systems themselves. By interviewing employees directly, the research captures their subjective interpretations of how surveillance impacts their sense of identity, fairness, and productivity, as well as how they navigate and potentially resist these systems.

The qualitative approach, therefore, not only complements the theoretical perspectives but also provides a practical means of investigating the intricate interplay between structural surveillance mechanisms and individual agency. The interviews conducted with security staff at Kotoka International Airport, including both junior staff and supervisors, enabled an in-depth analysis of how surveillance technologies influence employees' perceptions of performance management within a multicultural, non-Western context. This approach offers a nuanced understanding of both the power relations inherent in surveillance and the human agency that interacts with these systems, fulfilling the study's objectives of addressing the gaps in existing research on workplace surveillance in developing countries.

### **Case Study**

A case study is defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident” (Yin, 2018, p. 16). Case studies are particularly suitable for answering "how" and "why" questions, offering an in-depth exploration of complex social phenomena where the researcher seeks to understand processes, experiences, and meanings from the participants' perspectives.

The decision to adopt a case study design in this research is both methodological and strategic. The objective of this thesis is to examine how employees at Kotoka International Airport perceive and respond to electronic surveillance, and how cultural norms, workplace interactions, and institutional power structures shape these perceptions. Given this aim, a case study approach enables the researcher to study the phenomenon in context, acknowledging the specificity of place (KIA), time, and social relations that structure surveillance practices.

A case study is well-aligned with the interpretivist epistemology and the theoretical frameworks used in this thesis—symbolic interactionism and post-Foucauldian surveillance theory. These frameworks necessitate a deep understanding of subjective experiences, interpersonal dynamics, and social meanings, which cannot be adequately captured through more positivist or generalising research designs. As Stake (1995) notes, case studies allow for the examination of “the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi).

The Kotoka International Airport provides a rich and contextually grounded site for such an inquiry. It is a multicultural, globalised, and highly surveilled environment, where employees operate under both local cultural expectations and international security protocols. This bounded system, with its unique characteristics, meets the criteria for a qualitative case study (Creswell & Poth, 2018), enabling the research to uncover how surveillance is interpreted, negotiated, and resisted by workers in real-time.

Moreover, the case study supports the thesis’s focus on reflexivity, particularly in examining how the researcher's positionality influences data collection and analysis.

It allows for a flexible, iterative process that accommodates emerging themes and insights—characteristics that are essential when exploring sensitive topics such as surveillance and control in postcolonial organisational settings.

In sum, the case study method is not merely a convenient choice—it is a methodologically rigorous strategy that enables this research to capture the complex, layered, and meaning-rich realities of workplace surveillance in a specific Ghanaian context.

### **3.4 Access Clearance**

The core data gathering for this study was always going to be challenging. Obtaining access clearances can be difficult due to the sensitive nature of employee surveillance. There were several potential issues. Several of them relate to the terminology used, such as monitoring and surveillance. Performance monitoring typically assumes a more contentious role in research access negotiations, according to Ball and Haggerty (2005). It was always going to be challenging to write a letter that persuades employees in the aviation sector, which is security-sensitive, to participate in the study. The institution approached for this study had unique setups, motivations, and justifications for granting or denying access.

To optimise the availability of access arrangements for this investigation, it was imperative to use a comprehensive and all-encompassing strategy. This was achieved by initially conducting a thorough examination of several organisations to ascertain the most suitable one, namely, the one that provided convincing explanations and believable scenarios for surveillance. Secondly, it was of utmost importance to choose the appropriate department or unit inside the organisation, as well as the exact individual to whom the initial contact letter should be addressed. Sending a study

request letter to an inappropriate recipient, either in terms of hierarchical position or personal identification (such as name, title, or address), may also convey inaccurate messages. This might also suggest that the organisation has not undergone sufficient investigation.

Negotiations commenced promptly following the initial telephone conversation. Kotoka International Airport requested a significantly shorter lead-in period than is typical. Surprisingly, the access talks were concluded swiftly, allowing only a single pilot interview to be conducted before the commencement of the significant data collection process. It would have been advantageous to do a series of preliminary interviews before commencing the primary interviews. Surprisingly, access was promptly granted following the submission of an introductory letter (See Appendix G) and two subsequent telephone conversations, one of which involved coordinating an appointment with a personal assistant. This is noteworthy considering that the research process, as indicated by Buchanan et al. (In: Bryman & Bell, 2003), typically spans several weeks or even months.

### **3.5 Sampling**

After obtaining approval from Kotoka International Airport's management to conduct my research, I followed the agreed-upon guidance to select participants from the specific department or unit, in this case, the airport security unit. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants for this study. The decision to adopt a purposive strategy is driven by the belief that individuals with specific characteristics will possess unique and significant perspectives on the subject matter. Consequently, it is necessary to include such individuals in the sample to align with the study's goals and objectives (Mason, 2002; Robinson, 2014; Trost, 1986). A specific group of security



personnel with direct experience of being under workplace surveillance and subject to employee performance assessment was selected. This method of selecting participants is known as stratified sampling. Participants in this specific group were required to meet the following criteria: they had to have been working at KIA for at least three years and include a mix of junior- and senior-ranked officers. The purpose of this was to guarantee that the comments gathered were from experienced airport security personnel who had been exposed to appropriate types of workplace surveillance and assessment instruments used at KIA. Gender and age were not included in the sampling criteria, although they were later highlighted in the study. When creating the sample subset, we were mindful of how it would potentially favour or exclude certain viewpoints, which could affect the study's conclusions and trustworthiness (Thorne, 2016). To bolster credibility, meticulous attention was given to providing a clear, transparent, and explicit explanation of the rationale behind the sample subset selection (Robinson, 2014; Thorne, 2016). Moreover, the research consistently maintained a discerning understanding of the characteristics of the chosen sample and how these characteristics might potentially influence the results. This was done to prevent making assertions that extend beyond the specific subset of the sample (Robinson, 2014; Thorne, 2016).

I utilised key information and gatekeepers to identify suitable staff for the research. The head of the airport security unit informed and distributed demographic forms, research information sheets, and consent forms to security personnel who expressed interest in participating in the research. Thirty-two individuals were initially selected to participate in the research. However, 12 participants subsequently withdrew from the study, citing availability issues as the reason for their withdrawal. A total of 20 individuals completed the face-to-face interview and data-collecting phase of this

study. The primary sample group is illustrated in Table 3.2. It was found that four of them held the position of supervisor, with an average work experience of seven years. Additionally, six individuals were identified as senior security officers, with an average of five years of work experience. The other ten interviewees were classified as security officers, with an average of four years of work experience. All participants have a minimum of three years of professional experience working as airport security officers. Moreover, a total of three individuals were identified as female, whereas seventeen participants were identified as male. All twenty participants possessed familiarity with the advanced surveillance and evaluation methods employed at KIA, including CCTV cameras, a biometric fingerprint clocking-in system, an access swipe card system, and body scanning equipment.

**Table 3.2**

**Total sample group: Categorised in rank, gender and years of work experience.**

<i>Rank</i>	Junior officers	Supervisors	
	16	4	
<i>Gender</i>	Male	Female	
	17	3	
<i>Years of Work Experience</i>	Seven years	Five years	Four years
	4	6	10
<i>Participants Coding</i>	Pseudonyms: <div> 1. Atia 11. Atamougre </div> <div> 2. Adongo 12. Nyaaba </div>		

	3. Yaw 4. Domlevo 5. Ataa 6. Miki 7. Prof 8. Yaro 9. Dimple 10. Quashi 13. Ayimpoka 14. Precious 15. Moses 16. Adwoa 17. Kwabena 18. Gabi 19. Obolo 20. Mantse
Total Participants	20

### **3.6 The Researcher's Role**

Research is an active and dynamic process in which the researcher actively participates. In this work, I aimed to gain an intimate understanding by shedding light on a previously un-investigated domain. Consequently, a simultaneous process of double hermeneutics or dual interpretation was in action. According to Smith (2004), the participants are attempting to understand their surroundings, while the researcher is trying to understand the participants' efforts to comprehend their surroundings. These processes are essential for comprehending the subjective reality of others via interpretive activities.

The researcher's notions complicated access to the participant's experience. According to Creswell (2003), the qualitative researcher must engage in a deliberate process of self-reflection and be aware of their background and experiences throughout the inquiry. Reflexivity, which involves self-examination and recognition of

biases, attitudes, or interests, is a characteristic feature of contemporary qualitative research. The personal identity becomes indistinguishable from the identity of the researcher.

As the primary data collection tool, the researcher must identify their own beliefs, assumptions, and biases at the outset of the study. In his work, Meyrick (2006) argues that recognising the researcher's closeness through reflexivity may aid in achieving objectivity in qualitative research, thereby determining what constitutes excellence in such research. According to her, a researcher will prioritise certain parts of a subject that align with their own experience, which might influence their conclusions. It is essential to admit this bias.

To ensure rigour, as stipulated by Meyrick (2006), a concise description of my connection to the data is provided below. I will be characterised as a Black Ghanaian man in my middle years. With over 15 years of experience in security management, spanning both the private and public sectors in Ghana, I possess significant expertise and firsthand knowledge in the context of workplace surveillance. This allows me to speak with confidence and authority on the subject, as acknowledged by Crossley and Watson (2003). Throughout my career in security management, I actively engaged in employee surveillance in the workplace, which was conducted in various forms, either electronically or physically. As a manager, data gathered through surveillance was used for yearly appraisal purposes.

As a researcher, my personality, professional background, and lived experiences significantly influenced the design, execution, and interpretation of this study. In line with the principles of reflexivity, I remained critically aware of how my identity and

assumptions may have shaped the research process, particularly given my professional immersion in Ghana's security landscape.

I have spent over 15 years in the private and institutional security sector in Ghana, including roles as Marketing Manager at Edern Private Security, General Manager at Zygrow Security Services, and most recently, Head of Security at the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR). In these roles, I routinely engaged with electronic surveillance systems, including CCTV monitoring, biometric access controls, and body scanners, and managed a workforce of over 30 security personnel subject to various levels of workplace surveillance.

This deep familiarity with security operations meant that I approached this research as both an academic investigator and a practitioner-insider. My prior experience provided a rich contextual lens through which to understand the challenges, tensions, and perceptions of surveillance in the workplace. It also facilitated direct access to Kotoka International Airport (KIA) through existing professional relationships with the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority and National Aviation Security—an opportunity that might not have been as easily available to an outsider.

Crucially, my professional background enhanced rapport-building during interviews. Participants—many of whom were fellow security personnel—were more open and candid, knowing that I had “walked in their shoes.” This shared occupational identity reduced social distance and allowed for trust-based, peer-level conversations, which enriched the depth and authenticity of the data collected.

However, I was also cautious of the potential for bias. My own positive or critical assumptions about electronic surveillance—shaped by years of managing such systems—could influence how I interpreted participant responses. To mitigate this, I

engaged in ongoing reflexive journaling, documented my evolving thoughts during data collection and analysis, and actively sought to bracket my preconceived notions during theme development (Finlay, 2002). I also revisited the transcripts multiple times to ensure that the findings were grounded in the participants' voices, not my own interpretations.

In summary, my dual identity as a researcher-practitioner offered both insider access and deep contextual insight, while also requiring careful reflexivity to ensure that the data was analysed with integrity, openness, and critical distance. This reflective stance enhanced the credibility, trustworthiness, and cultural sensitivity of the research findings—especially in a study that deals with sensitive themes such as surveillance, control, and identity in a Ghanaian institutional context.

### **3.7 Ethical Issues and Consideration**

The ethical stance taken for this research is heavily influenced by Bassey (1999), who promotes the values of democracy, truth, and the dignity of individuals. The researcher emphasises the importance of trustworthiness and insists that researchers must adhere to honesty in data collection, analysis, and reporting of results. This principle was strictly adhered to throughout the study. Ethical issues are of utmost importance in research that follows the principles of symbolic interactionism, primarily since this approach focuses on examining people's subjective experiences, interpretations, and interactions within social situations.

The procedure of seeking ethical clearance for this research was relatively straightforward, given the study's nature. A study was conducted on adult volunteers, making it straightforward to obtain their consent, as they were capable of understanding the concept of informed consent. When seeking university ethical

approval, it was crucial to provide sufficient details to demonstrate that I had thoroughly considered all potential ethical concerns that might arise in this type of study. I carefully considered the trade-off between the possible dangers and advantages of this research. This included assessing the potential harm to all participants and the valuable contributions this study will make to the existing knowledge on this issue. While Gelling (2016) argues that doing research inherently involves risks for participants, I would want to clarify that I am well aware of the possible challenges and have already devised strategies to mitigate them. In addition, I had to provide details on the research participants, recognising the challenge of gaining informed consent from each of them. I was aware that the decision to authorise my research would have been a challenge if I had proposed appropriate modifications to minimise the risks.

Another significant aspect of obtaining ethical clearance for this research was the effort made to ensure that all participants understood their rights and responsibilities. While my plan did not guarantee universal comprehension of the level and nature of rights, I needed to convince the ethics committee that this topic was significant. I also needed to demonstrate through my actions that I had no intention of deliberately exploiting my participants or leaving myself vulnerable to accusations of exploitation. In the following section, I will provide a more comprehensive explanation of the ethical concerns inherent in my investigation and outline the measures I took to address and mitigate any potential difficulties that could have hindered the study's execution.

As the researcher, would I violate the confidentiality agreement by disclosing that the participant has divulged information on illegal activity, which is highly unlikely to have been disclosed otherwise? The Ethics Review Committee of London Metropolitan University has developed guidelines for conducting interviews. The standards

encompass several key aspects, including consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and the protection of sensitive information. The ethical considerations surrounding research require a strong emphasis on morality and the imperative to act by what is deemed correct. I want to seek advice from both of my supervisors to obtain their input and guidance on this particular scenario. Nevertheless, the interview agreement explicitly specified that any disclosure of material about internal matters would be maintained in strict confidence and presented anonymously. Failure to perform the interview in this manner would result in a violation of ethical considerations. Verifying the accuracy of the assertions would pose significant challenges.

It is incumbent upon researchers to use caution in choosing, attributing, or misrepresenting attitudes or ideas in their scholarly endeavours. A crucial ethical obligation that researchers fulfil is the utilisation of accurate and reliable quotes derived from their study as well as from the broader body of literature. The reliability of this research is increased by strictly adhering to this procedure.

### **3.7.1 Informed consent for interview**

Obtaining informed consent is a crucial method for ensuring that potential participants possess comprehensive knowledge about the research in which they are being asked to participate (Wiles et al., 2007). The research gathered informed consent from the respondents through the use of information and consent forms. The information sheet conveyed details on the project and the use of interview data. It also notified interviewees of their prerogative to decline to answer or withdraw from the interview process while ensuring the confidentiality of the findings. Upon reviewing the information sheet, if the respondents expressed their willingness to participate in the interview, their agreement was gained by requesting them to sign the consent



document. A signed permission form provides crucial protection for the researcher against any future allegations by participants claiming that they were not adequately informed (Wiles et al., 2007). The respondents comprehended the concept of anonymity and expressed overall satisfaction in signing the agreement document. Nevertheless, a small number of individuals dedicated themselves to meticulously reviewing the entire permission page, thereafter, consenting to participate and affixing their signatures to the document (See Appendix A).

### **3.7.2 Recording**

All the interviews were taped using a digital voice recorder. The use of voice recording as the technique allowed for uninterrupted talks, as opposed to taking written notes, which would have interrupted the interview's continuity. Furthermore, it offered a precise depiction of the spoken words. Devoid of voice recording, just the fundamental aspects of any discussion might be documented and perhaps misconstrued. The researcher found it very advantageous to listen to the speech recordings to transcribe the material frequently.

### **3.7.3 Transcription**

The researcher, Caesar, personally transcribed all the interviews in English. The interviews were transcribed with a high degree of fidelity, capturing all verbal fillers, such as "umms" and pauses, to the best extent feasible. To enhance clarity, specific terms were omitted from the verbatim transcripts when they were quoted in the qualitative findings. This was done if the statements were redundant, lacked significance, or had the potential to create misunderstanding.

The researcher personally transcribed the interviews to fully engage with the data and gain new and unexpected insights (Patton, 2002). Occasionally, specific quotes posed

challenges during transcription due to frequent word or sound repetition, as well as shifts in subject matter. In such instances, the researcher attempted to depict and restate the interviews accurately. The respondents' emotions and body language were meticulously documented to the fullest extent feasible. Additionally, the researcher used a notebook to report any behaviours or sentiments expressed by the participants at the end of each session. These aided the researcher in forming genuine assessments of the substance of the interview.

### **3.8 Primary Data Collection**

Using qualitative research allowed me to examine essential aspects of the study, develop reasonable explanations based on the findings, verify the credibility of these explanations, build a compelling argument or narrative, connect the argument or narrative to existing research, effectively communicate this argument or narrative to an audience, and offer a transparent record for other researchers to verify or question the findings, or propose alternative arguments.

To provide an "insider's perspective," I adopted the approach proposed by Minichiello et al. (2008). This included gathering data via semi-structured interviews, analysing it based on themes derived from the informants' descriptions, and reporting the findings using the language used by the informants themselves. The semi-structured interview was chosen as the primary research tool to investigate the individuals and subjects of interest thoroughly. In contrast to the structured interview, it offers a broader opportunity for discourse and the acquisition of knowledge about the issue, as well as the perspectives and viewpoints of the participants. It is a less formal and more adaptable approach, as described by Taylor (1984). Compared to the latter approach, the former is more effective in capturing the participants' perspectives and obtaining

insider knowledge. Semi-structured interviews allowed the participant to offer a more comprehensive and detailed description compared to using a standard quantitative instrument. It also gave the researcher the freedom to explore intriguing topics that came up during the interview. The study allowed the researcher to get insight into the importance of human experiences as recounted by the individual and understood by the researcher (Minichiello et al., 2008).

In the semi-structured interview, as outlined by Bryman (2001), the interviewer has a set of questions that adhere to the overall framework of an interview schedule but has the flexibility to modify the order of the questions. The interviewer is allowed some flexibility to ask further questions in response to essential answers. In their work, Taylor (1984) defines the interview guide as a comprehensive inventory of topics to be addressed throughout the interview process. Open-ended inquiries are used to elicit comprehensive and nuanced descriptions of the subject under investigation.

The selection of gatekeepers for this qualitative research was based on their expertise in the relevant field of study and their familiarity with the study site under investigation. The director of human resources and head of Airport security at the KIA were chosen as gatekeepers, respectively. The first reason for choosing the above as gatekeepers is their knowledge of the study site structure (KIA), and secondly, the support and cooperation I needed to review the collected data, processes, and procedures.

### **3.8.1 Design Description**

In the initial phase of data collection, chosen participants were instructed to employ memory writing or personal narratives, a methodology referred to as "retrospective ethnography" by Paechter (2013). The use of memory writing entails the task of recollecting and documenting participants' experiences with the various surveillance

and performance monitoring tactics implemented at Terminals 2 and 3. It was anticipated that these experiences would pertain to the influence that surveillance has on their performance, privacy, and behaviour. After completing these initial personal written narratives, the data were examined to identify prominent themes. Subsequently, these themes were connected to the theoretical subjects that I intend to explore.

The subsequent phase of data collection entailed conducting in-person interviews with participants at their selected locations. There were no imposed time constraints for each interview. It was anticipated that specific interviews would span an entire day or possibly multiple days, as they would include a continuous and protracted exchange of dialogue. The primary focus of these discussions was the examination of employees' perceptions of workplace surveillance, followed by the exploration of participants' perspectives on the impact of the various surveillance methods on performance evaluations and how they responded to these dynamics. In the forthcoming face-to-face interviews, pre-established theoretical themes served as triggers and subjects for debate. The purpose of this proposal is to pursue more elucidation and elaboration of the initial written recollections. I also employed tactics that were consistent with Moon's (2010) concept of "life story writing." One of the primary interview tactics used in this study involved the utilisation of an "emotional recall strategy", as proposed by Ellis and Bochner (2000, p. 752). This approach would require participants to engage in a mental exercise, envisioning themselves in a typical everyday work routine at Terminals 2 or 3.

### **3.8.2 Semi – Structured Interviews**

The use of Semi-Structured interviews (See Appendix D) was to delve into the thoughts and emotions of security personnel at KIA who are exposed to surveillance while carrying out their work. It was hoped that these interviews would provide the answers to the research questions. Interviews were conducted between June 2023 and December 2023.

i. Interview Rational

By analysing the literature, I discovered several factors that were likely to influence employees' perceptions of workplace surveillance and its effect on performance evaluation. I used these factors as a foundation to create a set of questions that delve into the overarching themes related to them. The factors examined in this study include the driving force and incentive for employers to implement surveillance, as well as the positive and negative emotions experienced by employees throughout the workplace surveillance process. Furthermore, there was an inquiry on how employees modified their behaviour in the presence of surveillance activities and interacting with other employees. The open-ended questions were used to investigate the varying responses or reactions of employees. Subsequent unstructured inquiries were used to stimulate more elaboration and verify the intended significance of the main terms employed by the respondents.

ii. Approaching Interview

The main interview schedule in appendices (D) consisted of forty (40) primary inquiries that examined several concepts expressed in uncomplicated language. The interview question was not tested in a trial run owing to time constraints. Additionally, one factor influencing my decision to refrain from conducting pilot interviews was the consideration of the prospective pool size of interested and accessible participants.

Conducting the interview questions in a controlled manner might have provided a reliable explanation of the informant's interpretations and constructions of reality

Participant	Interview Site	Rank	Interview Date	Duration
Atia	Marina Mall		18/06/2023	50mins
Adongo	Marina Mall		13/06/2023	38mins
Yaw	Café Aleeno – T2		22/06/2023	60mins
Domlevo	Accra Mall		27/06/2023	35mins
Ataa	Fresh Juice Lounge-T3		17/06/2023	53mins
Miki	Marina Mall		10/07/2023	60mins
Prof	Accra Mall		28/06/2023	28mins
Yaro	Café Aleeno -T2		20/06/2023	49mins
Dimple	Café Aleeno		20/06/2023	29mins
Quashi	Marina Mall		06/07/2023	37mins
Atampugre	Fresh Juice Lounge-T3		20/07/2023	31mins
Nyaaba	Marina Mall		08/07/2023	55mins
Ayimpoka	Fresh Juice Lounge-T3		15/06/2023	46mins
Precious	Fresh Juice Lounge-T3		20/07/2023	60mins
Moses	Marina Mall		10/07/2023	56mins
Adwoa	Marina Mall		23/06/2023	47mins
Kwabena	Accra Mall		28/07/2023	33mins
Gabi	Café Aleena		19/06/2023	59mins
Obolo	Marina Mall		28/07/2023	52mins
Mantse	Accra Mall		06/07/2023	60mins

(Minichiello et al., 2008, p. 51). After obtaining the memory writing or personal narratives from participants, some minor adjustments were made, primarily in the phrasing and arrangement of the questions. An attached document contains the finalised interview schedule for the research (See Table 3.3).

## Table 3.2

### Participants interview Schedule.

#### iii. Obtaining Interview Sample

Throughout the process, I made a deliberate effort to maintain a conversational and casual tone throughout the interview. I strategically steered the discussion, as needed,

to ensure comprehensive coverage of all the outlined themes. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) assert that the interviewer, rather than being a detached data collector, is the research instrument. I was aware of the need for the researcher to possess sensitivity and expertise - to be conscious of the potential influence of the researcher, to avoid introducing prejudice, to maintain concentration, and to stay on track with the primary objective of gathering information. I agree with Taylor and Bogdan's assertion that a crucial aspect of conducting compelling interviews is the ability to discern the appropriate moments to go further into the subject matter (ibid). By asking the other individual to elucidate the intended meaning, you want to clarify and communicate what both parties will already understand but typically assume and struggle to express. Assuming the researcher's position, as described by Neuman (2006), I inquired attentively, listened carefully, displayed curiosity, and documented the spoken information.

During the interview process, when respondents deviated from the main subject of discussion, the interviewer actively encouraged them to elaborate, as these digressions frequently provided valuable insights and enhanced the overall discourse. There is no evidence to suggest that the interviews were disorganised. To accommodate the phenomenon of interviewees often providing unexpected replies, it was imperative to develop and anticipate a predetermined framework for interview responses (Mason, 2002). Consequently, I did not have concerns over the potential disruption of conversational coherence while deviating from a predetermined trajectory. The challenge was to achieve a seamless and natural appearance for a meticulously designed creation. Periodically, the individuals included in this study showed a greater inclination towards openness and needed a reduced reliance on

explicit inquiries. In these instances, mere prompts proved sufficient to elicit the desired information.

Every participant was questioned once in a favourable, convenient, and mutually agreed-upon environment. The discussions were captured using two digital recorders, with one serving as the primary recorder and the other as an auxiliary device, which proved wise on two occasions. The shortest interview lasted 28 minutes, while the most extended interview ran for 60 minutes. The average duration of interviews was roughly 47 minutes.

To enhance the nature of interviews as dynamic exchanges, I investigated the concept of "co-authored statements." The revised transcriptions of the interview notes were returned to the interviewee for verification, along with a set of supplementary questions about the gathered information to encourage further discussion. However, except for recognising the precision of the transcripts, only a small number of the participants provided substantial responses.

Several limitations are associated with using this particular methodology. The presence of structural time constraints and the influence of the interviewer's and interviewee's goals and assumptions rendered any amount of preparation ineffective in mitigating their impact (Manson, 2002). The comprehension of these matters and the preservation of a certain level of flexibility in response to them represent the extent of what is achieved.

### **3.8.3 Data Analysis**

**Thematic Analysis** is a qualitative data analysis method used to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns of meaning ("themes") within a dataset. Braun and Clarke (2006), leading scholars in this field, define thematic analysis as "a method for identifying,



analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p. 79). It is a flexible and theoretically adaptable approach that can be used within a variety of epistemological frameworks, including interpretivism and constructivism, making it particularly suitable for studies focused on meaning-making, social experiences, and subjectivity.

In this study, thematic analysis is employed to make sense of the rich qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with security staff and supervisors at Kotoka International Airport (KIA). Given the study’s aim to explore how employees perceive electronic surveillance and its impact on performance management in a non-Western, multicultural environment, thematic analysis provides a coherent method for systematically organising, coding, and interpreting large volumes of textual data.

The use of thematic analysis is consistent with the symbolic interactionist and post-Foucauldian theoretical frameworks guiding this research. These perspectives necessitate a close attention to how individuals construct meaning, negotiate identity, and respond to surveillance systems through language and interaction. Thematic analysis supports this by allowing the researcher to uncover the latent meanings embedded in participants’ narratives, particularly regarding their feelings of being watched, their reflections on professionalism, and their interpretations of fairness and performance.

Braun and Clarke (2021) emphasise that thematic analysis is not just a tool for summarising data but a method of *constructing themes that reflect shared meaning* underpinned by a central organising concept. In this thesis, themes such as “Performing under Surveillance,” “Trust and Mistrust,” and “Surveillance and Cultural Norms” were developed through a recursive and reflexive process of familiarisation, coding, theme development, and refinement.

Thematic analysis also aligns with the study's emphasis on reflexivity and transparency. As Nowell et al. (2017) argue, thematic analysis can offer methodological rigour if the process is conducted in a systematic, coherent, and reflective manner. In this study, careful attention was paid to documenting the analytical process, including decisions made during data coding, the development of sub-themes, and the interpretation of findings in light of the theoretical framework and research questions.

In sum, thematic analysis is an appropriate and methodologically sound strategy for this study because it enables a deep, interpretive exploration of participants' lived experiences and perceptions of workplace surveillance—while remaining flexible enough to accommodate the complexity of cultural dynamics, organisational structure, and subjective meaning-making at KIA.

According to Keesee (1988), after collecting data, it is necessary to systematically analyse and categorise the recorded occurrences to get inferences from the data. Nevertheless, the literature does not provide a specific data analysis strategy recommended for a qualitative interpretative methodology. Bassey (1999), Creswell (1988, 2007), Merriam (1988, 1998), and Stake (1995, 2006) provide varying methodologies and use distinct terminology. Bassey defines data analysis as a challenging process of working with a large volume of unprocessed data to draw significant and reliable conclusions. On the other hand, Creswell (2003) characterises it as a thorough depiction of the context and individuals, followed by an examination of the data to identify recurring themes or issues.

Aside from creating digital recordings, concise notes were taken to capture the key points or themes discussed throughout the interview process. I also implemented

Bassey's (1999) recommendation to maintain a daily notebook that documents the specific times and locations of data collection, as well as observations and speculative thoughts. The interviews were transcribed promptly after the interview. After carefully considering several methods, I ultimately chose to transcribe each interview word for word while also recognising key themes and taking notes on them as a preliminary form of data analysis. Subsequently, every transcript was returned to the interviewee for member validation, typically within one to two weeks following the interview.

Interpretive qualitative research, as Merriam (1998) defines it, involves using data to create conceptual categories or to demonstrate, validate, or challenge theoretical assumptions that were established before collecting the data. Nevertheless, the methodology I used will be accurately classified as theme analysis, as outlined by Ezzy (2013), who highlights the shared methodologies employed by both thematic analysis and grounded theory. Although the overall topics of interest were established before the analysis, the exact characteristics of the categories and themes to be investigated were not predetermined. I was aware, as elucidated by Ezzy (2013), that this type of study would lead the researcher to encounter unanticipated concerns and problems. According to both Gibbs (2002, p.2) and Neuman (2006), qualitative researchers often develop theories based on the data they collect.

After transcribing all 20 interviews, the data were meticulously examined, evaluated, and analysed both manually and using Microsoft Excel. Both processes offered an efficient method for managing data, including facilitating the organisation and retrieval of textual information. The analysis required a meticulous examination of the data, including multiple readings, segmenting it, and using open coding to discern distinct patterns or concerns that emerged. Specifically, the data obtained from the interviews was analysed to identify recurring patterns in the participants' language (Minichiello et

al., 2008). Ezzy (2013) described the method as searching for in-vivo codes, which are the terminology used by respondents, and then analysing and contrasting events and situations to identify parallels and contrasts. This is an endeavour to create links between concepts to construct overarching themes ultimately. According to Stake (1995), the quest for significance might be characterised as a quest for regularities and connections. Researchers employ two strategic approaches to uncover new meanings regarding cases: direct interpretation of individual examples and the aggregation of instances until generalisations can be made about them collectively.

The methodology used in this study employed Neuman's (2006) approach of coding and idea building to systematically organise particular information into a cohesive framework, model, or interconnected collection of concepts. The process of data compression was achieved by identifying abstract notions inside the tangible data. Codes that represented comparable concepts were organised into broader categories, with some codes being combined or renamed to more accurately represent the recurring themes or topics that were identified.

Throughout the data analysis, I made a conscious effort to be mindful of potential risks to the study's quality, as outlined by Gibbs (2014). This might include partial transcription and interpretation, excessive emphasis on favourable instances, a focus on the extraordinary or uncommon, the disregard of unfavourable instances, ambiguous definitions of concepts, inconsistent application of such notions, and unjustified generalisations. I maintained a keen awareness of the potential to generate incomplete and prejudiced assessments.

Codes were further used to signify any remarks provided by the interviewee that corroborate or exemplify the notions. The selection of quotations was carefully refined

for the final report to capture the words that best explain the views presented by the interviewee. The data was altered to make the participants' descriptions and experiences of their social environment comprehensible to those who did not participate in it (Minichiello et al., 2008). The codes allocated to individuals and used throughout this investigation are specified in Table 3.1.

Subsequently, many analytical assertions and provisional hypotheses were developed to explain the observed patterns and correlations in the data. According to Bassey (1999), analysis and data testing is a repetitive process that continues until the researcher has a high level of confidence in the reliability of the analytical claims. Several different hypotheses were examined, and the data was scrutinised for evidence either supporting or refuting each theory.

### **Operationalizing Theoretical Concepts for the Analysis**

In this thesis, the analysis of interview data collected from airport security staff at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) will be guided by two complementary theoretical frameworks: Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist perspectives. These frameworks offer distinct yet synergistic lenses through which the data can be examined, enabling a robust exploration of both macro-level power structures and micro-level social interactions. This section explains how these concepts are operationalised to analyse the subjective experiences, perceptions, and behaviours of airport security staff regarding surveillance practices.

#### *i. Operationalizing Foucauldian Concepts: Power, Discipline, and Surveillance*

From a Foucauldian perspective, surveillance systems are understood as mechanisms of disciplinary power that regulate behaviour by making

individuals visible, thus fostering self-regulation. Foucault's (1977) concept of the panopticon suggests that the mere possibility of being watched can lead to self-discipline, with individuals internalising surveillance norms even in the absence of direct observation. In this research, Foucauldian concepts will be operationalised to explore how surveillance technologies at KIA shape the behaviour and attitudes of airport security staff and how they respond to the power dynamics imposed by these systems.

The concept of Disciplinary Power will be used to analyse how surveillance structures at the airport create an environment where security staff are constantly aware of being observed, influencing their professional conduct. The analysis will also examine how security personnel internalise the expectations of surveillance and adjust their behaviours accordingly, even when not being directly monitored. Foucauldian theory also enables an examination of how individuals resist or subvert surveillance. This concept will help identify instances where staff question or challenge the surveillance technologies in place.

During interviews, security staff expressed heightened awareness of being monitored by surveillance cameras and how this affected their day-to-day activities. For example, one officer stated that he was constantly mindful of following security protocols because *"you never know who's watching,"* demonstrating self-regulation in response to the perceived omnipresence of surveillance technologies. This statement reflects the internalisation of power dynamics through surveillance, a key Foucauldian concept. In the analysis, such statements will be explored about how surveillance practices enforce compliance and limit autonomy in the workplace.

ii. Operationalizing Symbolic Interactionist Concepts: The Looking-Glass Self and Social Meaning

In contrast to the Foucauldian focus on macro-level structures and disciplinary power, symbolic interactionism—particularly Charles Horton Cooley’s concept of the Looking-Glass Self (1902)—offers a micro-level perspective that emphasises the subjective and social construction of identity. Cooley argued that individuals develop their sense of self through a reflective process that involves imagining how they appear to others, imagining how others judge that appearance, and developing a self-concept based on these imagined evaluations (Cooley, 1902, pp. 112, 124). This process, he posited, is not merely about feedback, but about the *perceived feedback*, which becomes internalised and deeply shapes behaviour and self-perception.

In contemporary workplaces, especially in surveilled environments such as airports, the Looking-Glass Self serves as a critical lens for understanding how employees shape and regulate their identities in response to both real and perceived observation. Surveillance technologies—such as CCTV, biometric scanners, and performance tracking systems—function as “mirrors” through which employees imagine themselves being watched and judged, leading them to modify their behaviour to align with those perceived expectations (Moore, 2018; Ball, 2010).

At Kotoka International Airport (KIA), this dynamic is especially relevant. Security staff are aware of being continuously observed—not only by supervisors but also by passengers and colleagues. This awareness

shapes their self-presentation, professional conduct, and internal sense of competence. For example, one interviewee remarked: *“I know they’re watching, so I make sure to always be on top of things, or else they’ll think I’m not doing my job.”* This statement illustrates the Looking-Glass Self in action: the worker anticipates the judgment of others and adjusts his behaviour accordingly, constructing a self-image that conforms to perceived surveillance expectations.

Contemporary scholars have extended Cooley’s theory to digital and institutional contexts. Altheide (2000) and Lyon (2007) argue that surveillance creates a *performance arena* where individuals are constantly managing impressions, not just in face-to-face encounters but through mediated, often algorithmic, observation. Similarly, Ball and Wilson (2000) highlight that in modern workplaces, surveillance induces forms of identity work whereby employees internalise managerial logics, leading to self-discipline and conformity.

This interactionist approach is beneficial in collectivist cultures like Ghana, where social identity and workplace harmony are shaped through intersubjective evaluations. Employees do not passively absorb surveillance; instead, they actively interpret its meaning, often aligning their behaviour with what they perceive as the expectations of the organisational gaze. Thus, the Looking-Glass Self enables this thesis to explore how surveillance is not only disciplinary but also meaning-making, producing self-aware, reflexive workers whose professional identities are constantly negotiated through both imagined and objective evaluations.



iii. *Combining Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist Frameworks: A Multilayered Approach*

The combination of Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist perspectives enables a more holistic analysis of surveillance at KIA, capturing both the structural forces of power that shape behaviour and the subjective interpretations that influence individual responses to these structures. By using both frameworks, this thesis provides an understanding of not only how surveillance technologies enforce compliance and discipline but also how security staff negotiate their identities and behaviours in response to these technologies.

There were instances during the interview where a security officer discussed the tension between his professional obligations and their discomfort with constant surveillance. He expressed that while he understood the need for surveillance to ensure security, he also felt it creates an atmosphere of distrust. This dual experience can be analysed using both Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist lenses. From a Foucauldian perspective, this tension reflects the disciplinary power of surveillance, which enforces compliance but simultaneously generates feelings of alienation or resistance. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, the staff member's self-concept is being shaped by the Looking-Glass Self as they adjust their behaviour based on how they believe supervisors and colleagues perceive them within this surveillance system.

In the analysis chapters, these illustrative examples will be expanded to explore how the intersection of power and identity operates within the

surveillance environment at KIA. This combined approach will offer a nuanced understanding of how security staff navigate the pressures of surveillance while also managing their professional identities and agency.

#### **3.8.4 Verification and Reliability**

The quality of quantitative research is conventionally assessed using criteria including reliability and generalizability. Trustworthiness, as an alternative to quality and reliability, is considered pertinent to qualitative research (Bassey, 1999).

To ensure quality, I adhered to the following fundamental guidelines for my research:

1. This research contributes to the expansion of knowledge.
2. The research design is defensible as it includes a research strategy that can address the evaluation questions.
3. The research is conducted rigorously by systematically and transparently collecting, analysing, and interpreting qualitative data.
4. The research claims are credible as they provide well-founded and plausible arguments about the significance of the generated data.

While semi-structured interviews were the primary method of data collection. Initially, memory writing was used to set the ground for the interviews. Security officers and supervisors at the KIA were selected as participants, and their data was meticulously compared. Following Bassey's (1999) recommendation, I thoroughly examined the facts to persuade the reader of the story's credibility.

#### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter presents a comprehensive explanation of the techniques and methodologies used in this thesis. A qualitative methodology was chosen because it closely aligns with and is thus most suitable for the inquiry's goal, as well as being in line with the philosophical views of both Schatzki and Freire. Thorough interviews were conducted with selected participants from Kotoka International Airport. The purpose of these interviews was to gather detailed and comprehensive information. As the researcher, my duty was to analyse the data. The analysis of data was a continuous, repetitive, and flexible process that occurred concurrently with data collection. The events were carefully processed and categorised, with themes and categories being conceptualised and defined as the research progressed.

Furthermore, by operationalising the Foucauldian concepts of power, discipline, and self-regulation alongside symbolic interactionist concepts such as the Looking-Glass Self, this thesis will examine both the structural dimensions of surveillance and the individual-level interpretations of those subjected to it. The data analysis will focus on how these theoretical concepts manifest in the lived experiences of airport security staff, with illustrative examples drawn from the interviews to demonstrate how surveillance practices shape professional behaviour, identity, and perceptions of power. This methodology chapter thus outlines a theoretical framework that allows for a multifaceted exploration of surveillance at KIA, integrating both the macro (power structures) and micro (subjective experiences) dimensions of this complex phenomenon.

The analysis and discussion of this thesis will be divided into two chapters. Chapter Four examines employees' general perception of workplace electronic surveillance, and Chapter Five discusses the Ghanaian cultural dynamics (non-Western) versus

globalised dynamics (Western) of electronic surveillance performance management (ESPM).

## **Chapter 4**

### **Analysis and Discussion 1**

#### **Employee General Perception of Workplace Electronic Surveillance**

##### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of data collected through semi-structured interviews designed to gather in-depth, qualitative insights into employees' perceptions of electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM). These interviews enabled participants to share their real-life experiences and perspectives, providing a rich and nuanced understanding of how surveillance affects performance evaluations. By using open-ended questions, the study encouraged participants to articulate their interpretations and subjective realities, revealing the complexities and varied dimensions of their experiences with workplace surveillance.

The diversity of responses captured during these interviews provided valuable insights into the participants' unique viewpoints, contributing to a deeper understanding of the subject. These narratives revealed the intricate dynamics between employees and surveillance, thereby enhancing our understanding of the core issues at play. The analysis primarily draws on Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis methodology, which provides a structured approach to identifying and interpreting key patterns within the data. The first step, as suggested by Braun and Clarke, involved familiarisation

with the interview data, which was followed by the categorisation of responses based on emerging themes.

The themes identified during the interviews form the foundation of this analysis. Each theme sheds light on specific aspects of the research, making a unique contribution to our understanding of how electronic surveillance impacts employees' perceptions of performance management. These thematic insights are examined within the theoretical framework established in previous chapters, incorporating both post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist perspectives. This approach highlights how power dynamics, surveillance, and employees' subjective interpretations of their monitored actions intersect in complex ways.

An important theme that emerged during the data collection process was the influence of globalised work standards and cross-cultural interactions on employees' experiences of workplace surveillance and performance evaluation. The globalisation of trade and travel has transformed airports into essential hubs that connect people across diverse cultural and economic backgrounds (Faulconbridge & Beaverstock, 2009), and Kotoka International Airport (KIA) is no exception. As Ghana positions itself as a gateway to West Africa, KIA faces increasing pressure to meet international aviation and security standards, creating both opportunities and challenges for airport security personnel.

This chapter also examines how Ghanaian collectivist cultural values shape employee behaviour, communication, and attitudes toward performance monitoring within a globalised environment. The comparison between Terminals 2 and 3 of KIA will explore how differences in language, communication styles, and cultural factors—such as time management and tribal distinctions—impact both employee interactions and

performance evaluations in a setting influenced by international expectations. Through this analysis, the study seeks to understand the nuanced effects of surveillance in the context of globalisation and cultural diversity, particularly in a developing country like Ghana.

#### **4.1 Participants' Interview Data.**

The research initially included a participant pool of 32 individuals; however, 10 people subsequently withdrew before the commencement of interviews, citing availability issues as their reasons for withdrawal. Additionally, two participants were unable to successfully conclude the interview procedure because they abruptly terminated their participation. A total of 20 individuals completed the face-to-face interview and data collection phase of this study. Among the sample of twenty individuals who were interviewed, it was found that four of them held the position of supervisor, with an average work experience of seven years. We also identified six individuals as senior security officers, each with an average of five years of work experience. We classified the other ten interviewees as security officers with an average work experience of four years. All participants have a minimum of three years of professional experience working as airport security officers. Moreover, a total of three individuals were identified as female, whereas seventeen participants were identified as male. All twenty participants had prior educational and professional training experience before working as airport security personnel.

At the time of this interview, no study or data had been collected regarding employee behaviour and workplace surveillance at Kotoka International Airport. Employee participants were expected to have at least three years' experience working at the arrival and departure halls of Kotoka International Airport. The pre-interview phase

involved calling participants to discuss their preferred interview time. Additionally, this contact served as a reminder to participants of the study's aims and expectations. To facilitate transcription and subsequent analysis, all semi-structured interviews were recorded; however, few notes were taken to avoid detracting from the substantial evidence generated through the dialogues. The interviews were conducted in a secluded setting to minimise disruptions, and the participants' perspectives and viewpoints were highly valued, both in terms of the interview duration and through the practice of active listening. Active listening is a commonly used coaching strategy in the fields of counselling and coaching (Levitt, 2002, pp. 101–115). Comstock (2015) describes active listening as a communication style that requires the listener to focus their attention and concentration on the speaker or group to fully understand the conveyed message. Interviewees contributed varying amounts of information to the teams covered in this study. Some participants spoke at length about one or two of the teams, while others made their contribution targets in almost all the teams under this case study research. Therefore, all participant voices and views are equally represented in this study.

#### **4.2 Interview data: emerging themes**

During the data collection process through semi-structured interviews, it became apparent from the participants' responses that enduring employee perception of workplace surveillance techniques, as well as the influence of language, time, cultural disparities, and pressure to meet globalised standards at KIA, affected electronic surveillance-based performance management. The major themes identified for discussion in this chapter were:

1. Employee Perception of Workplace Surveillance

2. Electronic Surveillance- based Performance Management
3. Ghanaian Cultural Influence on Employee Perception of Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM)

#### **4.2.1 Theme 1: Employee Perception of Workplace Surveillance**

One of the main concerns affecting employee performance at work is the employee's perception of electronic workplace surveillance. This theme primarily aimed to investigate the perceived benefits or drawbacks of electronic surveillance of employee performance management. Employees expressed their views on workplace surveillance under three categories: (i) privacy Concerns, (ii) power dynamics, and (iii) Commercialization.

To analyse these interview statements using both post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories, we can explore how institutional power structures and subjective experiences interact to shape employees' perceptions of surveillance at Kotoka International Airport (KIA).

##### **4.2.1.1 Privacy and Trust Dynamics**

To analyse these interview statements using both post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories, we can explore how institutional power structures and subjective experiences interact to shape employees' perceptions of surveillance at Kotoka International Airport (KIA).

Employees expressed significant concerns about how electronic surveillance at KIA intruded on their privacy. Prof articulated a common sentiment:

*"I feel there is no such thing as privacy at Terminal 3; my bag and purse are being searched and scanned at every given opportunity. Management has*



*upgraded surveillance and data security to meet international standards at T3. I believe I am being monitored on my work emails and desktop computers at the airport when I use them. (Prof, 28/06/2023)*

Atia shared a similar view, highlighting the pervasive nature of surveillance:

*"Knowing where I am at any given time at work, including going to the toilet, is very pervasive of my personal space. Only God should be all-knowing, not my manager or supervisor " (Atia, 18/06/2023)*

The lack of consideration for cultural and gender norms on privacy in surveillance activities also contributed to negative perceptions. Adwoa's experience exemplifies this issue:

*"I am a woman having to go through the scanners and metal detectors any time I come to work at T3, which makes me uncomfortable. There have been times when the body scanners went beeping because I was wearing a sanitary pad during my menstrual period and had been searched. It made me feel embarrassed knowing that in my culture, a woman is not supposed to be seen in public places when she is menstruating " (Adwoa, 10/07/2023)*

From a Foucauldian perspective, the interviews in this study reveal how surveillance at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) operates as a mechanism of control, ensuring compliance with security protocols and international standards. Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power and the panopticon illustrate how surveillance technologies create a state of continuous visibility, where individuals are made to feel as though they are constantly being watched. This "panoptic" effect encourages employees to self-regulate their behaviour in response to the perceived omnipresence of surveillance.

Prof's concerns about privacy—*"I feel there is no such thing as privacy at Terminal 3; my bag and purse are being searched and scanned at every given opportunity"*—echo Foucault's notion of biopolitics, where surveillance extends beyond professional activities to intrude into personal lives. His belief that *"I am monitored on my work emails and desktop computers"* suggests that surveillance permeates both physical and digital spaces, reinforcing a pervasive system of control. This monitoring aligns with the concept of governmentality, where institutions enforce security protocols not just through rules but through the regulation of everyday behaviour, ensuring alignment with global standards.

Atia's statement, *"Knowing where I am at any given time at work, including going to the toilet, is very pervasive of my personal space,"* exemplifies the totalising nature of surveillance. Foucault's idea of *"docile bodies"* is evident here—surveillance turns employees into regulated subjects, stripping away personal autonomy. Atia's remark that *"Only God should be all-knowing, not my manager or supervisor"* illustrates his perception of surveillance as an intrusive, disproportionate force that dehumanises him. This reinforces Foucault's view of surveillance as an instrument of domination, where power operates subtly but thoroughly on the individual.

Adwoa's experience with body scanners, especially during her menstrual period, highlights the intrusive nature of surveillance, particularly in non-Western cultural contexts. Her requirement to undergo physical checks during a culturally sensitive time illustrates Foucault's concept of disciplinary technologies, where surveillance not only regulates behaviour but also invades personal and cultural dignity. This resonates with Foucault's assertion that power operates through the body, transforming individuals into objects of biopolitical control, particularly when surveillance practices clash with cultural norms.

In addition to Foucauldian analysis, symbolic interactionism, particularly the Looking-Glass Self theory, provides insight into how employees internalise surveillance and how it shapes their self-concepts. According to this theory, individuals form their self-image based on how they believe others perceive them. In a highly surveilled environment like KIA, employees' behaviour and emotions are shaped by the perceived judgment of supervisors and security personnel.

From a symbolic interactionist viewpoint, Prof's feelings of constant surveillance on his work emails and computers suggest that he imagines being scrutinised by supervisors. The Looking-Glass Self theory helps explain how this perceived monitoring leads him to modify his actions, possibly being more cautious about what he writes or does on his devices. His concern about privacy reveals how the imagined judgments of management influence his sense of autonomy and agency, prompting him to self-regulate to avoid negative repercussions.

Atia's discomfort with being constantly monitored, even during personal moments like using the bathroom, reflects how surveillance has affected her self-perception. The Looking-Glass Self theory helps us understand how she perceives the ever-present gaze of her supervisors, which creates feelings of self-consciousness and a sense of personal space being invaded. Her analogy of surveillance to divine omniscience suggests she perceives this scrutiny as an unjust infringement on her dignity, shaping her behaviour by making her feel perpetually judged and reducing her sense of individuality.

Adwoa's experience with body scanners during menstruation underscores how surveillance impacts her cultural identity and self-esteem. The embarrassment she experiences can be explained through the Looking-Glass Self theory, as she imagines

how others—such as security staff or colleagues—perceive her in these moments. The tension between her cultural norms, which dictate that women should not be seen in public during menstruation, and the invasive surveillance practices at KIA shape her behaviour and undermine her sense of dignity and self-respect.

The experiences of Prof, Atia and Adwoa highlight how surveillance is perceived differently based on cultural values. In Ghana's collectivist culture, which emphasises community, social harmony, and mutual support, individual monitoring at work is often at odds with these communal values. Privacy is seen not as a personal right but through a collective lens, and constant surveillance at KIA challenges this cultural understanding. According to Blumer (1969), these cultural dynamics shape how individuals perceive themselves and interact within their work environments. The persistent surveillance at KIA affects employees' sense of personal space and autonomy, influencing their work attitudes and behaviour.

Furthermore, Adwoa's experience also demonstrates how surveillance intersects with gender and cultural norms. The embarrassment she feels from body scanners detecting menstrual products highlights how surveillance technologies can reinforce gender biases and impact personal dignity. As Westbrook and Saperstein (2015) note, surveillance can unintentionally exacerbate gender inequalities by subjecting women to scrutiny in ways that violate their cultural values. Through a symbolic interactionist lens, this can be seen as a process where surveillance practices influence the construction and negotiation of gendered identities in the workplace, adding layers of complexity to how individuals like Adwoa experience and internalise surveillance.

Some employees felt that continuous surveillance created a perception of oppression and managerial distrust of employees. Yaw explained that:

*"At KIA, the electronic cameras welcome you immediately you enter the premises of the airport, including reception, entrances, and exits to our offices. I believe the clocking-in system collects our data when we report to work. Electronic body scanners and handheld metal detectors are used to scan each time we go through the security checkpoints, even if you return to the checkpoint a few minutes after leaving to use the washroom. At every checkpoint, two supervisors monitor our work progress every minute. I believe these measures are in place because management lacks trust in us. (Yaw, 22/06/2023)*

Moses raised a similar sentiment as to how the oppressor's rule of the colonial master has come into play at work in the presence of electronic surveillance:

*"I feel these cameras and electronic surveillance system is another form of control of Ghanaian citizens even after we declared freedom and independence from our colonial masters in 1957. I feel oppressed when I enter the walls of this airport. I don't believe the surveillance deployed is a managerial tool but to monitor my every movement and actions" (Moses).*

In a Foucauldian analysis of the above statements, surveillance is not just about monitoring but about creating a system where individuals internalise the gaze of authority, leading them to regulate their behaviour in anticipation of being watched. This self-discipline is a key aspect of Foucault's concept of governmentality.

*Yaw's Statement:* Yaw's feeling of being monitored from the moment he steps onto the airport premises resonates with Foucault's concept of ubiquitous surveillance. The presence of cameras and body scanners at every checkpoint, combined with the clocking-in system that tracks employees' attendance, creates a pervasive sense of

being constantly watched. This aligns with Foucault's concept of the panopticon, where surveillance establishes a state of continuous visibility, causing employees to behave as if they are constantly being observed (Foucault, 1977). Yaw interprets these measures as stemming from managerial distrust, suggesting that surveillance is used as a mechanism to discipline and control employees, ensuring they comply with work regulations. This feeling of distrust can be viewed as a form of biopolitical regulation, where the institution seeks to control not only the employees' work output but also their very presence within the space.

*Moses' Statement:* Moses' interpretation of surveillance as a form of ongoing colonial control aligns with Foucault's analysis of power and control in post-colonial contexts. In his view, the surveillance systems deployed at the airport resemble the oppressive mechanisms once used by colonial powers to maintain dominance over the local population. The legacy of colonial power is evident in Moses' feelings of oppression, where surveillance systems are perceived not as tools for workplace management but as instruments of social control over Ghanaian citizens (Ekeh, 1975, pp. 91-112). This aligns with Foucault's theory of disciplinary societies, where institutions use surveillance to manage and regulate individuals' behaviour, turning them into docile bodies under constant observation. Moses' feeling of oppression suggests that the surveillance system is experienced as a form of continued domination, echoing the power dynamics of colonial rule.

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, in a surveilled environment, employees develop self-perceptions shaped by their interpretations of how supervisors and managers are observing them.

Yaw's belief that surveillance systems are driven by managerial distrust can be explained through the concept of the Looking-Glass Self. Yaw imagines that management views him and other employees as untrustworthy, which shapes his perception of himself in the workplace. This self-perception, formed through his interpretation of the surveillance gaze, leads him to feel disempowered and under scrutiny. The constant visibility imposed by cameras, body scanners, and clocking-in systems becomes a reflective process, where Yaw internalises management's judgment and adapts his behaviour accordingly. This reinforces the idea that the self is not formed in isolation but through social interaction and the perceived gaze of authority figures.

Moses' statement about the surveillance systems being a continuation of colonial oppression highlights how he interprets the symbolic meaning of surveillance in a broader social and historical context. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, Moses imagines the surveillance system as a reflection of past colonial control, which informs his self-perception as a subject under domination. This interpretation shapes how he perceives his place within the airport environment, leading him to feel not just monitored but oppressed. The Looking-Glass Self theory helps explain how Moses internalises the surveillance gaze as a form of social subordination, where the presence of cameras and monitoring technologies reflects a broader societal power dynamic that devalues his autonomy and freedom.

However, not all employees viewed workplace surveillance in a negative light. Some saw it as essential for their safety, thus placing a high level of trust in the systems. Nyaaba stated:

*"I am fine with the cameras and the scanners, and this is due to my previous job where I worked for a Tech giant from China based in Accra. I believe if I have nothing to hide, I don't mind. I feel that I am working in a technology-based environment, and I feel safe in it." (Nyaaba, 08/07/2023)*

Mantse echoed this sentiment:

*"I have heard some of my colleagues complain about their privacy being invaded by the level of surveillance systems we have to undergo. I believe my safety and the safety of others is paramount to privacy. My parents had installed CCTV cameras at home for security reasons; hence, I know the importance of surveillance. What could be so personal or private to protect whilst at work?" (Mantse, 06/07/2023)*

To analyse the interview statements of Nyaaba and Mantse using Post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories, we can examine their responses to surveillance in the workplace from both a structural and subjective perspective. While these employees exhibit more trust in surveillance systems compared to other employees, their interpretations can be framed through the lens of these complementary theoretical perspectives.

**Nyaaba's Statement:** Nyaaba's comfort with surveillance stems from his belief that he has "nothing to hide" and that the technology-based environment is both familiar and conducive to his sense of security. From a Foucauldian lens, this reflects how surveillance systems are not only about control but also about creating norms of behaviour that individuals willingly adopt. In Nyaaba's case, surveillance is normalised as part of a safe, technology-driven work environment. His previous experience working for a Tech giant from China will have conditioned him to view surveillance as



a necessary and beneficial practice rather than a form of oppression. This aligns with Foucault's notion of biopolitics, where individuals internalise surveillance mechanisms as part of their self-regulation in exchange for perceived benefits, such as safety.

Nyaaba's acceptance of surveillance can be explained through the Looking-Glass Self in terms of how he imagines himself to be viewed by authority figures within the airport. He does not feel threatened by surveillance because he perceives it as a normal part of the technology-driven work environment. His statement, "I believe if I have nothing to hide, I don't mind," reflects an internalisation of the surveillance gaze in a way that aligns with his sense of self as a trustworthy and compliant employee. Through this lens, Nyaaba's perception of himself is shaped by his previous work experiences, which have conditioned him to view surveillance as routine and protective rather than invasive. The symbolic interactionist perspective emphasises how Nyaaba's interpretation of surveillance is influenced by his past interactions and how he perceives others' views on his compliance with surveillance systems.

**Mantse's Statement:** Mantse's view emphasises the importance of safety over privacy, which can also be understood through a Foucauldian lens as an example of how surveillance systems are justified through discourses of protection. Foucault's work on security apparatuses explains how institutions use surveillance to ensure the safety of both individuals and the broader social order. For Mantse, the installation of CCTV cameras at home by his parents exemplifies the normalisation of surveillance as a safeguard against threats. This perspective aligns with Foucault's notion that surveillance technologies are not always perceived as oppressive; they can also be viewed as necessary mechanisms for maintaining security and stability within a governed space, such as the workplace. The distinction Mantse draws between the paramount importance of safety and the lesser value of privacy demonstrates how

individuals will prioritise institutional goals (security) over personal autonomy (privacy), a key theme in Foucault's theory of governance.

Furthermore, Mantse's belief that safety is paramount to privacy reflects his self-concept, formed through his experiences of living in an environment where surveillance was considered protective, such as the CCTV cameras installed by his parents at home. From the Looking-Glass Self perspective, Mantse imagines that surveillance is not about targeting him or infringing on his privacy but rather about ensuring the collective safety of everyone in the workspace. His self-perception is influenced by the idea that being watched is a protective measure, one that his family also used in a personal context for security purposes. His rejection of the notion that anything "so personal or private" needs to be protected at work further illustrates how he constructs his identity as an employee who prioritises security over individual privacy based on his imagined reflection in the eyes of authority figures who manage the surveillance system.

Furthermore, Nyaaba and Mantse view surveillance positively, as it enhances safety and operational efficiency, reflecting the instrumental rationality inherent in surveillance technologies used to optimise organisational productivity. Their sentiments reflect Zuboff's theory of surveillance capitalism, which frames surveillance practices at KIA within the context of economic imperatives and efficiency gains (Zuboff, 2019).

Other participants, in their responses, expressed distrust of employers and the institution (KIA) in implementing workplace surveillance systems due to the lack of a thorough data protection framework. Response from Ataa confirms this view:

*“Generally, our Ghanaian institutions are not efficient enough in making sure the surveillance systems will work properly to meet its intended purpose. There have been instances where two months’ worth of recorded data readings from clocking-in systems and CCTV were lost. There could have been a significant data breach as a result, but it has been swept under the carpet with no heads rolling”. (Ataa, 17/06/2023)*

Similar sentiments of employee lack of trust in Ghanaian institutions' handling of surveillance were shared by Adongo:

*"The organisation is not very transparent about its surveillance policies. We were informed about the presence of surveillance, but details about what is monitored, how the data is used, and who has access to it are not communicated. This lack of transparency fuels mistrust and uncertainty among employees."(Adongo, 13/06/2023)*

Obolo also raised concerns of distrust in the surveillance system due to the influence of corruption in manipulating surveillance data for performance management.

*“In Ghana, anything is possible. All you need to do is continuously offer a brown envelope to your line manager each month, and all your lateness and inefficiencies will be non-existent. I don’t trust that performance measurements from surveillance are a true reflection of our performance because I know of a colleague who is late to work almost every day, and yet he receives good appraisal ratings. (Obolo, 28/07/2023)*

The statements provided by Ataa, Adongo, and Obolo reflect complex dynamics of mistrust and distrust in workplace surveillance systems at KIA (Kotoka International Airport), particularly regarding data protection, transparency, and corruption. These

perceptions can be analysed using both post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories to understand how employees navigate surveillance practices and how they interpret and internalise these practices.

Ataa's concern about the inefficiency of Ghanaian institutions reflects a failure in the surveillance infrastructure. From a post-Foucauldian perspective, surveillance is intended to be a mechanism of control and accountability, yet the reported loss of recorded data undermines its legitimacy. Ataa's statement that "there could be a significant data breach" but that it has been "swept under the carpet" suggests a collapse of institutional transparency and governance, which are critical to the proper functioning of surveillance systems. The absence of accountability and the concealment of these failures erode the very foundation of the surveillance regime, thus fostering distrust among employees. Ataa's view that institutions are not efficient in ensuring that surveillance works for its intended purpose reflects his interpretation of the institutional gaze as flawed or unreliable. From a Looking-Glass Self perspective, Ataa likely views the institution's failure to manage surveillance data effectively as a reflection of how management perceives its employees—not as individuals who require proper oversight but as people whose data can be carelessly mishandled. Ataa's self-concept is shaped by the perceived incompetence of the institution, which in turn shapes her sense of insecurity in how her data is being handled. Her mistrust reflects an internalised view that the institution does not value the importance of transparency and accuracy, which affects her trust in the surveillance system.

Adongo's mention of the lack of transparency regarding surveillance policies further supports the post-Foucauldian critique that surveillance practices, while seemingly all-encompassing, are often opaque. Foucault's theory of surveillance as a form of

biopolitics implies that surveillance systems should make visible the rules and norms of governance. Yet here, the ambiguity about what is monitored and how data is used creates a sense of uncertainty and suspicion. The lack of clarity and communication from the organisation regarding surveillance policies weakens the power-knowledge dynamic that Foucault emphasises, wherein institutions should utilise knowledge (e.g., data gathered through surveillance) to establish their authority. Instead, Adongo's experience points to how the secrecy of the institution contributes to employee alienation from the surveillance systems in place. Adongo's concerns about the lack of transparency highlight the importance of symbolic interactionism in understanding how employees perceive themselves as being surveilled. His statement suggests a tension between what he believes the surveillance system is supposed to do and the ambiguity surrounding its actual functioning. The Looking-Glass Self theory suggests that Adongo's sense of self is shaped by his uncertainty about how he is being perceived and for what purpose. This lack of clarity leads to mistrust, as employees cannot fully form their self-perception within the context of workplace surveillance when the nature of that surveillance is obscured. Adongo's self-concept is marked by anxiety over the potential misuse of data or how his actions might be misinterpreted due to this lack of transparency.

Obolo's reference to corruption and the manipulation of performance metrics through bribery aligns with a post-Foucauldian analysis of how power can be subverted within institutions. Foucault examines how power relations are negotiated and resisted. In this case, Obolo's mention of the "brown envelope" culture suggests that surveillance systems can be undermined through informal, corrupt practices. The surveillance system, intended to enforce discipline and accountability, becomes ineffectual in an environment where performance evaluations can be manipulated. This critique

highlights how even the most robust surveillance systems can fail in contexts where informal power dynamics, such as bribery, prevail over institutional governance. Obolo's critique of the surveillance system being susceptible to corruption and manipulation through bribery reflects a deep distrust in the fairness and accuracy of the system. From a Looking-Glass Self perspective, Obolo's experience of seeing a colleague rewarded despite frequent tardiness shows how he believes the system reflects distorted perceptions of employee performance. This perceived manipulation of surveillance data and performance reviews affects how Obolo views himself in the workplace—he likely feels disempowered and unjustly monitored since the surveillance systems are not applied equitably. Obolo's distrust in the fairness of performance management, based on surveillance results, leads him to doubt the integrity of the system, which in turn influences how he behaves and interacts within the workplace. His self-concept becomes one of cynicism, as he believes informal, corrupt practices can easily manipulate the surveillance gaze.

Trust in employers and institutions plays a crucial role in the acceptance of surveillance. In multi-tribal countries, where trust in institutions is lower due to corruption, nepotism, and ethnic favouritism, employees view surveillance as another tool for unfair practices, as indicated by Ataa and Obolo. Research by Ofori-Dankwa and Julian (2013) suggests that in environments where institutional trust is low, surveillance is seen as a method of control rather than a legitimate managerial tool.

Transparency about surveillance practices is critical in building and maintaining trust in leadership. Some respondents expressed the need to understand why surveillance is necessary, how it is conducted, and how the data will be used.

*“Workplace surveillance significantly affects my trust in management. The surveillance I experience here is excessive and not well-explained; it makes me feel like management doesn't trust us. This lack of trust is reciprocated, making it harder to feel loyal and committed to the organisation. Trust can be rebuilt by ensuring surveillance is fair, transparent, and respectful of privacy.” (Prof, 28/06/2023 )*

However, the participant's statement underscores the discrepancy between the intended function of surveillance as a control mechanism and the perceived overreach of that control.

*Excessive Surveillance:* The respondent mentions that the surveillance they experience is excessive and not adequately explained, suggesting that the power dynamics are not functioning smoothly. Foucault's theory would argue that for surveillance to regulate behaviour effectively, it must be legitimate and transparent. In this case, however, the lack of clear communication about the necessity and scope of surveillance has led to a breakdown in trust. Employees perceive the surveillance as intrusive and unjustified, which disrupts the intended disciplinary function and shifts the power relations between management and employees.

*Erosion of Trust:* The participant describes how the lack of transparency about surveillance has led to reciprocal distrust between employees and management. In Foucault's framework, surveillance is intended to be internalised by employees, enabling them to self-regulate. However, when surveillance is perceived as oppressive and opaque, rather than facilitating compliance, it can foster resistance or disengagement. The statement suggests that the unclear boundaries surrounding surveillance have contributed to an atmosphere of distrust, which undermines the

organisation's ability to use surveillance as an effective governance tool. Thus, the post-Foucauldian analysis would suggest that transparency is crucial in maintaining the legitimacy of surveillance practices.

*Perception of Distrust:* The respondent explicitly links the lack of transparency in surveillance to a perception that management does not trust employees. According to Cooley's Looking-Glass Self concept, individuals come to view themselves based on how they imagine others perceive them. In this case, the employee internalises the idea that the excessive surveillance reflects a lack of faith in their integrity and competence. The absence of clear communication about why surveillance is necessary leads the employee to construct a self-image that mirrors distrust from management, which then affects their emotional response and commitment to the organisation. The surveillance gaze becomes a negative reflection, causing employees to feel undervalued and under scrutiny, which, in turn, lowers their sense of loyalty to the institution.

*Impact on Loyalty and Commitment:* The Looking-Glass Self also helps explain the emotional consequences of surveillance. The employee's statement that "this lack of trust is reciprocated" suggests that they have internalised the idea that management views them with suspicion, leading to a decline in organisational commitment. This perception influences how employees respond to the surveillance—rather than seeing it as a neutral or beneficial tool, they interpret it as a signal of mistrust, which then affects their behavioural and emotional engagement with the organisation. In this way, surveillance not only influences employees' actions but also shapes their self-concept and their relationship to the workplace.



#### 4.2.1.2 Power Dynamics

Surveillance was also perceived as being selectively enforced to discipline lower-level workers while overlooking infractions by higher-level employees. This selective enforcement led to feelings of injustice and demotivation. Miki elaborated:

*"I feel it is an unfair practice since those working in the offices and managers are not monitored as much as we on the platforms are monitored. The supervisors themselves are not subject to the same level of surveillance. I am constantly under pressure to perform at work, knowing I am being watched at any given time for my flaws. This compounds my stress level, as the work procedure itself is already stressful. (Miki, 10/07/2023)*

The disparity in surveillance practices influences how employees perceive their role within the organisational hierarchy and impacts their workplace behaviours. Michel Foucault's theory of the Panopticon is frequently referenced in discussions of workplace surveillance. It posits that constant surveillance exerts a form of power and control, leading to self-discipline among employees due to the possibility of being watched at any time.

Domlevo described the presence of surveillance as intimidating:

*"Close circuit cameras have seen an increase in every part of the airport. Previously, we only had CCTV at the departure and arrival areas of the airport, as well as at car park entrances and exits in T2. However, we have now seen a large-scale introduction of CCTV in the working areas and at almost every point where staff can be seen. There is a biometric clocking-in system that uses our fingerprints to record our arrival and departure times, as well as breaks taken and resumption of work or leaving the premises at the airport. This can*

*feel very intimidating knowing your every move is watched as if you are a criminal." (Domlevo, 27/06/2023)*

Foucault's concept of the Panopticon suggests that surveillance operates as a form of invisible control, where the constant possibility of being watched compels individuals to self-regulate their behaviour. However, the interviews reveal a significant critique of how this power is applied in the organisational hierarchy.

*Selective Enforcement and Hierarchy:* Miki's statement emphasises the selective enforcement of surveillance, where lower-level workers are subject to more intense monitoring than higher-level employees or supervisors. Foucault's framework suggests that surveillance is intended to create a generalised, invisible form of discipline that impacts all individuals within a system. However, in this case, the unequal application of surveillance produces a power imbalance that fosters feelings of injustice. Lower-level employees, such as Miki, feel targeted, while supervisors are perceived as exempt from the same level of scrutiny. This selective enforcement undermines the legitimacy of the surveillance system, as it is perceived as a tool of control used primarily to discipline those at the lower levels of the organisational hierarchy. Foucault would argue that this undermines the effectiveness of surveillance as a means of fostering self-discipline, as it creates resentment and disillusionment among employees who feel they are being mistreated.

*Surveillance as a Tool of Oppression:* Domlevo's statement speaks to the psychological impact of surveillance, describing it as intimidating and reminiscent of criminal monitoring. This aligns with Foucault's idea that surveillance functions as a mechanism of docility and normalization, where employees internalise the gaze of authority and modify their behaviour to fit the expected norms. However, in cases

where surveillance is perceived as excessive or discriminatory, it can lead to feelings of oppression rather than compliance. The biometric clocking-in system and the pervasive presence of CCTV cameras, as described by Domlevo, evoke a sense of constant monitoring that induces stress and reduces employees' sense of autonomy. Foucault's theory suggests that this form of biopolitical control is designed to regulate bodies and actions with precision and efficiency. Still, the disempowering effects on workers are also evident.

*Perception of Unfair Treatment:* Miki's statement reveals how the disparity in surveillance practices shapes her self-perception of the workplace hierarchy. The perception that he is being watched more closely than his supervisors leads him to internalise the idea that he is less trusted or valued within the organisation. According to Cooley, the Looking-Glass Self is formed by imagining how others perceive us. In this case, Miki's understanding of surveillance reinforces feelings of inferiority and injustice. This not only impacts his self-esteem but also affects his workplace behaviour, as he feels constant pressure to avoid mistakes due to the watchful gaze of management. The perceived inequity in surveillance fosters demotivation and a sense of alienation from the organisation, leading to resentment rather than cooperation.

*Surveillance and Self-Consciousness:* Domlevo's experience of being under constant observation by CCTV cameras and biometric systems also reflects a key component of the Looking-Glass Self. The knowledge that his every move is being tracked leads him to imagine how management views him—potentially as untrustworthy or in need of strict control. This creates a heightened sense of self-consciousness, where Domlevo modifies his behaviour in response to the perceived judgments of others. However, instead of fostering productive self-discipline, this intense surveillance gaze

leads to feelings of intimidation and stress. Symbolic interactionism suggests that when individuals perceive themselves as being under constant scrutiny, they experience a loss of autonomy, as they are forced to adapt their behaviour to what they believe others expect of them.

The interview statements provided by Yaro, Precious, Gabi, Kwabene, and Atampugre below reflect various perceptions of workplace surveillance at KIA. By applying both post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories, we can examine how surveillance impacts power dynamics, fear, trust, and fairness in the workplace.

Fear and apprehension were common among employee's responses, as Yaro recounted:

*"A previous colleague of mine was sacked unfairly due to the biometric clocking-in system showing he was the last person to clock out when a theft incident had happened in the office. This experience makes me apprehensive every time I walk through the door of KIA and see all these surveillance systems. (Yaro, 20/06/2024)*

*Fear and Disciplinary Power:* Yaro's account of his colleague being unfairly dismissed due to biometric clocking data illustrates how surveillance can be weaponised to enforce disciplinary measures. The fear of being wrongly implicated in incidents due to surveillance data reinforces the disciplinary power that management holds over employees. This aligns with Sewell and Wilkinson's (1992) assertion that surveillance can reinforce power imbalances, creating a workplace where employees are more concerned with avoiding punitive measures than engaging in collaboration or

innovation. Foucault's theory highlights that surveillance not only monitors but also serves as a mechanism for ensuring compliance through the threat of punishment.

*Fear of Surveillance and Self-Perception:* Yaro's apprehension upon entering KIA due to the visible surveillance systems is a reflection of how surveillance affects his self-concept. The knowledge that every action is being observed, combined with the fear of unfair repercussions (as in the case of his colleague's dismissal), causes Yaro to imagine himself as constantly under scrutiny. This aligns with the Looking-Glass Self, where employees shape their behaviour based on how they believe they are being perceived by management—potentially as untrustworthy or suspect. The presence of surveillance, therefore, fosters a sense of vulnerability and anxiety, as employees feel they must constantly self-regulate to avoid negative judgments.

Sewell and Wilkinson (1992), in their work "Someone to Watch over Me," explain how workplace surveillance in similar settings, such as KIA, can reinforce existing hierarchical structures and power imbalances. When managers use surveillance as a tool to assert authority and control over employees, it can foster a climate of fear and obedience rather than one of collaboration and innovation.

Some employees felt surveillance was used to find faults and enforce strict compliance rather than support professional development. Precious shared his experience:

*"I was instantly given a query letter by my supervisor on duty when I was captured on CCTV failing to do a manual body search after a passenger passed through the electronic body scan system. The query went further to affect my overall appraisal results." (Precious, 20/07/2023)*

*Selective Enforcement and Power Imbalances:* Precious's experience of receiving a query letter and a negative appraisal due to CCTV footage demonstrates how

surveillance is selectively enforced to discipline employees. Foucault's notion of disciplinary power is evident here, as surveillance is used not to support professional development but to punish non-compliance. The selective enforcement of surveillance, where some employees are reprimanded while others are not, reinforces the power managers hold over lower-level workers, creating a sense of injustice and demotivation. This selective use of surveillance is a form of micro-power that regulates behaviour while perpetuating inequalities within the workplace.

*Surveillance and Professional Identity:* Precious's experience of being penalised for a minor infraction caught on CCTV illustrates how surveillance influences the professional identity of employees. The negative appraisal he received, based on surveillance data, reinforces his perception of himself as inadequate or failing to meet the organisation's standards. This aligns with the symbolic interactionist view that people develop their self-concept based on feedback from others, specifically supervisors, which can be either positive, fostering development, or negative, leading to demotivation (Lyon, 2001). The punitive use of surveillance to assess performance thus undermines the potential for employees to view themselves positively within the workplace.

Other participants felt that surveillance created an imbalance of power, with lower-level workers being more heavily monitored than higher-level employees. This selective enforcement led to feelings of injustice and demotivation, as explained by Gabi:

*"They can see all our actions and deeds. Our managers know much about us by watching us daily, but we know nothing about them, and this is unfair."(Gabi, 19/06/2023)*

*Intensified Power Differentials:* Gabi's frustration over the imbalance of power—where lower-level workers are heavily monitored while managers are relatively unmonitored—reflects Foucault's understanding of surveillance as a tool of hierarchical control. The asymmetry of knowledge, where managers have extensive knowledge about employees, but employees have limited knowledge about managers, intensifies power differentials, leading to feelings of inequality and mistrust. This observation aligns with Lyon's (2001) critique that surveillance in organisational settings often exacerbates power imbalances, eroding trust and fostering resentment among employees.

*Injustice and the Looking-Glass Self:* Gabi's feeling of injustice due to the unequal application of surveillance, where lower-level employees are monitored more closely than managers, reflects how perceptions of fairness shape employees' self-identity and workplace behaviour. The imbalanced monitoring fosters the belief that management perceives lower-level workers as more prone to mistakes or less trustworthy, while managers are seen as above reproach. This perception can lead to resentment and disengagement, as employees feel devalued within the organisational hierarchy.

The positive side of surveillance as a disciplinary mechanism was expressed by some participants. Kwabene shared this view in his statement below:

*"I had to rely mostly on the evidence produced by the biometric clocking in system to reprimand team members who do not turn up to work early. Since the implementation of this system, most members of my team report to work in time".*  
(Kwabena, 28/07/2024)

In some cases, employees believed that surveillance could promote fairness and transparency within the workplace. By monitoring everyone equally, surveillance systems could help prevent favouritism and ensure that all employees were treated fairly. Atampugre confirms this view in his statement:

*"Surveillance ensures that everyone is treated the same. No one can claim they are being unfairly targeted because the cameras capture everyone's actions equally." (Atampugre, 20/07/2023).*

Not all employees view surveillance negatively. Kwabene and Atampugre's statements reveal a belief that surveillance can promote fairness and accountability, aligning with Zuboff's (2019) notion of surveillance capitalism, where monitoring is seen as a way to enhance efficiency and transparency within the workplace.

*Promoting Fairness and Accountability:* Kwabene's reliance on the biometric clocking-in system to ensure employees report to work on time reflects a positive view of surveillance as a tool for promoting fairness. From his perspective, the system provides objective evidence of attendance, preventing favouritism and ensuring that all employees are held to the same standards. Similarly, Atampugre's statement that surveillance treats everyone equally suggests that he views monitoring as a mechanism for ensuring consistent accountability across all employees. This aligns with the symbolic interactionist idea that surveillance can shape positive workplace behaviour when employees believe they are being fairly and equally monitored.

*Surveillance as a Mechanism for Trust:* In contrast to Gabi's experience of surveillance as a tool of inequity, Kwabene and Atampugre's perspectives suggest that surveillance can foster trust in the organisation by ensuring transparency. Employees are more likely to accept surveillance when they believe it is applied evenly and fairly and when



they understand that its purpose is to promote accountability rather than to catch them making mistakes.

#### **4.2.1.3 Commercialization**

Another key category was employees' perception of workplace surveillance as a tool primarily aimed at enhancing commercial benefits. The interview statements regarding workplace surveillance at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) were analysed through post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories to examine how surveillance impacts productivity, commercial benefits, privacy, and employee perceptions of being commodified.

Some participants acknowledged that surveillance could streamline operations by identifying inefficiencies and ensuring optimal resource allocation. For instance, surveillance footage could be analysed to improve workflow and reduce bottlenecks. Mantse shared his views on this aspect:

*“Surveillance helps management identify areas where we can improve our operations. They can see how we work and suggest better ways to do things, which ultimately makes our jobs easier and more efficient.” (Mantse, 06/07/2023)*

*Surveillance as a Tool for Productivity and Efficiency:* Mantse's statement that surveillance helps management identify areas for operational improvement reflects how surveillance is used to streamline processes and ensure efficiency. Foucault would interpret this as a form of disciplinary power that ensures employees conform to organisational expectations, optimising productivity through self-regulation. Surveillance is no longer just about control; it also serves to enhance workflows, eliminate bottlenecks, and ensure that resource allocation is optimised. Obolo's

assertion that surveillance helps maintain high standards aligns with this view, as monitoring ensures deviations are quickly identified and corrected. This use of surveillance mirrors the corporate Panopticon, where surveillance is leveraged to improve business operations while maintaining organisational discipline.

This was further buttressed by Obolo:

*“Surveillance ensures that we maintain high standards in our work processes. Any deviations are quickly noticed and corrected, which helps us deliver better services.” (Obolo, 28/07/2023)*

Mantse and Obolo view surveillance positively as a mechanism to enhance operational efficiency and maintain high standards. Symbolic Interactionism would interpret this as employees constructing positive meanings around surveillance, perceiving it as a tool to optimise workflow and improve service delivery (Blumer, 1969).

Other employees perceived surveillance as a tool to enhance the organisation's profitability. By ensuring that employees work efficiently and effectively, surveillance can help the company achieve its financial goals. Moses provided insight into this perception:

*“I believe all these surveillance measures are in place to maximise the company's profits. If we are constantly monitored, we are less likely to slack off, which means higher productivity and better results for the company. (Moses, 10/07/2023)*

**Commercial Benefits and Profitability:** Moses's perspective that surveillance maximises the company's profits by preventing employees from slacking off reinforces the commercial aspect of surveillance. From a post-Foucauldian perspective, this

illustrates how surveillance is tied to the logic of surveillance capitalism, where monitoring workers' productivity is aimed at maximising output and profitability (Zuboff, 2019). Surveillance is deployed to extract the maximum value from employees, ensuring continuous productivity and efficiency. Moses's view of surveillance as profit-driven reflects how employees feel they are monitored not for their development but to meet the organisation's financial goals. This ties into Foucault's notion of biopolitics, where workers' behaviours are regulated to benefit the economic system, with their bodies being disciplined to serve the company's objectives.

Moses's view that surveillance ensures productivity in support of the company's financial goals reveals a different interpretation of how employees perceive themselves through the eyes of management. From a Looking-Glass Self perspective, Moses imagines that management views employees primarily as instruments for profit, leading him to feel that surveillance exists solely to monitor their output rather than their well-being. This shapes a more negative self-perception, as employees like Moses feel valued only for their contributions to profitability rather than their intrinsic worth as individuals. This commodification, where workers feel they are treated as disposable assets, resonates with the symbolic interactionist concern that people internalise how they believe they are being viewed (Sewell & Wilkinson, 1992).

Zuboff's theory of surveillance capitalism posits that surveillance technologies are deployed to maximise organisational profitability by ensuring continuous monitoring and productivity (Zuboff, 2019). This perspective justifies surveillance as a means of maintaining high levels of employee performance and efficiency. Surveillance aimed at enhancing efficiency and productivity can be seen positively if it leads to clear benefits for employees, such as bonuses or improved working conditions. However,

from Moses's perspective, surveillance appears to focus solely on maximising profits at the expense of employee well-being, which leads to negative perceptions.

While recognising the commercial benefits of surveillance, Dimple balanced his view against privacy concerns. He acknowledged the business advantages but still felt uneasy about the level of monitoring they were subjected to. Dimple expressed this dual perspective:

*"I understand that surveillance can help the company improve and make more money, but it feels very invasive. Knowing where I am at any given time, even when I go to the bathroom, is very much a part of my personal space. (Dimple, 20/06/2023)*

*Invasion of Privacy and Disciplinary Control:* Dimple's discomfort with the invasiveness of surveillance highlights the tension between control and personal autonomy. From a post-Foucauldian perspective, the pervasive nature of surveillance, such as monitoring employees even during private moments like using the restroom, exemplifies how surveillance functions as a means of regulating every aspect of employees' lives. While surveillance is intended to enhance efficiency, the level of monitoring can erode trust between employees and management, as Dimple's statement suggests. Extensive surveillance becomes a tool for disciplinary control, making employees feel that their autonomy is compromised for the sake of commercial efficiency (Opoku & Boahen, 2018).

The use of electronic surveillance has also contributed to feelings of commodification among employees. Quashi's statement reflects a perception of being treated as a disposable asset:

*"I do not think we are regarded as valuable individuals in this organisation. All the people at the top think of us is to get the job done. We are then thrown to the corner after they get what they want from us. We have no say or input to what happens here." (Quashi, 06/07/2023).*

Similarly, Mantse, a team-shift supervisor, voiced concerns about the high expectations and harsh treatment from management:

*"It is a challenging environment to work in. The expectations of us are too high, and the day that there are long passenger queues at the security checkpoints, word quickly gets out to management, and you are warned or harshly spoken to." (Mantse, 06/07/2023).*

Other participants during the interview expressed neutral views about the commercial use of workplace surveillance. Ayimpoka echoed this neutral sentiment:

*"I understand the need for surveillance, especially for security and productivity reasons. But it needs to be balanced with respect for our privacy." (Ayimpoka, 15/06/2023)*

Ataa further shared this view:

*"Surveillance has its pros and cons. It can help highlight our hard work, but it can also be intrusive if not managed well." (Ataa, 17/06/2023)*

*Positive Construction of Surveillance:* For some employees, such as Mantse and Obolo, surveillance is viewed as a tool for enhancing workflow and improving service delivery. According to symbolic interactionism, these employees construct positive meanings around surveillance, viewing it as beneficial to their work. They perceive surveillance as a mechanism for feedback, enabling management to suggest more

effective ways to perform tasks and maintain high standards. This perspective reflects Blumer's (1969) notion that individuals act based on the meanings they assign to objects or practices. Mantse and Obolo view surveillance as a collaborative tool that enhances their performance, leading them to engage with it more positively.

*Commodification and Alienation:* Quashi and Mantse express frustration over how surveillance reinforces their feeling of being commodified, where employees are valued only for their output and discarded once their utility is exhausted. Quashi's perception that management views employees as replaceable reflects how surveillance can erode workers' sense of agency and self-worth. In symbolic interactionist terms, employees like Quashi internalise a view of themselves as mere cogs in the machine whose worth is measured by their productivity rather than their individuality. This feeling of alienation is intensified by surveillance, which constantly monitors their actions without giving them a say in how they are evaluated or monitored.

*Balancing Privacy and Productivity:* Ayimpoka and Ataa provide a neutral perspective, acknowledging both the positive and negative aspects of surveillance. From a symbolic interactionist viewpoint, their balanced view reflects an understanding that surveillance can both highlight their hard work and serve as a tool for oversight. This aligns with Frimpong and Fan's (2019) findings, which show that employees in Ghanaian workplaces have mixed reactions to surveillance, appreciating the security benefits but feeling discomforted by the constant monitoring. Ayimpoka and Ataa's statements suggest that the key to a positive perception of surveillance lies in striking a balance between productivity goals and respect for employee privacy.

#### **4.2.2 Theme 2: Electronic Surveillance-based Performance Management**

The adoption of electronic monitoring for performance management at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) has elicited a wide variety of responses from employees, indicating considerable perceptual gaps between workers and management. This theme delves into workers' experiences and perspectives on the use of electronic monitoring in performance appraisal procedures. Participants' opinions were categorised into three categories, namely.

##### **4.2.2.1 General Perception of ESPM**

The participants interviewed had varied perceptions of ESPM, influenced by factors such as job role, industry, and previous experiences with surveillance technology. The study found that while some employees view ESPM positively, appreciating the potential for clear performance metrics and accountability, a significant portion of the participants harbour negative sentiments due to concerns over Trust, transparency and accuracy.

Performance management at KIA is heavily influenced by electronic surveillance, including biometric time clocks and CCTV systems. Employees expressed concerns about the transparency and fairness of these surveillance-based evaluation methods. Ayimpoka's statement illustrates the pervasive nature of surveillance:

*“Our performance is measured every day...immediately you open the door at work by clocking in with your fingers to swiping your ID cards on the work printer, our performance evaluation begins” (Ayimpoka, 15/06/2023).*

This continuous monitoring has led to a sense of being constantly evaluated, impacting employees' perceptions of their performance and their interactions with supervisors. Miki further elaborates on how surveillance data is used in performance evaluations:

*“My fingerprints are placed on a biometric time clocking machine when I arrive at work and or when I go for breaks. This is to collect attendance data. His manager reviewed the clocking-in data collected, focusing on his punctuality, time spent loitering during breaks, and time spent working at the airport. I think the CCTV surveillance by our supervisors is linked to time one is spent working or not working.” (Miki, 10/07/2023).*

*Surveillance as a Tool for Disciplinary Power:* Ayimpoka’s description of continuous surveillance—from biometric clocking to ID card swipes at printers—illustrates how performance evaluation becomes intertwined with constant observation. This aligns with Foucault’s concept of the Panopticon, where the ability to be watched at any moment leads to self-regulation. The fact that performance begins to be measured the moment employees enter the workplace suggests that surveillance is not limited to isolated incidents but is an all-encompassing process that tracks their every move. Foucault would interpret this as the exertion of disciplinary power through surveillance, where employees internalise the expectation of being monitored and, therefore, modify their behaviour accordingly.

*Surveillance and Performance Metrics:* Miki’s statement about biometric time clocks and CCTV monitoring highlights how surveillance technologies are utilised to monitor attendance, track work hours, and even record breaks. From a post-Foucauldian viewpoint, this surveillance data is used to reinforce disciplinary norms, ensuring employees remain productive and punctual. Surveillance, in this case, is not simply about oversight but functions as a means of discipline, controlling how employees spend their time at work. Foucault’s notion of disciplinary society is evident here, as surveillance becomes a tool for regulating behaviour in line with organisational



objectives. At the same time, employees are made aware that their movements are constantly scrutinised.

*Transparency, Trust, and Fairness:* Although surveillance is efficient in tracking performance, it can also erode trust and raise concerns about fairness and transparency. Employees like Ayimpoka and Miki may feel that their autonomy is compromised when surveillance systems, such as biometric clocks and CCTV, are used to evaluate their performance. The use of surveillance data for performance appraisals can lead to perceptions of injustice, particularly if employees feel that the data is used unfairly or selectively. The post-Foucauldian theory suggests that these concerns reflect a deeper issue of power imbalance, where surveillance is deployed to exert control rather than promote mutual trust and transparency within the organisation. Surveillance becomes a one-sided form of observation, benefiting management while disempowering employees.

In the context of ESPM, employees develop their self-perception based on how they think management and supervisors evaluate their performance through surveillance systems.

*Surveillance and the Construction of Self-Identity:* Ayimpoka's statement reflects how constant monitoring through surveillance shapes employees' self-perception. The awareness that performance evaluation begins the moment they enter the workplace affects how employees see themselves within the organisational hierarchy. According to Cooley's Looking-Glass Self (1902), employees are likely to internalise the judgment they imagine supervisors make based on the surveillance data. As a result, employees will develop a sense of self-worth or self-doubt, depending on whether they believe surveillance portrays them in a positive or negative light. Ayimpoka's statement

suggests a growing concern that their performance is measured continuously, which could lead to feelings of inadequacy or pressure to conform to management expectations.

*Impact on Relationships with Supervisors:* Miki's account of how his manager reviews biometric data to assess his punctuality and work performance highlights the influence of surveillance on the relationship between employees and their supervisors. The Looking-Glass Self theory posits that employees envision how their supervisors perceive them based on surveillance data, which in turn influences their interactions with supervisors. If employees believe that surveillance data is used to micromanage or penalise them, they will develop negative perceptions of their supervisors, which can lead to a breakdown in trust. Miki's belief that CCTV is linked to time spent working implies that employees will feel constantly judged, affecting their self-esteem and potentially creating a culture of fear rather than collaboration.

*Fairness and Accountability:* While some employees will appreciate that surveillance provides clear performance metrics, others will question its fairness and accountability. If employees perceive that surveillance data is used selectively or inaccurately, it can undermine their sense of self-worth. According to symbolic interactionism, employees' self-perceptions are shaped by the feedback they receive. If surveillance leads to biased or unjust evaluations, it can result in feelings of disillusionment. Ayimpoka's and Miki's concerns reflect the potential for surveillance to damage self-confidence if they believe that surveillance measures do not account for contextual factors such as workload, stress, or unforeseen delays (Sewell and Barker, 2006).

In a multi-ethnic context like Ghana, surveillance practices can be perceived differently by various ethnic groups. Ayimpoka and Miki both describe biometric and CCTV

monitoring, which can be seen as invasive and unfair, mainly if there is a history of ethnic tensions or discrimination. Agyemang and Ryan (2013) argue that employees from different ethnic backgrounds will have varying levels of acceptance and trust towards surveillance, influenced by historical and cultural contexts.

### Negative Perceptions and Concerns

The reliance on electronic data for performance assessment has led to scepticism among employees regarding the objectivity of the evaluations. Domlevo expressed doubts about the fairness of the ratings given by supervisors:

*"I believe some supervisors give good ratings to employees they like or get along with. I don't think they consider or evaluate actual performance evidenced through the surveillance systems." (Domlevo, 27/06/2023).*

In a multi-ethnic workplace, the perception of favouritism can be exacerbated by ethnic dynamics and historical biases, influencing how employees interpret surveillance practices. The trust in surveillance data is undermined by perceived favouritism, which aligns with the idea that meanings are constructed through social contexts. Foucault (1977) describes how surveillance creates a power dynamic in which individuals regulate their behaviour because they may be watched, internalising the gaze of authority figures.

Some participants expressed that the pressure of being continuously monitored created a stressful work environment, leading to negative feelings about their job. Adongo described the overwhelming nature of this constant scrutiny:

*"I feel like I'm always being watched, and it makes me anxious. It's stressful knowing that every move I make is being recorded and evaluated." (Adongo, 13/06/2023)*

*"The constant surveillance is stressful. It feels like I'm always being watched, which makes it hard to focus and perform at my best." (Kwabena)*

Symbolic interactionism suggests that these feelings stem from the meanings they attach to being watched. The act of surveillance is not merely a technical process but a social interaction that conveys mistrust and control, leading to stress and reduced performance. Goffman's (1959) concept of the "presentation of self" is relevant here. Employees are constantly aware of being observed, leading them to engage in impression management, which can be stressful and hinder their ability to focus and perform effectively. This is particularly relevant in a multi-ethnic workplace, where historical and cultural factors amplify these feelings.

Ataa expressed a similar concern:

*"It is a challenging environment to work in. The expectations of us are too high, and when there are long passenger queues at the security checkpoints, word quickly gets out to management, and you are warned or spoken to harshly. (Ataa, 17/06/2023).*

Domlevo's statement reflects a suspicion that supervisors manipulate surveillance data for subjective assessments, giving preferential ratings to employees they favor. This concern aligns with Foucault's concept of power relations within hierarchical structures, where surveillance, despite being perceived as objective, can be used selectively to reinforce existing power imbalances. Surveillance here is not a neutral tool; it can be co-opted by those in power to assert control, granting more favourable ratings to specific individuals while disadvantaging others. This undermines the legitimacy of the surveillance system and creates distrust among employees. The

reliance on electronic data, which employees expect to offer fairness and transparency, becomes a tool for enforcing subjective biases.

Also, from a symbolic interactionist perspective, Domlevo's scepticism about the fairness of evaluations reflects how employees form their self-perception based on the feedback they expect from surveillance data. Domlevo believes that performance ratings are influenced not by objective data but by personal relationships with supervisors, leading to a sense of unfairness. This perception impacts how employees see themselves within the organisation. If they feel that their actual performance is not accurately reflected in evaluations, they will develop self-doubt and resentment. The Looking-Glass Self theory suggests that employees like Domlevo construct their self-identity based on imagined judgments from their supervisors. When these judgments are perceived as biased or unfair, it can negatively impact their self-esteem and motivation.

Both Adongo and Kwabena describe how constant monitoring contributes to a stressful work environment. Foucault would interpret this as an example of disciplinary power in action, where the awareness of continuous observation forces employees to behave in ways that align with management's expectations. This perpetual surveillance creates a climate of self-regulation, where employees become their monitors, constantly adjusting their behaviour to avoid negative evaluations. The stress that Adongo and Kwabena experience stems from this internalisation of surveillance, where every action is perceived as being scrutinised, whether or not it is. Foucault's theory of the Panopticon—a metaphor for how individuals regulate their behaviour when they believe they are constantly watched—resonates with their descriptions. This leads to feelings of anxiety and disempowerment, as employees feel they are performing under relentless scrutiny. The descriptions of stress by

Adongo and Kwabena can also be understood through the Looking-Glass Self theory. They feel constantly watched, which creates a sense of being continuously judged. This leads them to internalise the evaluations they believe management is making based on the surveillance data. The fear of being judged negatively affects their self-concept, as they might start to view themselves as inadequate or unable to meet expectations. This self-perception is shaped by the constant feedback loop created by surveillance, where employees imagine how their actions are being interpreted and adjust their behaviour accordingly. The resulting stress reflects the emotional toll of this constant evaluation, which can hinder their ability to perform at their best.

Ataa's statement highlights the high expectations placed on employees, where deviations from expected performance (e.g., long passenger queues) lead to immediate reprimands. This reflects Foucault's concept of a disciplinary society, where surveillance is used not only to monitor but also to enforce punitive measures for non-compliance with organisational standards. The immediate feedback from surveillance systems allows management to intervene quickly, reinforcing the power dynamics that position employees in a state of constant vigilance. The stress caused by these high expectations and frequent monitoring is indicative of how surveillance is used to control and discipline employees rather than support their professional growth.

Ataa's concerns about the high expectations and the immediate consequences of long queues also tie into the Looking-Glass Self theory. Ataa believes that management's surveillance creates a perception of failure whenever performance metrics fall short, which in turn leads to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety. The rapid feedback from management, based on surveillance data, reinforces this perception, creating a cycle where employees view themselves as falling short of expectations. This shapes their self-identity, as they see themselves through the lens of how management might

evaluate their performance, which in this case is harshly and with little regard for the contextual challenges they face.

The harsh responses from management when issues arise, such as long passenger queues, contribute to a hostile work atmosphere. Employees interpret these interactions as signals that they are constantly under scrutiny and that any deviation from expected performance will result in immediate reprimand. Additionally, according to Goffman (1959), Ataa's feelings of being in a challenging work environment could be intensified by cultural expectations of respect and fairness. The harsh treatment from management is perceived as a lack of respect and can exacerbate feelings of alienation and dissatisfaction among employees from different ethnic backgrounds.

### Positive Perceptions

Some employees felt that the data collected through surveillance could provide tangible evidence of their contributions, making it less likely for their efforts to be overlooked or underestimated. Atampugre shared his positive experience regarding this aspect:

*"I appreciate that surveillance data can back up my hard work and dedication, making it less likely for my efforts to be overlooked or underestimated."*  
(Atampugre, 10/07/2023)

Some participants related their views to the efficient management of resources. Mantse noted the operational benefits:

*"The surveillance systems help me as a supervisor identify bottlenecks and areas where we can improve efficiency. It helps plan and ensure that we are using our resources wisely."* (Mantse, 06/07/2023)

The interview statements provided, especially from Atampugre and Mantse, offer a nuanced perspective on how employees perceive electronic surveillance and performance management (ESPM) in their workplace. By applying post-Foucauldian theory and symbolic interactionism (the Looking-Glass Self), we can explore how surveillance is perceived both as a mechanism of control and a source of recognition, leading to a complex interplay of power dynamics, self-identity, and efficiency.

Atampugre appreciates that surveillance can back up his hard work, providing evidence of his contributions. This can be seen as an instance of surveillance visibility, where employees benefit from being constantly watched, as it ensures that their efforts are acknowledged and quantified. According to Lyon (2001), surveillance can lead to self-discipline, where individuals align their behaviour with organisational expectations to achieve recognition. From a Foucauldian perspective, this represents a shift from surveillance being purely repressive to also being productive, as it motivates employees to work harder, knowing that their efforts are being recorded and can serve as tangible proof of their performance. Atampugre's statement also reflects a positive self-concept derived from his interpretation of surveillance data as a form of recognition for his hard work. Through the Looking-Glass Self framework, we can see how Atampugre internalises the idea that surveillance allows management to recognise and validate his contributions, leading to a more positive self-identity. Blumer (1969) emphasises that individuals give meaning to their actions based on how they interpret the responses of others. For Atampugre, surveillance provides a sense of security and appreciation, as it ensures that his efforts are seen and rewarded, reducing the fear of being overlooked. The surveillance data, therefore, functions as a mirror through which Atampugre constructs a positive self-image based on his perceived contribution to the organisation.



Mantse, in his role as a supervisor, sees surveillance as a tool for improving operational efficiency and identifying bottlenecks. This highlights the utilitarian aspect of surveillance, where it is not just used to monitor behaviour but to streamline processes and ensure optimal resource allocation. From a post-Foucauldian perspective, this reflects the dual role of surveillance as a mechanism for both disciplinary control and organisational efficiency. Lyon (2001) argues that surveillance technologies often serve the dual purpose of regulation and enhancement of productivity, which aligns with Mantse's positive outlook on how surveillance can help improve workflows and ensure the effective use of resources. Furthermore, from a symbolic interactionist perspective, Mantse's interpretation of surveillance as a tool for identifying bottlenecks and improving resource management can also be understood through the lens of role-taking. As a supervisor, Mantse interprets surveillance in a way that aligns with his role, focusing on how it can help him perform his duties more effectively. He does not view surveillance as an intrusive force but as a practical tool that enables him to meet organisational expectations. This reflects the role of social context in shaping individuals' interpretations of surveillance. Mantse's perception of surveillance as beneficial to operational planning reinforces his identity as an efficient supervisor responsible for ensuring smooth workflows and proper resource use.

Surveillance in the workplace continues to reinforce hierarchical power dynamics, even when employees like Atampugre perceive its benefits. The underlying control mechanisms remain intact, as surveillance makes employees visible to management for constant evaluation without providing reciprocal insight into decision-making processes at higher levels. Those who control the surveillance data also control the narrative around employee performance, intertwining power and knowledge. The variation in employees' perceptions of ESPM—ranging from validation to concerns

over control and efficiency—illustrates the complex ways individuals internalise and respond to surveillance, shaped by their roles, expectations, and past experiences. Symbolic interactionism emphasises how these subjective experiences lead employees like Atampugre and Mantse to view surveillance positively, while others will interpret it as an instrument of oppression or stress, highlighting how the Looking-Glass Self functions differently across diverse contexts.

Participants' responses illustrate diverse perceptions of ESPM in a multi-ethnic country like Ghana, reflecting both positive views of recognition and efficiency benefits, as well as concerns about power dynamics and control.

#### **4.2.2.2 Transparency and Objectivity**

The use of electronic surveillance has a significant impact on trust in the performance evaluation matrix at KIA. Employees reported a lack of transparency and fairness in the evaluation methods. Kwabena, a supervisor, highlighted the challenges of using surveillance data for accurate appraisals:

*“We supervisors talk among ourselves, and almost every one of us does the same thing... it is complex, and we sometimes find it difficult using readings and data generated electronically to appraise each employee in my team. I sometimes make my judgement by estimating rates for each employee during appraisals. I do not think the main purpose of using electronic surveillance to help us in making accurate appraisal meets its aim.” (Kwabena, 28/07/2023).*

This scepticism about the efficacy of surveillance-based appraisals is echoed by Mantse, who questions the validity of performance metrics derived from surveillance:

*“I base my work on the principle that any metric by which we are evaluated must have some intended result... in reality, we discover that two distinct measures*

*are being used inside the organisation: one for tracking activity and output, and another for gauging output quality. Because the former is simple and the latter is challenging, I often use the former as a yardstick for evaluating my performance.” (Mantse, 20/06/2023).*

The perceived lack of fairness and accuracy in performance evaluations has led to a decline in trust among employees. Gabi's critical view of the evaluation system underscores this mistrust:

*"I don't think the surveillance systems can justify our performance in terms of appraisal. I used to arrive early at work and clock in. I followed the work procedure religiously, but my appraisal ratings remained the same as those of my colleagues who didn't follow the work procedure. Lately, I don't care whether I'm being observed or not. (Gabi, 19/06/2023).*

Prof further confirmed this:

*"Honestly, I feel like it's a breach of trust. Being constantly monitored makes me feel like management doesn't trust us to do our jobs". (Prof, 28/06/2023)*

Employees were concerned about the potential for misuse of surveillance data, fearing that it could be used against them or taken out of context. Nyaaba described an instance of perceived unfairness:

*"There was a time when I took a short break to make a personal call, and the system flagged it. It felt unfair because it was during a non-busy period and didn't affect my work." (Nyaaba, 08/07/2023)*

Another participant shared a similar concern:

*"There was an instance where I was flagged for not meeting a performance metric because I had to deal with an unexpected technical issue. It felt unfair because the system didn't account for the context of the situation." (Atia, 18/06/2023)*

Adwoa appreciated the potential for surveillance to keep track of employees' punctuality and attendance accurately:

*"The biometric time clocking system ensures that everyone is held accountable for their time at work. It's fair because it records the exact time we clock in and out, so there is no room for manipulation when accessing employee performance." (Adwoa, 23/06/2023).*

Other respondents also shared the view that when supervisors utilise surveillance data constructively in appraisals, it can guide employees on how to improve their work practices. Yaw highlighted this point:

*"When the data from the surveillance systems are used to give us constructive feedback, it helps us understand where we need to improve. It's like having an extra set of eyes to help you do better." (Yaw, 22/06/2023)*

Discussing the provision of concrete evidence of performance, participants were of the view that surveillance could ensure that employees who perform well are appropriately recognised and rewarded. Precious saw potential in linking performance metrics to incentives:

*"If the data collected from surveillance is used to identify and reward high performers, it can be very motivating. Knowing that your hard work is being monitored and will be recognised gives you an extra push to do your best." (Precious, 20/07/2023)*

The use of objective data from surveillance systems was seen as a way to ensure that evaluations were based on actual performance rather than subjective opinions. One participant, Yaro, articulated this view:

*"With surveillance, there's less room for personal biases in evaluations. The data speaks for itself, which can reduce favouritism and unfair treatment."*  
(Yaro, 20/06/2023)

Some employees reported mixed feelings about how surveillance impacts their performance. While some acknowledged that it could drive productivity, others, like Atampugre, felt it induced stress and hindered creativity.

*"For me, the transparency that comes with electronic surveillance is beneficial. It makes performance evaluations more objective and fairer."* (Atampugre, 20/07/2023)

Obolo revealed similar sentiments:

*"I feel more secure knowing that there's electronic surveillance. It helps ensure that everyone's doing their job properly and can provide clear evidence during performance reviews".* (Obolo, 28/07/2023)

The interview statements reflect a complex relationship between employees' trust in surveillance-based performance evaluations at Kotoka International Airport (KIA), with varying perceptions rooted in transparency, fairness, and personal experience. Kwabena, a supervisor, acknowledges the limitations of using electronically generated data for accurate appraisals, expressing doubts about its effectiveness due to the complexity and inadequacy of the data. Symbolic interactionism, as articulated by Blumer (1969), can explain Kwabena's perception of the data as symbolic of confusion and inefficiency, leading him to rely on personal judgment rather than the surveillance

system for performance appraisals. This disconnect between intended usage and practical application reflects a broader critique within post-Foucauldian surveillance theory. Foucault (1977) discusses how surveillance is designed to induce self-discipline through the "panopticon" effect; however, Kwabena's experience highlights the failure of this objective when surveillance data become too complex to be practically applied. This undermines the self-regulation that surveillance aims to create, leading to subjectivity in appraisals.

Mantse, another supervisor, offers a nuanced view of surveillance metrics, differentiating between measures of activity and output, as well as output quality. His preference for more straightforward metrics aligns with the emphasis on meaning-making in symbolic interactionism. Mantse assigns a symbolic meaning to the more straightforward metrics, choosing them over more challenging qualitative measures. This pragmatic approach, while useful in day-to-day operations, illustrates the tension between quantitative and qualitative measures of performance. Lyon (2001) supports this view, arguing that surveillance often prioritises easily measurable metrics at the expense of more meaningful qualitative assessments, thereby reducing the efficacy of the performance evaluation process.

Employees like Gabi and Prof express a profound mistrust in the surveillance system, questioning its fairness and transparency. Gabi's disillusionment stems from her belief that the system does not reflect individual performance, even when employees adhere to the rules, leading to decreased motivation and passive resistance. This aligns with Foucault's (1977) concept of disciplinary power, where surveillance not only regulates behaviour but can also provoke resistance when perceived as unfair. Prof's response echoes this sentiment, viewing constant monitoring as a breach of trust, which Goffman (1959) interprets as a breakdown in the psychological contract between

employees and management. Continuous observation creates a work environment where trust is eroded, negatively impacting job satisfaction and overall morale.

Nyaaba and Atia highlight another dimension of scepticism, focusing on the rigidity and context insensitivity of ESPM systems. Their experiences reveal that these systems often fail to account for contextual factors, leading to unfair evaluations. Ball (2010) supports this, suggesting that rigid surveillance systems that do not consider the nuances of human behaviour contribute to perceptions of injustice. This critique aligns with the broader concerns within surveillance theory that such technologies, despite their intention to enhance fairness, will ultimately exacerbate issues of mistrust and inequity.

On the other hand, some employees, such as Adwoa and Yaw, express more positive perceptions of surveillance, viewing it as a tool for promoting fairness and accountability. Adwoa appreciates the biometric time clocking system for its ability to hold employees accountable by providing objective data, which Lyon (2001) argues reinforces transparency and equity in the workplace. Yaw's view that surveillance can offer constructive feedback highlights how employees can perceive surveillance as a mechanism for personal and professional growth when used appropriately. Goffman (1959) suggests that this interpretation is based on the meaning individuals attach to surveillance, with Yaw seeing it as a supportive tool rather than a punitive measure.

Precious and Yaro further extend this positive view by suggesting that surveillance data, when used to reward high performers, can serve as a motivator. Yaro's emphasis on reducing personal biases through objective data aligns with Lyon's (2001) view that surveillance can minimise favouritism and ensure more equitable performance evaluations. However, the potential for surveillance to induce stress is not entirely

dismissed, as employees like Atampugre note that while surveillance will enhance transparency, it can also create an atmosphere of anxiety that hinders creativity.

In conclusion, the perceptions of surveillance-based performance management at KIA reflect a broad spectrum of experiences and meanings influenced by factors such as job roles, expectations, and individual interpretations of the surveillance system. The post-Foucauldian theory highlights the power dynamics and control mechanisms inherent in surveillance. At the same time, symbolic interactionism emphasises how employees construct meanings based on their subjective experiences, resulting in diverse responses that range from trust and appreciation to scepticism and resistance. This complexity highlights broader academic concerns about the efficacy and fairness of surveillance in modern workplaces, particularly in multi-ethnic contexts such as Ghana.

#### **4.2.2.3 ESPM Dynamics at T2 and T3**

##### **Electronic Surveillance Dynamics at T2**

Employees at T2 generally perceive the less electronic form of surveillance as more personal and human-centred, which positively impacts their relationships and perceptions of fairness. They appreciate the direct observation and feedback from supervisors, considering it beneficial for building relationships. However, they also note that this approach will sometimes lack the efficiency and objectivity of electronic systems.

Employees appreciate the direct observation and feedback from supervisors, which can build relationships and make the process feel more personalised. The response by Moses below emphasises the point:



*"Overall, I find the less electronic form of surveillance in T2 to be more personal and human-centred. It relies more on direct observation and feedback from supervisors, which can be beneficial for building relationships. However, it can sometimes lack the efficiency and objectivity of electronic systems."*  
(10/07/2023)

Employees reported feeling less stressed and found interactions to be more natural, with fewer electronic surveillance systems, although feedback can sometimes be delayed and subjective. Quashi shares this view:

*"The less electronic approach in T2 makes daily work feel less stressful in terms of constant monitoring. It allows for more natural interactions and can be less intrusive. However, it also means that feedback can be delayed and might sometimes depend on the subjective judgment of supervisors."* (Quashi, 06/07/2023)

Adongo intimated the less complex surveillance systems in T2:

*"In Terminal 2, I am allowed to pass information or briefings to other colleague staff in written form at the beginning of our shift in our handing over books. This mode of communication is less complex and does not put me under pressure".*  
(Adongo, 13/06/2023)

The opportunity for real-time, face-to-face feedback is viewed as a significant benefit, enabling immediate discussion and clarification. The benefit of this form of performance evaluation was expressed below by Kwabena:

*"One significant benefit is the opportunity for real-time, face-to-face feedback. This kind of interaction can be more nuanced and supportive. It also facilitates*

*immediate discussion and clarification, which can be very helpful in improving performance.* (Kwabena, 28/07/2023)

This was further intimated by Atia:

*"In T2, my supervisor normally passes information to me on the floor of the terminal face-to-face, although we have a radio communication system. I can read meaning into the tone of his voice and the expression on his face. This prevents ambiguity in understanding what needs to be carried out."* (Atia, 18/06/2023)

Despite its benefits, employees have concerns about the potential for inconsistency and bias in the less electronic surveillance system.

Employees worry about variations in how different supervisors interpret and report performance, which can lead to feelings of unfairness or favouritism. Domlevo expressed concerns about potential inconsistency and bias in a less electronic surveillance system:

*"My main concerns are related to the potential for inconsistency and bias in less electronic surveillance-based performance management. Since the system relies heavily on human observation, variations can occur in how different supervisors interpret and report performance. This can lead to feelings of unfairness or favouritism".* (Domlevo, 27/06/2023)

A specific example by Adongo illustrates how immediate feedback helped correct a mistake quickly, while another instance highlights potential bias in supervisor feedback.

*"There was a time when a supervisor provided immediate feedback after observing my work, which helped me correct a mistake quickly and learn from it. On the other hand, there was an instance when I felt a supervisor's feedback was biased, as it seemed to favour another colleague despite similar performance." (Adongo, 13/06/2023)*

According to some interviewees, less electronic surveillance in T2 can build trust if used transparently and fairly, but perceived bias or inconsistency will erode this trust. This was confirmed in Moses's response:

*"Trust can be positively impacted if the system is used transparently and supervisors are fair and supportive. However, if employees perceive any bias or inconsistency in how they are monitored and evaluated, it can erode trust. The personal nature of the surveillance requires a high level of integrity from the supervisors." (Moses, 10/07/2023)*

Employees are more accepting of less electronic surveillance-based performance management in T2 due to its personalised nature and the ability to receive immediate feedback.

*"I appreciate the human element and the ability to receive immediate, personalised feedback. Knowing that my performance is being evaluated by someone who understands the context of my work makes me more accepting of this system." (Atampugre, 20/07/2023)*

Prof, like some participants, claimed that resistance to less surveillance mainly stems from the potential for subjective judgments and the lack of standardised metrics, which can lead to feelings of unfairness.

*"Resistance mainly comes from the potential for subjective judgments and the lack of standardised metrics. It can be frustrating if you feel that your performance is being unfairly assessed due to personal biases or differing standards among".(Prof, 28/06/2023)*

The interview statements from employees at Terminal 2 (T2) reveal a nuanced understanding of surveillance practices, highlighting the benefits and challenges of a less electronic, more human-centred approach to monitoring. These experiences can be analysed using Post-Foucauldian theories of surveillance and the symbolic interactionist framework, particularly the Looking-Glass Self theory.

Moses's statement that less electronic surveillance is "more personal and human-centred" aligns with symbolic interactionism's view of surveillance as a social interaction shaped by human relationships and subjective experiences. According to Blumer (1969), symbolic interactionism emphasises that individuals construct meanings through social interactions. In this case, employees like Moses attach positive meaning to direct observation and feedback from supervisors because it fosters interpersonal relationships and feels less intrusive than electronic systems. Employees value the social nature of the surveillance, as it provides a sense of understanding and personalised attention, which supports their sense of self-worth within the work environment.

However, while direct, face-to-face interactions will enhance trust and allow for immediate feedback, as noted by Kwabena, the potential for subjectivity raises concerns. Prof highlights that the lack of standardised metrics in this system can lead to inconsistent evaluations, which aligns with Foucault's (1977) critique of disciplinary power. Foucault argues that surveillance, particularly in its electronic form, is designed

to create a self-regulating workforce through continuous observation and objective monitoring. In the absence of such objectivity, as in T2, power is more diffuse, allowing for potential biases and inconsistencies in how supervisors evaluate employees. As Domlevo notes, the reliance on human observation introduces variability, which can lead to perceptions of favouritism and unfairness.

Foucault's notion of the "panopticon" is relevant here, as it speaks to the power dynamics inherent in surveillance. In an electronic surveillance system, employees are constantly aware of their visibility to management, which induces self-discipline (Foucault, 1977). In T2, where surveillance is less electronic, employees are less stressed by constant monitoring, as Quashi suggests. The less formal nature of surveillance in T2 might reduce feelings of control, but it also leads to potential inefficiencies, such as delayed feedback. This reinforces the idea that while electronic systems induce compliance, less formal systems may provide a more relaxed work environment at the cost of precision and immediacy.

Atia's comment about face-to-face feedback preventing ambiguity highlights the symbolic interactionist perspective, specifically the Looking-Glass Self theory, which posits that individuals shape their self-concepts based on how they believe others perceive them (Cooley, 1902). In this case, Atia perceives the nonverbal cues from the supervisor, such as tone of voice and facial expressions, as part of the surveillance process, which enables a more accurate understanding of performance expectations. This highlights the importance of social interactions in shaping employee perceptions of fairness and competence. In contrast, Adongo's experience with perceived bias in supervisor feedback suggests that the Looking-Glass Self can also produce adverse outcomes, as employees will internalise feelings of unfair treatment, leading to reduced trust and morale.

The potential for bias and inconsistency is a central theme in many of the employees' responses. Moses articulates that while trust can be built through transparent and fair supervision, any perception of bias or inconsistency can erode that trust. This resonates with Foucault's view that surveillance systems when applied unevenly or subjectively, can undermine their disciplinary function. The success of a surveillance system, whether electronic or less formal, depends not only on the technology but also on the integrity and fairness of those implementing it.

Despite concerns about subjectivity and bias, many employees appreciate the personalised nature of the less electronic system, as it allows for immediate and contextualised feedback. Atampugre's statement that knowing their performance is evaluated by someone who understands the context of their work makes them more accepting of the system supports Blumer's (1969) argument that people's actions are based on the meanings they ascribe to situations. In this case, employees assign positive meaning to human-centred surveillance because it provides a deeper understanding of their specific work context, enhancing feelings of fairness and trust.

In conclusion, less electronic surveillance at T2 fosters a more personalised and relational work environment, which many employees appreciate for its human-centred approach and real-time feedback. However, this approach is also perceived as subjective and inconsistent, leading to concerns about fairness and trust. From a post-Foucauldian perspective, the lack of objectivity in electronic systems challenges the disciplinary power typically associated with surveillance. In contrast, symbolic interactionism emphasises how employees' perceptions of fairness and trust are shaped by social interactions and the meanings they attach to their experiences.

### *Electronic Surveillance Dynamics at T3*

T3 uses modern electronic surveillance systems to manage employee performance. The globalised electronic surveillance system at T3 was generally viewed as efficient and comprehensive. Employees appreciated its ability to provide clear and objective metrics for tracking performance. Mantse noted:

*"Overall, I feel that the globalised electronic surveillance system is efficient and comprehensive. It provides a clear and objective way to track performance metrics, which can be helpful for both employees and management. However, it can sometimes feel impersonal and intrusive". (Mantse, 06/07/2023)*

While the high presence of electronic surveillance motivated employees to remain focused and adhere to best practices, it also introduced stress, particularly during periods of high activity. Obolo remarked:

*"The electronic surveillance system keeps me on my toes, knowing that my activities are constantly being monitored. It motivates me to stay focused and adhere to best practices. However, it can also be stressful, especially during busy periods when the pressure to perform is high." (28/07/2023)*

A significant benefit highlighted by the respondents was the system's ability to provide real-time feedback and data analysis. This enabled employees to quickly identify areas for improvement and track their progress over time. Additionally, the system's objectivity helped reduce personal biases in performance evaluations. As Gabi explained,

*"One major benefit is the real-time feedback and data analysis. It enables me to quickly identify areas where I need improvement and track my progress over time. The system's objectivity helps reduce personal biases in performance evaluations, making the process fairer." (Gabi, 19/06/2023)*

The use of globalised electronic surveillance systems reflects Foucault's concept of panopticism, where employees internalise the awareness that they are constantly being watched, leading to self-discipline and control. Mantse acknowledges that the system is efficient and objective but notes that it can feel impersonal and intrusive. This reflects the post-Foucauldian idea of how surveillance technologies transform employees into subjects of disciplinary power. By monitoring performance metrics in a globalised and objective manner, the surveillance system exercises control over behaviour. The impersonal nature of this system aligns with Foucault's concept of the dehumanising aspects of disciplinary mechanisms, where individuals are seen as mere units of labour rather than unique, autonomous beings. While Mantse appreciates the efficiency, his perception of its impersonality suggests that surveillance can also alienate employees by stripping them of their subjectivity.

Obolo's statement that the surveillance system keeps him focused but also induces stress, especially during busy periods, aligns with the post-Foucauldian notion that constant visibility is a form of control that compels employees to adhere to organisational norms (Foucault, 1977). The surveillance system at T3 imposes a regime of discipline that requires constant focus and adherence to best practices. This self-regulation is a result of the knowledge that one's activities are constantly monitored. The stress experienced by Obolo can be interpreted as a byproduct of biopower, where surveillance exerts pressure to perform continuously, making it difficult for employees to balance high expectations with their well-being.

Gabi emphasises the objectivity of the system and its ability to provide real-time feedback, which enables employees to track their progress and minimise personal biases in evaluations. From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, this aspect of surveillance serves to rationalise control by removing the subjective elements of



performance assessments. The surveillance system becomes an instrument of efficiency, allowing both employees and management to make decisions based on data-driven insights rather than personal judgments. Gabi's appreciation for the system's fairness aligns with Foucault's view that disciplinary mechanisms can create an apparatus of knowledge that normalises behaviour, making employees more predictable and manageable. In this case, the neutrality of the surveillance system reduces potential conflicts related to performance evaluations by providing objective measures.

In the context of electronic surveillance at T3, employees' perceptions of their work performance and self-worth are shaped by the feedback and data provided by the surveillance system. Mantse's recognition of the system's efficiency suggests that he values objective performance metrics, which will reinforce a positive self-concept based on competence and contribution. However, the impersonal and intrusive nature of the system could negatively affect his self-identity, making him feel alienated from the organisation. According to the Looking-Glass Self theory, Mantse's self-concept is shaped by how he imagines how management perceives him through surveillance data. While the system's objectivity will reduce interpersonal bias, its impersonality means that Mantse might feel he is valued more for his output than for his unique skills and qualities. The lack of personal interaction in performance evaluation could undermine his sense of belonging within the organisation.

Obolo's awareness that his activities are constantly monitored influences his self-discipline and work ethic, aligning with Blumer's (1969) idea that individuals act based on the meanings they attach to symbols—in this case, surveillance as a symbol of accountability and pressure. The surveillance system keeps Obolo focused and motivated to adhere to best practices, suggesting that his self-concept is shaped by

the knowledge that his work is always visible to management. However, the stress he experiences during busy periods indicates a conflict in his self-concept. While he strives to meet organisational expectations, constant monitoring will lead to a sense of inadequacy or performance anxiety. Obolo's sense of being evaluated could create a disconnect between his self-perception and the expectations imposed by the surveillance system.

Gabi's optimistic view of the system's objectivity reflects how surveillance can reinforce a sense of fairness and recognition. From a Looking-Glass Self perspective, Gabi's self-concept is shaped by how she believes the surveillance data will be used to evaluate her performance. The real-time feedback allows her to adjust her behaviour and improve, which helps her develop a positive self-identity. The reduction of personal biases in performance evaluations aligns with Cooley's theory, as Gabi perceives that the surveillance system reflects her true abilities and contributions more accurately than traditional evaluation methods. This contributes to her sense of self-worth and job satisfaction.

From a post-Foucauldian perspective, surveillance serves as a mechanism of disciplinary power, compelling employees to conform to organisational norms and enhance efficiency. However, it also introduces a sense of alienation and stress, particularly when employees feel that they are being treated impersonally or are under constant scrutiny. The symbolic interactionist perspective also suggests that the surveillance system becomes a symbol that shapes employees' self-concepts and behaviours. Employees like Gabi see surveillance as a fair and objective way to assess their performance, enhancing their sense of self-worth. Others, like Obolo, feel pressured by constant monitoring, which affects their self-perception and can lead to stress.

Ultimately, the success of surveillance systems in organisations like T3 depends on how well they balance efficiency and objectivity with the well-being and self-perception of employees.

### Concerns about the Surveillance System

Despite the benefits, employees expressed concerns about privacy and the potential for micromanagement. The constant monitoring was sometimes perceived as an invasion of privacy, and there was a fear that management might misuse the data to micromanage rather than support employees. Kwabena shared,

*"My main concerns are related to privacy and the potential for micromanagement. Knowing that every action is monitored can feel like an invasion of privacy. Additionally, there is a fear that management might use the data to micromanage rather than support and develop employees." (Kwabena, 28/07/2023)*

Participants provided examples of both beneficial and problematic instances of surveillance. For example, the system's feedback helped one employee identify specific issues and improve performance. However, constant monitoring could also feel overbearing, particularly when minor infractions were highlighted unnecessarily. Adwoa mentioned,

*"There was a time when the system flagged a decline in my performance metrics, which prompted a review. The feedback helped me identify specific issues and improve. On the downside, the constant monitoring can sometimes feel overbearing, especially when minor infractions are highlighted, causing unnecessary stress. (Adwoa, 23/06/2023)*

The globalised electronic surveillance systems at T3 impact on trust between employees and management varied. Transparency and the constructive use of data can enhance trust, but punitive or unclear use can erode it. Precious stated that,

*"Trust can be enhanced if the system is used transparently and data is used constructively. If employees perceive that the surveillance system is fair and designed to support their growth, it can foster trust. However, if the system is used punitively or without clear communication, it can lead to distrust and a feeling of being constantly scrutinised." (Precious, 20/07/2023)*

The responses from Kwabena, Adwoa, and Precious provide a comprehensive view of the perceptions of Employee Surveillance and Performance Monitoring (ESPM) systems at a multi-ethnic airport like Kotoka International Airport (KIA) in Ghana. These perspectives highlight concerns about privacy, micromanagement, stress, and trust, which can be analysed through the lenses of symbolic interactionism and surveillance theories.

Kwabena expresses concerns about privacy and the potential for micromanagement. This perspective highlights the symbolic meaning employees attach to surveillance as an invasion of their personal space and autonomy. According to Blumer (1969), individuals act based on the meanings they attribute to their experiences. When surveillance is perceived as an invasion of privacy and a tool for micromanagement, it can lead to negative feelings and resistance. Employees will feel that their boundaries are being violated, which can erode their sense of autonomy and erode their trust in management. Adwoa's response highlights the dual nature of surveillance systems, which can provide valuable feedback for improvement but also cause stress when monitoring is perceived as overly intrusive. Goffman (1959) discusses how individuals

manage their self-presentation and the importance of feedback in shaping their self-concept. Positive feedback can enhance self-efficacy and motivation, but constant monitoring and highlighting of minor infractions can create a stressful environment, leading to anxiety and decreased job satisfaction. Precious emphasises that trust can be enhanced if the surveillance system is used transparently and constructively. This perspective aligns with symbolic interactionism's focus on the importance of clear communication and mutual understanding in building trust. Mead (1934) emphasises the importance of communication and symbolic interaction in fostering social relationships and trust. Transparent use of surveillance data and constructive feedback can promote a positive work environment where employees feel supported and valued rather than scrutinised and punished.

Kwabena's concerns about privacy and micromanagement align with surveillance theories that critique the invasive and controlling aspects of surveillance systems. Foucault (1977) notes that surveillance operates as a mechanism of power and control, often leading to feelings of being constantly watched and controlled. This can erode employees' sense of autonomy, leading to resistance and negative attitudes towards management. Adwoa's experience of receiving valuable feedback but also feeling stressed by constant monitoring reflects the dual impact of surveillance systems. Lyon (2001) confirms Adwoa's sentiments by indicating that surveillance systems can enhance performance through continuous monitoring and feedback. However, they can also create a stressful environment if perceived as overbearing or punitive, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that prioritises employee well-being. Precious, in his response, emphasises trust and constructive use of data, underscoring the importance of transparency and fairness in surveillance systems. Ball (2010) argues that for surveillance systems to be effective and accepted by

employees such as Precious, they must be implemented transparently and used to support employees' development rather than solely for punitive measures. This approach can build trust and enhance the perceived legitimacy of the surveillance system.

Transparency and clear communication about data usage were crucial factors in enabling employees to accept electronic surveillance and performance management at T3. Employees were more accepting if they believed the system aimed to support their development and recognised their hard work objectively. Ayimpoka noted,

*"Transparency and clear communication in the language I understand about how the data will be used make me more accepting of the system. Knowing that the system aims to support my development and recognising my hard work objectively helps in embracing it." (Ayimpoka, 15/06/2023).*

Concerns about privacy and the impersonal nature of electronic monitoring contributed to resistance. Employees felt that constant surveillance could be overbearing and hindered their sense of trust and autonomy. Nyaaba expressed that,

*"Most of us resist electronic surveillance of concerns about privacy and the potential for constant monitoring to become overbearing. The impersonal nature of electronic systems also makes it difficult to feel trusted and autonomous." (Nyaaba, 08/07/2023)*

To address concerns, Participants suggested regular communication about the system's purpose and benefits, involving employees in discussions about data usage, and ensuring the system is used primarily for development rather than punishment. Setting clear boundaries on surveillance and respecting personal time were also recommended. Atampugre, in his response, proposed that,

*To address concerns, regular communication about the system's purpose and benefits is crucial. Involving employees in discussions about how the data is used and ensuring it is primarily for developmental purposes rather than punishment can help. Additionally, setting boundaries on the extent of surveillance and respecting personal time would be beneficial." (Atampugre, 20/07/2023)*

In the Foucauldian context, electronic surveillance systems at T3 serve as mechanisms of power that monitor employees' actions, potentially shifting from performance management to micromanagement.

*Kwabena's Concerns about Privacy and Micromanagement:* Kwabena's concerns that constant monitoring feels like an invasion of privacy and that surveillance data could be misused for micromanagement reflect the disciplinary power of surveillance as described by Foucault (1977). Surveillance transforms employees into subjects of control, where every action is monitored and evaluated. This aligns with Foucault's notion of the panopticon, where visibility becomes a form of coercive control, leading to self-discipline but also anxiety over the potential misuse of data. The fear of micromanagement is an extension of the power imbalance created by surveillance, where employees feel stripped of their autonomy and subjected to constant oversight by management.

*Adwoa's Experience with Overbearing Monitoring:* Adwoa's experience with surveillance, which is both beneficial and overbearing, exemplifies the duality of surveillance systems. On one hand, the system helps identify areas for improvement, functioning as a tool for self-regulation. On the other hand, it creates stress by flagging minor infractions, emphasising the punitive aspect of surveillance. Foucault (1977)

described how surveillance can lead to the creation of docile bodies—individuals who conform out of fear of being punished. In Adwoa's case, the overbearing nature of the system emphasises the punitive potential of surveillance, where even minor issues are treated as significant, leading to unnecessary stress and a feeling of being constantly evaluated.

*Precious's Emphasis on Trust and Transparency:* Precious's statement about the need for transparency and constructive use of data reflects the tension between surveillance as a tool for support versus a mechanism for punishment. In post-Foucauldian terms, when surveillance is used transparently, and data is shared constructively, it mitigates the panoptic effect by fostering a sense of fairness and reducing the perception of control. However, if used punitively, it reinforces the disciplinary power of surveillance, leading to distrust and feelings of being constantly watched. Foucault's concept of power/knowledge is relevant here, as surveillance data becomes a form of knowledge that can be wielded either to support or punish employees. The way this knowledge is used determines whether surveillance is perceived as empowering or disempowering.

*Nyaaba's Resistance to Surveillance:* Nyaaba's resistance to surveillance, driven by concerns about privacy and the impersonal nature of the system, underscores the alienating effect of surveillance. According to Foucault (1977), surveillance systems create a sense of objectification where individuals are reduced to data points, stripping away their subjectivity. Nyaaba's feeling of not being trusted and autonomous reflects this dehumanising aspect of surveillance, where employees feel distanced from management and experience a loss of control over their work environment. This also aligns with Foucault's notion of bio-power, where systems of surveillance are used to regulate and control not just behaviour but the very experience of being an employee.



Symbolic interactionism, particularly Cooley's concept of the Looking-Glass Self, suggests that individuals shape their self-concept based on how they perceive themselves and how they believe others perceive them. In the workplace, surveillance systems at T3 influence employees' self-image and their relationship with management by reflecting how they think their performance and actions are judged.

Symbolic interactionism, particularly Cooley's concept of the Looking-Glass Self, suggests that individuals shape their self-concept based on how they perceive themselves and how they believe others perceive them. In the workplace, surveillance systems at T3 influence employees' self-image and their relationship with management by reflecting how they think their performance and actions are judged.

*Kwabena's Fear of Micromanagement and Privacy:* Kwabena's feeling that constant monitoring invades his privacy and will lead to micromanagement aligns with the Looking-Glass Self theory, where employees adjust their behaviour based on perceived scrutiny. Kwabena's sense of self is shaped by the belief that every action is monitored and potentially subject to criticism. In this case, surveillance creates a mirror that reflects not just his performance but the fear of judgment and overcontrol by management. This results in anxiety and discomfort, as Kwabena's self-image is influenced by the sense that he is being overseen rather than supported.

*Adwoa's Self-Improvement and Overbearing Surveillance:* Adwoa's account of receiving helpful feedback from the system and improving her performance aligns with Cooley's idea that individuals self-regulate based on the feedback they receive from others (Cooley, 1902). The system acts as a mirror, helping her identify areas for growth and reinforcing her sense of competence and professional development. However, when minor infractions are highlighted, Adwoa experiences stress, as the

surveillance system now reflects criticism rather than support. This shift in perception damages her self-esteem, as constant monitoring leads her to feel that she is being judged harshly, even for minor issues. This dual experience reflects how surveillance mirrors can both support and harm employees' self-concept, depending on how the data is used.

*Precious's View on Trust:* Precious's emphasis on transparency and constructive data usage highlights how employees' trust in surveillance systems depends on their perception of how management views and uses the data. If employees believe that surveillance is used to support their development, their self-concept becomes more positive, as they feel their hard work is being recognised relatively. This aligns with the Looking-Glass Self theory, which posits that constructive feedback leads to a more positive self-image. However, if surveillance is seen as punitive or unclear, it damages employees' sense of trust. It fosters a negative self-image, where they feel they are constantly being scrutinised rather than supported. Precious's statement underscores the importance of communication and transparency in shaping employees' self-concept and their willingness to accept surveillance as a tool for development.

*Ayimpoka's Need for Transparency and Recognition:* Ayimpoka's statement about accepting surveillance when it is transparent and when it recognises her hard work reflects how surveillance can function as a positive mirror in the workplace. When employees understand how data is used and feel that it objectively acknowledges their efforts, they are more likely to embrace the system as a tool for validation. According to Cooley, individuals derive their self-worth from how they perceive themselves about others. Ayimpoka's acceptance of the system, when it is transparent and supportive, suggests that surveillance can foster a positive sense of self-worth as long as it reflects fairness and recognition.

*Nyaaba's Resistance to Surveillance:* Nyaaba's resistance to surveillance, driven by concerns about privacy and a feeling of being over-monitored, highlights the negative mirror effect of surveillance. In symbolic interactionism, people resist when they perceive that they are being judged unfairly or when the feedback from others (in this case, surveillance) does not align with their self-perception. Nyaaba's feeling of being distrusted and her loss of autonomy reflect how surveillance can distort an employee's self-image, making them feel alienated from their work and disconnected from management. The impersonal nature of electronic surveillance systems contributes to this resistance, as employees feel they are not viewed as individuals but as data points to be controlled and managed.

In summary, from a post-Foucauldian perspective, surveillance at T3 operates as a disciplinary mechanism, where the potential for micromanagement and punitive data use reflects its coercive power over employees. This aligns with the panoptic effect, where constant visibility creates self-regulation and control. However, when surveillance is used transparently and constructively, it reduces the sense of coercion and instead fosters a supportive environment. In contrast, a symbolic interactionist perspective emphasises how surveillance shapes employees' self-concepts by influencing how they perceive management's view of them. Constructive feedback and recognition of their efforts boost employees' self-esteem, while overbearing or punitive monitoring erodes trust and triggers resistance. Thus, the impact of surveillance depends on how it is perceived and implemented—either reinforcing control or encouraging personal growth.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Analysis and Discussion**

#### **Ghanaian Cultural Dynamics versus Globalised ESPM**

##### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter builds on the findings from Chapter 4, which examined employees' general views on contemporary workplace electronic surveillance and electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM) in a multi-ethnic environment. In this chapter, the focus shifts to analysing how global standards and Ghanaian cultural dynamics influence employee perceptions of ESPM. To interpret the interview data from employees within a collectivist culture, the analysis will employ both Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories. Using the post-Foucauldian lens, surveillance will be explored as a mechanism of disciplinary power, examining how global standards of ESPM might impose control and regulate behaviour in ways that interact with cultural values of time, communication, and tribal differences. Meanwhile, the Symbolic Interactionist perspective will enable an analysis of how employees from collectivist backgrounds interpret surveillance in terms of their self-concepts, shaped by their perceptions of management's views and feedback. This chapter categorises and discusses participants' responses under the theme of how Ghanaian language, time culture, and tribal differences impact employee perceptions of ESPM.

##### **5.1 Theme 3: Ghanaian Cultural Influence on Employee Perception of ESPM**

Under this theme, the interviewee discussed the impact of Ghanaian culture on their perspective on electronic surveillance-based performance management at KIA.

Various aspects of Ghanaian culture, including language and communication, time culture, leadership style, and tribalism, were discussed.

### **5.1.1 Language and Communication**

Interviews perception on how the varying communication styles at Terminals 2 and 3 impact their performance management at KIA. Some made mention of the formal and informal communication dynamics employed between terminals 2 and 3, including perceived benefits, challenges, and their overall influence on job performance.

#### **Communication Dynamics at T2**

Interviewees indicated that the use of informal language at T2 fosters a more relaxed and flexible communication environment. Employees feel more at ease when they are not bound by strict formalities, which can facilitate quicker and more spontaneous exchanges. Informal language makes the ESPM system seem less rigid and more approachable, fostering a sense of camaraderie and trust among employees.

*"Yes, I believe it does. Using informal language can make employee interactions with electronic systems, colleagues and customers seem less rigid and more approachable. It helps to build a sense of camaraderie and trust among employees, as we can discuss work-related issues in a way that feels more personal and less corporate. However, it can also sometimes lead to misunderstandings if the nuances of work routine are lost in translation."*  
(Quashi, 06/07/2023)

Domlevo also intimates how the use of informal language at T2 promotes a friendly atmosphere at work:

*"The casual atmosphere of communication in T2, where we are allowed to use local jargon, promotes a feeling of friendship and collaboration among colleague security staff, which in turn promotes transparent communication and the exchange of thoughts and knowledge." (Domlevo, 27/06/2023)*

Yaw further confirmed this in his response:

*"I feel at ease and at home when I can communicate with passengers in our local dialect without thinking of being told I am acting unprofessionally. I spoke in Hausa to our local imam, who was travelling to Tamale. I could see he was satisfied and understood the security procedure he had to undergo. (Yaw, 22/06/2023)*

Quashi's perception that informal language makes interactions more approachable aligns with the principles of symbolic interactionism. Informal language acts as a symbol that reduces social distance and fosters a sense of camaraderie and trust. Blumer (1969) posits that meanings emerge from social interactions and are shaped through interpretive processes. Informal communication creates a shared understanding among employees, making the work environment feel more personal and less corporate. This shared understanding can facilitate better collaboration and transparency in ESPM. Demlevo's comment on the use of local jargon, which fosters friendship and cooperation, underscores the significance of shared symbols in cultivating a cohesive work environment. The casual atmosphere fosters open communication and the exchange of ideas and knowledge. Goffman (1959) emphasises the importance of face-to-face interactions in constructing social reality. In T2, the use of local jargon serves as a symbol of cultural identity and belonging, fostering an inclusive environment that supports open communication and teamwork,

both of which are crucial for effective ESPM. Yaw's comfort in using local dialects with passengers underscores the role of language as a symbol of cultural identity and professionalism. Communicating in Hausa with the local IMAM demonstrates cultural sensitivity and enhances mutual understanding. Mead (1934) argues that language and symbols are crucial to social interaction and the formation of identity. Yaw's use of local dialects creates a sense of ease and professionalism, which is essential for building trust and effectively implementing ESPM.

The informal language can mitigate the impersonal nature of electronic surveillance, making employees feel more valued and trusted. However, surveillance systems must be transparent to avoid feelings of intrusion. Foucault (1977) discusses how surveillance can create a panoptic effect, where individuals internalise monitoring and adjust their behaviour. Informal communication can soften this effect by fostering a more human-centric approach. The casual communication style can enhance the acceptance of surveillance by promoting a collaborative environment where surveillance data is seen as a tool for collective improvement rather than individual punishment. Lyon (2007) argues that surveillance can be more acceptable when framed as part of a collaborative effort to improve organisational performance. The use of local jargon and informal communication fosters a sense of joint purpose and mutual benefit. Using local dialects can mitigate the stress associated with surveillance by enhancing cultural sensitivity and communication effectiveness. This can improve employee morale and compliance with security procedures. Ball (2010) suggests that surveillance practices should be culturally sensitive to be practical and ethical. Communicating in local dialects respects cultural contexts and reduces the perceived intrusiveness of surveillance.

Employees often feel more comfortable and authentic when using informal language. This comfort can lead to more genuine interactions and a stronger sense of belonging within the workplace. Participants in their responses indicated informal language makes discussions about security checks and shift routines more relatable and less intimidating, allowing employees to share their thoughts and concerns more freely, as indicated by Dimple.

*"Using informal languages like Twi or Pidgin English helps explain tasks, use of equipment or shift plans among colleagues more relatable and less intimidating. It allows us to share our thoughts and concerns more freely, as it feels more like a peer-to-peer conversation rather than a formal, structured discussion." (Dimple, 20/06/2023)*

Yaro, in his response, believes that the use of informal language reduces misinterpretation and misunderstanding among staff in their course of work:

*"In Terminal 2, I will utilise local dialects and jargon without worrying about being misinterpreted. I can communicate in Hausa with individuals from Nigeria and with those who speak the same language as me. However, at Terminal 3, we are only required to use English to greet international customers and passengers, which puts a significant amount of pressure on us. (Yaro, 20/06/2023).*

Dimple highlights that using informal languages like Twi or Pidgin English makes task explanations, equipment usage, and shift plans more relatable and less intimidating. This aligns with Symbolic Interactionism, which posits that language and symbols facilitate understanding and social bonding. Blumer (1969) asserts that individuals act



based on the meanings things have for them, which arise from social interactions. Using informal language fosters a peer-to-peer conversational atmosphere, enhancing mutual understanding and reducing hierarchical barriers. Yaw notes that he can use local dialects and jargon without fear of misinterpretation in T2, fostering a sense of comfort and ease in communication. This reflects the Symbolic Interactionist view that language shapes social reality and facilitates smoother interactions. Mead (1934) discusses how communication through shared symbols, such as language, helps form the self and social bonds. The ability to use local dialects allows employees to connect more deeply with colleagues and passengers, enhancing their sense of belonging and effectiveness.

Dimple suggests that using informal language makes discussions less intimidating and more relatable. This can mitigate the impersonal nature of surveillance by fostering a supportive environment where feedback and performance discussions are more readily accepted and appreciated. Foucault (1977) notes that surveillance can create a panoptic effect, where individuals adjust their behaviour due to perceived constant monitoring. Informal communication can soften this effect by promoting a more humane and supportive approach to surveillance. Yaw contrasts the ease of using local dialects in T2 with the pressure of using only English in T3. This illustrates how the communication style can affect employees' comfort and performance. The use of local languages in T2 reduces stress and fosters better understanding, which can improve compliance and cooperation in surveillance contexts. Lyon (2007) suggests that surveillance systems should consider cultural and linguistic contexts to be practical and ethical. Allowing employees to use familiar languages can reduce the perceived intrusiveness of surveillance and enhance its acceptance.

Other participants, like Ataa, shared the perception that the use of Ghanaian languages enhances the cultural image of KIA.

*"I am a Ghanaian, and I believe expressing my identity through my language puts the airport in a better light. We are being westernised by the introduction of all these modern forms of surveillance using foreign language" (Ataa, 17/06/2023).*

The informal communication style can enhance responsiveness and adaptability. Employees can address issues quickly and efficiently without the constraints of formal language protocols. Prof spoke about his experience in this regard:

*"There was a time when a colleague was confused about how the surveillance data was being used. Explaining it in Pidgin English made it easier for them to grasp the concept, as the language felt more comfortable and familiar to them. It bridged the gap between the formal technical jargon and everyday understanding." (Prof, 28/06/2023)*

Miki further confirmed this:

*"Informal language use can create a more inclusive environment by making information more accessible to all employees, regardless of their proficiency in English. It fosters a sense of belonging and respect for cultural diversity, which can enhance overall morale and cooperation. When employees feel understood and valued, they are more likely to engage positively in their work." (Miki, 10/07/2023)*

Ataa emphasises that expressing identity through language reflects positively on the airport, suggesting that the use of local languages connects employees to their cultural roots and enhances their sense of identity. According to Blumer (1969), individuals act based on the meanings things have for them, which arise from social interactions. The use of local languages in the workplace can reinforce cultural identity and pride, fostering a positive work environment. A professor recounts a situation where explaining surveillance data in Pidgin English helped a colleague understand the information better, thereby bridging the gap between technical jargon and everyday understanding. Mead (1934) discusses how communication through shared symbols, such as language, helps form social bonds and foster a shared experience. Using a familiar language, such as Pidgin English, can demystify complex concepts and facilitate better communication and comprehension among employees. Miki emphasizes that using informal language fosters an inclusive environment, making information more accessible to all employees, regardless of their English proficiency. This promotes a sense of belonging and respect for cultural diversity. Goffman (1959) suggests that language and symbols are vital in presenting oneself in social interactions. When employees can communicate in their preferred language, it promotes inclusivity and strengthens social bonds within the workplace, enhancing morale and cooperation.

Ataa's concern about the Westernization of surveillance through foreign languages indicates a tension between traditional cultural practices and modern surveillance methods. Lyon (2007) suggests that surveillance systems should respect cultural contexts to be practical and ethical. Integrating local languages in surveillance communications can mitigate the perceived intrusion of Western surveillance practices and promote cultural sensitivity. Prof's example of explaining surveillance data in

Pidgin English highlights the importance of clear and relatable communication in mitigating the complexity of surveillance systems. Foucault (1977) notes that surveillance can create a sense of constant observation. Clear communication in a familiar language can reduce anxiety and enhance understanding, making the surveillance system appear less intimidating and more supportive. Miki's observation that informal language fosters inclusivity and respect for cultural diversity aligns with the idea that effective surveillance should be supportive rather than punitive. Ball (2010) argues that for surveillance to be effective, it must be perceived as fair and just by those being monitored. Informal language use can enhance perceptions of fairness and inclusivity, leading to better engagement and cooperation from employees. While informal language can improve comfort and speed, it also carries the risk of miscommunication. The lack of standardisation in informal speech can lead to misunderstandings, especially in a diverse workplace.

There have been instances where key details were misunderstood or lost in translation during informal discussions, highlighting the need for follow-up with formal explanations. Adongo expressed this concern:

*"Yes, there have been instances where key details were lost in translation or misunderstood when discussed informally. For example, specific metrics or technical terms used in scanners and drug testing equipment may not have a direct equivalent in informal language, leading to confusion. It's important to follow up these informal discussions with more detailed, formal explanations to ensure everyone is on the same page." (Adongo, 17/06/2023)*

Domlevo similarly shared this view:

*"I believe there is no order or structure in T2 since there is no one common factor of verbal communication. At one moment, you hear a group of employees speaking one language and, in another breath, a different language. I believe this can breed the building of tribal cleeks, which is not good for team dynamics." (Domlevo, 27/06/2023)*

According to some participants, the use of informal language can sometimes create informal hierarchies or cliques within the workplace, where particular groups may feel excluded or undervalued due to their language preferences or usage. It was a concern raised by Ayimpoka:

*"I have, over the past year and a half, tried to learn Ashanti Twi and speak Pajeon English so I can fit in with my supervisor and colleagues. I have realised my supervisor has become friendlier towards me, and I get good recommendations during my performance appraisal." (Ayimpoka, 22/06/2023)*

Atia also reported similar sentiments of informal language promoting clique formation at work:

*"I sometimes feel uncomfortable hearing some of my team members communicate to each other in the 'Ga' language and, in some cases, send intel via radio communication to our superiors in 'Ga'. The switch in communication from English to Ga by these team members, I believe, is to report other members to our supervisor or gossip about others." (Atia, 18/06/2023)*

The interview statements from T2 employees highlight the benefits and challenges of using informal language in the workplace. Analysing these statements through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories offers a rich

understanding of how power, control, self-perception, and group dynamics interact in this context.

*Informal Language as a Tool of Power and Resistance:* Post-Foucauldian theory sees language as a tool of power, with formal communication often reinforcing institutional control and discipline. At T2, the use of informal language can be understood as a subtle resistance to this form of control, allowing employees more autonomy and reducing the formality of the workplace structure. Employees such as Quashi and Dimple perceive informal communication as making the Electronic Security and Personnel Management (ESPM) system less rigid and more approachable. By allowing more spontaneous exchanges, employees can express themselves with more freedom, potentially undermining the highly formalised power dynamics traditionally reinforced by formal language (Foucault, 1977). For example, Prof mentioned how informal language bridged the gap between technical jargon and everyday understanding, allowing quicker and more transparent communication. This reflects Foucault's idea of how power and control are exercised through language and discourse. By using informal language, employees temporarily disrupt the hierarchical structures imposed by formal language, thereby gaining more control over how they communicate complex ideas.

*Fostering Camaraderie vs. Informal Hierarchies:* While informal language promotes camaraderie and trust, as noted by Domlevo and Yaw, it can also lead to the formation of cliques or informal hierarchies, as observed by Atia and Ayimpoka. In a Foucauldian framework, informal language can be seen as a tool that both liberates and reinforces power structures. The use of local dialects or "Pidgin" fosters inclusivity among some groups but simultaneously excludes others, reinforcing subgroups within the

organisation. Atia's unease with colleagues speaking in 'Ga' reflects Foucault's notion of "bio-power," where language can regulate behaviours and interactions, creating informal networks of power that marginalise others (Foucault, 1977).

*Surveillance and the Loss of Control:* While informal communication will reduce the rigid control typically associated with formal language, there is a potential downside regarding the loss of essential details in translation. Adongo's concern that key metrics or technical terms are sometimes lost when communicated informally reflects the challenges of balancing spontaneity with the need for precision and accountability. From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, this suggests a tension between employee empowerment through informal language and the organisation's need to maintain control and clarity in communication (Foucault, 1977).

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, particularly as outlined in Cooley's Looking-Glass Self, employees shape their self-concept based on how they perceive themselves and how they believe others perceive them in the workplace (Cooley, 1902). The use of informal language enables employees to feel more authentic and relaxed in their interactions, resulting in a more positive self-image. For instance, Yaw felt more "at home" when communicating with passengers in his local dialect. This personal interaction fostered a sense of cultural connection, enhancing both the passenger's understanding of the procedures and his self-esteem.

Similarly, Miki emphasised how informal language fosters inclusivity, allowing employees to feel understood and valued, which boosts their morale and engagement. When employees perceive that their communication style is accepted, they experience greater satisfaction and confidence in their roles, reflecting the positive feedback loop described by the Looking-Glass Self.

Group Identity and Belonging: The interviews reflect how informal language can also shape group identity and a sense of belonging. Domlevo's comment about how local jargon fosters a sense of camaraderie and collaboration among security staff suggests that informal language serves as a reflection of employees' social bonds. When individuals engage in casual communication, they reflect their desire for more personal and less hierarchical relationships, reinforcing a positive self-image tied to their group identity.

However, as Ayimpoka and Atia indicate, this dynamic can also alienate those who are not part of the informal language group. Ayimpoka's effort to learn Ashanti Twi and Pidgin English to fit in reflects how employees adjust their self-concept in response to the perceived norms of their supervisors and colleagues. This illustrates Cooley's notion of individuals modifying their behaviour based on how they believe others judge them.

The concern raised by Adongo regarding misunderstandings that can occur when using informal language highlights the negative aspects of this dynamic. When communication breaks down due to a lack of precision, employees will feel inadequate or frustrated. This can damage their self-esteem if they perceive that their informal communication is viewed as less professional or competent by others. Domlevo's point about the potential for tribal cleeks developing from the use of different languages at T2 further reflects how informal language can shape negative group dynamics, potentially creating divisions and undermining team cohesion. This aligns with Cooley's notion that negative reflections from others can lead to a diminished self-concept (Cooley, 1902).



Analysing the interview statements from T2 employees through both Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist theories provides valuable insights into the complex role of informal language in the workplace. From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, informal language can both liberate and reinforce power dynamics, disrupting traditional hierarchies while simultaneously creating new informal structures that exclude others. Symbolic Interactionism emphasises how informal language influences employees' self-perception and group identity, promoting a sense of belonging and authenticity while also contributing to misunderstandings and potential marginalisation.

### Communication Dynamics at T3

Terminal 3, being a contemporary and vibrant facility, also uses a distinct communication approach within its security department. The communication channels within T3's security department are more formal yet decentralised, enabling the quick sharing of information and cooperation among security personnel and supervisors.

Interviewees indicated that the use of formal language at T3 fosters a professional and transparent communication environment. Some participants, such as Ayimpoka, felt that formal language helps maintain a high standard of professionalism and minimises misunderstandings:

*"The main form of language used at T3 is English among personnel. I believe the use of English as the formal way of communication is to portray the airport's professional and international image." (Ayimpoka, 15/06/2023)*

The use of English as the primary language at T3 serves as a symbol of professionalism and adherence to international standards. This choice of language creates a shared understanding, according to some employees, and reinforces the

airport's identity as a global hub. This aligns with the symbolic interactionist perspective, which posits that language and symbols are crucial in constructing social realities and identities. Mead (1934) suggests that language shapes self-concept and social order, which is relevant to how English is used to build a professional image at T3. However, the use of English and formal communication as part of ESPM aligns with Foucault's concept of disciplinary power, where language functions as a tool for standardising behaviour and ensuring compliance with organisational norms (Foucault, 1977).

Formal language use, further intimated by Nyaaba, contributes to more structured and predictable interactions among employees. This structure can be beneficial for maintaining order and ensuring that communication is precise and consistent.

*"We are only allowed to communicate formally, especially using the terms Sir or Madam to address passengers. In all my professional life as a security operative, I think the use of these formal words provides order and respect in the workplace." (Nyaaba, 08/07/2023)*

The formal titles "Sir" and "Madam" serve as symbols of respect and social hierarchy. This formal communication style helps maintain a structured and respectful interaction environment, which is crucial in a high-security setting like an airport. It reflects the symbolic interactionist view that symbols, in this case, formal titles, create and sustain social norms and hierarchies. Blumer (1969) emphasises the role of symbols in social interaction, relevant to how formal titles reinforce respect and order at T3. Lyon (1994) also indicates that formal titles ('Sir', 'Madam') contribute to a hierarchical and ordered workplace, reflecting panoptic surveillance, where visibility and formalisation of interactions reinforce power structures and employee compliance.

Moses further confirmed this:

*"Formal language is used almost exclusively in all official communications regarding security officers' interactions at T3. Whether it's emails, reports, or meetings, the information is always presented in a highly structured and professional manner." (Moses, 10/07/2023)*

The structured and professional use of language in communications, such as emails, reports, and meetings, serves to standardise and formalise interactions among employees. This formal communication style ensures clarity and professionalism, thereby reducing misunderstandings and reinforcing T3's organisational culture. The exclusive use of formal language in official communications can be seen as part of dataveillance, where structured and documented interactions provide a clear trail for performance monitoring and accountability (Poster, 1990).

Respondents perceived that formal language enhances the airport's professional image, both internally and externally. This formal mode of communication aligns with the international standards expected in the aviation industry. Quashi, in his response, indicated how being formal benefited a colleague of his:

*"One of my colleagues was promoted from the position of a security officer to a senior security officer in one year instead of two years for his ability to communicate effectively by electronic means and face-to-face. He communicates in both English and French, which are seen as the two officially accepted languages in T3. Following the KIA's formal line of communication is held in high esteem by our managers." (Quahi, 06/07/2023)*

The colleague's promotion due to effective communication in English and French highlights the symbolic value placed on multilingual and formal communication skills at T3. These languages are symbols of professionalism and international standards, reinforcing the airport's global identity (Mead, 1934). The recognition and reward for these skills emphasise the importance of adhering to the established communication norms within the organisation. This aligns with Foucault's concept of disciplinary power, where effective communication is monitored and valued as a form of compliance and performance excellence.

Some participants discussed how the use of formal language is perceived to enhance accountability and documentation.

*“Clear and formal communication ensures that there is a record of interactions and directives, which can be important for accountability and performance evaluations”. (Obolo, 28/07/2023)*

The emphasis on clear and formal communication as a means of maintaining records highlights its symbolic function in establishing accountability and transparency (Blumer, 1969). This practice ensures that interactions are documented, which can be crucial for fair and objective performance evaluations. Clear and formal communication, as a means of maintaining records, aligns with the concept of dataveillance, where continuous monitoring and documentation of interactions support accountability and performance evaluations (Lyon, 1994).

The ability to communicate effectively in multiple languages and through various means (electronic and face-to-face) is highly valued at T3. This capability not only enhances individual performance but also aligns with the airport's professional and

international image. The practice of explicit and formal communication ensures that all interactions and directives are recorded. This documentation is essential for maintaining accountability and supporting fair performance evaluations, reducing the potential for biases and misunderstandings. In a multi-ethnic environment like T3, the use of English and French as official languages facilitates the management of a diverse workforce. It ensures that communication is standardised, reducing the potential for misunderstandings and promoting inclusivity (Hofstede, 1980).

While formal language promotes professionalism, it can also be intimidating and stressful for some employees, particularly those who will not be as confident in their language skills. Adwoa spoke of how it can lead to a sense of pressure and discomfort.

*"Although I speak, write, and read English, I am not able to fully express myself in certain situations in the English language. I sometimes feel stifled when trying to find the right English words to describe incidents that might have occurred during my shift, which I could have done using Ashanti Twi with no difficulty.*  
(Adwoa, 23/06/2023)

The struggle to express oneself fully in English can lead to feelings of inadequacy and frustration. Language is a key symbol through which individuals communicate their identity and experiences (Mead, 1934). Adwoa's difficulty in finding the right English words and preference for Ashanti Twi highlights a disconnect between personal identity and the imposed communication style. This misalignment can impact her sense of self and efficacy in the workplace. Ofori and Sackey (2010) in their work highlight how multilingualism can enhance communication efficiency and reduce misunderstandings in Ghanaian workplaces.

Another participant expressed similar sentiments about how formal language, with its technical terms and complex sentences, can be overwhelming and require additional time for employees to interpret and comprehend:

*"The strict use of formal language sometimes makes it difficult to fully understand the details of the work processes and procedures, especially using technical equipment. Technical terms and complex sentences in English can be overwhelming and will require additional time to interpret and comprehend, even for staff who are proficient in formal English." (Dimple, 20/06/2023)*

The use of technical terms and complex sentences in formal English can create barriers to understanding and effective communication. For employees like Dimple, this can lead to feelings of confusion and stress, ultimately affecting their ability to perform tasks efficiently. The complexity of language serves as a symbol of exclusion rather than inclusion (Blumer, 1969). Ansah (2014) argues that the overemphasis on English in professional settings can create significant barriers for employees who will be proficient in English but find technical jargon and formal language overwhelming. It recommends incorporating local languages to improve comprehension and efficiency (Ansah, 2014).

Atia highlighted a specific instance of how formal language hindered immediate understanding, necessitating further clarification from supervisors.

*"There was a situation where a detailed performance report was circulated. The formal language used in the report was so complex that many of my colleagues and I had to seek clarification from our supervisors. While the formal language ensured precision, it hindered immediate comprehension and required extra*

*effort to grasp the content fully. This is undermining my identity as a Ghana subject to my colonial master language at work in my own country"(Atia, 18/06/2023).*

The use of complex formal language in performance reports can create a sense of alienation and frustration. Atia's reference to language as a colonial imposition reflects the deeper symbolic meaning attached to language use. It undermines her identity and reinforces power dynamics rooted in historical colonialism, impacting her engagement and sense of belonging at work. Goffman's (1969) presentation of *self* aligns with how formal language affects Atia's identity and interaction in the workplace. Wolf (2018) explores in his research how the use of English as a formal language in Ghanaian workplaces affects employees' identity and performance. It highlights the need for more inclusive language policies that recognise local languages and cultural contexts (Wolf, 2018). Atia's view of the use of complex formal language in performance reports reflects a colonial legacy, which can be analysed through the lens of postcolonial surveillance, where language becomes a tool of control and power, maintaining historical inequities and power dynamics (Bhabha,1994).

Some employees felt that the formal language used at T3 could be overly rigid, stifling creativity and spontaneity in communication. This rigidity can potentially slow down response times and hinder the natural flow of information. Mantse explained how the formality of the language can create a barrier that discourages open communication, making it harder for employees to express concerns or ask questions freely.

*"Yes, the strict use of formal language does affect my comfort level. It creates a barrier that makes discussions with management feel more intimidating and less approachable. This formality can discourage open communication and*

*make it more difficult to express concerns or ask questions freely. (Mantse, 06/07/2023)*

The strict use of formal language can create psychological barriers between employees and management, making discussions feel intimidating. This can discourage employees from expressing concerns or asking questions, leading to a lack of open communication (Ansah, 2014). When employees feel intimidated and less comfortable communicating openly, critical feedback and concerns might go unaddressed.

This was further confirmed by Atampugre's response:

*"The use of formal language can sometimes create barriers to effective teamwork and collaboration. When instructions or feedback are given in a highly formal manner, they can feel impersonal and intimidating, discouraging open dialogue and collaboration. On the other hand, formal language can also ensure that everyone is on the same page and understands the expectations clearly."(Atampugre, 20/07/2023)*

Formal Language as an Instrument of Power and Professionalism: In a Post-Foucauldian framework, language is central to the exercise of power and control within institutions. The use of formal language at T3, as described by participants like Ayimpoka and Nyaaba, is reflective of how institutions maintain discipline and order. Foucault (1977) argues that formal systems, such as communication structures, serve as mechanisms to reinforce institutional power. By requiring security personnel to communicate in English and follow structured protocols, T3 establishes a strict hierarchy where professionalism is not only expected but also demanded. This mirrors



the "disciplinary power" that Foucault discusses, where institutions control individuals through systems of norms and expectations.

*Standardisation and Control:* According to Moses, formal communication at T3 is highly structured, particularly in emails, reports, and meetings, suggesting that these mechanisms are tools of organisational control. By standardising communication, the airport ensures that every interaction is predictable, reducing the space for ambiguity or personal deviation. This emphasis on order is characteristic of a post-Foucauldian understanding of how institutions "normalise" behaviour (Foucault, 1977). The precision of formal language, as noted by Quashi and Obolo, ensures accountability and creates a clear record of interactions, thus reinforcing hierarchical power through documentation and surveillance. This formalised communication makes the actions of employees legible to managers, increasing their ability to monitor and evaluate performance.

*Regulating Behaviour and Identity through Language:* The power of formal language also regulates how individuals perceive themselves within the organisation. Atia's reflection that formal language reinforces colonial power structures resonates with Foucault's concept of "bio-power," where control is exercised not just over actions but over identity and thought (Foucault, 1977). For employees like Adwoa, the struggle to express themselves in formal English can be stifling, affecting both their communication and their sense of agency. The use of English as the dominant language creates a barrier for those who are more comfortable with their local dialects, reflecting how formal systems marginalise non-dominant languages and cultures, thereby reinforcing existing power dynamics.

*The Limits of Formality:* While formal language upholds professionalism, it can also limit spontaneity and creativity, as indicated by Mantse and Atampugre. This rigidity aligns with Foucault's idea that power is not only about enforcing order but also about controlling the possible ways of being and behaving within a system (Foucault, 1977). The formal communication style at T3 creates a structured environment that can intimidate employees, discouraging open communication and creative problem-solving. This demonstrates the paradox of formal language—it ensures precision and professionalism. Still, it can also reduce flexibility and hinder the natural flow of information, which is essential for timely responses in security work.

*Formal Language and the Looking-Glass Self:* From the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism, particularly Cooley's Looking-Glass Self, the use of formal language at T3 affects how employees perceive themselves based on how they think others view them (Cooley, 1902). Employees like Ayimpoka and Quashi view their ability to communicate effectively in English as a reflection of their professionalism and competence, which has practical consequences, such as promotion opportunities for those who master this formal mode of communication. The way colleagues and managers respond to their use of formal language influences their self-concept, thereby enhancing their sense of belonging and competence within the professional environment of T3.

*Identity and Exclusion:* However, for some employees, formal language presents challenges to their self-image and feelings of competence. Adwoa's statement about feeling stifled when forced to communicate in formal English highlights how individuals can experience a negative self-concept when they believe they do not meet the expectations of their workplace (Cooley, 1902). Atia's reference to colonial dynamics

highlights how formal language can create a sense of alienation or inferiority among those who are not fluent in English. This aligns with the Looking-Glass Self, where individuals internalise the perceived judgments of others and adjust their self-image accordingly.

*Group Dynamics and Formal Communication:* Symbolic Interactionism also explains how formal language influences group identity and dynamics. Atampugre mentioned how formal communication can feel impersonal and intimidating, creating barriers to open collaboration. In Cooley's terms, this can hinder the development of a positive group identity, as employees will feel distanced from one another. Formal language, with its emphasis on structure and precision, can foster a professional environment but at the expense of emotional connection and rapport among team members.

*Striving for Professional Recognition:* On the other hand, employees like Quashi and Moses view formal language as a pathway to recognition and success. When Quashi's colleague was promoted for his effective communication in English and French, this reflects how formal language is tied to the airport's international image and standards. Employees internalise this association between language proficiency and professional competence, shaping their behaviour to align with organisational expectations. This aligns with Cooley's notion that individuals modify their actions based on the feedback they receive from others, particularly from authority figures such as managers.

Analysing the use of formal language at Terminal 3 through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories reveals a complex dynamic between power, identity, and communication. From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, formal language serves as a tool of institutional control, standardising communication and reinforcing power structures. It regulates behaviour and shapes employees'

identities, both empowering and constraining them within the professional environment. From a Symbolic Interactionist view, formal language influences self-perception and group dynamics, shaping how employees see themselves and interact with others. While formal language enhances professionalism and accountability, it can also create barriers to open communication, leading to feelings of exclusion and discomfort for some employees.

### **5.1.2 Ghanaian Time Culture and ESPM**

#### **Influence of Ghanaian Time Culture on Employee Perception of ESPM**

The interviews conducted with employees at KIA reveal significant insights into how Ghanaian time culture influences perceptions of electronic surveillance-based performance management (ESPM). The key themes identified include the flexible nature of Ghanaian time culture, the resulting conflicts with the rigid structure of ESPM, and the potential adjustments that could improve alignment and acceptance.

#### **Flexible Nature of Ghanaian Time Culture**

Across all interviewees, there was a consensus that Ghanaian culture approaches time and punctuality more flexibly compared to Western cultures. As one participant explained:

*"In Ghana, time is often viewed more flexibly compared to Western cultures. While punctuality is appreciated, there is a general understanding that delays can happen due to various social or logistical reasons" (Atampugre, 20/07/2023).*

In Ghana, time is often seen as fluid rather than fixed, with an emphasis on accommodating social and logistical challenges. Delays are usually understood and

accepted due to various factors, such as social obligations and infrastructural issues. (Acheampong, 2006). ESPM systems that strictly enforce punctuality can be perceived as unfair if they do not account for culturally accepted delays. Employees like Atampugre feel that their unique challenges are not considered. Strict monitoring can create stress among employees who struggle to align with rigid time expectations that conflict with their cultural norms and values.

This relaxed view on time, where social relationships and unforeseen circumstances are prioritised, often leads to meetings and events starting later than scheduled. Obolo indicated this:

*"We are supposed to start our morning shift at 5:30 a.m., where we have morning team briefings from our shift supervisors. We end up starting our morning team briefings at 6:30 a.m. due to airport cleaners not cleaning up on time and, in most cases, our supervisors arriving late and unchallenged. This recurrent effect of lateness then leads to long passenger queues and delayed flights. The term "African time" means starting work an hour or two later than the scheduled time. There is no respect for time at all, and I am guilty as well."*  
(Obolo, 18/02/2024)

The term "African Time" reflects a more relaxed approach to punctuality, often resulting in delays that are culturally accepted (Kuada, 2010). Chronic lateness can have significant operational impacts, including delayed meetings and services, which can negatively affect overall efficiency and performance. According to Obolo's response, if supervisors and employees alike adhere to "African time," it can undermine the effectiveness of ESPM systems that rely on punctuality and strict adherence to schedules.

The system's failure to adapt to cultural norms while enforcing necessary punctuality results in operational disruptions, which in turn affect the customer. An example of customer dissatisfaction was described in Quashi's response below:

*"I was called names by a UK-bound passenger for not being efficient enough at my work and causing long passenger queues at the security checkpoint. My supervisor, whose lateness caused our shift to be delayed, came shouting at me and my colleagues to be effective and clear the queues. I couldn't complain at the moment because we had a mantra at work that said, 'Do before you complain,' meaning you should do what you have been told to do by your superior first, and then you can raise a complaint later. (Quashi, 06/07/2023).*

The hierarchical culture and the mantra *"do before you complain"* reflect traditional power dynamics, where employees are expected to comply with directives before voicing concerns. Such practices will hinder open communication and impede timely problem-solving, ultimately affecting overall performance and employee morale. (Yeboah-Assiamah, 2016). The power imbalance and the culture of compliance before complaint lead to skewed performance evaluations, as employees will not feel empowered to report issues or delays caused by supervisors. The expectation to follow orders before raising concerns can delay critical feedback that could improve processes and performance monitoring.

The responses from Atampugre, Obolo, and Quashi illustrate the impact of Ghanaian time culture on employee perceptions of ESPM at KIA. They interpret ESPM practices through the lens of their cultural understanding of time, which can lead to potential misalignments between formal monitoring systems and everyday practices. (Blumer, 1969). When surveillance systems impose rigid standards that conflict with

cultural norms, they can become tools of control rather than support, leading to resistance and negative perceptions (Foucault, 1977).

### *Conflicts Between Ghanaian Time Culture and ESPM*

The rigid nature of ESPM often clashes with the flexible approach to time prevalent in Ghana. This was highlighted by all participants, who noted that strict time monitoring and enforcement felt overly harsh and inconsiderate of the local cultural context. For example, Nyaaba shared an instance where they were flagged for being a few minutes late due to heavy traffic, a common issue in Accra:

*"The system flagged my lateness, and I felt it didn't take into account the unpredictable nature of commuting in Accra" (Nyaaba, 08/07/2023).*

Traffic congestion and infrastructural challenges in Accra significantly affect commuting times, making punctuality difficult to predict and maintain. There is a cultural understanding that delays are common due to these external factors, and this flexibility is ingrained in everyday life. (Amoako and Adom-Asamoah, 2018). ESPM systems that rigidly flag lateness without considering commuting challenges can be perceived as unfair and insensitive to local conditions. The inability of ESPM systems to account for such variability can lead to increased stress among employees and negatively impact their morale.

Similarly, Dimple recounted a situation where the ESPM system did not contextualise their tardiness:

*"There was a time when I stayed late to help a colleague with a technical issue, which caused me to be late the following day. The system flagged my tardiness without considering the context of my late arrival (Dimple, 20/06/2023).*

Ghanaian work culture emphasises helping colleagues and supporting communal efforts, which can sometimes conflict with rigid time schedules. Employees will prioritise social responsibilities, such as assisting colleagues, over strict adherence to schedules (Owusu and Lund 2004). ESPM systems that fail to account for such context-driven behaviours can be seen as rigid and lacking an understanding of local work ethics. Strict monitoring without flexibility can undermine teamwork and discourage employees from supporting each other.

A supervisor echoed these sentiments, describing an incident where an employee was penalised for arriving late due to a funeral procession, a significant cultural event in Ghana:

*"The ESPM system didn't account for a colleague's lateness because he had to be part of the Homowo festival family events in the morning before leaving for work and the cultural significance that has on him as a GA. This led to a sense of unfairness" (Kwabena, 28/07/2023).*

Festivals like Homowo are deeply embedded in Ghana's cultural and social fabric, carrying significant communal and familial obligations. Participation in such events is a crucial aspect of cultural identity and social cohesion. (Agyekum, 2013).

The interview statements regarding the influence of Ghanaian time culture on employee perceptions of Electronic Surveillance-based Performance Management (ESPM) at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) are analysed through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) perspectives. Each framework offers valuable insights into the complexities of cultural norms, power dynamics, and individual identities in the workplace.



*Time as a Tool of Discipline:* In a Post-Foucauldian context, time is not merely a measurement but a form of discipline that institutions impose to regulate behaviour and productivity. The interviews highlight a stark contrast between Ghanaian time culture—characterised by flexibility and social context—and the rigid expectations of ESPM, which enforces strict punctuality. As Atampugre notes, delays due to social or logistical factors are culturally accepted in Ghana, yet the surveillance systems at KIA demand adherence to a fixed schedule. This disparity reflects Foucault's (1977) concept of "biopower," where surveillance mechanisms enforce normative standards of behaviour that can marginalise local cultural practices.

*Surveillance and Power Dynamics:* The experiences shared by employees, such as Nyaaba and Dimple, highlight how ESPM functions as a tool of control that imposes external standards incongruent with local realities. The rigid enforcement of punctuality leads to feelings of unfairness and stress among employees. For instance, Kwabena's account of penalising an employee for being late due to participation in a culturally significant event illustrates how surveillance systems can disregard the complexities of individual lives and cultural obligations. Such practices not only reinforce hierarchical power dynamics but also alienate employees from the values and norms of their own culture (Foucault, 1977).

*Impact on Employee Morale and Compliance:* The culture of compliance before voicing concerns, as noted by Quashi, exemplifies how rigid monitoring can suppress open communication and hinder timely problem-solving. Employees feel pressured to conform to the demands of the surveillance system, which can stifle their ability to articulate grievances or contextualise their actions. This aligns with Foucault's assertion that power is not only repressive but also productive, shaping the subjectivities of individuals within an institution (Foucault, 1980). The mantra of "do

before you complain" further exemplifies this dynamic, as it discourages employees from questioning or challenging the system, leading to a lack of empowerment and agency.

*Cultural Insensitivity and Resistance:* The conflict between Ghanaian time culture and ESPM systems exemplifies a broader critique of how Western norms of punctuality are imposed in non-Western contexts, often without consideration for local customs and practices. As Dimple reflects, the failure of ESPM to account for social responsibilities and communal support leads to a perception of the system as insensitive and unjust. This resistance to rigid standards can result in negative perceptions of ESPM, positioning it as a mechanism of control rather than a supportive tool for employee performance (Foucault, 1977).

*Cultural Identity and Time:* From a Symbolic Interactionist perspective, the concept of time and punctuality is deeply intertwined with cultural identity and social interaction. Employees at KIA perceive their adherence to "Ghanaian time" as part of their cultural identity, and their experiences of being monitored by ESPM systems challenge this self-concept. The informal acceptance of delays and flexible scheduling reflects a communal approach to time, where social relationships take precedence over rigid structures. Atampugre and Obolo's reflections reveal how these cultural norms influence their interactions with the ESPM system and shape their perceptions of fairness and equity in the workplace.

*Feedback and Self-Perception:* The Looking-Glass Self theory posits that individuals form their self-concept based on how they believe others perceive them (Cooley, 1902). For employees like Quashi, who experience reprimands for issues stemming from cultural practices, the surveillance system becomes a lens through which they

evaluate their worth and competence. When the ESPM system flags their lateness without providing context, employees may internalise feelings of inadequacy or unfairness, which can alter their self-perception and potentially impact their job performance.

*Social Interaction and Resistance:* The interactions between employees and supervisors further illustrate the complexities of compliance and resistance within a hierarchical structure. As noted by Kwabena, the expectation to comply before voicing concerns creates an environment where employees feel disempowered and hesitant to challenge authority. This dynamic resonates with Blumer's (1969) assertion that social interaction shapes individual behaviour and identity. The rigid enforcement of ESPM standards will be perceived as an imposition of external values that conflict with local cultural norms, leading to resistance and frustration among employees.

*Cultural Contextualization of Work Ethics:* Employees like Dimple articulate the importance of cultural values in shaping workplace behaviour, emphasising the communal support that often takes precedence over strict adherence to schedules. This cultural context, as demonstrated in the responses from Nyaaba and Kwabena, underscores the impact of the collective nature of Ghanaian society on perceptions of performance management. When ESPM systems fail to recognise these cultural nuances, they will exacerbate feelings of alienation and discontent among employees.

The analysis of employee perceptions of ESPM at KIA, conducted through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) lenses, reveals the intricate interplay between cultural norms, power dynamics, and individual identities. The rigid enforcement of punctuality in ESPM conflicts with the flexible understanding of time prevalent in Ghanaian culture, resulting in perceptions of unfairness and stress

among employees. The surveillance system operates as a mechanism of control that often disregards local practices, reinforcing hierarchical power dynamics and stifling open communication. From a Symbolic Interactionist perspective, the internalisation of these conflicts shapes employees' self-perceptions and social interactions, leading to resistance against a system perceived as culturally insensitive and unjust.

### Potential Adjustments to ESPM

All interviewees suggested that ESPM could be adjusted to better align with Ghanaian time culture. Suggestions included incorporating grace periods for common delays, considering local factors such as traffic and social obligations, and allowing contextual explanations for tardiness. Yaro, in his interview response, proposed that,

*"ESPM could incorporate a grace period to account for common delays. Additionally, it should consider local factors such as traffic and social obligations that might impact punctuality" (Yaro, 20/06/2023).*

Moses also emphasised the need for contextual adjustments:

*"ESPM could benefit from being more flexible by allowing for contextual adjustments. For instance, understanding that staying late to help others or dealing with unpredictable traffic should be factored in before penalising tardiness" (Moses, 10/07/2023).*

Mantse, who is a supervisor, suggested that ESPM should include flexibility for culturally significant events and allow employees to explain inevitable delays, fostering a more understanding and supportive management style:

*"ESPM should incorporate flexibility for culturally significant events and common delays. It could include options for employees to explain certain*

*delays, allowing the system to adapt to these cultural nuances" (Mantse, 06/07/2023).*

Analysing the interview statements about potential adjustments to Electronic Surveillance-based Performance Management (ESPM) at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist perspectives provides insight into the interplay between power, cultural norms, and individual agency. The suggestions from employees like Yaro, Moses, and Mantse reflect their experiences with ESPM and highlight how the system can be better aligned with Ghanaian cultural practices, ultimately leading to improved workplace dynamics.

*Power Relations and Control Mechanisms:* The implementation of ESPM at KIA can be viewed through Foucault's lens of surveillance and power dynamics. In this context, ESPM functions as a disciplinary mechanism that seeks to regulate employee behaviour through strict monitoring and performance metrics. However, the interviewees' suggestions for adjustments indicate a recognition of the need for flexibility within this system. Yaro's proposal to incorporate a grace period for common delays exemplifies how cultural nuances can be integrated into performance management systems to mitigate feelings of unfairness and stress among employees. This aligns with Foucault's (1977) idea that power is not solely repressive but can also be productive, influencing how individuals navigate institutional structures.

*Contextualising Surveillance:* Moses emphasises the importance of contextual adjustments to account for local realities, such as traffic and social obligations. By advocating for a system that allows for explanations of tardiness, he highlights the limitations of a rigid surveillance system that does not accommodate the complexities of everyday life. This raises questions about the fairness and validity of performance

evaluations that overlook cultural and contextual factors, underscoring the need for a more nuanced understanding of employee behaviour. Foucault's concept of "biopower" suggests that surveillance mechanisms must adapt to the realities of those they monitor or risk being perceived as unjust and alienating (Foucault, 1977).

*Cultural Sensitivity and Employee Morale:* The suggestions for incorporating cultural flexibility, as proposed by Mantse, reveal a potential shift in how power is exercised within the workplace. Allowing for culturally significant events and contextual explanations fosters a supportive management style that acknowledges the realities of employees' lives. This adaptability can reduce stress and enhance employee morale, as it transforms ESPM from a tool of rigid control into a mechanism that supports and values cultural practices. When systems are perceived as fair and considerate, they engender trust and loyalty among employees, thereby enhancing overall organisational effectiveness (Earley, 2003).

*Cultural Norms and Employee Identity:* From a Symbolic Interactionist perspective, the recommendations provided by employees reflect their understanding of cultural norms and their implications for identity in the workplace. The concept of "Ghanaian time" emphasises flexibility, social obligations, and communal relationships, which are central to the identities of employees at KIA. Yaro's call for a grace period acknowledges the importance of these cultural practices and reinforces a collective identity among employees. When employees perceive the ESPM system as accommodating their cultural realities, it can lead to enhanced job satisfaction and a stronger sense of belonging within the organisation.

*Impact of Contextual Understanding:* Moses's insistence on recognising the reasons behind employee behaviours emphasises the role of social interactions in shaping

perceptions of fairness and performance evaluation. By allowing employees to contextualise their tardiness, the ESPM system would enable a more holistic understanding of their contributions. This aligns with Blumer's (1969) assertion that social interactions significantly influence individual behaviour and self-perception. When employees feel that their efforts to help colleagues are recognised and valued, they are more likely to engage positively with the ESPM system, leading to enhanced teamwork and collaboration.

*Cultural Significance and Employee Loyalty:* Mantse's suggestion to consider culturally significant events reinforces the idea that understanding and accommodating cultural practices can foster employee loyalty and commitment. Recognising the importance of events like festivals not only validates employees' identities but also enhances their morale and sense of fairness in the workplace. By allowing employees to explain delays, the ESPM system can create a platform for dialogue that empowers individuals to share their experiences and contribute to a supportive workplace culture. This reciprocal interaction aligns with the Looking-Glass Self concept, where employees shape their self-perception based on their interactions with the system and their supervisors (Cooley, 1902).

The analysis of interview statements regarding potential adjustments to ESPM at KIA, conducted through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist lenses, reveals the critical interplay between power, cultural norms, and individual identities. The suggestions from Yaro, Moses, and Mantse highlight the need for a more culturally sensitive and flexible ESPM system that acknowledges the realities of Ghanaian time culture. By incorporating grace periods, contextual adjustments, and considerations for cultural significance, the system can transform from a tool of rigid control to a supportive mechanism that fosters employee engagement and morale. Ultimately,

these adjustments can enhance perceptions of fairness, trust, and legitimacy within the workplace, contributing to a more positive organisational climate.

### **5.1.3 Ghanaian Tribal Differences and ESPM**

#### **Impact of Tribal Differences on Workplace Dynamics**

The interviews revealed that tribal differences in Ghanaian workplaces create noticeable divisions among employees. Prof noted that:

*"In my experience, tribal differences can create invisible lines within the workplace. For instance, during social events or team gatherings, I've noticed that people tend to gravitate towards those from their tribes. This can sometimes make collaboration across different tribes a bit challenging". (Prof, 28/06/2023)*

Blumer (1969) posits that people act based on the meanings they ascribe to objects, events, and behaviours, which are derived from social interactions. Prof perceives social grouping in his statement where tribal affiliations serve as significant symbols around which employees organise their social interactions, creating 'invisible lines.' These social groupings foster strong in-group bonds but can create barriers to inter-group collaboration. The tendency for employees to socialise within their tribal groups is likely to hinder effective collaboration across different tribes, affecting team cohesion and productivity. Persistent in-group socialisation reinforces tribal divisions, making it difficult for employees to form a unified workplace culture.

Moses, in his response, highlighted unequal treatment in the ESPM process:

*"Tribal dynamics can lead to a sense of unequal treatment in the implementation of ESPM. For example, I once noticed that my colleague from*



*a different tribe seemed to receive less scrutiny for similar performance issues than I did. This made me feel that the system wasn't entirely objective and might be influenced by these underlying tribal biases". (Moses, 23/06/2023)*

Moses indicates that employees perceive and react to the fairness of ESPM based on their interactions and observations of how others are treated, particularly within tribal contexts. Employees might feel the need to manage their behaviour more carefully if they perceive bias, which can lead to stress and reduced job satisfaction (Goffman, 1969).

Yaro further confirmed this in his statement:

*"The supervisor in my team is an Ashanti by tribe, and he normally hangs out with other team members from his tribe. He favours them by giving them good appraisal ratings, even though they do not arrive at work early and often loiter around with no queries. I am a Dagomba by tribe and always feel left out in the team". (Yaro, 17/02/2024).*

Cooley (1902) suggests in his concept of the "looking-glass self" that individuals form their self-concepts based on how they believe others perceive them. Yaro's feelings of exclusion and perceived favouritism by the supervisor shape his self-concept and work identity. Being marginalised based on tribal identity can negatively impact Yaro's job satisfaction and engagement. Favouritism based on tribal affiliations is likely to heighten tensions and conflicts within teams, undermining cohesion and effectiveness. Persistent feelings of exclusion and unfair treatment can lead to disengagement and lower productivity among marginalised employees.

*I was called 'stupid and unfit' by a colleague for a job role that my team manager had assigned. He said that people from the Nabdan tribe do not approach issues with reasoning, and for that matter, I am unable to handle the level of responsibility entrusted to me. This was demeaning to me as a person, and I had to report him to management for that comment. (Nyaaba)*

There was a lot of prejudice against specific groups of people from the Northern part of Ghana among some staff members:

*"We, those from the Upper West, Upper East and Northern regions, are perceived as violent by other colleagues from the southern part of Ghana. They have the mentality that we are all Muslims and, therefore, have violent behaviour. This assumption about us puts us on the back foot, and we are sometimes not put in the front line to serve passengers." (Atampugre, 20/07/2023)*

*"People of the North are not Muslims. The Muslim community make up 30 per cent of the entire population, and we have co-existed peacefully, and I don't think they are violent". (Atampugre, 20/07/2023)*

Ayimpoka intimated similar prejudice against the Asante at work:

*"I dislike working with the Asantes because they think they are better human beings than we, the Northerners. Growing up, I never liked them in school because of the way they carried themselves. I only have a working relationship with them and don't socialise with them after work. (Ayimpoka, 15/06/2023)*

Analysing the interview statements regarding tribal differences in Ghanaian workplaces through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist theories provides insight into the complexities of social dynamics, identity formation, and power relations

within the organisational context. The interviews reveal how tribal affiliations influence employee interactions, perceptions of fairness, and overall workplace cohesion.

*Invisible Lines and Power Structures:* Prof's observation about "invisible lines" within the workplace highlights the underlying power dynamics shaped by tribal affiliations. According to Foucault (1977), power is not only exercised through formal structures but also social interactions and relationships. The tendency for employees to cluster around their tribes creates an environment that hinders collaboration across groups, thereby reinforcing existing social hierarchies. This segregation perpetuates tribal divisions and impacts team cohesion, ultimately affecting overall organisational performance.

*Surveillance and Bias:* Moses's experience with perceived unequal treatment in the ESPM process further illustrates how power dynamics operate within tribal contexts. The feeling that specific individuals receive preferential treatment based on tribal affiliation reflects the intersection of surveillance and bias. Foucault's concept of "biopower" suggests that surveillance systems like ESPM can be influenced by cultural biases, leading to unequal treatment and undermining the system's objectivity (Foucault, 1977). The resulting feelings of unfairness and resentment, as articulated by Moses, can lead to reduced employee morale and a sense of alienation within the workplace.

*Impact on Trust and Engagement:* Yaro's statement about favouritism in performance appraisals indicates how tribal affiliations can shape perceptions of fairness and equity in the workplace. When supervisors display bias towards certain tribal groups, it not only affects the individuals directly involved but also erodes overall trust in the ESPM system. This aligns with Foucault's assertion that surveillance can become a means

of control, leading to resistance and disengagement among employees who feel marginalised (Foucault, 1977). As employees navigate these power structures, their experiences shape their perceptions and behaviours, reinforcing the cycle of exclusion and favouritism.

*Meaning-Making and Tribal Affiliation:* Blumer (1969) emphasises that individuals act based on the meanings they ascribe to social interactions and contexts. Prof's observation about employees gravitating towards their tribal groups illustrates how tribal identity serves as a significant symbol in the workplace. These social groupings create strong in-group bonds, which can foster collaboration but also lead to barriers in inter-group communication. The tendency for employees to form alliances based on tribal affiliations contributes to a fragmented workplace culture, which in turn affects overall team effectiveness and cohesion.

*Self-Concept and Perceptions of Fairness:* Yaro's feelings of exclusion and favouritism highlight Cooley's (1902) concept of the "looking-glass self," where individuals shape their self-concept based on how they believe others perceive them. Yaro's negative experiences lead him to feel marginalised, which impacts his job satisfaction and engagement. The presence of tribal biases in performance evaluations exacerbates feelings of exclusion, further entrenching divisions within the workplace. This self-perception can also lead to internalised biases and lowered self-esteem, reinforcing the impact of tribal affiliations on individual identities.

*Prejudice and Stereotyping:* Atampugre's experiences illustrate how prejudices against certain tribes can shape perceptions and treatment within the workplace. The stereotypes about individuals from the Northern regions being violent reflect broader societal biases that can influence interactions in professional settings. This aligns with

Goffman's (1969) notion of "stigma," where individuals from marginalised groups will be subjected to negative labels that affect their self-identity and interactions with others. Ayimpoka's disdain for Asantes further emphasises the impact of tribal prejudices on workplace relationships. These biases not only hinder effective collaboration but also perpetuate a cycle of division and conflict among employees.

The analysis of tribal differences in Ghanaian workplaces, conducted through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist perspectives, reveals the intricate interplay between power dynamics, social identity, and interpersonal interactions. The experiences shared by Prof Moses, Yaro, Atampugre, and Ayimpoka highlight the challenges posed by tribal affiliations, which can create divisions and hinder collaboration in the workplace. These social constructs influence perceptions of fairness and equity in performance evaluations, resulting in feelings of exclusion and resentment among employees.

To foster a more cohesive and inclusive workplace culture, organisations must recognise and address these tribal dynamics. This can be achieved by promoting awareness of cultural biases, encouraging inter-tribal collaboration, and implementing equitable performance management practices that take into account the complexities of employee identities. By doing so, organisations can create an environment that values diversity and enhances overall employee morale and productivity.

Tribal dynamics have a significant influence on the perception of Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM). Atia, in his response, mentioned that:

*"Tribal differences can affect how ESPM is perceived, particularly if there's a belief that certain tribes are being favoured. I've seen situations where*

*employees felt that their performance was being judged more harshly because they belonged to a minority tribe, which undermines trust in the system".*  
(Atia, 18/06/2023)

Atia mentions that employees from minority tribes will feel judged more harshly, which undermines trust in the system. According to Blumer (1969), meanings arise from social interactions, and these meanings can shape individuals' perceptions and behaviours. In the context of KIA, the perception that certain tribes are favoured can lead to mistrust and a sense of unfairness among minority employees, impacting their engagement and performance. Akrofi-Quarcoo (2011) notes that tribal affiliations can influence interpersonal relationships and perceptions of fairness in Ghanaian workplaces. At KIA, such biases can impact how surveillance data is interpreted and applied, leading to perceptions of favouritism. Atia's observation that minority tribe members feel judged more harshly highlights the role of surveillance in reinforcing power dynamics. Lyon (2007) argues that surveillance systems can exacerbate existing social inequalities if not implemented relatively. At KIA, if surveillance data is perceived to be used selectively to favour certain tribes, it can lead to distrust and resentment among employees.

Adongo also expressed scepticism about the fairness of ESPM, noting that:

*"Tribal diversity can sometimes lead to perceptions of favouritism in ESPM. I once felt that a colleague from a different tribe was getting better performance reviews and feedback even though our outputs were similar. This made me sceptical about the fairness of the monitoring and evaluation process".*  
(Adongo, 13/06/2023)

Adongo's experience of feeling that a colleague from a different tribe received better reviews despite similar outputs points to perceived favouritism. Mead's (1934) concept of the "generalised other" explains that individuals' perceptions of fairness and equity are influenced by their interactions and the broader social context. When employees perceive tribal biases, it undermines the collective sense of fairness, leading to scepticism about the evaluation process. Ofori-Dankwa (2007) highlights that fairness and transparency in performance evaluations are crucial for maintaining employee trust and motivation. Perceptions of tribal bias undermine these principles, as seen in Atia and Adongo's experiences.

This was further intimated by Moses:

*"In my experience, tribal affiliations play a role in how people perceive the fairness of ESPM. I've noticed that employees from the same tribe as our supervisor seem to receive more leniency when it comes to lateness or minor performance issues. For example, I once arrived late due to traffic and was flagged by the system, but my colleague, who belongs to the supervisor's tribe, arrived later and wasn't penalised. This creates a sense of unfairness because it feels like the ESPM system is not applied consistently across all employees. Tribal favouritism, whether intentional or not, makes it harder to trust that the system is fair." (Moses, 10/07/2023)*

Other staff like Yaro also felt performance evaluation was subjective and was not purely based on data collected:

*"Yes, there was one situation where a colleague from a different tribe than mine consistently arrived late, but the ESPM system didn't seem to flag them as much as it did for me. It made me wonder if the supervisor, who shares the*

*same tribe as my colleague, was somehow influencing the system or giving them a pass. This type of tribal bias made me feel like the performance monitoring was subjective and not purely based on the actual data collected by the system. It affects my motivation because I don't feel like I'm being evaluated on a level playing field. (Yaro, 17/02/2024)*

This concern was further highlighted by Prof:

*"I think it's important to have transparency in how the ESPM system is managed and how data is used for performance evaluations. Currently, tribal favouritism is a phenomenon that occurs behind the scenes and is not openly discussed. If supervisors could be trained to recognise and mitigate their biases, and if the data from the ESPM system were reviewed by an independent party or a neutral management team, it would help a lot. Employees would feel more confident that their performance is being judged fairly, without any tribal biases creeping in." (Prof, 28/06/2023)*

Ayimpoka, in her remarks, believes leadership has a role to play in the tribal dynamic of ESPM in KIA:

*"In our workplace, the perception of leadership is closely tied to tribal dynamics. Employees tend to trust leaders who are from their tribe, and this trust carries over to how they perceive the fairness of ESPM. If a leader from a particular tribe is perceived as fair and neutral, then employees, regardless of their tribe, tend to trust the ESPM system more. But suppose the leader is seen as favouring their tribe. In that case, it creates a lot of distrust, and employees from other tribes start to doubt whether the ESPM system is objective or just another tool for reinforcing tribal favouritism." (Ayimpoka, 15/06/2023)*



Michel Foucault's ideas on power and surveillance suggest that modern surveillance systems, such as ESPM, are mechanisms for controlling behaviour and reinforcing power dynamics. In workplaces where tribalism plays a significant role, surveillance systems can exacerbate existing social inequalities. The ESPM system at KIA, as reflected in these interviews, does not exist in isolation; it interacts with tribal affiliations and biases, thereby influencing how performance data is collected, interpreted, and used.

Atia's observation that minority tribe members feel more harshly judged highlights how tribal affiliations influence the application of surveillance. Foucault's concept of the panopticon—a structure that creates a sense of constant surveillance, leading individuals to regulate their behaviour—applies here. However, the panopticon effect breaks down when the system is perceived as biased. As Lyon (2007) argues, surveillance can reinforce power disparities if it is applied unevenly or based on discriminatory practices. In this context, employees from minority tribes will feel more scrutinised or punished, thus reinforcing tribal power imbalances within the workplace.

This is evident in Atia's statement:

*"Employees from minority tribes will feel judged more harshly, which undermines trust in the system" (Atia, 18/06/2023).*

Here, the tribal dynamic complicates the typical panopticon effect. Instead of self-regulating in a neutral, universally applied system, minority employees perceive the surveillance as biased, leading to distrust rather than compliance. Foucault (1977) suggests that when surveillance systems are not perceived as fair, they fail to create the intended order and instead foster resistance and resentment. This can lead to

disengagement or altered behaviours, not out of improved performance but as a defence against perceived injustice.

In Moses's account, we see how tribal favouritism can distort surveillance:

*"Tribal affiliations play a role in how people perceive the fairness of ESPM. I've noticed that employees from the same tribe as our supervisor seem to receive more leniency" (Moses, 10/07/2023).*

According to Foucault, surveillance systems like ESPM can reinforce hierarchical structures. In KIA, tribal affiliations within the leadership affect how employees are monitored and evaluated. This perceived tribal favouritism aligns with Foucault's theory that surveillance systems are not neutral but are intertwined with power relations that can perpetuate inequality. When tribal affiliations distort performance evaluations, the system becomes an instrument of power, reinforcing the privileges of certain tribes at the expense of others.

Symbolic Interactionism, particularly Charles Cooley's concept of the looking-glass self, emphasises how individuals' self-concepts are shaped by their interactions with others and how they believe others perceive them. In this case, the perception of ESPM at KIA is influenced by how employees perceive their tribal affiliations and the feedback they receive (or perceive) from supervisors.

Yaro's statement reflects the symbolic interactionist concept of the looking-glass self:

*"It made me wonder if the supervisor, who shares the same tribe as my colleague, was somehow influencing the system... This type of tribal bias made me feel like the performance monitoring was subjective" (Yaro, 17/02/2024).*

Here, Yaro's sense of self and his perception of fairness within the ESPM system are shaped by how he believes the system and the supervisors view him as a member of a different tribe. Cooley's theory suggests that individuals construct their self-concepts based on how they think others perceive them. For Yaro, the perceived bias in performance monitoring creates feelings of exclusion and unfairness, which in turn affects his motivation and engagement. This also supports Mead's (1934) concept of the "generalised other," which suggests that the broader social context (in this case, tribal affiliations) influences individuals' perceptions of fairness and equity.

Adongo's scepticism about the fairness of ESPM, based on tribal favouritism, further illustrates the interactionist perspective:

*"I once felt that a colleague from a different tribe was getting better performance reviews... This made me sceptical about the fairness of the monitoring" (Adongo, 13/06/2023).*

Adongo's feelings of unfair treatment reflect how tribal dynamics shape individuals' interactions with the ESPM system. According to symbolic interactionism, these interactions feed back into the employees' self-concepts and affect their work behaviour. When employees perceive that tribal biases influence performance reviews, their trust in the system diminishes, leading to reduced morale and performance.

Both post-Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist theories highlight how surveillance systems, such as ESPM, shape power and identity. Foucault's ideas explain how ESPM can reinforce power imbalances through surveillance, while Cooley's and Mead's concepts demonstrate how tribal dynamics shape employees' self-concepts and perceptions of fairness.

Prof's statement emphasises the need for transparency:

*"Right now, tribal favouritism is something that happens behind the scenes... If supervisors could be trained to recognise and mitigate their biases, it would help a lot"* (Prof, 28/06/2023).

From a Foucauldian perspective, this underscores the role of surveillance in perpetuating power dynamics. Increased transparency in surveillance systems could mitigate some of the inequalities exacerbated by tribal favouritism. From a symbolic interactionist viewpoint, transparency would alter how employees perceive the system, possibly restoring trust and fairness.

Ayimpoka's observation further highlights the interaction between leadership and tribal dynamics:

*"If the leader is seen as favouring their tribe, it creates a lot of distrust... employees from other tribes start to doubt whether the ESPM system is objective"* (Ayimpoka, 18/02/2024).

Here, the symbolic interactionist perspective demonstrates how perceptions of leadership fairness impact employees' self-concepts and trust in the system. Meanwhile, the post-Foucauldian perspective emphasises how leadership, as a power structure, can utilise surveillance to perpetuate and maintain tribal hierarchies.

The interviews illustrate how tribal dynamics influence perceptions of ESPM through both power structures and social interactions. Post-Foucauldian theory helps explain how ESPM can reinforce tribal power imbalances by selectively applying surveillance. Symbolic Interactionist theory illustrates how these power dynamics influence employees' self-perceptions, leading to distrust and disengagement when surveillance systems are perceived as biased. Together, these perspectives underscore the

importance of transparency, fairness, and cultural sensitivity in implementing ESPM systems within culturally diverse workplaces, such as KIA.

### *Conflicts Between Tribal Differences and ESPM*

Several instances where tribal differences and ESPM conflict were cited. Ataa, one of the respondents, recounted an occasion when a family emergency led to lateness:

*"Yes, there was an occasion when I arrived late due to a family emergency, a situation that is quite common and understood within my tribe. The ESPM flagged this lateness, and despite explaining the cultural significance of my situation, it was still marked against me. This experience felt unfair because it didn't take into account the cultural context of tribal obligations". (Ataa, 17/06/2023)*

Gabi shared an experience of such a clash between tribal differences and ESPM:

*Yes, I once worked late to help a colleague from my tribe with a project, which resulted in my late arrival the following day. The ESPM flagged my tardiness, but there was no consideration for the effort I put in the previous night. This lack of contextual understanding felt particularly unfair, given the tribal expectation to support one another. (Gabi, 19/06/2023)*

Kwabena provided an example where an employee from a minority tribe was penalised for taking time off for a traditional ceremony:

*"There was an instance where an employee from a minority tribe was marked down for taking time off to attend a traditional ceremony, which is a significant cultural obligation. The ESPM system didn't account for this context, leading to feelings of resentment and unfair treatment". (Kwabena, 28/07/2023)*

There are communities and Tribes in Ghana whose names have names synonymous with Islamic names but are not Muslims. One of these complexities was raised by Kwabena, who spoke about an ex-staff's experience with the ESPM at Kotoka:

*“An ex-security officer by the name of Mohammed had to leave this job because he said he kept getting the same negative piece of appraisals each year for five years. The system kept raising an alert for him as a high-risk absentee. He believed the software was biased towards people bearing Muslim names even though he was not a Muslim”.* (Kwabena, 28/07/2023)

*Cultural Insensitivity and Power Imbalance:* Ataa's experience illustrates how ESPM can impose a form of power that disregards cultural context:

"I arrived late due to a family emergency, a situation that is quite common and understood within my tribe... it was still marked against me" (Ataa, 17/06/2023).

In this instance, the ESPM system fails to accommodate tribal customs that prioritise family and community obligations. Foucault (1977) argues that surveillance systems, such as ESPM, create a structure where individuals are constantly observed and judged based on predetermined criteria. However, if these criteria are culturally insensitive or ignore social nuances, the system becomes a tool for reinforcing inequalities. Ataa's tribe will view family obligations as paramount, but the ESPM system treats all lateness uniformly, failing to account for such nuances. This creates a power dynamic where employees from certain tribes whose cultural practices are not aligned with the rigid rules of ESPM are disproportionately penalised.

Similarly, Gabi's experience further emphasises this imbalance:

*"I once worked late to help a colleague from my tribe... The ESPM flagged my tardiness, but there was no consideration for the effort I put in the previous night"* (Gabi, 19/06/2023).

In Gabi's case, the ESPM system's rigidity disregards the tribal expectation of mutual support, treating it as unimportant within the context of workplace performance. Foucault's theory helps explain how such systems become tools for exerting control, ignoring social relations that exist outside the formal framework of performance monitoring. This lack of contextual understanding reinforces power asymmetries, privileging those whose cultural practices are more aligned with the system's expectations and penalising those who are culturally distinct.

*Surveillance Reinforcing Bias and Discrimination:* Kwabena's recounting of an employee penalised for attending a traditional ceremony further illustrates how ESPM systems can reinforce cultural bias:

*"An employee from a minority tribe was marked down for taking time off for a traditional ceremony"* (Kwabena, 28/07/2023).

Foucault's ideas suggest that surveillance can serve as an instrument for maintaining and reproducing existing inequalities. The minority employee's cultural obligation is not recognised by the ESPM system, which enforces a uniform set of standards without consideration of tribal differences. This creates a power imbalance where the cultural practices of minority tribes are devalued, leading to feelings of resentment and unfair treatment. As Lyon (2007) argues, surveillance systems are often embedded within existing social structures. If these systems are not designed to accommodate diversity, they can exacerbate social inequalities rather than neutralise them.

Kwabena's additional example of Mohammed's experience with the ESPM system introduces a new layer of bias:

*"The system kept raising an alert to his name as high risk and an absentee... He believed the software was biased towards people bearing Muslim names even though he was not a Muslim".*

Foucault's concept of biopower—the regulation of populations through institutions and technology—applies in this context. Mohammed's perceived unfair treatment due to his name suggests that the ESPM system will carry embedded biases, likely due to programming or historical data patterns. These biases disproportionately target individuals with specific names, reflecting broader societal prejudices against Muslims. Although Mohammed was not a Muslim, the system still subjected him to surveillance that assumed a connection based on his name, reinforcing cultural and religious stigmas.

Charles Cooley's Looking-Glass Self posits that individuals shape their self-concepts based on how they believe others perceive them, which is deeply influenced by social interactions and societal contexts. In the context of ESPM and tribal differences, the employees' perceptions of themselves and their work are mediated by how the ESPM system and their supervisors treat them.

*Impact of ESPM on Self-Perception:* Atma's and Gabi's accounts reveal how the ESPM system's insensitivity to cultural and tribal contexts affects their self-perception. Ataa's lateness due to a family emergency, a culturally significant issue within her tribe, was penalised by the system, leading to feelings of unfairness and exclusion:

*"This experience felt unfair because it didn't take into account the cultural context of tribal obligations" (Ataa, 17/06/2023).*



From a symbolic interactionist perspective, Ataa's self-concept is affected by the system's inability to recognise her cultural identity. The rigid surveillance system communicates that her tribal obligations are insignificant, leading Ataa to feel marginalised within the workplace. Cooley's theory explains that Ataa's perception of herself and her work is negatively shaped by the system's lack of acknowledgement of her cultural context, leading to feelings of alienation.

Similarly, Gabi's feelings of unfairness after helping a colleague reflect how cultural expectations and self-perception are intertwined:

*"This lack of contextual understanding felt particularly unfair given the tribal expectation to support each other" (Gabi, 19/06/2023).*

Gabi's tribe values mutual support, and by fulfilling this cultural obligation, she perceives her contribution as valuable. However, the ESPM system's failure to account for this reinforces a sense of exclusion. Gabi's self-perception is negatively influenced because the formal surveillance system does not acknowledge her culturally significant actions.

*Self-Concept and Tribal Identity in the Workplace:* Kwabena's account of Mohammed's experience also aligns with Cooley's concept of the looking-glass self. Mohammed's self-concept was shaped by the repeated negative appraisals he received based on his name:

*"The system kept raising an alert to his name as high risk and an absentee... He believed the software was biased" (Kwabena).*

Mohammed's perception of himself was influenced by how the system, and by extension, his supervisors, perceived him. Despite not being a Muslim, the system's alerts regarding his name communicated a negative, biased image, which led

Mohammed to feel alienated and unfairly judged. Cooley's theory helps explain how such surveillance technologies affect self-perception by reinforcing external judgments, leading to resignation and eventual disengagement (as seen when Mohammed left the job).

Both post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist theories help explain the dynamics at play in these interview responses. Foucault's concepts of surveillance and power demonstrate how ESPM systems when applied without cultural sensitivity, can exacerbate existing inequalities and reinforce tribal biases. The power imbalance created by a culturally blind system like ESPM disproportionately affects employees from minority tribes, leading to feelings of unfairness and exclusion.

On the other hand, Cooley's Looking-Glass Self illustrates how these surveillance practices shape individuals' self-concepts and self-perceptions. The employees' experiences with ESPM suggest that their cultural identities are not recognised or valued by the system, leading to feelings of marginalisation. Employees' perceptions of unfairness extend beyond their actions being flagged by the system to include their identities and cultural practices being disregarded.

The interview statements show how tribal dynamics and cultural contexts significantly shape employees' perceptions of ESPM. From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, the surveillance system reinforces power dynamics and biases that disadvantage minority groups. Simultaneously, from a Symbolic Interactionist perspective, the way the system interacts with employees' cultural identities affects their self-perception and engagement. Both theories emphasise the importance of enhancing cultural sensitivity and fairness in the development and implementation of surveillance-based performance management systems in diverse workplaces, such as KIA.

### Impact on Stress and Productivity

Pearlin (1989) connects social interactions and stress in his research, suggesting that constant surveillance can be viewed as a form of social stressor that impacts employees' mental health.

Tribal affiliations and the potential for bias in ESPM contribute to increased stress and decreased productivity among employees. Obolo, in his response, mentioned that:

*"The potential for tribal bias in ESPM adds to my stress levels. I find myself constantly worrying about being judged unfairly, which can detract from my focus and effectiveness at work. This anxiety about potential bias negatively impacts my overall productivity". (Obolo, 28/07/2023)*

Obolo mentions that the potential for tribal bias in ESPM adds to stress levels, leading to worries about being judged unfairly. In the context of KIA, the perception of tribal bias can lead to anxiety and stress, affecting overall productivity (Blumer, 1969). Lyon (2007) argues that surveillance systems can exacerbate existing social inequalities if not implemented relatively. The fear of biased surveillance can lead to stress and decreased productivity among employees.

Atampugre stated that the constant worry about being judged unfairly:

*"The fear of being unfairly judged due to tribal biases adds to my stress. It feels like I have to work harder to prove myself, which can sometimes distract me from focusing on my actual work. This constant pressure to avoid penalties can negatively impact my productivity". (Atampugre, 20/07/2023)*

Mantse noted that tribal dynamics required a more empathetic and culturally aware management style; however, the rigid structure of ESPM sometimes conflicted with this approach, negatively impacting team morale and productivity.

*"ESPM should incorporate a more holistic approach to evaluating performance, including the cultural context of tribal responsibilities. Providing a platform for employees to explain their actions and ensuring that monitoring criteria are transparent and equitable could help. Additionally, regular training on cultural sensitivity for those managing the system would be beneficial". (Mantse, 06/07/2023).*

Quashi Also expressed how the unfair nature of ESPM puts him under pressure to work harder than usual:

*"I've noticed that employees who belong to the same tribe as the supervisors tend to get away with certain things, like being late or not meeting targets. For me, that adds a lot of stress because I feel like I'm constantly being watched more closely. Even when I perform well, I worry that the ESPM system will still flag me because I'm not part of the same group. It makes me feel like I have to work twice as hard to avoid negative reviews. This constant pressure is exhausting, and it has a significant impact on my stress levels. (Quashi, 06/07/2023)*

Precious also intimated that she feels her efforts are not recognised through the use of ESPM due to tribal differences:

*Yes, tribal affiliations undoubtedly play a significant role in how employees are evaluated. I've seen cases where two people make the same mistake, but the one who's from the supervisor's tribe gets a lighter penalty. It isn't very*

*encouraging because it makes you feel like your efforts won't be pretty recognised. When you know you're working under a biased system, it's hard to stay motivated. It impacts my productivity because, instead of focusing on my job, I'm constantly worrying about how the system will evaluate my performance compared to others. (Precious, 20/07/2023)*

Miki expressed a similar concern:

*"There was a time when a colleague from the same tribe as our supervisor arrived late several times, but the ESPM system never flagged it. Meanwhile, I arrived late just once due to a family emergency and was immediately penalised. This made me feel stressed because it seemed like no matter what I did, I wasn't being evaluated on a fair basis. I ended up becoming increasingly anxious about every little thing I did, which distracted me from performing my job effectively. My productivity dropped because I was more focused on avoiding penalties than on doing good work." (Miki, 10/07/2023)*

Dimple, in his statement, outlined how teamwork is affected by a lack of collaboration:

*"It affects teamwork. When people perceive that tribal bias influences how their performance is monitored and rewarded, they become more guarded and less willing to collaborate with others, especially if those others belong to a different tribe. This sense of working together won't benefit you because the system is already rigged. This creates tension and competition rather than cooperation, ultimately reducing overall productivity. When you can't trust the system or your colleagues to treat you fairly, it's hard to focus on the bigger picture." (Dimple, 20/06/2023).*

Atia acknowledges a lack of motivation due to the unfair and stressful nature of the system:

*"Absolutely. Over time, when you feel like the system is biased and tribal affiliations play a role, it wears you down. I used to be very motivated, but now I'm just doing the bare minimum. Why push yourself when you know the system is stacked against you? It affects my productivity because there's no point in going the extra mile if it's not going to be fairly acknowledged. The stress from trying to prove myself in an unfair system just isn't worth it anymore."*(Atia, 18/06/2023)

In this case, employees like Obolo and Atampugre experience anxiety and stress due to the perceived tribal bias in the ESPM system, fearing that they are being judged more harshly based on tribal affiliations.

Obolo notes that the potential for tribal bias in ESPM contributes to his stress and negatively affects his productivity. This reflects Foucault's notion of the self-regulation of behaviour due to constant surveillance. Obolo's focus shifts from productivity to anxiety over unfair judgment. According to Lyon (2007), surveillance systems can exacerbate existing social inequalities, leading to a greater sense of disempowerment for individuals not favoured by those in power.

Atampugre echoes this sentiment, highlighting how the fear of tribal bias motivates him to work harder to prove himself, ultimately detracting from his actual work. This illustrates Foucault's argument that surveillance can exacerbate existing power imbalances, where marginalised groups (e.g., minority tribes) bear the brunt of increased scrutiny, which can lead to psychological strain and reduced effectiveness.

Furthermore, Kwame's statement about witnessing different treatment for mistakes based on tribal affiliations emphasises how the ESPM system serves to reinforce existing power hierarchies. Employees feel demoralised when tribal favouritism is embedded within surveillance, leading to disengagement and reduced motivation, as described by Foucault's ideas on social control through surveillance.

Perception and Identity Construction: Symbolic interactionism, particularly Mead's (1934) concept of the "generalised other" and Cooley's "Looking-Glass Self," provides a lens through which to understand how employees internalise the perceived judgments of others, particularly regarding tribal biases. Employees modify their self-image based on how they believe others perceive them, as well as how they think the ESPM system and supervisors evaluate them.

Obolo's stress arises from the constant worry about being judged unfairly due to tribal affiliations. In the symbolic interactionist framework, this can be seen as a reaction to his perception of how others (e.g., supervisors and the ESPM system) see him, a central idea in Cooley's "Looking-Glass Self." His productivity suffers because his sense of self is shaped by these perceived judgments, leading to self-doubt and anxiety.

Similarly, Atampugre's statement reflects the internalisation of external judgments. The fear of tribal bias leads him to work harder to avoid penalties, demonstrating how the pressure of being evaluated through a biased system affects his sense of self-worth and focus on actual work. Mead's concept of the "generalised other" explains that individuals' self-concepts are shaped by their perception of societal norms. In this case, the norm is that employees from minority tribes are held to a higher standard.

Mantse suggests incorporating a holistic approach to ESPM that accounts for cultural contexts, aligning with Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical theory, which highlights the importance of role performance and context in interactions. By acknowledging the cultural and tribal backgrounds of employees, Mantse advocates for a more equitable and empathetic performance evaluation process. Goffman's work emphasises the need for transparency and cultural sensitivity in performance monitoring to reduce the adverse psychological effects of biased surveillance.

The experiences shared by employees like Obolo, Atampugre, Kwame, and Miki highlight the detrimental effects of tribal bias on stress and productivity. According to Blumer (1969), meanings are constructed through social interactions, and these meanings influence individuals' behaviour. The perception that tribal favouritism exists in the ESPM system generates anxiety and a loss of trust in the system, leading to stress and reduced productivity.

Quashi mentions that she feels watched more closely because she does not share the same tribal background as her supervisors, which leads to stress and exhaustion. The Looking-Glass Self theory can explain this as an outcome of her perception that her performance is being evaluated through a biased lens, forcing her to modify her behaviour and work harder, even when unnecessary.

Kwabena's concern about biased penalties also reflects the idea that individuals' self-concepts are shaped by their understanding of how they are judged by others (Cooley, 1902). The unfair evaluations he witnesses erode his confidence in the system, leading to disengagement and a decline in motivation. In this case, Mead's concept of the generalised other explains how Kwabena's perception of the ESPM system as biased impacts his behaviour and productivity.



Mantse's suggestion of culturally sensitive training and transparent criteria for ESPM aligns with Haggerty and Ericson's (2000) view that surveillance systems should consider the social and cultural contexts of those being monitored. Mantse's call for a holistic approach to performance evaluation would help reduce the perceived unfairness and restore trust in the system, alleviating stress and improving productivity.

Training supervisors on cultural sensitivity could also reduce the power imbalances created by the surveillance system, as Foucault's work emphasises the role of knowledge and power in shaping behaviour. A system that acknowledges and integrates cultural contexts would empower employees to feel more fairly evaluated, reducing the anxiety associated with surveillance.

Both Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist frameworks highlight how tribal bias in ESPM can negatively impact employee stress and productivity at KIA. The perception of biased surveillance leads to anxiety and disengagement. At the same time, employees' self-concepts are shaped by their interactions with the surveillance system and their perception of how they are being judged. Introducing culturally sensitive performance evaluation processes would help mitigate these negative impacts, fostering a more equitable work environment.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Employees noted that the exclusive use of formal English for communication at KIA remains a significant obstacle. Feeling constrained and unable to express oneself fully can be stressful for many employees, which may also have negative implications for productivity levels. Suppose people speak a language that is not their native language. In that case, this can be interpreted as further surveillance and control, as well as the

imposition of linguistic norms over personal or cultural autonomy. This has the potential to create confusion and lead employees to feel displaced when it comes to ESPM systems being perceived as fair or inclusive.

Speaking in formal language all the time, according to the participants, can make it harder for employees to immediately understand the concepts of ESPM and create a less approachable atmosphere. While ideal for eliminating confusion and ensuring all interactions are professional, this formal practice often feels impersonal and intimidating to many employees at KIA, thus discouraging further conversation and collaboration. The symbolic interaction perspective suggests that this transactional style of communication has a negative impact on social interactions and relationships within the workplace, thereby making a surveillance system less acceptable due to its perceived level of intrusiveness or lack of support.

Ghanaian employees' more flexible interpretation of time often conflicts with the stringent policing of time systematised by ESPM systems. Another issue is that employees perceive these systems as rigid and seemingly inconsiderate of the social and logistical realities that can cause delays, such as traffic or social obligations. This rigid monitoring increases stress and creates a sense of unfairness, as employees feel penalised for factors beyond their control. The perception that the system is out of sync with cultural norms can lead to decreased productivity and morale, as employees focus more on avoiding penalties than on delivering high-quality work.

Embedded within the very fabric of KIA are invisible lines of tribal differences which perpetuate a culture that continually leads to bias/favouritism in ESPM. Minority tribes often feel that they are evaluated more frequently and sometimes believe that colleagues from majority tribes receive preferential treatment. It makes them perceive

these surveillance and performance monitoring systems as unfair, which ultimately erodes their trust in the system while simultaneously deepening social divisions within the team. Biased surveillance systems deepen existing power inequities and foster a sense of injustice. To successfully implement ESPM in a multi-tribal context such as Ghana, you need an understanding of these tribal dynamics, which requires using the right approach or angle. ESPM policies should be implemented sensitively and inclusively to address tribal backgrounds and minimise allegations of unfairness. Gender and performance-based diversity in leadership roles, along with fair evaluation processes at work, are essential measures for promoting equal access to opportunities.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents a comprehensive summary and conclusion of the research findings on Electronic Surveillance and Performance Monitoring (ESPM) at Kotoka International Airport (KIA), integrating the key themes that emerged throughout the study. It focuses on critical issues such as privacy, trust, power dynamics, and the collectivist cultural context surrounding workplace surveillance, drawing on both Foucauldian theory and symbolic interactionism to interpret the experiences of KIA employees. The findings provide insights into how surveillance technologies, shaped by historical legacies and organisational practices, influence employee behaviour, self-perception, and autonomy within a non-western environment.

Through a systematic examination, the chapter addresses each research question, linking them to the data gathered from interviews and other sources. It highlights how surveillance at KIA is experienced differently by employees, influenced by factors such as managerial distrust and cultural values. While the data generally supports the research inquiries, specific areas, particularly the long-term impact of surveillance on employee productivity and well-being, remain unresolved, suggesting the need for further exploration.

The chapter also assesses the strengths and limitations of the research. On the one hand, the study's qualitative approach enabled an in-depth understanding of how surveillance is internalised by employees, making valuable contributions to both academic and practical discussions on workplace monitoring. However, limitations

such as the focus on a single airport and the absence of long-term observational data suggest areas for improvement in future studies.

In the concluding section, this chapter reflects on the primary research issue—how ESPM impacts employee behaviour in a non-western collectivist cultural environment—offering recommendations for future research. It suggests further investigation into the role of cultural and gender dynamics in shaping responses to surveillance, as well as the need to explore technological advancements in surveillance and their ethical implications in the workplace.

Ultimately, this chapter synthesises the study's contributions to the broader discourse on surveillance in globalised work environments, particularly in a collectivist cultural context like Ghana. It integrates theoretical insights and empirical findings to provide a nuanced understanding of how ESPM operates as both a management tool and a mechanism of social control.

### **6.1 Summary of Findings**

The findings of this research offer significant insights into the use of electronic surveillance as a performance evaluation tool in a globalised workplace, particularly within a culturally diverse context such as Ghana. Employees in contemporary organisations face complex decisions regarding the role and impact of surveillance in their work environments, often balancing the responsibilities of both being surveilled and overseeing others. This dual experience reflects the intricate dynamics explored in this study, focusing on the implications of Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM) at Kotoka International Airport (KIA).

The primary objective of this research was to investigate the impact of electronic surveillance on employees' performance, privacy, and autonomy within a multicultural,

post-colonial context. While extensive research exists on surveillance in public and private sectors globally, there has been limited focus on how local culture influences employee acceptance, resistance, and response to ESPM in developing countries like Ghana. This study addressed that gap, offering new perspectives on how cultural values, historical legacies, and global expectations intersect with workplace surveillance practices at KIA.

Through a Foucauldian lens, the research reveals how surveillance at KIA functions as a mechanism of control, fostering self-regulation among employees who internalise the ever-present gaze of management. The panoptic effect of continuous visibility, facilitated by surveillance technologies such as cameras and biometric clocking systems, compels employees to align their behaviour with organisational standards. The study also uncovers deeper power dynamics, where surveillance extends beyond professional activity into personal spaces, resonating with Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power and biopolitics.

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, the study highlights how the perceived judgments of supervisors and surveillance systems shape employees' self-perceptions. The Looking-Glass Self theory explains how constant monitoring leads to changes in behaviour, self-regulation, and feelings of disempowerment as employees imagine themselves under the scrutiny of authority figures. This impact is particularly evident in culturally sensitive contexts, where surveillance practices conflict with local norms, exacerbating feelings of alienation and discomfort, especially among female employees.

Key findings also underscore the intersectionality of surveillance with cultural and gender dynamics. For example, Adwoa's experience with body scanners during her

menstrual period reveals how surveillance technologies can inadvertently reinforce cultural and gender biases, affecting her dignity and sense of self-worth. This aligns with symbolic interactionism's focus on how surveillance influences the construction of gendered identities within the workplace.

Furthermore, the study examines the colonial legacy of surveillance in Ghana, highlighting how employees such as Moses perceive workplace surveillance as an extension of colonial control. This perception highlights the deep-seated mistrust of institutional surveillance, a sentiment rooted in the colonial history of using surveillance as a tool for oppression and social control. Ekeh's concept of the "two publics" offers a relevant framework for understanding this dynamic, where employees exhibit scepticism toward surveillance practices associated with the state or formal institutions, viewing them as intrusive rather than supportive.

The research also demonstrates how globalisation and international security standards influence workplace surveillance practices at KIA. Employees are required to navigate between local cultural expectations and the demands of globalised security protocols. This dynamic often results in tension, as seen in the varying responses to surveillance between different terminals at the airport, reflecting both global work standards and cross-cultural differences in employee management.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering a nuanced understanding of how electronic surveillance impacts employee behaviour, privacy, and performance management in a post-colonial, multicultural context. It emphasises the importance of considering cultural, historical, and global factors in the implementation of surveillance practices in workplaces, particularly in developing countries like Ghana. These findings open the door to further research on the ethical

and practical implications of workplace surveillance, with a focus on cultural sensitivity and employee well-being.

## **6.2 Answering Research Questions**

Each research question is systematically addressed in this section, with explicit connections made to the obtained data. The data mostly corroborates and addresses the three research questions below:

**RQ1: How do employees in Ghana perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace?**

**RQ2: How do employees in Ghana perceive the influence of electronic surveillance on their performance management?**

**RQ3: How do Local cultural differences in Ghana influence employee performance management strategies and outcomes in a globalised organisation?**

### **6.2.1 Research Question 1: How do employees perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace?**

The research question aimed to explore the varied perceptions about the impact of electronic surveillance on employees in the workplace. The answers were drawn from data gathered through semi-structured interviews with participants. Key findings were revealed in the areas of Privacy and Trust, Power Dynamics, and the commercialisation of workplace surveillance.

#### **1. Privacy and Trust**

Under the heading Privacy and Trust, the research question "How do employees perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace?" can be explained by focusing on



how surveillance affects employees' sense of privacy and their levels of trust in management. By using post-Foucauldian theory and Symbolic Interactionism, we can analyse how employees interpret surveillance within specific cultural, gendered, and historical contexts.

From a post-Foucauldian perspective, surveillance is seen as an extension of disciplinary power that regulates employee behaviour through constant monitoring. The panoptic nature of surveillance at KIA, as described by employees such as Yaw and Moses (page 107), reflects Foucault's theory of disciplinary power, where the mere presence of cameras, biometric clocking systems, and managerial oversight creates a sense of being constantly watched. This continuous surveillance impacts employees' privacy, as it invades their personal space and infringes upon their autonomy. Employees perceive it as a mechanism of management distrust, which reinforces hierarchical power dynamics rather than promoting collaboration or mutual respect.

### ***Colonial Legacy and Privacy***

In the Ghanaian context, employees' perceptions of surveillance are influenced by the country's colonial history. Yaw and Moses (pages 107) highlight that the colonial legacy of surveillance as a tool for control and oppression has shaped modern attitudes towards monitoring. Surveillance is seen as an intrusive practice reminiscent of colonial suppression, leading to mistrust of the system. This aligns with Ekeh's concept of "two publics", where the civic public (state institutions, including corporate management) is distrusted, while the primordial public (ethnic and kinship groups) commands more trust. Employees view workplace surveillance through this lens of colonial-era control, associating it with oppression rather than legitimate managerial

oversight. This history deepens employees' scepticism about surveillance as they fear it will be used for punitive measures rather than organisational improvement.

### ***Gendered Impact on Privacy and Trust***

Adwoa's experience (p. 106) illustrates how surveillance technologies intersect with gender norms, mainly when body scanners detect menstrual products. This incident highlights how surveillance can unintentionally reinforce gender biases, causing embarrassment and discomfort for female employees. Symbolic Interactionism, through the concept of the Looking-Glass Self, explains how employees like Adwoa will internalise negative perceptions of themselves due to these intrusive technologies. Additionally, the study's data reveals that female participants, such as Ataa and Adwoa, were more apprehensive about privacy breaches, which will perpetuate gender inequalities in the workplace. Surveillance thus has the potential to create or amplify inequitable outcomes based on gender, as it disproportionately affects women's sense of privacy and personal dignity in the workplace.

The Looking-Glass Self theory, a core concept of Symbolic Interactionism, helps explain how employees' perceptions of surveillance are shaped by their interpretation of social interactions with surveillance technology. Employees' self-perception and behaviour are influenced by how they believe they are seen by management, especially under constant observation.

### ***Privacy in a Collectivist Culture***

In Ghana, a collectivist culture that emphasises community, social harmony, and mutual support, the individualistic nature of surveillance at KIA clashes with traditional values. Employees like Prof, Atia and Adwoa (pages 105-106) experience this tension, as surveillance is seen as an invasion of communal privacy. Instead of viewing privacy as an individual right, employees see it as a collective experience that should be

respected within a community-oriented work environment. Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism supports this interpretation, suggesting that employees shape their attitudes toward surveillance based on how they perceive its impact on communal relationships and social harmony.

Employees perceive surveillance as violating this communal sense of privacy, causing discomfort and alienation. The Looking-Glass Self theory suggests that employees internalise these negative experiences, leading to distrust in management and a diminished sense of autonomy. When personal items and movements are continuously monitored, as described by Prof and Adwoa, employees may feel dehumanised and micromanaged, which can negatively impact their work attitudes and behaviours.

### ***Trust and Acceptance of Surveillance***

Employees' trust in management is crucial in shaping their perceptions of surveillance. The data reveals that in a multi-ethnic country like Ghana, where institutional trust is low due to corruption and ethnic favouritism, employees like Ataa and Obolo (pages 110-111) view surveillance with suspicion. They fear that it will be used unfairly to favour particular groups or punish others. Kuenzi et al. (2019) argue that transparent communication about the purpose, scope, and benefits of surveillance can help build trust. Still, the leadership at KIA has failed to communicate these aspects effectively, leading to resistance among employees.

Trust can be enhanced through transformational leadership, which involves engaging employees in dialogue, seeking their input, and demonstrating ethical conduct. Kumako and Asumeng (2013) emphasize how transformational leaders can mitigate the adverse effects of surveillance by promoting open communication and ensuring

that surveillance is perceived as a tool for organisational improvement rather than punishment. However, at KIA, the absence of such leadership has led to distrust and resistance, with employees perceiving surveillance as intrusive and unfair.

### ***Cultural Differences in Perceptions of Privacy***

The study also highlights how cultural differences influence employees' acceptance of surveillance. In Western, individualistic cultures, surveillance is often viewed positively as a tool for enhancing efficiency, security, and accountability. Employees like Nyaaba and Mantse (page 109), who have been exposed to Western corporate practices, are more accepting of surveillance because they understand its potential benefits in improving organisational performance. In contrast, in Ghana's collectivist culture, where there is a lower level of trust in institutions, surveillance is often perceived as a threat to personal privacy and is met with resistance.

### **Conclusion**

In the context of Privacy and Trust, employees at KIA perceive electronic surveillance as an invasion of personal space, privacy, and dignity. These perceptions are shaped by cultural norms, gender biases, and historical experiences, particularly Ghana's colonial legacy, which has fostered mistrust toward surveillance as a tool of control. Post-Foucauldian theory helps explain how surveillance reinforces disciplinary power and hierarchical control, while Symbolic Interactionism provides insights into how surveillance affects employees' self-perception and their trust in management. To mitigate negative perceptions, organisations need to balance surveillance with transparent communication, transformational leadership, and respect for employees' cultural and gendered experiences, ensuring that surveillance is not only a tool for productivity but also one that fosters trust, collaboration, and respect for privacy.

## **2. Power and Control Dynamics**

The concept of power dynamics in workplace surveillance, when viewed through the lens of post-Foucauldian theory and Symbolic Interactionism, particularly the "Looking-Glass Self," provides a deeper understanding of how employees perceive surveillance. These theoretical frameworks help explain how employees internalise and react to surveillance practices, especially in an environment like Kotoka International Airport (KIA), where power imbalances and selective monitoring create complex relationships between surveillance, identity, and organisational control.

From a post-Foucauldian perspective, surveillance is a tool of disciplinary power that shapes behaviour through continuous observation. At KIA, the data reflect how surveillance systems, such as CCTV and biometric clocking-in systems, are experienced as pervasive and controlling, especially among lower-level employees like Miki and Domlevo. This aligns with Foucault's concept of the panopticon, where the mere possibility of being observed creates self-discipline and compliance. Employees become conscious of being constantly watched, which leads to a loss of autonomy and feelings of intimidation, as seen in Domlevo's account (page 112).

Moreover, the unequal application of surveillance at KIA, where lower-level workers are more heavily monitored than managers, reinforces hierarchical power structures. This selective surveillance creates an environment where employees feel that management is exerting dominance and control, leading to distrust and a sense of exploitation. Sewell and Wilkinson (1992) argue that such surveillance practices reinforce existing power imbalances, creating a climate of fear and obedience rather than collaboration and innovation. This is evident in Yaro's account (on page 114), where surveillance data is used to unfairly dismiss a colleague, reinforcing disciplinary norms and control mechanisms that serve management interests.

Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism offers an additional layer of understanding by examining how surveillance influences employees' self-perception and identity through social interaction. The concept of the Looking-Glass Self, developed by Charles Horton Cooley, is particularly relevant here. This theory suggests that individuals form their self-concept based on how they believe others perceive them. In the context of workplace surveillance, employees internalise the judgment of their supervisors and the broader organisational system, shaping their self-perception accordingly.

### ***Surveillance and Self-Perception***

Employees like Miki and Domlevo experience surveillance as a form of judgment that diminishes their sense of self-worth and autonomy. The constant scrutiny forces them to self-monitor and adjust their behaviour to conform to perceived organisational expectations. This aligns with the Looking-Glass Self, where employees begin to perceive themselves through the lens of surveillance and management authority. As they imagine how supervisors perceive them (whether as untrustworthy or subordinate), their sense of identity and personal agency is shaped negatively, resulting in stress, anxiety, and diminished self-esteem.

### ***Impact on Personal Identity***

The Looking-Glass Self also explains the emotional and psychological effects of surveillance on employees. As Domlevo describes the presence of pervasive surveillance technologies, he experiences a loss of personal identity in the workplace. Employees who constantly feel watched perceive themselves as mere subjects under control rather than active contributors to the organisation. This diminishes their sense of individuality and freedom as their behaviour becomes aligned with the expectations of those in power.

### ***Gendered and Hierarchical Perceptions of Surveillance***

Gender and power differentials further complicate the perception of surveillance. The Looking-Glass Self concept helps explain how employees, such as Precious and Gabi (Pages 114 and 115), experience the selective enforcement of surveillance as particularly demotivating. They perceive surveillance as reinforcing inequalities, especially when lower-level workers are scrutinised more heavily than their superiors. The frustration over unequal treatment, as Gabi expresses, intensifies the perception of injustice and inequality within the workplace. This disparity in monitoring practices creates feelings of demoralisation and highlights the power imbalance inherent in surveillance practices.

In contrast, employees like Kwabene and Atampugre (Page 116), who view surveillance positively, do so because they perceive it as a tool for promoting fairness and transparency. Their perception aligns with Zuboff's concept of surveillance capitalism, where surveillance is framed as a means to ensure consistent standards and accountability. In this context, the Looking-Glass Self operates differently, as these employees view surveillance as enhancing their status and fostering a sense of fairness in the workplace.

### ***Power and the Ethics of Surveillance***

The data also reveal that managerial ethics and the values of those conducting the surveillance significantly shape employee perceptions. The Looking-Glass Self theory suggests that when employees sense that surveillance is being used ethically and transparently, they are more likely to view it positively. However, when surveillance is perceived as a tool for manipulation or unfair control, as in Precious's case, it fosters mistrust and demotivation. Employees' perceptions of surveillance are deeply

influenced by how they believe their supervisors see and judge them through surveillance practices.

### ***Surveillance, Stress, and Mental Health***

Drawing from Pearlin's research on social stressors, the constant awareness of being observed through surveillance leads to heightened stress and mental health issues among employees. When employees perceive surveillance as a tool for control rather than support, it exacerbates feelings of pressure and anxiety. This is evident in Miki's account, where the disparity in surveillance between lower-level workers and managers leads to stress and a lack of trust. The Looking-Glass Self contributes to this stress, as employees continually adjust their behaviour to align with how they believe their superiors are perceiving them.

### **Conclusion**

Through the lenses of post-Foucauldian theory and the Symbolic Interactionist concept of the Looking-Glass Self, it becomes clear that employees at KIA perceive electronic surveillance as both a tool of control and a reflection of their social standing within the organisation. Surveillance reinforces power dynamics and hierarchical structures, leading to feelings of intimidation, stress, and a loss of autonomy. At the same time, employees' self-perception is shaped by their belief in how management views them through the surveillance process, further influencing their behaviour and mental well-being. While some employees view surveillance positively as a mechanism for fairness, the unequal application and selective enforcement of surveillance undermine trust and exacerbate power imbalances. These dynamics highlight the complex interplay between surveillance, identity, and power in the workplace.

### **3. Commercialisation**



To answer the research question "How do employees perceive electronic surveillance in the workplace?" using post-Foucauldian theory and the Symbolic Interactionist concept of the Looking-Glass Self, we can analyse the role of commercialisation of surveillance in shaping employee perceptions.

From a post-Foucauldian perspective, electronic surveillance is not only a tool for monitoring employee behaviour but also a mechanism for optimising productivity and extracting value from employees. This aligns with Foucault's theory of disciplinary power, where surveillance functions as a means of control, ensuring employees conform to organisational goals. In the context of commercialisation, this form of surveillance becomes tied to profit maximisation, leading to mixed perceptions depending on how employees interpret its purpose.

### ***Surveillance as a Tool for Profit***

Employees like Moses and Dimple (On pages 117-118) express negative perceptions of surveillance when it is seen as primarily serving the organisation's profit-driven motives at the expense of employee well-being. This is a clear reflection of Foucault's concept of biopolitics, where the employee's body becomes a site of control and productivity. Surveillance technologies are utilised not only to monitor performance but also to commodify employees, reducing them to mere instruments of production. This view is reinforced by Opoku and Boahen's (2018) findings, which show that extensive surveillance leads to diminished trust, as employees feel their autonomy is being sacrificed for commercial gain.

### ***Commercial Surveillance and Disempowerment***

As surveillance practices focus more on maximising profits, employees will feel disempowered. The perception that surveillance is invasive and solely profit-driven, as highlighted by Moses and Dimple, suggests that these practices erode trust between

employees and management. This leads to decreased job satisfaction and a sense of alienation as employees begin to see themselves as commodified objects rather than valued contributors. Foucault's concept of disciplinary power helps explain this dynamic, where surveillance becomes an instrument of capitalist control, further entrenching power imbalances in the workplace.

From the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism, particularly the Looking-Glass Self theory, employee perceptions of surveillance are shaped by their interpretation of the social meanings attached to these practices. The commercialisation of surveillance can influence employees' self-perception, depending on whether they view it as a tool for improving efficiency or as an exploitative mechanism for profit extraction.

### ***Surveillance as a Productivity Tool***

Employees like Mantse and Obolo (On page 117) perceive surveillance positively, seeing it as a mechanism to enhance operational efficiency and maintain high standards. This aligns with the Looking-Glass Self theory, where employees construct positive meanings around surveillance, believing it reflects their competence and contribution to organisational success. By seeing themselves through the lens of enhanced productivity and workflow optimisation, employees feel that surveillance helps improve service delivery and promote fairness. Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism supports this, suggesting that individuals shape their self-concepts based on how they interpret interactions with surveillance technology and management.

### ***Commercialisation and Employee Benefits***

When surveillance is transparently linked to employee benefits, as suggested by Mantse and Quashi (on page 119), employees are more likely to perceive it positively. This resonates with the Looking-Glass Self theory, where employees internalise

positive feedback from surveillance, associating it with fair rewards and improved working conditions. In this context, surveillance becomes a tool that enhances their sense of fairness and equity in the workplace, fostering a more positive self-image. The connection between surveillance and productivity enhancement, aligned with Zuboff's concept of surveillance capitalism, frames surveillance as a way to ensure consistency and prevent favouritism, thereby improving organisational efficiency and accountability.

### ***Profit-Driven Surveillance***

Conversely, employees who feel that surveillance is solely focused on profit maximisation, as highlighted by Moses and Dimple, experience negative self-perceptions. According to the Looking-Glass Self theory, when employees feel that surveillance reduces them to mere commodities, they internalise these negative perceptions, leading to feelings of marginalisation and disempowerment. This reflects how employees' sense of self is shaped by their perception of how management views and uses surveillance technologies. The commodification of employees through constant monitoring can lead to frustration, stress, and a sense of loss of autonomy.

### ***Impact of Observer Effects and Stereotype Threat***

The observer effect and stereotype threat also play crucial roles in how different employees perceive surveillance in a commercialised workplace. Employees will feel heightened stress or anxiety due to the awareness of being constantly observed, mainly if they belong to groups that are subject to stereotyped expectations. For example, certain demographic groups may feel more scrutinised under surveillance, leading to apprehension and a decline in performance. Symbolic Interactionism explains this by suggesting that employees internalise these external judgments, which shape their behaviour and self-perception.

Employees who are more sensitive to observation or who face higher levels of scrutiny tend to experience more significant stress, which can lead to negative perceptions of surveillance. This can create a climate of mistrust, leading to feelings of discrimination or unfair treatment. Watson et al. (2013) and White, Ravid, & Behrend (2020) support this view, emphasising that surveillance can have varying psychological impacts depending on factors such as self-efficacy, ethical orientation, and goal orientation.

### ***Balancing Commercialization with Privacy***

The commercialisation of surveillance technologies, while seen as beneficial for modernisation and efficiency by some employees, such as Ayimpoka and Ataa (p. 120), can also raise concerns about privacy and autonomy. Employees appreciate the security benefits that come with advanced surveillance technologies, but they also have concerns about invasion of privacy. This dual perception underscores the importance of striking a balance between technological advancements and respect for employee privacy to foster a positive and productive work environment.

When surveillance is perceived as fair, transparent, and linked to clear benefits for employees, it is more likely to foster a positive self-image and strengthen trust between employees and management. However, when it is seen as invasive or solely focused on commercial gain, it can lead to distrust, demotivation, and alienation.

### **Conclusion**

Through the lenses of post-Foucauldian theory and the Looking-Glass Self, it is evident that the commercialisation of surveillance at KIA has a significant impact on how employees perceive electronic monitoring in the workplace. Employees' self-perception and behaviour are shaped by how they interpret surveillance—whether as a tool for productivity and fairness or as a mechanism of profit-driven control. While some employees view surveillance positively as a means to improve operational

efficiency, others perceive it negatively when it compromises their autonomy and privacy for commercial purposes. The challenge for organisations is to ensure that surveillance technologies are implemented in a way that balances efficiency with respect for employee well-being, thereby fostering a climate of trust and fairness in the workplace.

### **6.2.2 Research Question 2: How do employees in Ghana perceive the influence of electronic surveillance on their performance management?**

The study on Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM) at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) reveals a complex array of perceptions among employees, influenced by factors such as job role, industry, and prior experiences with surveillance technology. While some employees view ESPM positively, appreciating its potential for clear performance metrics and enhanced accountability, a significant portion of participants express negative sentiments. These concerns primarily revolve around issues of trust, transparency, and accuracy. The reliance on continuous electronic surveillance has led some employees to doubt their worth and skills, consequently weakening their working relationships and diminishing their sense of autonomy and control over their tasks. This suggests that the organisation's heavy dependence on surveillance technology undermines employees' trust, making them feel commoditised and undervalued. The findings indicate that confidence in the performance evaluation system at KIA is significantly impacted by the use of electronic surveillance, highlighting both positive and negative views shaped by experiences with transparency and fairness. This situation has immediate implications for the locus of control perspective, as employees perceive a lack of trust in their employers, which raises questions about their ability to manage their work responsibly.

The findings of this study reveal a complex interplay between the perceived benefits and drawbacks of Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM) at Kotoka International Airport (KIA). The constant monitoring through biometric clocks, CCTV, and performance tracking systems, as described by employees such as Adongo (p. 123) and Ataa (p. 124), represents a panoptic structure in which employees feel perpetually watched. This creates a regulatory effect on their behaviour, compelling them to conform to organisational expectations, often at the cost of their autonomy and privacy. Employees perceive this surveillance as a manifestation of managerial dominance, where the underlying motive is not just to track performance but to exert control over their daily interactions and behaviour. This perception of invasive oversight undermines trust, as employees feel their privacy is being sacrificed for the organisation's need for constant supervision. This aligns with Foucault's theory of disciplinary power, where surveillance extends beyond mere observation to become a means of behavioural modification and hierarchical control. Employees, thus, feel disempowered, viewing surveillance as a tool that enforces top-down authority rather than fostering collaboration or transparency.

From the Symbolic Interactionist perspective, particularly the Looking-Glass Self concept, employees' perceptions of ESPM are influenced by how they interpret the social interactions with surveillance technology. Employees like Atampugre (p. 125), who view surveillance data as validation of their hard work, embody the positive potential of ESPM. For Atampugre, surveillance serves as an objective measure that recognises his contributions and reinforces his sense of worth in the organisation. This aligns with Blumer's theory, which posits that individuals shape their self-identity based on how they perceive others (in this case, management) perceive them. For

employees who view surveillance as a tool for recognition, it can boost their motivation and performance, as it provides tangible proof of their efforts.

However, for others, such as Adongo and Ataa, the constant scrutiny creates a different self-perception. They experience surveillance as an invasive force that generates stress and anxiety, as they feel that their every move is being monitored. The Looking-Glass Self theory helps explain how this sense of being continuously observed leads employees to internalise negative feelings about themselves, affecting their job satisfaction and mental health. The constant evaluation causes them to feel like they are under pressure to perform, even in routine tasks, which diminishes their sense of autonomy and fosters distrust in the performance management system.

For these employees, surveillance shifts from being a tool of performance validation to one of behavioural control and self-monitoring, leading to emotional strain. The internalisation of this monitoring process results in feelings of inadequacy or unworthiness as employees begin to doubt their skills and value beyond what surveillance data captures.

*Tension Between Efficiency and Trust:* The study reveals a tension between efficiency and trust in the workplace. While employees like Mantse (p. 125), a supervisor, appreciate the operational benefits of surveillance in improving efficiency and identifying bottlenecks, others are more concerned with its impact on trust and transparency. Surveillance is seen as a double-edged sword—while it enhances accountability and ensures that performance metrics are clear, it also breeds a sense of distrust when employees feel that they are being monitored excessively or unfairly.

Employees who perceive surveillance as a means of increasing productivity will feel that it adds value to their work environment by providing clear performance

expectations and goals. However, for those who experience it as a tool of constant scrutiny, surveillance undermines their confidence. It creates an environment where they feel dehumanised and reduced to mere objects of observation.

*Trust and Fairness Issues:* A key finding is that the level of fairness and objectivity of ESPM determines whether employees accept or resist it. Employees like Domlevo (p. 122) express mistrust in the fairness of performance evaluations, suspecting favouritism and biased ratings from supervisors. This perception aligns with Foucault's (1977) theory of disciplinary power, where surveillance is not just a neutral monitoring tool but also a means of maintaining power hierarchies and reinforcing control over subordinates. In this context, surveillance exacerbates feelings of injustice when employees believe it is used unfairly, which can result in demotivation and resistance to performance management systems.

The lack of transparency in how surveillance data is used in evaluations contributes to this distrust. Employees will question the accuracy and fairness of the data, believing it could be manipulated or interpreted subjectively by managers to favour specific individuals, thus undermining confidence in the system. Such scepticism reflects Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism, as employees' self-perception is affected by how they believe they are judged, with unfair evaluations leading to frustration and decreased job satisfaction.

*Stress and Mental Health Impact:* The study also identifies the negative psychological impact of constant surveillance on employees' well-being. Participants like Adongo and Kwabena (p. 123) report experiencing stress and anxiety due to the continuous monitoring of their work, as they feel under constant scrutiny. This aligns with Sewell and Barker's (2006) findings that workplace surveillance can contribute to burnout, as



the pressure to perform under continuous observation can overwhelm employees, particularly when compounded by existing cultural and historical factors in Ghana.

Blumer's theory of social stressors provides further context, suggesting that employees' mental health can deteriorate when surveillance leads to heightened feelings of being watched and a sense of inadequacy. The perceived invasiveness of surveillance amplifies stress, especially in a multi-ethnic environment like KIA, where employees will already be navigating ethnic tensions or inequities in the workplace.

*Power Dynamics and Control:* The research reveals that ESPM reinforces existing power dynamics within the organisation, where surveillance strengthens managerial control over employees. For example, Ataa's experience (p. 130) highlights how surveillance data is used by managers to swiftly intervene in cases of perceived underperformance, often creating a hostile work atmosphere. This resonates with Goffman's (1959) concept of impression management, where employees modify their behaviour to meet organisational expectations but at the cost of increased stress and decreased autonomy.

This use of surveillance as a disciplinary tool supports post-Foucauldian notions of power, where management employs surveillance not only for operational oversight but also as a mechanism of behavioural control. Employees thus feel pressured to manage their public performance under surveillance, leading to a work environment that prioritises compliance over innovation and collaboration.

*Ethnic and Cultural Influences:* The study also underscores the significance of ethnic and cultural factors in shaping employees' perceptions of ESPM. In Ghana's multi-ethnic context, surveillance can be perceived differently by employees based on their cultural background. Some employees, as noted by Agyemang and Ryan (2013), are

more resistant to surveillance due to their historical experiences, while others are more open to its benefits, mainly if they associate it with organisational efficiency. This divergence in perception creates inequities in how ESPM is accepted, influencing overall employee morale and cooperation.

In this context, Symbolic Interactionism offers a valuable framework for understanding how employees' self-perceptions and social identities are shaped by their cultural context. Employees from ethnic backgrounds with a history of mistrust towards institutions will interpret surveillance as an extension of systemic biases. In contrast, others will view it as a necessary tool for ensuring accountability and fairness.

*Balance between Human Interaction and Technology:* The findings also suggest that while employees appreciate the objectivity and transparency that surveillance technology can bring, there is a need to strike a balance between this and human interaction. Employees value personalised feedback from managers, which provides a contextualised understanding of their performance beyond just data-driven metrics. Transparency and ethical communication regarding the use of surveillance data are essential for building trust and enhancing the overall acceptance of ESPM.

This balance is critical in multi-ethnic workplaces like KIA, where cultural differences must be handled with sensitivity. By ensuring fair evaluations, respecting cultural contexts, and maintaining open communication, organisations can mitigate concerns about surveillance, fostering a more positive and productive work environment.

The findings of this study suggest that employees at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) hold complex and often mixed perceptions of Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM), reflecting concerns related to fairness, trust, mental health, and cultural respect. While many employees acknowledge the potential

benefits of surveillance for enhancing accountability and operational efficiency, there are substantial concerns regarding the stress, inequity, and sense of control it imposes. The post-Foucauldian theory emphasises how ESPM functions as a tool for reinforcing managerial control, highlighting the power dynamics at play. Meanwhile, Symbolic Interactionism reveals how employees internalise these surveillance experiences, shaping their self-perception, behaviour, and well-being.

For KIA to foster a supportive work environment, it is essential to strike a balance between the perceived benefits of ESPM and a commitment to transparency, fairness, and cultural inclusivity. By viewing surveillance as a mechanism for supporting, rather than controlling, employees, KIA can foster a more trusting and positive work environment. Practical steps may include incorporating fair and transparent surveillance protocols, fostering cultural sensitivity, and respecting employees' autonomy. This approach ensures that ESPM can be used to both enhance performance and uphold employees' sense of dignity and inclusivity within the organisation.

### **6.2.3 Research Question 3. How do cultural differences influence employee performance management strategies and outcomes in a globalised organisation?**

Research question three aimed to understand how cultural differences among employees affect their perception of workplace surveillance. This question explored how language and communication, time culture, and tribal differences influenced employees' acceptance or resistance to the globalised form of workplace surveillance.

#### **1. Language and Communication**

The findings highlight the substantial impact of language and communication styles on employee interactions and performance at Kotoka International Airport (KIA), where globalisation and cultural diversity present both opportunities and challenges. Using Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories, the study explored how language and communication shape performance management practices and outcomes, particularly across Terminal 2 (T2) and Terminal 3 (T3).

### *Standardisation and Language Barriers*

In a globalised setting like KIA, the standardisation of English as the primary language introduces communication barriers for employees more comfortable with informal or native languages. For instance, the formal language required for evaluations can hinder effective communication and, ultimately, employee performance. Many employees expressed that they feel most valued and perform their best in T2, where informal language use is accepted, indicating a preference for culturally resonant communication. This aligns with Symbolic Interactionist theory, where employees' self-perceptions and interpersonal interactions are shaped by language, fostering a sense of identity and value through the use of informal language.

In contrast, the formal language expectations in T3, which handles international operations, reflect the impact of globalisation on KIA's communication practices. Post-Foucauldian theory helps illustrate how standardised language norms in T3 create subtle controls over employees' communication, reinforcing organisational hierarchies and expectations of professionalism. This dynamic can sometimes limit interpersonal rapport and reduce employees' sense of agency, contributing to a feeling of constraint and formality that can impact job satisfaction and engagement.

### *Communication Styles and Trust Building*

Face-to-face interactions in T2 were noted for promoting trust and empathy, with employees such as Atia, Adongo, and Yaw (pp. 152-154) reporting that nonverbal cues in direct interactions help build rapport, foster real-time feedback, and support a collaborative culture. Symbolic Interactionism offers insight into how employees perceive themselves through their interactions with colleagues, with informal communication promoting mutual respect and understanding.

Conversely, electronic communication at T3, according to participants Atia, Kwabena, and Adwoa, lacks the richness of face-to-face interactions and can create feelings of control and reduced autonomy. The post-Foucauldian lens views this as a form of digital surveillance, where constant connectivity will inadvertently erode employee morale and foster a sense of being constantly monitored. This diminished trust, coupled with potential misunderstandings resulting from the lack of nonverbal cues, can impact performance evaluations, especially when employees feel disconnected from management or are overly scrutinised.

### *Power Dynamics and Communication Control*

The formal communication protocols required at T3 reinforce power dynamics within the organisation, influencing how performance is managed. The post-Foucauldian theory posits that these formal communication styles in T3 function as tools of managerial control, subtly enforcing organisational norms and maintaining hierarchical structures. Employees will feel that their performance is assessed strictly through standardised metrics without recognition of contextual or qualitative contributions, which can lead to demotivation and lower engagement.

In T2, however, the more relaxed communication culture allows employees to engage more openly, fostering camaraderie and a sense of shared identity. Here, Symbolic

Interactionist theory, specifically the Looking-Glass Self, is particularly relevant, as employees develop an understanding of self that reflects the positive, supportive interactions they experience with colleagues and managers, thereby enhancing team cohesion and job satisfaction.

### *Influence of Leadership Styles and Cultural Differences*

Diverse leadership styles and cultural biases also affect performance management. Employees like Precious observe that managers' expectations and biases shape how they communicate feedback and evaluate performance, potentially affecting outcomes. Miscommunication or differing expectations, as expressed by Adwoa (p. 166), can lead to misalignments in understanding goals, which can impact morale and sometimes result in conflicts. This dynamic illustrates Symbolic Interactionist principles as employees internalise these exchanges, influencing their self-perceptions and overall job satisfaction.

### *Collaboration and Authenticity*

Employees working in T2 benefit from a collaborative culture that emphasises informal language and face-to-face communication, which fosters camaraderie and open communication. This environment aligns with a Symbolic Interactionist approach, where the use of informal language fosters authenticity, mutual respect, and team cohesion. Employees feel valued and engaged, with interpersonal relationships playing a key role in their identity expression, performance, and overall job satisfaction. The emphasis on informal communication at T2 also aligns performance evaluations with qualitative factors, such as teamwork and interpersonal skills, contributing to a sense of community and shared values that support collaboration and creativity.

### *Professionalism and Conformity Pressures*

In contrast, formal communication protocols prevail in T3, where globalisation fosters a structured environment centred on professionalism and adherence to organisational norms. Post-Foucauldian theory helps explain this dynamic, suggesting that formal language serves as a disciplinary mechanism that reinforces hierarchy and control, shaping employee behaviour to meet organisational expectations. While this structure enhances accountability and reinforces standardised performance criteria, it will create barriers to interpersonal connection and rapport-building, potentially impacting employee morale. This emphasis on formality prioritises quantitative metrics, such as productivity and adherence to deadlines, which, while reinforcing professionalism, sometimes overlooks relational dynamics critical for employee engagement and satisfaction.

#### *Conformity Pressures and Communication Authenticity*

The findings highlight that employees adapt communication styles to fit organisational norms, yet some experience discomfort when pressured to conform, as illustrated in Yaro's experience in Chapter 5. Conformity pressures emerge from organisational hierarchy, leadership expectations, and peer influence, which will hinder authentic self-expression and create social barriers to effective communication. Employees who conform to these norms often receive positive evaluations for adaptability and teamwork. Still, those who resist will face challenges in building rapport and establishing trust with supervisors and peers. This tension reflects Symbolic Interactionism, where employees shape their self-image based on how they are perceived within the organisational hierarchy.

#### *Preferences and Performance Outcomes*

Employees' experiences vary based on personal and cultural factors; some thrive in informal environments like T2, where spontaneous dialogue and relationship-building occur, while others prefer the structured, formal interactions of T3. Understanding these preferences is crucial for effective performance management, as employees who are comfortable with informal communication will excel in team-oriented or creative roles, while those who prefer formal structures will perform best in settings that require efficiency and accountability.

### *Balancing Formality and Informality in Communication*

The research suggests that striking a balance between informal and formal communication is essential for effective performance management at KIA. Employees at T2, where informal language is prevalent, tend to feel more connected, fostering a collaborative environment where creativity and mutual respect flourish. Informal communication supports evaluations focused on qualitative aspects, such as teamwork and interpersonal skills, aligning with the values of Symbolic Interactionism.

At T3, formal language emphasises professionalism and adherence to protocols, reinforcing accountability but potentially at the expense of empathy and interpersonal connection. Formal language use in electronic communication, while enhancing objectivity, can sometimes feel impersonal and alienating, which can impact employee morale and engagement. This reflects post-Foucauldian control, where formal communication serves to standardise interactions and reinforce the organisation's cultural expectations, sometimes at the cost of individual expression and flexibility.

Language and communication at KIA significantly shape employees' experiences and performance management outcomes, influenced by cultural diversity and globalisation. The informal, face-to-face communication favoured at T2 promotes trust,



empathy, and engagement, fostering a sense of shared identity. In contrast, formal electronic communication in T3 aligns with the organisational goals of professionalism and control, although it can sometimes lead to reduced autonomy and morale.

In a globalised and multicultural workplace like KIA, language barriers and communication styles play crucial roles in defining employee experiences and perceptions. Recognising these dynamics and fostering a balance between informal, culturally resonant communication and structured professionalism can support employee engagement, satisfaction, and performance, enabling a more inclusive and effective performance management system. By acknowledging the impact of language usage on employee identity and performance, KIA can create a performance management system that reflects cultural sensitivity and values both qualitative and quantitative assessment criteria. This approach could include providing regular feedback, celebrating contributions across varied communication styles, and ensuring that evaluation processes account for cultural nuances in language and communication. Implementing these practices could improve employee engagement, morale, and performance outcomes in a culturally diverse workplace like KIA, contributing to a work environment that values inclusivity, engagement, and performance excellence.

## **2. Time culture**

Building on the discussion, this study reveals that Ghana's cultural approach to time often referred to as "African time," not only shapes but also complicates employee performance management at Kotoka International Airport (KIA), where global standards of punctuality and efficiency are crucial. The findings, analysed through Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theories, illustrate

the friction between Ghana's traditional time culture and the demands of the aviation industry, creating a multifaceted challenge for performance optimisation in this diverse, international work environment.

### *The Impact of "African Time" on Operational Efficiency and Customer Satisfaction*

Ghanaian culture's flexible approach to punctuality reflects broader communal values that prioritise adaptability, social connection, and collaboration. This cultural approach to time, although valuable in fostering resilience and strong interpersonal connections, presents challenges within a high-stakes, time-sensitive industry such as aviation. At KIA, strict adherence to global aviation standards is crucial for ensuring customer satisfaction, compliance, and operational efficiency. However, the Ghanaian tendency to prioritise social or personal engagements over strict schedules will lead to missed deadlines and extended turnaround times, affecting the entire workflow, from check-in and security screening to boarding and customer service.

The Post-Foucauldian lens helps to analyse this dynamic by viewing time discipline as an exercise of power that the global aviation industry enforces on local employees. The imposition of strict schedules in the workplace will be seen as a control mechanism, one that conflicts with employees' cultural habits, leading to resistance or tension. Consequently, Ghanaian employees may feel that they are sacrificing their cultural values to conform to these imposed norms, which can negatively impact their morale and performance, potentially leading to inconsistent service and diminished customer loyalty. By enforcing global time standards, KIA will risk not only reducing its staff's autonomy but also straining the balance between organisational efficiency and the employees' cultural identity. This challenge can ultimately affect overall performance management outcomes.

### *The Role of Social Norms in Shaping Workplace Time Culture*

From a Symbolic Interactionist perspective, “African time” within the KIA workplace is upheld by social norms that prioritise adaptability and interpersonal harmony over rigid timekeeping. Shared interpretations of time-related behaviours, like tardiness or prolonged social interactions, shape the everyday culture at KIA, influencing employees’ attitudes and behaviours. In Ghanaian culture, time flexibility is often linked to a sense of community and inclusivity, where social obligations and relationships take precedence. This interpretation typically leads to the normalisation of delays, as peer validation reinforces these behaviours, creating social loops that perpetuate flexible time norms in the workplace.

These cultural norms will pose challenges when colleagues from more time-sensitive backgrounds or expectations encounter friction with the more relaxed Ghanaian approach to time. Symbolic Interactionist theory, particularly the Looking-Glass Self, illustrates how employees perceive and adjust their behaviours in response to how they believe they are seen by others, particularly supervisors or peers. Employees aware that their supervisors prioritise punctuality will feel conflicted as they balance workplace expectations against deeply rooted cultural norms. This creates a potential identity struggle, where employees alter their behaviours to meet expectations, sometimes at the cost of cultural authenticity and comfort. Ultimately, employees’ adaptation to time management expectations can be inconsistent, influenced by social cues within their workplace, which in turn affects team cohesion, collaboration, and performance evaluations.

### *Safety, Compliance, and the Implications of Time Culture on Risk Management*

The findings further reveal that “African time” can have broader implications for safety standards and regulatory compliance at KIA. Punctuality is crucial to aviation safety; deviations from prescribed schedules can lead to operational risks, including compromised security screenings, maintenance lapses, and inadequate emergency protocols. This is especially concerning in scenarios where timely responses are crucial, such as emergencies, security threats, or essential maintenance requirements. The laxity in time adherence can create vulnerabilities that not only increase operational risks but also expose KIA to reputational damage and regulatory scrutiny.

In the face of such pressures, employees will find themselves at odds with the need for strict time management. As post-Foucauldian theory suggests, regulatory adherence functions as a form of discipline within organisations. Thus, enforcing rigid time standards to maintain safety and compliance will likely conflict with local time perceptions, leading to heightened anxiety and stress among employees who are required to navigate these conflicting expectations. The potential compromise between cultural norms and imposed punctuality standards ultimately underscores the challenge of achieving alignment within an organisation that must balance global operational requirements with local cultural expectations.

### *Bridging Cultural Time Differences to Enhance Performance Management*

The findings suggest that KIA could address the cultural time conflicts through strategies that promote cultural sensitivity and foster an inclusive environment that accommodates both global and local expectations. By incorporating time management training with an understanding of cultural perspectives, KIA can help employees balance their traditional time practices with the demands of the aviation industry. For

instance, providing flexibility in non-critical tasks while emphasising punctuality in areas essential to operational and safety standards can encourage employees to adapt without feeling entirely constrained by foreign time norms.

Leadership also plays a vital role in role-modelling time discipline. Setting clear expectations and accountability standards—while respecting cultural flexibility where possible—can foster an inclusive environment where employees feel understood, valued, and supported. Managers could benefit from training that enables them to understand local time perceptions and employ empathy when addressing performance issues related to punctuality. This culturally nuanced approach can encourage employees to maintain a balance between personal authenticity and professional accountability, ultimately enhancing morale, engagement, and performance outcomes.

In conclusion, by addressing the challenges posed by Ghana's time culture on employee performance management, KIA can build an environment that respects cultural diversity while meeting international operational standards. By fostering a workplace that blends cultural inclusivity with organisational efficiency, KIA has the potential to optimise both employee performance and customer satisfaction, positioning itself as a globally competitive yet culturally aware organisation.

### **3. Cross-cultural Differences**

This discussion examines the influence of tribal affiliations and cultural obligations on employee performance management strategies and outcomes at Kotoka International Airport (KIA). As a globalised organisation in a collectivist society, KIA faces unique cultural challenges, particularly about tribalism and community-based values. The application of Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self)

theories in this study provides insights into how these cultural dynamics shape employee perceptions and interactions with the Electronic Surveillance-Based Performance Management (ESPM) system.

### *Tribalism and Favouritism*

Tribalism at KIA has been identified as a critical cultural factor shaping workplace interactions and performance evaluations. Tribalism, defined here as favouritism based on tribal affiliations, has led to the formation of cliques that limit the diversity of thought and hinder effective communication among employees from different tribes. This dynamic disrupts the objective criteria that should ideally guide performance management systems. When managers favour employees from their tribes in decisions around promotions, training opportunities, and access to resources, employees from minority tribes are systematically marginalised, reducing their motivation, morale, and engagement. This favouritism has significant implications for team cohesion, ultimately diminishing overall productivity (Prof. Moses and Yaro, p. 175).

From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, the tribal favouritism observed at KIA reflects an underlying power structure that influences performance management outcomes. Foucault's ideas on control and discipline through surveillance are pertinent here, as managers who exercise their authority based on tribal affiliations reinforce power imbalances. The favouritism in performance management decision-making leads to a workplace culture that prioritises in-group affiliations over merit, resulting in an organisational environment that hinders diversity and undermines equitable evaluation.

### *Employee Perceptions of ESPM and Tribal Bias*

The study also found that employees' perceptions of the ESPM system are highly influenced by tribal biases, particularly among employees from minority tribes who view ESPM evaluations as biased. This perception of bias, underpinned by tribal affiliations, often leads to feelings of unfairness and resentment. In line with Post-Foucauldian theory, ESPM functions as an organisational control mechanism; however, the cultural context at KIA complicates its effectiveness. For instance, ESPM evaluations are perceived as being subject to manipulation through tribal allegiances, creating scepticism about the fairness and accuracy of performance assessments (Obolo and Atampugre, pages 182 and 183).

Symbolic Interactionist (Looking-Glass Self) theory offers additional insights into these dynamics. Employees' responses to ESPM are influenced by their perceptions of how others, particularly managers, perceive them. Employees from minority tribes, in particular, interpret their performance evaluations as reflecting not only their work but also biases stemming from their tribal identity. This perception reinforces social divisions and entrenches employees in self-conceptions that align with how they believe they are perceived through ESPM surveillance. Consequently, this self-perception impacts behaviour and performance outcomes, as employees who feel undervalued or unfairly judged will disengage or perform below their potential (Atia and Adongo, pages 168 and 180).

### *Conflicts between Cultural Obligations and ESPM Rigidities*

In a collectivist cultural context like Ghana, employees face conflicts between fulfilling cultural obligations and adhering to the rigid demands of the ESPM system. Tribal and community responsibilities are deeply embedded in Ghanaian culture, emphasising relational obligations over individual performance metrics. When the ESPM system

fails to recognise these obligations, it creates friction for employees, leading to feelings of exclusion and frustration. The clash between collectivist norms and the individualistic framework of ESPM can erode employees' sense of fairness and belonging, further exacerbating perceptions of organisational bias (Ataa, Gabi, and Obolo, pp. 181-182).

Incorporating cultural contexts into ESPM could bridge this gap, as suggested by employee feedback. Recognising cultural obligations within performance evaluations would allow employees to feel respected and understood, creating a more inclusive evaluation process. Acknowledging these collectivist values could enhance employees' trust in ESPM because they believe the system takes into account their cultural realities rather than relying solely on individualistic metrics.

#### *Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion in ESPM*

The study highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity in implementing ESPM in a multi-tribal environment, such as KIA. Employees have recommended measures to enhance inclusivity and mitigate tribal biases within ESPM, such as involving representatives from various tribes in system oversight and providing regular cultural sensitivity training for managers. Transparent monitoring criteria are also crucial, as they would ensure that employees understand the evaluation process and feel reassured that performance assessments are objective and equitable.

These suggestions align with both Post-Foucauldian and Symbolic Interactionist theories. From a Post-Foucauldian perspective, such cultural sensitivity measures would decentralise the power of managers to impose biased evaluations, creating a more democratic performance management system. Symbolic Interactionist theory also supports these recommendations, suggesting that transparent criteria and



culturally inclusive processes would positively shape employees' self-conceptions, thereby reducing the sense of exclusion and enabling employees to feel pretty represented within the organisation.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that integrating cultural and tribal contexts into ESPM is essential for effective performance management at KIA. Tribalism, cultural obligations, and perceptions of bias influence employees' engagement and perceptions of fairness, impacting productivity and workplace cohesion. By adopting culturally sensitive practices, KIA can create an inclusive environment that aligns with both global standards and local cultural values, thereby enhancing employee performance, trust in management, and overall organisational outcomes.

Based on the collated data, tribalism—a type of favouritism based on tribal affiliations—has a significant impact on employee interaction and performance management at Kotoka International Airport. It leads to cliques, limiting diversity of thought and perspective and compromising trust and communication between employees from different tribes. Managers' favouritism towards employees from their tribe can also distort performance management. Employees from marginalised tribes will face discrimination in promotions, training opportunities, or access to resources, which can have an impact on motivation and morale. Tribal allegiances will often overshadow objective performance criteria, leading to inefficiencies and unfairness.

### **6.3 Limitations**

The study's limitations include a focus on a single location (KIA) and potential biases in self-reported data. I have identified several constraints associated with this research and the data obtained. My regular use of the KIA airport has likely influenced my bias in preparing this research and collecting data. The primary constraint could be

attributed to my conviction and firsthand knowledge that employee surveillance is inherently unfavourable. This belief has influenced the level of objectivity and impartiality I exhibited while researching a topic that I am particularly passionate about. Another issue of concern raised about single-case study research is its reliability and replicability, which is a broader critique of qualitative research methods in general (Berg and Lune, 2017). How can a single case study be relied on to offer a generalised perspective beyond the particular research? This has been the question critics put forward regarding the external validity of a single case study like mine. Future research should explore multiple sites and employ additional data collection methods to validate and extend these findings.

There are certain constraints on the number and procedure for selecting participants in the recruitment process. It is reasonable to propose that a greater volume of data would yield more robust findings, as suggested by the assertion that the study becomes more informative with increased data collection (Lakens, 2022). Existing literature indicates that although quantitative research aims to optimise statistical power, qualitative research frequently chooses a smaller number of examples to facilitate in-depth study. Conversely, Marshall (1996) proposes that the ideal sample size is one that effectively addresses the study inquiries. Due to my initial concerns about participant recruitment, I decided to employ a qualitative methodological approach. This approach enables in-depth analysis of smaller samples, yielding a comprehensive dataset.

#### **6.4 Contribution to the body of knowledge**

This thesis makes a creative contribution to the established literature on surveillance by integrating symbolic interactionist theories into post-Foucauldian analyses. While

Foucauldian frameworks focus primarily on surveillance as a mechanism of institutional control, symbolic interactionism introduces a vital bottom-up perspective, emphasising how individuals interpret, engage with, and respond to surveillance practices. This complementary approach enables a more nuanced analysis of how surveillance is experienced by those being observed, addressing a significant gap in existing research, particularly in under-researched, non-Western contexts.

#### **i. Bridging Structure and Agency**

Foucauldian theories, particularly those related to disciplinary power and the panopticon, are invaluable for understanding the structural forces that regulate behaviour through surveillance. However, they often understate the role of individual agency. Symbolic interactionism, by contrast, provides a means to explore how individuals are not merely passive subjects of surveillance but relatively active agents who interpret, resist, or conform to these mechanisms of control. By combining these approaches, this thesis provides a more comprehensive view of surveillance that acknowledges both the institutional power structures and the subjective agency of individuals.

#### **ii. Exploring Subjective Experiences of Surveillance**

Symbolic interactionism, particularly the concept of the Looking-Glass Self (Cooley, 1902), facilitates a deeper examination of how individuals perceive and internalise surveillance. While post-Foucauldian analyses tend to focus on the broader societal implications of surveillance technologies, symbolic interactionism emphasises the micro-level interactions—the everyday experiences of those who are being watched. This framework facilitates an investigation into how individuals construct their self-

concept in response to the perceived surveillance gaze, providing insights into how they modify their behaviour based on how they think others view them.

In the context of airport surveillance, symbolic interactionism can help explain how security staff and passengers perceive surveillance not just as an abstract mechanism of control but as a personal experience. By examining how individuals interpret their relationship with surveillance technologies, the thesis can reveal how surveillance impacts their identity, professional behaviour, and sense of autonomy.

### **iii. Highlighting Meaning-Making Processes**

A key strength of symbolic interactionism lies in its ability to foreground meaning-making processes. Individuals do not simply react to surveillance; they actively construct meanings around these practices. This thesis examines how various social groups, including airport security staff and passengers, create their interpretations of surveillance, which may either align with or challenge the dominant narratives of control imposed by the institution. This adds an essential dimension to post-Foucauldian analysis, which often centres on the structural effects of surveillance but pays less attention to how individuals subjectively understand these systems.

It also presents two perspectives, where one group views surveillance as a protective tool for ensuring public safety. At the same time, another perceives it as an intrusion into personal privacy that threatens individual freedom. These differing interpretations shape how people engage with surveillance systems—some may comply, others may resist, or even seek ways to undermine these mechanisms.

### **iv. Enhancing Collectivist Cultural Understanding of Surveillance**

Post-Foucauldian surveillance literature often reflects Western-centric perspectives, where individualism and privacy are highly valued. However, symbolic interactionism

provides a flexible framework for examining how surveillance is perceived in non-Western, less individualistic contexts. In societies where collective identities and social roles are more prominent, surveillance is likely to be experienced differently. This thesis contributes to the cross-cultural understanding of surveillance by examining how individuals in such contexts, such as airport security staff at Kotoka International Airport, interpret and respond to surveillance systems.

Through symbolic interactionism, the thesis will investigate how collective cultural values shape the experience of surveillance and how these values lead to different perceptions and reactions compared to those typically observed in Western contexts.

The case study of surveillance practices at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) exemplifies the combined application of Foucauldian and symbolic interactionist frameworks. Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power and biopolitics were used to analyse how airport security systems are structured to monitor and control the flow of staff performance management, ensuring compliance with security protocols. This top-down analysis revealed how these systems function to create a regulated environment.

Simultaneously, symbolic interactionist concepts, such as the Looking-Glass Self and the definition of the situation, were employed to explore how security staff perceive and respond to being surveilled. For instance, while a Foucauldian analysis highlights how surveillance technologies impose a sense of control over staff, symbolic interactionism reveals how staff interpret these systems—whether they view surveillance as a necessary safeguard or as an infringement on personal privacy.

In conclusion, this thesis offers a creative contribution by integrating symbolic interactionism into the post-Foucauldian analysis of surveillance. By bridging the focus

on power structures and individual agency, the thesis provides a more holistic understanding of how surveillance technologies operate and are experienced by individuals in diverse cultural contexts. This dual approach enhances the field of surveillance studies by acknowledging both the institutional mechanisms that regulate behaviour and the subjective experiences of those being surveilled. This comprehensive framework enables a deeper exploration of the intricate interplay between surveillance systems, institutional power, and individual meaning-making processes.

### **6.5 Study Implications**

The findings provide practical implications for management strategies. These insights can help organisations develop policies and practices that integrate surveillance into performance management frameworks in a manner that respects employee concerns while optimising performance. The results will also indicate prospective domains for further investigation. It has the potential to initiate further inquiries, such as the influence of culture or ethnicity on individual perception of surveillance, which was briefly highlighted in this research. It could also lead to a comparative analysis across other organisational cultures and sectors.

### **6.6 Recommendation for future studies**

#### ***Reframing the Looking-Glass Self: From a Single Mirror to a Hall of Mirrors in Surveillance Contexts.***

One of the key theoretical contributions of this research lies in the extended application of Cooley's (1902) "Looking-Glass Self" within a highly surveilled, multicultural workplace environment. Cooley's original theory posited that individuals construct their self-concept through a reflective process: we imagine how others perceive us, imagine

how they judge us, and develop a self-image based on those imagined judgments. In traditional interpersonal contexts, this process unfolds in relatively direct, face-to-face interactions. However, the contemporary workplace—particularly one governed by electronic surveillance systems—complicates and intensifies this process.

At Kotoka International Airport (KIA), this reflective process has moved beyond interpersonal imagination into a technologically mediated reality. Security personnel are constantly aware that their actions are being monitored by surveillance systems such as CCTV cameras, biometric clock-in devices, and computer activity trackers. Unlike the abstract "mirror" of Cooley's time, these surveillance tools offer tangible, retrievable, and reviewable records of performance. In this context, the looking-glass self is no longer imagined in isolation; it is partially fed back to the individual during performance reviews, disciplinary processes, or informal supervisory feedback based on surveillance data.

This leads to what I have described as a "hall of mirrors"—a metaphor that more accurately reflects the multi-layered construction of the self in the digital surveillance workplace. Employees are not responding to a single reflection of how they are perceived, but rather to multiple, overlapping, and sometimes conflicting reflections. These mirrors include the technological gaze (what the CCTV camera records), the managerial gaze (how supervisors interpret that data), the peer gaze (how colleagues view each other's performance), and broader cultural and institutional expectations.

The complexity of this dynamic becomes even more pronounced in the Ghanaian context, where workplace hierarchies, ethnic affiliations, and communal norms influence how surveillance data is interpreted. For example, performance feedback is not just about what the surveillance system shows, but also about how the supervisor

(who may belong to a different tribal or linguistic group) interprets and values that information. This opens space for bias, misrecognition, and differential treatment based on non-technical criteria, including tribal affiliations, gender, and perceived loyalty. These layered evaluations further fracture the self, leading employees to construct multiple selves—each tailored to how they believe they are seen by different evaluators.

The hall of mirrors, therefore, is not a metaphor for distortion alone but a framework for understanding the plurality and instability of identity in a surveilled, multicultural workplace. Employees may experience tension between who they feel they are, who they are told they are (via surveillance data), and who they believe they need to become in order to satisfy organisational demands. The process of navigating this complexity contributes to a form of internalised self-regulation, but also to potential stress, role conflict, and emotional fatigue.

This reconceptualisation of the looking-glass self invites several avenues for future research:

- How do workers construct and manage multiple identities in response to various feedback channels—technological, social, and cultural?
- What emotional toll does this fragmented identity process take, especially in high-surveillance environments?
- How do local cultural hierarchies (such as tribal affiliations, seniority norms, and collectivist values) shape the perception and application of surveillance in performance evaluation?

In conclusion, this research suggests that the looking-glass self in contemporary surveillance settings should be reframed as a hall of mirrors—a complex, multi-



dimensional space where identities are continuously constructed, mediated, and contested through an interplay of technology, power, and culture. This nuanced understanding enriches symbolic interactionist theory by embedding it more deeply in postcolonial, multicultural, and technologically advanced contexts like Ghana's aviation security sector.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This study offers an original and timely contribution to the evolving body of research on electronic surveillance and performance management (ESPM) by grounding the investigation in a non-Western, multicultural organisational context. In doing so, it challenges the dominance of Western-centric assumptions that typically underpin surveillance literature and performance measurement frameworks. By focusing on the lived experiences of security personnel at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) in Ghana, this research presents a more context-sensitive, culturally embedded, and theoretically expansive account of how ESPM operates in the Global South.

Much of the existing literature on workplace surveillance has emerged from studies in Western industrial and post-industrial societies, where assumptions about individualism, managerial rationality, and standardised notions of time, discipline, and productivity are taken for granted. These assumptions often ignore the realities of workplaces where cultural values such as collectivism, flexible time norms ("African Time"), and tribal or ethnic affiliations significantly shape employee perceptions and workplace relationships. This study, therefore, brings to light the limitations of transplanting Western surveillance models into culturally diverse, postcolonial settings without considering how they interact with local norms, languages, and power structures.

By drawing attention to how tribal affiliations, language hierarchies, and postcolonial legacies influence how employees interpret and respond to surveillance, this research provides a nuanced critique of the assumption that surveillance technologies are neutral tools for enhancing accountability and performance. Instead, the findings show that these tools can become amplifiers of existing social inequalities, reinforcing managerial biases and exacerbating tensions between employee groups. For example, participants expressed concerns about surveillance data being selectively interpreted by supervisors, often along lines of tribal affiliation or perceived loyalty, creating environments of distrust and perceived unfairness. This insight is particularly original, as it exposes how surveillance intersects with local social dynamics in ways rarely explored in the global literature.

One of the most significant theoretical contributions of this research lies in the reworking of Cooley's (1902) "Looking-Glass Self". While Cooley's original theory described identity as the result of imagined judgments in social interactions, this thesis reconceptualises identity construction in surveillance settings as occurring in a "hall of mirrors"—a more fragmented, multilayered, and mediated process. In the contemporary surveilled workplace, individuals do not respond to a single, imagined reflection but to multiple, overlapping and sometimes contradictory forms of feedback. These include real-time technological surveillance (e.g. CCTV and biometric data), supervisor evaluations, organisational values imported from global standards and culturally situated expectations from peers.

This hall of mirrors model expands symbolic interactionist theory to better fit modern workplace realities, where datafication, algorithmic governance, and postcolonial cultural complexities intersect. It foregrounds the role of surveillance technologies not

only as tools of control but also as instruments of meaning-making, shaping how employees see themselves, manage their conduct, and navigate organisational life.

Furthermore, this study makes a methodological contribution by adopting a qualitative case study approach that foregrounds the voices and subjectivities of Ghanaian security personnel, a group often marginalised or rendered invisible in global debates on workplace surveillance. By centring their lived experiences, this thesis amplifies perspectives from the Global South and demonstrates the necessity of cultural reflexivity in research, policy, and practice.

Ultimately, this research calls for a more contextually grounded and ethically responsive approach to surveillance implementation, especially in multicultural and postcolonial workplaces. Surveillance should not be treated as a purely technical solution but as a socially and culturally mediated practice that requires deep awareness of its differential impacts. In doing so, this study lays the groundwork for more inclusive, equitable, and effective performance management systems that respect the dignity, diversity, and humanity of all workers—regardless of geography or cultural background.

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## APPENDIX 'A'

### Participant's consent form

#### Consent to take part in research.

- I.....voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the survey.
- I understand that participation involves being interviewed by the researcher and giving answers to questions.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research, my identity will remain concealed. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview that might reveal my identity or the identities of the people I speak about.

- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview will be quoted in dissertations, conference presentations, published papers, etc.
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that I or someone else is at risk of harm, they will have to report this to the relevant authorities -they will discuss this with me first but will be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained or stored in password-protected devices.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for the duration of the research.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation, I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact the researcher at [caa0451@my.londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:caa0451@my.londonmet.ac.uk) and the supervisor of studies, Dr James Alexander, at [j.alexander@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:j.alexander@londonmet.ac.uk), who is involved in the research, to seek further clarification and information.

Signature of participant

Date

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study.

Signature of researcher

Date

## APPENDIX 'B'

### **PARTICIPANTS' INFORMATION SHEET FOR A RESEARCH STUDY WITH AIRPORT SECURITY EXPERIENCING WORKPLACE ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE AT KIA.**

My name is **Caesar Ayimbire Agana**, and I am a 41-year-old Ghanaian PhD candidate at the London Metropolitan University. I am conducting PhD research in Ghana, Examining employees' perception of Workplace Electronic Surveillance and Performance Measures.

You have received this information sheet because you have been invited to participate in a research study. You need to understand why the research is being conducted and what taking part will involve. This is so you can decide whether you want to take part or not. Please read this information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish.

Please ask me if anything is unclear or if you would like more information. Thank you

#### 1. What is the Project Purpose?

- This project aims to understand:
  - How workplace electronic surveillance as an appraisal tool affects employee privacy.
  - How employee perception of workplace electronic surveillance impacts their work relationship.
  - The usefulness of workplace electronic surveillance in managing employee behaviour at work.
- We will explore whether these factors are connected to each other.
- We believe this will help us understand how the Exchange theory is relevant to modern workplace electronic surveillance.

#### 2. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

- You will be given £10.00 compensation for taking part.

- You will be contributing to an important research topic focused on the relevance of exchange in electronic workplace surveillance.

### 3. Why have I been Chosen?

You have been chosen to take part as you are:

- Over the age of 18
- You have experience working under electronic surveillance.
- You have been working at the Kotoka International Airport for at least 3 years.
- You can Understand English.
- You have no difficulty in understanding the questions that will be asked.

Individuals who meet these criteria will be selected to participate in the research.

### 4. What will happen to me if I take part?

- You will need to take part in an approximately one hour (60 minutes) long interview at your work or place of your choice where you feel safe.
- I will personally be conducting the interviews. I have undergone a criminal record check.
- We will review the consent form at the beginning of the interview, which you will be asked to sign. You will subsequently be asked questions about your identity.
- You will be given £10 cash for taking part.
- Participants are allowed to withdraw their data within 24 hours after the interview.
- You are allowed to keep copies of your consent and information sheet.

### 5. What are the Possible risks of taking part?

We will ask questions that pertain to your work experience and how it impacts you as a person. This will cause some level of distress or upset. If you become distressed or upset, we can take a break from the interview or withdraw from the study entirely if you wish.

### 6. What if something goes wrong?

If you would like to raise an issue or concern about your participation in the research project, please get in touch with me or my research supervisor, Dr. James Alexander, at [j.alexander@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:j.alexander@londonmet.ac.uk).

If, for any reason, you feel your concerns have not been resolved by the researchers, you can contact the LondonMet Research ethics committee.

7. Will my taking part in this research be kept confidential?

- All personal information provided for this research study will be highly confidential.
- All data collated after this research study will be stored alongside an ID code, which is not tied to your name. This means that your name will not be associated with any data we enter into our system.
- You will not be identified in any reports or publications related to this research project.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained or stored in password-protected devices.

8. Limits to confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible unless, during our conversation, I hear anything which makes me worried that you or someone else might be in danger of harm. If this happens, I may need to notify the relevant agencies. We will make every effort to inform you if we plan to notify appropriate agencies of your disclosure, if possible.

9. Who is organising and funding this research?

London Metropolitan University and Caesar Agana are organising and funding this research, respectively.

10. Local Data Protection Privacy Notice

The controller for this project will be London Metropolitan University.

The following categories of personal data will be used:

- Name
- Gender
- Nationality
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Contact details (Email address/contact number)
- Ethnicity
- Place of birth
- Length of time working at KIA
- Rank/position held.

The personal data above is being asked so that we can understand how our sample compares to the broader population. It will also help us know whether any of these factors influence our findings.

The lawful basis that would be used to process your *data* will be the performance of a task in the public interest. The lawful basis used to process *special category personal data* will be for scientific, historical, or statistical purposes.

Your data will be processed for as long as necessary for the research project. Your contact details will be deleted after you have participated or if you decide you no longer wish to participate. Your name will be stored for the duration of data collection and then deleted. The Pseudonymised data and your consent forms will be kept for 10 years. We will minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

## APPENDIX 'C'

### Demographics Form

1. Participant ID.....
2. How Old are you (Years)
3. What is your Gender
  - ☐ Male
  - ☐ Female
4. What is your sexual orientation
  - ☐ Heterosexual
  - ☐ Bisexual
  - ☐ Gay
  - ☐ Lesbian
  - ☐ Other (Please specify).....
5. What is your ethnicity?
  - . Black
    - ☐ Ghanaian
    - ☐ West African
    - ☐ African – Other
    - ☐ Caribbean
    - ☐ British or American
  - . White
    - ☐ British
    - ☐ American
    - ☐ European
  - . Other ethnic group
    - ☐ Asian
    - ☐ Arab
    - ☐ Other
6. What is your place of birth (i.e. Country, region)? .....
7. What is your nationality? .....
8. How long in total have you been working at Kotoka International Airport?.....

9. What is your years of experience as an airport security?.....

10. What is your current rank?.....



## **APPENDIX 'D'**

### **Proposed In-person Interview questions.**

#### **A. Introduction to Demographic Information**

- I hope you understand why we are meeting here today.
- Have you read and understood what this research is about?
- Do you give me consent to ask you questions as part of collecting data for the purpose of this research?
- Do you have any questions or concerns you would like me to address before we proceed?
- How do you describe yourself?
- What department or unit do you work in at KIA?
- What department or unit do you work in at KIA?
- How long have you worked as airport Security?
- What is your educational background?
- What do you say your special area of work is at KIA?
- How would you describe yourself as a leader?

#### **B. General Questions.**

- What can you tell me about workplace surveillance?
- How would you describe electronic surveillance? Explain it to me?
- How would you describe visual surveillance?
- What are the differences between electronic and visual surveillance?
- How would you explain performance evaluation/appraisal?
- Have ever been to a performance evaluation meeting with your supervisor?
- Have you ever been involved in the performance appraisal process?
- Describe the categories of workplace electronic surveillance you encounter.
- Who operates and collects your Workplace surveillance data?
- How often are you under workplace electronic surveillance?
- Could you please describe the criteria used to evaluate whether your performance is satisfactory or not?

- Can you provide examples of the jargon or language commonly used in your workplace?
  - How do you feel about the Kind of monitory that takes place?
  - I notice a lot of CCTV cameras being installed at the airport. Do you have them all over the site? Is security critical and have you had training in that?
  - Have there been instances where you know of employees breaking the rules - and how did you handle it?
- 
- Describe how electronic workplace surveillance affects you in your line of work.
  - How do these surveillance systems affect your behaviour at work as airport security personnel?
  - How does workplace privacy matter to you?
  - To What extent do you feel your privacy has been breached by workplace surveillance?
  - What policies are put in place to govern the usage of employee data at KIA?
  - Describe how employees' concerns to workplace electronic surveillance are addressed?

### **C. Closing and Thank You**

15. Is there anything else you would like to contribute or talk about which I didn't mention that will be relevant to this study?

## **Appendix ‘E’**

### **Participants Memory Writing Sample**

**Participant: #7**

#### **Memory Writing: Navigating the Watchful Eye at Kotoka International Airport (KIA)**

It was a Monday morning in the heart of 2018 when the landscape of my professional life shifted. I had just settled into my role at the airport security division of the Kotoka international airport in Accra, a prestigious sector in the Ghanaian economy to work in. Little did I know that along with the excitement of contributing to national security, a subtle but omnipresent force was silently making its way into the fabric of our workplace – employee surveillance.

The first encounter with this electronic sentinel was when we were introduced to the new smart access ID cards in addition to the CCTV system. They weren't just the usual plastic cards with our names; they were a gateway to a realm of constant scrutiny. Every entrance and exit, every break taken, was now meticulously logged. It felt like the company had embedded a watchful eye in our very pockets.

I distinctly remember the discomfort that settled in during those initial days. The casual conversations in the break room became hushed, and the once vibrant office buzz was overshadowed by an unspoken awareness of being observed. The boundary between personal and professional space blurred as the gaze of the surveillance system extended beyond the access ID cards to the finger biometric clocking-in system.

One incident etched itself vividly into my memory – a harmless coffee break with a colleague turned into a subtle dance around the watchful eye. We found ourselves

glancing over our shoulders, hesitating before indulging in a moment of laughter, as if the sensors embedded in the ceiling were silently judging our every move.

As months went by, the surveillance apparatus evolved. What began as a mere logging system transformed into quarterly and annual performance management and a disciplinary tool. The constant awareness of being observed weighed on the collective psyche of the office. Conversations about the latest surveillance updates became a recurring theme during lunch breaks, overshadowing discussions about project milestones.

Yet, amidst this digital scrutiny, a peculiar camaraderie emerged among employees. We found solace in shared glances of acknowledgment, an unspoken understanding that we were all navigating this new normal together. The surveillance, while invasive, inadvertently forged bonds among us, united by a common experience of being observed, measured, and quantified.

In reflecting on this period, I can't help but recognize the irony of a workplace striving for innovation through surveillance. The very technology designed to enhance productivity had inadvertently cast a shadow over the organic dynamics of human interaction. It was a lesson in the delicate balance between technological advancement and the preservation of a workplace culture that values trust and autonomy.

As I pen down these memories, the echoes of that time linger, a reminder that the watchful eye not only shapes behaviour but also leaves an indelible mark on the collective consciousness of the workplace. The evolution of employee surveillance was not merely a technical upgrade; it was a narrative woven into the fabric of our

professional lives, altering the way we perceived ourselves and our colleagues within the confines of a digitally surveilled space.

## Appendix 'F'

### Sample In-person Interview

Name of Participant: Interviewee #1

Date of Interview: 18/06/2023

Place of Interview: Marina Mall – Accra

Name	Body (Questions and Answers)	Themes	Commends
Caesar	Q1: I hope you understand the reason for our meeting today.	Demographics	
#1	<i>Ans: yes, we are here to conduct an interview.</i>		
Caesar	Q2: Have you read and understood what this research is about?		
#1	<i>Ans: Yes</i>		
Caesar	Q3: Do you give me consent to ask you questions as part of collecting data for this research?		
#1	<i>Ans: Yes, please</i>		
Caesar	Q4: Do you have any questions or concerns you would like me to address before we proceed?		
#1	<i>Ans: Not now.</i>		
Caesar	Q5: How do you describe yourself?		
#1	<i>Ans: "I am a young black male in my mid-thirties, originally from the Volta Region of Ghana but was born and bred in Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region. I come across as assertive, follow instructions and always want to get everything done to perfection."</i>		
Caesar	Q6: What department or unit do you work in at KIA?		
#1	<i>Ans: I work in the airport security division.</i>		
Caesar	Q6: What department or unit do you work in at KIA?		
#1	<i>I am a security officer.</i>		

Caesar #1	Q8: How long have you worked as a security officer at KIA?		
Caesar #1	Ans: <i>I have worked here at KIA for the past 4 years.</i>		
Caesar #1	Q9: What is your educational background?		
Caesar #1	I hold a diploma in Management Studies from Accra Technical University. <i>I have also received training in Aviation security here in my current place of work.</i>		
Caesar #1	Q10: What do you say your unique area of work is at KIA?		
Caesar #1	Ans: <i>I primarily work at the boarding security checks for departing passengers.</i>		
Caesar #1	Q11: Can you describe to me precisely what you do at the departure security checks?		
Caesar #1	Ans: <i>Passengers who are departing are physically body-checked for any concealed item, and they are asked to walk through an electronic body scanner. We also asked them to remove any mental accessories, electronic gadgets, shoes and their check-in luggage, and this passes through another scanning system with the watchful eyes of personnel managing the system.</i>		
Caesar #1	Q12: Do you enjoy working in your designated area?		
Caesar #1	Ans: <i>It's not the most pleasant place to work due to the workload, but hey, it pays my bills.</i>		
Caesar #1	Q13: How would you describe yourself as a leader?		
Caesar #1	Ans: <i>I see myself as someone who gets on with his task and follows instructions, though I sometimes use my own initiative.</i>	Experience of surveillance at work	

Caesar #1	<p>Q14: Can you describe the main types of workplace surveillance at KIA?</p> <p>Ans: <i>The surveillance systems used here at KIA are biometric clocking-in system for recording time reporting and closing from work, CCTV, electronic body scanning systems and ID door access systems.</i></p>	Perception of Surveillance systems at work	
Caesar #1	<p>Q15: Why do you think your employers deplore these systems?</p> <p>Ans: <i>They say these are put in place for safety and security of Airport community including staff and visitors.</i></p>		
Caesar #1	<p>Q16: Can you describe how you encounter surveillance at work?</p> <p>Ans: <i>When I report to work in the morning, I touch the clocking in system right at the entrance of my office to register me as having reported to work. It records the time I report and close from work. A time management report is then generated of each staff. Supervisors are able to check the reporting time of each security personnel. At the arrivals and departure halls platforms senior security officer monitors the progress and conduct of each staff through CCTV.</i></p> <p>Q17: You indicated earlier that you have worked at KIA for four years. What have been the changes to surveillance systems since you started working here at KIA?</p> <p>Ans: <i>there have been a lot of changes in terms of surveillance systems here in Kotoka, we used to have only CCTV cameras at the entrance, the corridors, arrival, and departure halls and also had visitors' logbooks. This was done for so many years. However, since the introduction of Terminal 3 and the revamping of the whole airport in its entity, we've seen in numerous introductions of electronic surveillance systems not only for customers but for also for employees. We currently have the</i></p>		



Caesar	<i>biometric clubbing system where we must put our fingerprints to show the time you reported to work and time, we leave the premises. CCTV cameras are mounted all over the work premises monitoring the activities of staff by supervisors of airport security. Body scanners are available to search staff going through arrivals and departure security checkpoints”.</i>		
#1			
Caesar	Q18: If I understand you right the major form of workplace surveillance is electronic?		
#1	Ans: <i>Although the major form of surveillance here is electronic, we sometimes conduct routine foot patrols in the arrival and departure halls. We are sometime physically monitored by our supervisors at our beats.</i>		
Caesar			
#1	Q19: When you say ‘beat’ What do you mean?		
	Ans: <i>I mean our duty post.</i>		
Caesar			
#1	Q20: How often are you as an employee under surveillance at KIA?		
	Ans: <i>“We are being monitored on everything from attendance, time of reporting to work and spent on breaks, our engagement with passengers to the amount of work done”.</i>		
Caesar			
#1	Q21: How are these electronic surveillance systems operated at KIA?		
	Ans: <i>Senior security officers in charge of each shift monitor CCTV at personnel beats and also task to check when we report and when we leave the premises through the electronic clocking in system.</i>		
Caesar:			

Ubiquitous  
nature of  
surveillance

Employee  
dataveillance

#1	Q22: Can you explain how employee data stored?		
Caesar	Ans: <i>All this data collected through cameras, fingerprint clocking in system and ID card access systems is stored in a server in the IT department in a server room. I don't have access to this server room.</i>		
#1	Q23: Who analyses this electronic workplace surveillance data?		
Caesar	Ans: <i>data is being analysed after being collected I believe by our supervisors or line managers in line with KIA data policies implementation. I do not know what other analysis data collected might have been useful apart for supervision, security, increasing productivity, disciplinary reasons and yearly appraisals".</i>	Surveillance meat to increase productivity.	
#1	Q24: Why do you think employees are monitored at KIA?		
Caesar	Ans: <i>"I believe we are under constant surveillance to whip us in line when working to increase productivity. We believe we are being watched by our superiors and therefore cannot afford to be lackadaisical".</i>	Employee trust in surveillance for managing performance.	
#1	Q25: How do you feel about been constantly watched by your supervisors while at work?		
Caesar	Ans: <i>"I feel ok with it for the safety and productivity reasons of it, but I am not fully convinced for the performance evaluation side of surveillance."</i>		
#1	Q26: What concerns do you have with surveillance used for performance evaluation?		
Caesar			

#1	<p>Ans: <i>"It sometimes does not reflect the grades given by our supervisors. I know of some of my colleagues who are not punctual and idle around most of the time but are given the same grades as some of us who are punctual and hardworking"</i>.</p> <p>Q27: What is your relationship with your supervisors?</p>	Power and Control of surveillance	
Caesar	<p>Ans: <i>Generally, I have a good working relationship with my supervisors. However, there are a few of them who are biased in their dealings with junior officers.</i></p>		
#1	<p>Q28: Why do you say some of them are biased towards junior officers?</p>	Loss of Autonomy	
Caesar	<p>Ans: <i>I was radio checked by my supervisor two weeks into my start of work as security personnel at the airport. I was told by my supervisor not to stand idle but to get active and get to work since I was monitored at the arrivals section through CCTV. However, there was a senior officer who was on the phone with a friend and was never told off"</i>.</p>		
#1	<p>Q29: What does electronic workplace surveillance mean to you?</p>		
Caesar	<p>Ans: <i>I feel as a security personnel I should be the one in charge of what I do but I feel control has been taken away from me by the electronic surveillance systems because I am constantly monitored.</i></p>	Efficiency issues of workplace surveillance	
#1	<p>Q30: Describe how electronic workplace surveillance affect you?</p>		

Caesar #1	<p>Ans: <i>"I am always in constant fear and anxiety of being queried or called out for doing something wrong. This has an impact on my mental health".</i></p>	Censorship and surveillance	
Caesar #1	<p>Q31: Does it have any impact on your performance?</p> <p>Ans: <i>To be seen as working hard, I increase my work rate by screening as many passengers as I can in a short time, by so doing overlooking a lot of things like liquids and searching their bags thoroughly.</i></p>		
Caesar #1	<p>Q32: Explain how this form of surveillance makes you conform or self-censor at your workplace?</p> <p>Ans: <i>I hardly use my work email address to send out messages to colleagues or friends informally for the fear my emails will be monitored.</i></p>	Adaptation and Resistance	
Caesar #1	<p>Q33: Have you tried avoiding surveillance at work?</p> <p>Ans: Yes</p>		
Caesar #1	<p>Q34: In what way have you ever tried to avoid surveillance at work?</p> <p>Ans: <i>I try as much as possible to hide from the cameras by standing in angles that I will not be captured.</i></p>	Surveillance and Privacy concerns	
Caesar #1	<p>Q35: Why do you try to avoid been captured by the CCTV?</p> <p>Ans: <i>Management think they are smart in keeping track of whatever I do at work, but they don't know we also beat them to it. Not only do I hide from the cameras but on some occasions I and my colleagues have opened and taken</i></p>		

	<p><i>laptops and mobile phones of passengers without been noticed.</i></p> <p>Q36: To What extent do you feel your privacy has been breached by workplace surveillance?</p> <p>Ans: <i>Undergoing drug testing and searches for drugs almost every now and then can be embarrassing sometimes.</i></p>		
Caesar			
#1	<p>Q37: What policies are put in place to govern the usage of employee data at KIA?</p> <p>Ans: <i>KIA has a data protection policy, I have briefed as to reporting any breach to my line manager or the IT department if I have concerns, but I have not taken the pain to read through the data policy document”.</i></p>		
Caesar			
#1	<p>Q38: Describe how employees’ concerns to workplace surveillance are addressed?</p> <p>Ans: <i>In the Ghanaian culture, the superior or elderly person is always right, and I believe this has led to a less or no complains about unfair surveillance practices at KIA. We have generally come to accept that workplace surveillance practices are part of our daily routine.</i></p>		
Caesar			
#1.	<p>Q39: Do you think there is a better way to improve the impact of surveillance on employees at KIA?</p> <p>Ans: <i>Management needs to involve employees in the decision making when implementing these surveillance technologies at work, so we can make our input.</i></p> <p>Q40: Will it be okay with you if I can follow up later with a call to</p>		

Influence  
Culture and  
Ethnicity on  
surveillance  
perception

	<p>clarify any statement you made during this interview?</p> <p><i>Ans: Yes, I will be ok with you following up.</i></p> <p>I would like to thank you for your time and making yourself available for this interview.</p> <p><i>Ans: It is an absolute pleasure to be part of this study.</i></p>		
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## Appendix 'G'

### Research Introductory Letter

Caesar Ayimbire Agana  
London Metropolitan University  
166-220 Holloway Road, London N7 8DB  
Email: caa0451@my.londonmet.ac.uk  
Tel: +447365993932/+233277113335  
Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

The Director of Human Resources  
Ghana Civil Aviation Authority  
Kotoka International Airport  
Accra - Ghana

Dear Sir/Madam,

I trust this letter finds you well. My name is Caesar Ayimbire Agana, and I am a PhD Criminology candidate at London Metropolitan University. I am writing to request your permission to conduct research on workplace surveillance with Airport security staff at the Kotoka International Airport.

The purpose of my research is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of workplace surveillance on employees and organizational dynamics. The study aims to explore the ethical considerations, employee perceptions, and overall effectiveness of surveillance systems in the workplace.

My interest in Kotoka International Airport stems from its reputation as a leader in the aviation industry in West Africa, and I believe that your organization can provide valuable insights into the challenges and benefits associated with workplace surveillance. The information obtained from this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on this subject and will assist organizations in developing more ethical and effective surveillance practices.

The research will involve face to face interviews with participants to collect data and will strictly adhere to ethical guidelines. Any information collected will be treated confidentially, and steps will be taken to ensure the anonymity of participants.

I have attached a detailed research proposal outlining the scope, objectives, and methodology of the study. Additionally, a consent form is provided to outline the terms of participation and confidentiality agreements for individuals involved in the research.

I am more than willing to meet with you to discuss the research project further and address any concerns you will have. I understand the sensitivity of the topic and am committed to ensuring that the research is conducted with the utmost respect for the privacy and interests of all involved parties.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and am excited about the potential collaboration between London Metropolitan University and Kotoka International Airport. I am confident that the findings from this research will be valuable for both academia and industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

Caesar Ayimbire Agana

Candidate: PhD Criminology

London Metropolitan University

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