

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION - WINNEBA

**PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES IN
GHANA: A STUDY OF SUNYANI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY**

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

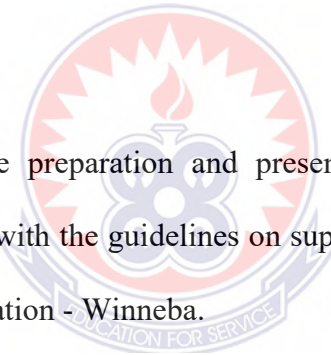
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Date.....

Supervisor's Declaration

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



Name: Dr Mavis Amo-Mensah

Supervisor's Signature:

Date:

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A production of this academic document requires collective efforts of so many people and these efforts deserve special appreciation and acknowledgement. It is against this background that I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty God for His protection and guidance throughout my academic endeavours.

My next appreciation goes to my diligent supervisor, Dr Mavis Amo-Mensah who painstakingly took her time to go through this document and unconditionally offered me useful pieces of advice and corrections. I also place on record my appreciation to the entire staff of Sunyani Technical University and to everyone who assisted me in one way or the other to make this project a reality.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wife, Deborah Adjabeng Boakye, family and all my loved ones.



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ABSTRACT

This study examined public relations practice (PR) in higher educational institutions in Ghana with a focus on Sunyani Technical University. The study adopted the qualitative research and purposively sampled employees at the registry, Heads of Department and other management staff within the university. In all 35 participants comprising 15 employees at the Registry, 16 Departmental Heads and 4 Deans participated in the study. The results of the study revealed that the role of the PR unit is that of a communication technician. The role is therefore output focus. The PR unit is not deeply involved in organisational decision-making, but implements public relations programmes such as writing press releases, organising events or producing web content. This role increases students' motivation and public acceptance of the technical educational system and helps in increasing students' patronage. The PR unit however, has challenges including lack of resources, lack of understanding of the role of the PR unit, lack of a consensus on what the term PR means and the lack of adequate knowledge, all of which hamper the operations of the PR unit. The study recommends that the PR unit be deeply involved in the decision-making of the University. The study therefore will inform both the management and the PR department on the relevance of their coordination towards the achievements of the goal of the Sunyani Technical University.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

In the contemporary competitive world today, the ability to create and maintain a positive corporate reputation has become an invaluable asset. A study by Adjei (2015) established that an organisation thrives on the goodwill of its multiple stakeholders to remain competitive, hence the management of stakeholder relationships is an essential factor in organisational success. Having realised that public relations is a necessary tool in making their needs and programmes known, higher educational institutions have also begun to use it to gain public support (Mitrović & Drača, 2013). The rationale and justifications for converting some of the polytechnics into technical universities are to achieve parity of esteem with the universities without departing from the practice-oriented philosophy of polytechnic education and training (Act of Parliament, Act 922). Upgraded polytechnics are required to remain focused on their core function of training technicians and technologists at a higher level to meet the difficulties of the rapidly changing, technology-driven work environment (Adja, Adjepong, & Nunfam, 2014).

According to Okafor and Nwatu (2018, p. 5), “public relations in the educational sector is a planned, systematic management function which relies on a comprehensive, two-way communication process involving both internal and external publics with the goal of stimulating a better understanding of the role, objectives, accomplishments, and needs of the institution”. Cutlip, Allen and Broom (2006, p. 11) reckon that “public relations is that management function that establishes and sustains mutually favourable relationships between an organisation and its stakeholders”. Karczewska and Bsoul (2015) in agreement with PR being a management function, define public relations as

a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organisation and its publics.

From the foregoing, it is evident that, the field of public relations (PR) is all about developing understanding and building a good relationship with various groups including, government, institution, media, employee, investor, supplier, retailer and customer because institutions cannot do without public relations (Achilov, 2016). Quite often, the office has a cross-functional responsibility of maintaining a constant link with the public and with all functional units of an organisation including top management (Aikins & Adu-Oppong, 2015). PR provides a way for the organisation to monitor and interact effectively with the other key groups in this subsystem. According to Gqamane (2010), PR functions as the action and communication part of an organisation which builds and maintains relationships between the organisation and the other members of this system. It is essential that communication between an organisation and its publics is managed so that each side appreciates what is expected of the other.

Research has proven that most organisations are yet to identify the role, position and contribution of public relations within their organisation (Adjei, 2015). This is because, for some organisations, public relations does not feature prominently in their organisational structure (Aikin & Adu-Oppong, 2016). There seems to be a lack of understanding and agreement about the role communication plays in an organisation between PR executives and their CEOs (Teresa, 2017). Okafor and Nwatu (2018) are also of the view that management and PR practitioners have different expectations and understanding of the role PR is to play in an organisation. This lack of knowledge

affects the practice of PR and its contribution to the organisation. Even though PR performs essential communication functions in the organisation, there is still doubt that PR contributes to realising organisational goals (Yeo & Sriramesh, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Sunyani Technical University is a public institution of higher learning that is committed to the provision of career-focused education in engineering, science and technology, technical and vocational, applied arts and related disciplines with hands-on experience and entrepreneurial development to meet the higher and middle-level workforce needs of the country. The vision of the institution is to become a top-notch Technical University for the provision of career-focused, practically-oriented and entrepreneurially-inclined higher and middle-level workforce training for the socioeconomic development of the Brong Ahafo region and Ghana; and to contribute to the global sustainable development. Barely two years ago, the Sunyani Technical University was converted from being a polytechnic to a technical university by the Act of Parliament, Act 922. This conversion meant an increase in the scope of the activities of the institution. The institution now had to virtually and physically interact and communicate with its stakeholders and other corporate bodies in and outside the country to build a dynamic set of relations. This reality parallels PR as a strategic tool which needs to be enhanced.

Besides, owing to expansion in staff and students population, communication effectiveness and efficiency has also become a formidable task for most universities. However, a study by Boakye (2012) stated that PR in tertiary institutions are not accorded the status that will make them part of the decision-making of the university. This gives an impression of the insignificance of their function as role players in the

management of Universities. In Ghana, although educational institutions have public relations department and units, they have not been accorded the same status as other departments (Aikin & Adu-Oppong, 2016). Added to this is the lack of literature in this area and especially, among the Technical Universities in Ghana (Aikins & Adu-Oppong, 2015). Previous research by Lekanić, Bešić, Vukašinović and Bešić (2016) indicated that public relations in the educational sector is neglected in research. Notwithstanding, a critical look at educational institutions reveal that public relations is required to perform specific responsibilities that ensure the achievement of the goals of the institution involved. This motivated the researcher to embark on this study.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to examine public relations practice in higher educational institutions in Ghana with a focus on Sunyani Technical University. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives.

1. To examine the role of PR in improving communication at Sunyani Technical University
2. To assess the impact of public relations practice on students' patronage of the university
3. To determine the strategies for maintaining effective PR in the university

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the role of public relations practice in improving communication at Sunyani Technical University?
2. What is the impact of public relations practice on students' patronage of the university?

3. What strategies could be adopted to ensure successful public relations practice in the university?

Significance of the Study

All members of the university, especially those in leadership, management and supervisory positions have public relations roles to play, all of which are coordinated by the public relations practitioner. Examining the strategies adopted by management and the PR department to maintain PR would, therefore, enlighten various stakeholders on how management coordinates with the PR department. It will also inform both the management and the PR department on the relevance of their coordination towards the achievements of the goal of the Sunyani Technical University.

Scope of the Study

The study examines public relations at Sunyani Technical University. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the role of public relations practices in improving communication of the university, ascertain the impact of public relations practices on students' patronage of the university, and identify strategies could be adopted to maintain adequate public relations practices in the university. Geographically, the study targets first-year students and the employees of Sunyani Technical University.

Organisation of the Study

This study is organised into five main chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of the study. This chapter covers the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research objectives and questions for the study, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study and the organisation of the study. In chapter two, along with outlining the theoretical bases of this study is the conceptual and empirical reviews of the study. The conceptual reviews entail the various concepts underlining

PR, the impact of PR practice in tertiary institutions, the challenges affecting the PR role and strategies for maintaining effective PR practice. Chapter three lays out the research design and methodology of the study. The research design and methodology for the study are justified and explained. Chapter four presents and discusses the findings of the study that emerged from the research. The final chapter, which is chapter five, gives the summary, conclusions and recommendations for the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The study looked at a review of the various literature on public relations. The chapter is organised into two main aspects; the empirical review and the theoretical framework. The review examined studies that have been conducted on the topic, and they are reviewed following the objectives of the study. The theoretical review contained the theories that underpin the work and the justifications for selecting the theories.

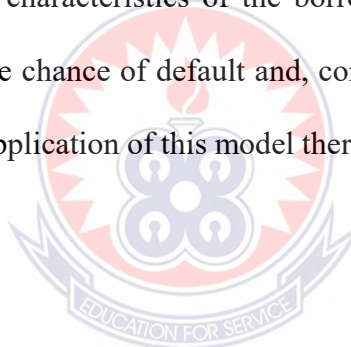
Empirical Review

Role of Public Relations in Educational Institutions

Several researchers have studied the roles of PR. Singh and Masuku (2014) conducted a study to find out the role and position of public relations in the management of education institution (university) to achieving its objectives. The study evaluated the performance of public relations as part of management. A qualitative descriptive research method was adopted with the study subjects being the Mahendradatta University Public Relations and internal stakeholders. Data were drawn from interviews with the help of an interview guide. The result of the research shows that the role of public relations tends to reflect technician roles with little communication facilitator roles. This role and position was influenced by the rigid rules relating to the organisation and work procedures endorsed by the government. The study also found that the most challenging obstacle for the PR is limited resources.

Axelsson and Nordberg (2005) investigated agencies' view of public relations role relative to traditional advertising in the introduction phase of a new brand. The authors used a qualitative study where in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with

three participants with experience and knowledge within the PR and the traditional advertising industry. The study found that PR is more effective when it comes to credibility, cost, and clutter. However, a major drawback was the control. Also, one has to consider the attributes of the brand since there are brands that are more PR “friendly” than others. This study was conducted in the communication industry which has a different setup to that of educational institutions and hence its outcome may not be applicable to the educational setup. For example, the adoption of the 5C model as theoretical bases for the study cannot be applied in educational institutions since educational institutions do not exist to make profits. The five Cs of credit is a system used by lenders to gauge the creditworthiness of potential borrowers (Kagan, 2019). The system weighs five characteristics of the borrower and conditions of the loan, attempting to estimate the chance of default and, consequently, the risk of a financial loss for the lender. The application of this model therefore do not fit appropriately in to the educational system.



Frederick (2012) sought to assess the contribution of public relations practice in achieving organisational goals in selected private tertiary institutions in the Ashanti Region. The study used Christian Service University College, Ghana Baptist University College, Garden City University College and University College of Management Studies as selected cases. The study found that three out of the four selected private tertiary institutions do not have a public relations department. The study also found that all four tertiary institutions agree that public relations is very important in dealing with the external and internal publics of the various universities in achieving the organisational goals. Among the stated functions were that the PR serves as a mouthpiece for their institutions, are responsible for organising programmes for their

universities, have oversight responsibility of publicising their universities, responsible for media relations and alumni relations, manage the notice boards and perform protocol functions. This study used only five participants for the study which was too limited for the four selected tertiary institutions.

In a study of staff perception of the Public Relations outfit of the University of Education Boateng (2015) found that Public Relations Officers' roles involve receiving visitors and seeing to their wellbeing, seeing of people and welcoming them at the Airport and seeing to funeral matters, among others. The study also found that staff of UEW did not know that the Public Relations Officer is the mouthpiece of the University. The researcher recommended that the Public Relations Officer should be involved more in decision making and he also should occupy its proper position of a Deputy Registrar in the organisational structure and must report directly to the Vice-Chancellor. Again, as part of decision making, the Public Relations Officer must have the capacity to interpret the University's policies and programmes as well as coordinate students' activities and be responsible for alumni matters among others.

According to Wu and Baah-Boakye (2009), public relations executives above the position of head of a department level had no problem getting access to management and also being consulted frequently by management on corporate policies. Only a few public executives of the status of heads of department and below enjoy that privilege. This was a major finding in a study on the attitude of management towards public relations practice in ten organisations in Accra.

Using a modern telecommunications organisation as a case study, Adjei (2015) assessed the role of public relations as a strategic function. This study sought to assess how PR contributes to the growth and success of Rlg, a modern communications company. Excellence theory and document analysis were employed as the major theoretical and methodological tools respectively. The qualitative study discovered that the PR department of Rlg plays predominantly a strategic managerial role which has an impact on the overall strategy of the organisation. The department, therefore, contributed to the organisational effectiveness and excellence. The study recommended that the organisation employ practitioners who have formal education in public relations.

In another study, Wu and Baah-Boakye (2009) after surveying 64 public relations practitioners, concluded that PR is moving towards professionalism in Ghana because practitioners are utilising research as a tool. In a research conducted in Singapore by Yeo (2009), examining the role of senior PR practitioners in Singapore and the value that adds to the organisation, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 38 departmental heads. It was revealed that although top communication practitioners were operating strategically and had direct access to senior management, the practitioners lacked the requisite strategic knowledge to enact the role and were concentrating on the technical work only. The research recommended that the PR practitioner should be fully equipped with relevant academic knowledge of what makes communication excellent.

Steyn (2005) established a benchmark regarding what CEOs expected the most of senior PR practitioners. It emerged that, the PR strategists' role at the macro level of the organisation is to identify strategic stakeholders and their concerns; identify the

public that is affected by key organisational policies and issues, and determine the consequences of organisational policies and strategies on the strategic stakeholders. Accordingly, the role of the PR strategist from the CEO's perspective includes feeding this strategic information into the organisation's strategy-making processes. In so doing influence top management decisions on the organisation's attitude towards, and communication with, strategic stakeholders. According to the study, the PR manager is expected to take responsibility for developing a communication strategy that supports corporate strategy and managing the planning, implementation and evaluation of communication plans and programmes. The role of the technician was conceptualised as creating communication products that implement policy decisions made by others. Whereas most research on PR roles are on self-reports from the perspective of the PR practitioner, this study provided both the theoretical and empirical perspective of the chief executive as the 'role sender'. Shared expectation between the dominant coalition and the communication function is essential to have an excellent communication unit.

Impact of PR on Institutions and Organisations

Onsongo, Mberia and Jjuuko (2017) investigated the contribution of public relations practice to organisational effectiveness in private universities in Rwanda. The study focused on the current execution of public relations activities and how they enhance the organisational effectiveness of private universities. The researchers based this study on the excellence and the systems theories of public relations and the strategic constituents models of organisational effectiveness. The study also relied on quantitative descriptive survey design and analysed the data using the SPSS software. The findings revealed that PR had a high positive influence on organisational effectiveness. The enhancement of PR practice in private universities to the Excellency theory standards enables PR practitioners to contribute to the effectiveness of institutions.

Gqamane (2010) suggested that public relations practitioners should place their focus on studying and understanding organisational relationships. The purpose and direction of an organisation are affected by the various links that it has with key constituents in its environment. Aikin and Adu-Oppong (2016), therefore, suggest that the relational perspective of public relations proposes that the primary purpose of public relations' professionals in the organisation is to build sustainable and long-term relationships with key stakeholders in the organisation's environment. These relationships should be managed so that the public and the organisation's interests are balanced.

Axelsson and Nordberg (2005) reinforce that public relations cover the daily exchange of information to manage all corporate communications including marketing activities. This view is reinforced by Teresa (2017) who state that public relations play a managerial role to develop strategies to maintain relations with public groups to gain public trust and mutual understanding.

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst or starburst design. Below the sunburst, there are two stylized human figures holding hands, symbolizing unity or service. The text 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA' is written around the top inner edge of the circle, and 'EDUCATION FOR SERVICE' is written around the bottom inner edge.

Stroh (2007) argues that public relations should be the umbrella function that manages the communication between an organisation and its publics to build and enhance healthy relationships to the benefit of all parties involved. Therefore, this view of relationships, being at the centre of the function of public relations, can be seen as one of the essential ingredients for an effective organisation. This perspective puts public relations on the level of a strategic management function because it can influence the way stakeholders support an organisation's goals. Ledingham (2003) reinforce that public relations' professionals add value to an organisation when they develop cooperative relationships with all publics affected by organisational behaviours, not just

those who give the organisation something in return. Apart from all the other activities of the public relations function, such as community relations, fundraising, crisis communication, and corporate social responsibility, cooperative relationships are essential if organisations are to be socially responsible and to add value to society as well as to clients. The operational role is responsible for preparing means of communication for the organisation to help the organisation formulate its communication strategies. This role is also concerned with communication plans developed by others and is aimed only at the implementation and evaluation of the communication process. The reflective role is there to analyse changing standards and values in society and discuss these with members of the organisation to adjust the rules and benefits of the organisation.

Strategies for Effective PR

The challenges for public relations practitioners in educational institutions are evident in previous studies. Public Relations can therefore not be overlooked in the management of Sunyani Technical University. Boateng (2015) states that University Relations Offices (URO) are confronted with many problems that hinder their effective performance. The most important of which was access to funding. More often than not, funds for PR activities are made available to the office much later than it should be to make such activities meaningful and effective.

Aikin and Adu-Oppong (2016) examined the extent of the practice of public relations as a tool for facilitating the achievement of the objectives of the University of Education, Winneba. Data for the study was collected from a sample of One Hundred and Fifty (150) respondents sampled from the staff of the University. Findings from the study showed that the University's public relations department is poorly resourced to

perform its functions. Among the challenges militating against its operations are limited telecommunication equipment, lack of official means of transportation and lack of trained personnel. Furthermore, the study revealed that the public relations position is neither accorded the same status as other senior management positions nor involved adequately in decision making.

Johansson and Larsson (2015) identified the lack of managerial education for PR practitioners as one of the eight challenges to public relations being accepted as a mainstream managerial function within an organisation. The other seven challenges are: (a) the lack of a consensus on what the term PR means and the controversy over how the boundaries of the discipline or function should be defined, (b) ignorance of the value of PR efforts to the organisation, (c) the lack of a managerial function that is formally recognised within the organisation, (d) overlap and /or encroachment of PR functions and roles by other managerial functions, (e) the size of the PR function and presence in most organisations, (f) the wide variety of PR roles and functions, (g) varied background of PR practitioners with most of them not having any education in PR or any related course like journalism. According to the writers, this is why senior practitioners have often struggled to be accepted as needing to be a part of the dominant coalition.

Odongo (2009) explored PR in the education sector in Kenya, with specific attention to strategies, roles and challenges in the management, growth and the development of middle-level colleges in Kenya. It applied descriptive approach where questionnaires were used to collect data from 60 respondents from Orthodox College of Africa. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics comprising mainly tables and

percentages. The findings were that PR was a central factor in the management of the institution. The challenges that affect effective PR practice include lack of financial allocation, lack of management goodwill, poor planning and coordination and confusion of PR roles with other functionalities.

In another development, Dornyo (2015) used the excellence theory to examine public relations practice in two private universities (Islamic University College and Valley View University) in Ghana. The study adopted in-depth qualitative interviews to find out from the communication practitioners from these institutions how they managed communication at their respective universities; the kinds of communicator roles they performed; and the models of public relations they applied in their works. The results showed that public relations practitioners largely failed to strategically manage communication in their institutions. Media relations emerged as the dominant role these communicators performed. The overemphasis on media relations made the public relations managers of the two institutions mostly apply one-way public information model in their communication processes to the detriment of the more acceptable two-way symmetrical model.

Earlier researchers such as Josan (2010), Grunig (2011) and Smith (2013) identified four main strategies for effective public relations. They classified these strategies as formative research, strategy formation, tactics and evaluation research. In gathering and analysing the formative research, the PR officer needs to take three main steps; analyse the situation, analyse the organisation and analyse the publics. This goal is rooted in the organisation's mission or vision, and the objective emerges from the organisational goals. Strategic public relations is focused on achieving goals and objectives that

contribute to the overall purpose and mission of an organization. The strategy formation primarily composed of four steps: using research to define the problem or situation, developing objectives and strategies that address the situation, implementing the strategies, and then measuring the results of the public relations efforts. Public relations practitioners may be tempted to start with tactics such as press releases, a blog, an event, and so on; but these first should be determined by research, to help inform the overall goals and strategies of the function, otherwise they may be wasted efforts. The evaluation research concerns defining the benchmark, selecting the tools for the process, analyse the data, draw actionable conclusions and make recommendations.

In his research, Josan (2010) advocated that organisations can use the classic - traditional model centred on institutional image, maintaining certain equilibrium in relationship between the public and institutions or strategies to obtain a high awareness through public advocacy and social media, or, even, to influence policy and legislative environment through lobby activities. Using any of these two strategies requires caution by the practitioners because in the non-profit sector, Public Relations campaigns are context sensitive, directed by the target audience characteristics and, especially, by the needs that audience is aware or not.

In another development, Grunig and Grunig (2000) established the case for public relations as a critical component of an organisation's strategic management processes and the subsequent strategic management of public relations in an effective organisation. Qualitative and quantitative results of the IABC Research Foundation's Excellence project, presented next, and used one of the theoretical basis of this study confirmed the importance of strategic public relations in helping make organisations effective. The involvement of public relations in strategic management consistently was

the best predictor of excellent public relations in the 323 organisations studied. Both CEOs and communication managers in organisations with excellent public relations departments believed the function contributes more to organisational effectiveness than did those with less-excellent departments.

Theoretical Framework

The study utilised the excellence theory and the system theory as its framework. These theories are explained below.

The Excellence Theory

The Excellence theory is a general theory of public relations that specifies how public relations makes organisations more effective, how it is organised and managed and how the monetary value of public relations can be determined (Onsongo et al., 2017). The Excellence Theory explained that the cost of public relations lies in organisation-public relations (Mitrović & Drača, 2013). A good relationship with strategic publics is helpful for an organisation to develop and achieve goals desired by both the organisation and its publics, reduce costs of negative publicity, and increase revenue by providing products and services needed by stakeholders. Hence, in the Sunyani Technical University, its development and continued existence is reliant on the production of quality graduates to the society and maintaining a good relationship with all its stakeholders. A better understanding of its stakeholders and how these stakeholders can be served better will help in the understanding of the social responsibility of the university to its stakeholders.

To maximise the value of public relations, public relations must identify strategic publics and build long-term relationships with them through regular communication

programmes. According to Axelsson and Nordberg (2005), the Excellence study identified characteristics of effective public relations in four major categories:

1. Empowerment of public relations function: an effective organisation must empower public relations as a critical management function
2. Communicator roles: let public relations executives play a managerial position as well as an administrative role
3. An organisation of communication function: public relations should be an integrated communication function and separate from instead of being sublimated to marketing or other management functions
4. Public relations models: effect organisation should base its internal and external communication and relationship building on the two-way symmetrical model.

That is to say, organisations especially those running open systems like Sunyani Technical University should relate with their stakeholders to help create a favourable image. This will foster a sense of belonging for the stakeholders and therefore create a platform for dialogue between the university and the stakeholders. It will also build an acceptable image for the university and create a favourable corporate image which will foster sustainability.

Systems Theory

The work of Knight (1986) recognised the need of an organisation to interact with its external environment, unlike what was proposed by classical school theorists like Max Weber, F. Taylor and Fayol who viewed the organisation as a closed system. To him, for the survival of an organisation like the way living organism survives, the organism should operate in an open system and interact with their environment. An open system

changes the way of thinking about organisational management from a mechanical point of view of the organisation.

The case study which is Sunyani Technical University is an example of an open system as it receives inputs and gives outputs to the environment. Its survival is dependent upon a series of exchange and the continual interaction with the environment which gives rise to some broader responsibilities to society in general. Things like technology, social and economic phenomena are not static but are always changing. Hence Sunyani Technical University needs to adapt, not only to survive but to produce graduates who can fit into the current developmental world.

The management of organisations, notwithstanding, consist of various internal subsystems that need to be coordinated continuously together so that they all work towards the achievement of the common goal of the firm and to ensure that all these systems operations are aligned with each other. As a company grows, its internal systems evolve and become more complex, and hence there is a need for effective coordination among all these systems for the production process (Ojogwu, 2017). These interdependencies can quickly become so complicated that a minor event in one subsystem may amplify into severe unintended consequences elsewhere in the organisation. No organisation operates in a vacuum but works to be related to and also associated with other companies within the ecosystem. In systems theory, PR practitioners are thought to be boundary spanners, straddling the edge of an organisation; looking both inside and outside of an organisation (Bell, 1980). PR practitioners, therefore, play the middlemen between the organisation and the environment in an open system.

The PR practitioner plays a mirror role which is giving the organisation an outside perspective and the window function which is to take to the external environment the viewpoints of the organisation. This helps in making strategic decisions with the position of the public in mind. However, the following subtopics are the essential components of a system.

- i. Inputs - Inputs deals with the contribution of variables such as people, capital, management, skills and many others in the ecosystem to allow for smooth achievement of a task. In the Sunyani Technical Institution, the input constitutes the students. These inputs are needed for Sunyani Technical University to function effectively and hence the PR of the university need to take cognisance of this and work towards sustenance of the inputs to the university at all time.
- ii. Transformation process – Transformations are the changes exerted on the inputs received to produce outputs. The focus of Sunyani Technical University is a production of quality graduates and research findings for the society. Transformation processes, therefore, include education development, education assessment, research development and research assessment at the university. Through proper educational management, the university can produce quality outcomes for the society.
- iii. External variable – The external variable is any variable operating from the external environment. The role of the external variable is very critical since it acts to transform the input into an accepted output appropriately. In the university, this comprises of the influences from the educational stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, other universities in and outside Ghana, institutions such as NAGRAT and GNAT and the media. All these stakeholders,

the PR must ensure a good relationship and source information for the smooth run of the university.

- iv. Outputs – When inputs from the internal and external variables are coordinated, they interact and give out an output. Managerial functions mostly correlate the inputs and outputs variables. Usually, outputs vary depending on the type of organisation, the purpose and objective of the organisation and the variety of input variables available. The final outcomes of the university, are graduates with desirable quality and quality research outcomes for the society.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology employed in the study. It gives details on sampling processes, data collection procedures and data analysis.

Research Design

Research designs are the blueprints of any research; it seeks to highlight which questions to study, relevant information, what information to gather, and how to examine the outcomes (Bryman, 2013). A qualitative research approach was followed in the collection and analysis of the data. Qualitative research is defined as an approach to empirical inquiry that collects, analyses, and displays data in narrative rather than in numbers (Cresswell, 2009). Information gathered qualitatively is restricted to the setting in which it was obtained. It cannot be generalised. Thus, the qualitative method was most suitable for this study because Heath (2005) emphasises that a large part of public relations research is found within the realm of qualitative research. Also, Carson *et al.* (2001) argue that the qualitative research method allows flexibility and variation in a study of a complex phenomenon in a dynamic environment. Since the qualitative research allows a large amount of flexibility and variety, the qualitative research also enables researchers some amount of freedom when analysing the results from the study. Elo and Kyngäs (2008) emphasised that qualitative studies do not generate data that can be used in statistical procedures that enable generalisations of a population. The qualitative approach was chosen for this study because it enabled the researcher to collect rich data. According to Schreier (2014), the wealth of detail provided by qualitative interviews serve as a significant advantage.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Lunet (2012) stated that the sample size depends on the nature of the subjects under study, the kind of data to be elicited, the quality of the analysis to be carried out and the availability of funds for the study. The study employed the purposive sampling method to select the needed sample size.

The purposive sampling procedures were followed to select workers at the registry, heads of department and other management staff of the Sunyani Technical University. A total number of 35 employees were selected. These comprised 15 employees at the registry and 16 departmental heads (Pharmacy Technician, Hospitality and Tourism, General Agriculture, Computer Science, Building Technology, electrical and Electronic Engineering, Visual and Industrial Art, Woodwork Technology, Accountancy, Communication Studies, Marketing, Procurement and Supply Chain Management, Secretariat and Management Studies, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Material Engineering), 4 Faculty Deans (Applied Science and Technology, Building Environment and Applied Art, Business and Management and Engineering). These are people who are involved in developing and maintaining a positive image for the University and are also involved in media relations, writing, publications and documentation, government relations/affairs, public affairs, special public relations, special events, international relations, outreach programmes and marketing communication/development. Their roles either directly or indirectly affect public relations; both internal and external in the university.

Data Collection Methods

In collecting data for the study, several procedures were followed. First, the researcher contacted the Principal of Sunyani Technical University personally and sought permission for the research, and also assisted in communicating the objectives to the

staff. A letter introducing the researcher as a student was taken from the University of Winneba and was shown to individuals partaking in the study for consideration to source interview data from them. Every effort was made to protect the anonymity of the participants as well as the confidentiality of their responses.

Field notes, as well as audio recordings of the interviews were done. The field notes were essential and took into consideration non-verbal cues to add more meanings to the recorded data. The study included non-verbal cues in the transcript - silence may communicate embarrassment or emotional distress, or just a pause for thought. In this consideration, the participants' privacy is sourced during the procedure. The researcher also ensured that the identities of the research participants were not exposed or could be traced to any third party. The study avoided any descriptive information that could lead to the possible identification of participants. Also, the consent of participants is a crucial factor, and this is spelt out in the interview likewise.

Data Processing and Analysis

The qualitative data collected from the field through the use of structured interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. The study sought relationships between various themes that have been identified to the research objectives. The interviews were tape recorded; also, there were handwritten field notes. This data were first transcribed and organised into sections. This was followed by familiarisation where the researcher repeatedly listened to the recorded tapes, read and re-read the notes taken, making memos and summaries before the formal analysis. After familiarisation with the material, the researcher did some preliminary coding which serves to start the process of categorising and analysing the data. At this stage, the data had been broken down into manageable sections, and the researcher sorted and sifted them, searching for types,

classes, sequences, processes, patterns or wholes. The researcher then began to identify themes or new concepts and was engaged in re-coding to develop more well-defined categories based on the objectives of the study.

Chapter Summary

The chapter outlined the research methodology used to explore the research questions in this study. It provided the justifications for the various research methods adopted. The research design, sampling strategies, research procedures for data collection, ethical considerations and data analysis were elaborated. The results and interpretations of the study are detailed in the next chapter.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The chapter consists of the findings and the analysis of the data collected. The data presented were gathered using interview guide.

Bio-Data of the Participants

Staff Number of Years with University

The number of years, employees have worked with the Sunyani Technical University was captured and indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Working Experience of Staff

Department	Freq	Percen (%)
2 years and less	2	5.7
3 – 4 years	5	14.3
5 – 6 years	17	48.6
7 – 8 years	10	28.6
9 – 10 years	0	0.0
Greater than 10 years	1	2.8
Total	35	100

Field Survey, (2018).

From the results indicated, majority of the participants have worked with the institution for the past eight years with those serving 5 – 6 years in the institution being the majority with 17 participants constituting 48.6% of the study. This is followed by employees who have spent 7 – 8 years in the institution. This implies a lot of the participants have worked with the institution for long, hence are abreast of the various functions and roles of the PR unit.

Role of Public Relations in improving Communication at the Sunyani Technical University

From the responses, all the participants (35 in number) indicated their awareness of the Public Relation Unit of the University. Outcome of the results indicating the roles of the public relations in improving communication at the Sunyani Technical University are indicated in Table 2 below. Participants were coded from STAFF1-STAFF35 corresponding to “Staff 1” to “Staff 35”.

Table 2: Role of Public Relations to maintaining Good Relations within the University

Responses	Participants Code
Organising events within University	STAFF1, STAFF5, STAFF20, STAFF21, STAFF34
Dissemination of information usually coming from the management	STAFF2, STAFF6, STAFF4, STAFF10, STAFF12, STAFF15, STAFF16, STAFF17, STAFF18, STAFF19, STAFF20, STAFF21, STAFF25, STAFF27, STAFF30, STAFF3, STAFF14, STAFF8, STAFF11, STAFF9, STAFF13, STAFF14
Represents the organisation at events and meetings	STAFF3, STAFF6, STAFF8, STAFF18, STAFF26, STAFF24, STAFF5, STAFF20, STAFF22, STAFF23, STAFF28, STAFF29
Creates opportunities for management to communicate with internal and external publics	STAFF7, STAFF21, STAFF30, STAFF16, STAFF7, STAFF13
Producing the in-house journals	STAFF1, STAFF2, STAFF5, STAFF10, STAFF12, STAFF15, STAFF16, STAFF17, STAFF20, STAFF21, STAFF22, STAFF23, STAFF32, STAFF34

(Source: Interview Data, 2018)

The interview results gathered indicate that majority of the employees sees the PR unit as responsible for the dissemination of information from management of the University. Another response was the fact that the PR represents the University at events and meetings. Some others indicated that the PR creates opportunities for management to communicate with internal and external publics as well as responsible for the

organisation of events within the University. This results were not surprising because the PR unit works under the Registry and hence report through the Registrar. This assertion confirms an earlier study by Aikin and Adu-Oppong (2016) who conducted their study in Ghana. Their study found that, Public Relations practice in educational institutions is founded on dissemination of information usually coming from the management of which the Public Relations practitioner is not part.

According to Gqamane (2010), an essential role of the Public Relation Officer is to communicate the strategic vision of the institution to the various stakeholders. Hence, in the Sunyani Technical University, the Public Relation unit among other functions, exist to carry the corporate vision of the institution to its stakeholders. The role of the PR unit as a liaison was also heightened in the study. This means that the PR unit represents the University at events and meetings. PR serves as a mouthpiece for their institutions, are responsible for organising programmes for their universities. Axelsson and Nordberg (2005) reinforce that public relations in organisations are the category that covers the routine of the daily exchange of information to manage all corporate communication including marketing activities. Similarly, participants indicated the role of the PR unit as an organiser of events within the University. Through this function, the PR unit creates opportunities for management to communicate with both internal and external stakeholders and the general public. This, therefore, implies that public relations can play a managerial role within an organisation, a position of managing relationships between an organisation and its stakeholders and maintaining open communication amongst the various stakeholders.

With this role, participants indicated that the PR unit is responsible for writing press releases. These releases covers the various functions of the University as well as clarification of messages. Mitrovi and Dra (2013) reinforce that there is enormous variety within these roles. A PR officer employed for their writing skills may be involved in a range of work such as writing press releases, speech writing, writing for the web, or may be required in just one job, for example producing the in-house journals. Another role is the advertising and portraying the good image of the school to outsiders. As stated by STAFF9,

The PR unit as well as the PR Officer has the oversight responsibility of publicising the Technical University (STAFF9).

In this era of globalisation, there is the need for the Technical University to share its strategic vision and what we are doing to the world. Now the institution is not only subjected to internal environmental conditions but also to the international environment. There is therefore the need for publicity in the institution and this in no doubt is a role of the PR unit (STAFF23).

Participants also indicated the PR unit is responsible for media relations between the institution and the external media. In addition, the management of notice boards, relationship with alumni and performing protocol function were other roles stated by the participants. With the roles of the PR with industries, almost all participants stated that the PR unit functions to effectively manage and build a healthy relation with industry.

TVET education has suffered in this country a lot. The PR unit need to raise the image of this educational sector and create the awareness of

the relevance and importance of TVET education in the country. Quality graduates cannot be produced by only theoretical content in the classroom but also through industrial attachments with students. This explains that the link between Technical Universities and as such the Sunyani Technical University and the industry must be a strong one (STAFF19).

This view is shared by Stroh (2007) who argues that public relations should be the umbrella function that manages the communication between an organisation and its publics to build and enhance healthy relationships to the benefit of all parties involved. Therefore, this view of relationships, being at the centre of the function of public relations, can be seen as one of the essential ingredients for an effective organisation.

For the students, the study wanted to know the various channels that they receive information from the University. In response, they indicated through notice boards, their Students Representative Council (SRC), announcements through students' gathering and the media. Most of the students however, expressed dissatisfaction on the various ways the University communicate information to them. Students expressed interest in text messages and social media. They were also of the view that the university should strengthen the relations with their SRC so that whatever they do could be communicated through their student leadership.

Impact of Public Relations Practice on Students' Patronage of the University

Three main reasons were raised. The first was that the PR unit functions to give emphasis for technical education in the country.

The role of the PR to lift the image of this educational sector and create the awareness of the relevance and importance of TVET education will lead to increase in patronage by students and increase the priority of TVET education in our communities (STAFF19)

He added that there is a negative thinking about the image and status on technical education in the country and hence the PR unit is to look for a way of diverting this negative impression. When this happens, people confidence in the institution goes up and this has the tendency to increase students' patronage. In conformity with this assertion is a study by Amedorme et al. (2014). Their study indicated that practitioners of technical and vocational education and training in Ghana revealed that an inferiority complex is a challenge in the TVET sector. People who take the traditional academic path are held in higher esteem and earn higher than those who went through technical and vocational education and training. Hence, effective PR role will increase students' motivation and the public acceptance of the technical educational system.

Table 3: Impact of Public Relations Practice on Students' Patronage of the University

Responses	Participants Code
Increases the motivation of students to patronise the University	STAFF1, STAFF2, STAFF4, STAFF6, STAFF7, STAFF8, STAFF12, STAFF13, STAFF16, STAFF18, STAFF21, STAFF24, STAFF28, STAFF35
Through relationship with Alumni and students, more students are attracted to the school	STAFF3, STAFF10, STAFF15, STAFF20, STAFF22, STAFF26, STAFF27, STAFF30, STAFF32
Through press releases, organisation of web contents and social media and other technological tools, many people get to know the institution	STAFF5, STAFF9, STAFF14, STAFF17, STAFF19, STAFF23, STAFF25, STAFF34, STAFF31

(Source: Interview Data, 2018)

Another concept that was highlighted in the study function of the PR in maintaining effective link with students and Alumni. Participants believed that, this relationship benefits the institution since most of the people advertise the school and encourage others to patronise the institution.

With the advent of Social Media, the PR unit can take relationships with Alumni and students to a new level. The PR unit could start to harness the power of alumni through various networking platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter etc. by creating their alumni groups and profiles on them. A strong alumni association can be one of the biggest benefactors of an institution that can contribute towards various developmental activities of the institution. In this way the Sunyani Technical University could expand its infrastructure base that will allow it to take more students (STAFF2)

In addition, STAFF17 stated that

The role of PR unit in leveraging the Alumni and link with students can be beneficial to the institution. Alumni can play an active role in voluntary programmes like mentoring students in their areas of expertise. They could also play a significant role in contributing scholarships to deserving students. In this way, needy but brilliant students could be captured and this could lead to increase in students' patronage (STAFF17).

Maintaining a positive relationship with your alumni means that the messages they share about your institution will also be positive and current. As stated by STAFF27,

Your alumni are your international ambassadors. They take their knowledge of your institution to their hometowns and countries and into their professional

and social networks, constantly encouraging others to patronise and help the institution

Last but not the least, another impact of the PR unit that was indicated was that through press releases, organisation of web contents and social media and other technological tools, many people get to know the institution.

Challenges affecting Public Relation Practices in Sunyani Technical University

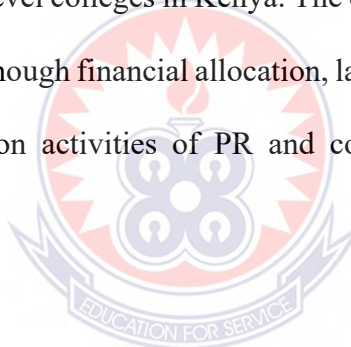
The categorisation of the responses are indicated in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Challenges affecting Public Relation Practices

Responses	Participants Code
Lack of Resources	STAFF1, STAFF2, STAFF3, STAFF4, STAFF5, STAFF6, STAFF7, STAFF8, STAFF10, STAFF12, STAFF13, STAFF14, STAFF15, STAFF18, STAFF19, STAFF21, STAFF22, STAFF23, STAFF25, STAFF27, STAFF28, STAFF29, STAFF34
Lack of understanding of the role of the PR unit	STAFF1, STAFF2, STAFF6, STAFF9, STAFF10, STAFF11, STAFF12, STAFF14, STAFF15, STAFF16, STAFF17, STAFF18, STAFF19, STAFF23, STAFF24, STAFF26, STAFF32, STAFF35
Lack of adequate knowledge	STAFF2, STAFF6, STAFF7, STAFF9, STAFF11, STAFF12, STAFF15
Public relations position is neither accorded the same status as other senior management position	STAFF7, STAFF23, STAFF33

The results indicate that almost all the participants cited lack of resources as a major challenge for the PR unit of Sunyani Technical University. Undoubtedly, the outcome is in conformity with several studies. Boateng (2015) states that the University Relations Offices (URO) is confronted with many problems that hinder the effective performance of its functions. The most important of which was lack of resources. The

URO lack adequate resource to ensure the efficient running of the office. They have no research staff, efficient phone system and depend on other offices for fax and e-mail facilities. Aikin and Adu-Oppong (2016) also examined the extent of the practice of public relations as a tool for facilitating the achievement of the objectives of the University of Education, Winneba. Findings from the study showed that the University's public relations department is poorly resourced to perform its functions. Among the challenges militating against its operations are limited telecommunication equipment, lack of official means of transportation and lack of trained personnel. In addition, Odongo (2009) explored the PR in the education sector in Kenya, with specific attention to strategies, roles and challenges in the management, growth and the development of middle-level colleges in Kenya. The challenges that affect effective PR practice include lack of enough financial allocation, lack of management goodwill, poor planning and coordination activities of PR and confusion of PR roles with other functionalities.



The next challenge was the Lack of understanding of the role or the PR unit. Mostly, there is the lack of a consensus on what the term PR means and the controversy over how the boundaries of the discipline or function should be defined. Tench and Yeomans (2006) argue that there is a lot of confusion about who does what in public relations. some organisations are still battling to position the discipline as the confusion between the public relations and the marketing functions still exists. It is, therefore, also important to make a distinction between the two disciplines to reflect the diverse view of their roles and their position within an organisation.

A few of the participants believed that the lack of adequate knowledge hampers the operations of the PR unit. As in any service business, an important part of establishing PR as a legitimate professional service comes from the hiring and retention of quality people. Although human resources represent over 50 per cent of costs, employee training accounts for less than 1 per cent of employee costs. This lack of training investment is acknowledged by the executives interviewed and who almost all expressed disappointment in the amount of training provided for their personnel. Developing effective recruitment and training programmes is particularly important given the PR industry's stated and apparently widespread desire to play an increasing role in strategy formulation

Furthermore, the study revealed that the public relations position is neither accorded the same status as other senior management positions nor involved adequately in decision making. Of the practitioners who were interviewed for this study, all indicated important changes occurring in the nature of competition in the PR industry.

Strategies for Maintaining Effective Public Relations in the University

In relation to this question, majority of participants indicated the use of information and communication technology in the public relation process. The effects of changing technology are of great concern to the PR industry. Engaging, rich media content including audio, video, images and links that tell a vivid story is more likely to be shared across social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Vine, Snapchat, Instagram and Pinterest, thereby allowing organisations to speak directly with their strategic publics without needing to go through the mainstream mass media (Smith, 2013). Not only does technology affect the type of PR being undertaken, it also affects

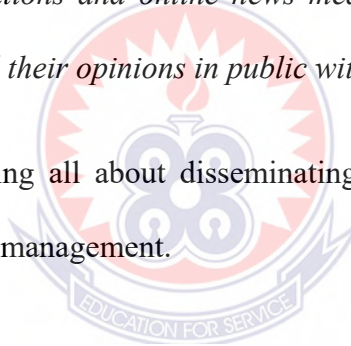
the means for communicating messages, and in fact constantly creates new areas of emphasis.

The primary purpose of PR is to communicate, hence the changes in technology have a particularly significant role in this industry. New technology affects almost every area of PR and the future prospects of PR. It is therefore necessary for the PR unit to take advantage of the benefits which these technologies offer.

(STAFF1)

The world is changing and the PR unit need to always move along. New technology and means of communication are emerging every day. Social media, blogs, online petitions and online news media and other applications allow people to channel their opinions in public with ease.” (STAFF12)

PR has moved from being all about disseminating information (press agency and publicity) to relationship management.



Another strategy is that PR unit should be resourced to perform effectively. Almost all the participants indicated that to maintain effective public relations, there is the need for the public relation unit to be resourced. In conformity with this findings, Stroh (2007) argues that public relations should be the umbrella function that manages the communication between an organisation and its publics to build and enhance healthy relationships to the benefit of all parties involved. Therefore, this view of relationships, being at the centre of the function of public relations, cannot be achieved without adequate resources for the PR unit.

Human resources is at the center of attracting and retaining talent, communicating internally to all members of any successful organisation regarding policies and programmes, as well as training, planning events and a host of additional responsibilities. This cannot be eliminated from the PR unit. Employees within this sector need constant training so they can be abreast with the current changes in the communication process. (STAFF28)

The above comment by STAFF28 indicate that training and constant development of the PR unit should be enhance. This assertion was also supported by participants.

The social media, for instance, is a relatively new but fast growing category of online interactive applications. The social media applications (Blogs, Online communities, social networks, online bulletin boards and content aggregators) are now evolving and new ones are emerging. This tool can be used as a marketing tool for the university. However, there is no doubt that knowledge and continual upgrade of ones understanding in this trend is required. Training and development should therefore be part of the PR unit. (STAFF5)

Another strategy that was indicated by STAFF22, was that the University Public Relations Unit should have a strategic plan. Creating an effective PR strategy requires a strong foundation and lots of pre-planning. But at the end it will assist and give directions to the unit.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter summarises the major findings of the study. The chapter also concludes the study and makes recommendations based on the findings.

Summary

The main objective of the study was to examine public relations practice in higher educational institutions in Ghana with a focus on Sunyani Technical University. The study adopted the qualitative research approach to meet the aim of the research. The study targeted students and employees of Sunyani Technical University. The data was analysed using thematic analysis.

Key Findings

Research question one sought to examine the role of PR in improving communication at Sunyani Technical University. The results indicated that employees see PR as responsible for the dissemination of information from management of the University. The PR department also creates opportunities for management to communicate with internal and external publics and they are responsible for the organisation of events within the University. The role of the PR unit as a liaison was also heightened in the study. This means that the PR unit represents the University at events and meetings. PR serves as a mouthpiece for their institutions. Similarly, the PR act as a unit as an organiser of events within the University. Through this function, the PR unit creates opportunities for management to communicate with both internal and external stakeholders and the general public. Another role is advertising, and image building to portray the good image of the university to outsiders. Participants also indicated the PR

unit is responsible for media relations between the institution and the external media. In addition, the management of notice boards, relationship with alumni and performing protocol functions were other roles stated by the participants.

Objective two sought to assess the impact of public relations practice on students' patronage of the university. The results indicated that the PR unit functions to give emphasis for technical education in the country. Hence, effective PR role will increase students' motivation and the public acceptance of the technical educational system. Another concept that was highlighted in the study function of the PR in maintaining effective link with students and Alumni. Participants believed that, this relationship benefits the institution since most of the people advertise the school and encourage others to patronise the institution.

Research question three examined the strategies for maintaining effective PR in the university. The results indicated that lack of resources, lack of understanding of the role of the PR unit and lack of a consensus on what the term PR means are among the challenges confronting the PR unit of the university. The study also revealed that the public relations position is neither accorded the same status as other senior management positions nor involved adequately in decision making. Among the strategies for maintaining effective PR in the university, participants indicated the use of information and communication technology in the public relations process. The engagement of the institution in rich media content including audio, video, images and links is more likely to be shared across social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Vine, Snapchat, Instagram and Pinterest, thereby allowing the institution to speak directly with their strategic publics without needing to go through the mainstream mass media.

In addition, the results indicated that, to maintain effective public relations, there is the need for the public relations unit to be resourced. Training and constant development of the PR unit was also recommended.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the role of the PR unit is that of a communication technician. The role is therefore output focus. The PR unit is not deeply involved in organisational decision making, but implements public relations programmes such as writing press releases, organising events or producing web content. Technicians usually do not get too involved in research or evaluation; they are the ‘doers’. This role increases students’ motivation and the public acceptance of the technical educational system and helps in increasing students’ patronage. The PR unit however, has challenges including lack of resources, lack of understanding of the role of the PR unit, lack of a consensus on what the term PR means and the lack of adequate knowledge hampering the operations of the PR unit.

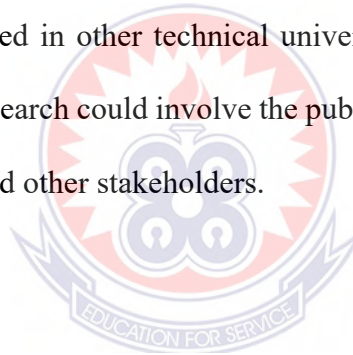
Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the role of the PR unit is that of a communication technician which is output focus. The study recommends that the PR unit be deeply involved in the decision making of the University. They should be involved in developing programmes to improve the university. The unit should act as a communication broker, maintaining two-way communication between the organisation and its publics, liaising, interpreting and mediating. They should act as counsellors or advisors on planning and implementation of programmes.

The study revealed that the challenges affecting the operations of the PR unit include lack of resources, lack of understanding of the role of the PR unit, the lack of a consensus on what the term PR means and the lack of adequate knowledge hampers the operations of the PR unit. This study recommends that technical universities should be seen as the resources required to solve their own challenges. The institution is built on the principle of creativity, innovation and practicality. There is therefore the need to utilize the existing assets and create an enabling environment to solve the challenges they are currently battling.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Since this study took place in the Sunyani Technical University, it is suggested that other studies be conducted in other technical universities to either confirm or refute these findings. Future research could involve the public and policy developers such the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders.



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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION - WINNEBA

1. Please, how long have you been in this University?

.....

2. Are you aware that the University has a Public Relation Unit?

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3. If Yes, how has the Public Relations Unit in the University enhanced good relationship

a. Within the University?

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b. With the media?

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c. With industry?

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4. How would you describe the role of public relations in the development of the University?

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5. In your opinion has the existence of a public relations unit enhanced students patronage of the University? Explain.

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6. What do you consider the major problems confronting the public relations unit of the University?

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7. What strategies do you recommend for maintaining effective PR in the University?

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