

# **A Study on Public Relations Environment in India**

**Prof. Mohit Sharma, Prof. Snehal Sharma, Bhoomika Katpara**

Assistant Professor and Research Scholar

St. Rock's College of Commerce and Science, Borivali (W), Mumbai, India

**Abstract:** *Public relations – both as a scholarly domain and as professional practice – is involved with ways to understand, inform, and intervene to adjust relationships between ideas, individuals, groups, and societies. As an interdisciplinary field, it seeks to influence the building, maintenance, and restoration of reputation through such methods as public affairs and issue management, risk and crisis communication, community building and corporate social responsibility, and rhetorical advocacy, thereby attempting to contribute to organisations and society at large. Looking to the future, public relations scholarship is evolving from its relatively restricted geographical beginnings in a few Western regions to a more robust and diverse global effort.*

**Keywords:** Public, relation, Environment, Organization

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Public relations (PR) is the practice of managing and disseminating information from an individual or an organization (such as a business, government agency, or a nonprofit organization) to the public in order to influence their perception. Public relations and publicity differ in that PR is controlled internally, whereas publicity is not controlled and contributed by external parties. Public relations may include an organization or individual gaining exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payment. The exposure is mostly media-based, and this differentiates it from advertising as a form of marketing communications. Public relations aims to create or obtain coverage for clients for free, also known as earned media, rather than paying for marketing or advertising also known as paid media. But in the early 21st century, advertising is also a part of broader PR activities.

An example of good public relations would be generating an article featuring a PR firm's client, rather than paying for the client to be advertised next to the article. The aim of public relations is to inform the public, prospective customers, investors, partners, employees, and other stakeholders, and persuade them to maintain a positive or favourable view about the organization, its leadership, products, or political decisions. Public relations professionals typically work for PR and marketing firms, businesses and companies, government, and public officials as public information officers and nongovernmental organizations, and nonprofit organizations. Jobs central to public relations include internal positions such as public relations coordinator, public relations specialist, and public relations manager, and outside agency positions such as account coordinator, account executive, account supervisor, and media relations manager.

Public relations specialists establish and maintain relationships with an organization's target audience, the media, relevant trade media, and other opinion leaders. Common responsibilities include designing communications campaigns, writing press releases and other content for news, working with the press, arranging interviews for company spokespeople, writing speeches for company leaders, acting as an organization's spokesperson, preparing clients for press conferences, media interviews and speeches, writing website and social media content, managing company reputation (crisis management), managing internal communications, and marketing activities like brand awareness and event management. Success in the field of public relations requires a deep understanding of the interests and concerns of each of the company's many stakeholders. The public relations professional must know how to effectively address those concerns using the most powerful tool of the public relations trade, which is publicity.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This practice by Regent University College and Ghana Telecom University College goes to support a study by Jefkins (2000) who observed that an ideal structure of the public relations department is independent and directly responsible to

the Chief Executive Officer. However, the practice at Methodist University College Is not consistent with the findings of Gruniget al.,(2006).

The PR managers in all the three universities also revealed that they participate in management decision making which is consistent with views from the extant literature (Peyronel and lawniczak, 2000). As a consequence, the public relations manager is believed to be given a seat on management advisory committee meetings and involved in decision making. However, we found that the public relations managers of the three universities are not represented on the Council, which is the highest decision-making body of the Universities. This is not consistent with modern views of corporate management which hold that reserving a seat for public relations managers at the corporate boardroom and involving them in strategy development is a logical first step for corporate reputation building (Nakra, 2000). Interviewees from the three universities contended that public relations is a very important information source within and outside the universities and help to build relationships with the universities' publics. They further stressed that the unit acts as an active force for corporate image building of the universities and without an effective and vibrant public relations unit, building relationships and managing misconceptions about the private universities will be difficult. This is in agreement with Jobber's (2001) assertion that a public relations' officer manages misconception for unfounded opinions not to tarnish the image or operations of the organization. Similarly, Well et al (2005) on the other hand, asserted that public relations objectives is to make changes in the public's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour related to a company, brand, or organization.

## 2.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- To study the organization's goals and values.
- To know the demographics, preferences, and behaviours of the target audience is crucial for tailoring messages and communication strategies that resonate with them.
- To study industry trends and competitors: Staying informed about industry trends and the activities of competitors allows PR practitioners to identify opportunities and threats, helping them develop effective strategies.
- To study public perception and sentiment.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is exploratory in nature and user technique of secondary research for the same. Thus the study is primarily based on secondary data collection from various sources viz. Books, journals, internet, etc.

## IV. THE SCOPE OF PUBLIC RELATION

Public relation is a window of the corporation through which management can monitor external changes and simultaneously a window through which society can affect corporate policy. Today most social conflicts are caused by changing values and higher expectation from the superiors. We find regular conflicts between employer-employee consumer-manufacturer, management-shareholders, citizens-government and so on due to misconception and misunderstandings. These are generally the major challenges where public relation practitioners can play a crucial role. They should get to know the psychology of the public mind and acquire skill in solving and also avoiding such conflicts. In our market economy there are information gaps which cannot be filled by the interaction of supply and demand via cost, wages or prices. Here public relations activity steps in. It provides relevant information on planning technical and organizational developments, inventions and their potential utilization, etc.

Current State of Public Relations in India: Public relations is a thriving profession in India. There are hundreds of large and small PR consultancies in the country, employing thousands of practitioners. Most companies in the private sector and almost all companies in the public sector have public relations departments. According to a survey conducted by the Associated Chamber of commerce and Industry in India (Assocham, 2012), the PR industry in India is growing at an annual rate of 32 percent. Many believe the definition of traditional PR has undergone a change. PR in its new avatar not just encompasses media relations and employee communication, but is used increasingly for strategic communication, brand building, customer relations and crisis management. From an executive function, PR is now becoming a part of the high-level management job touching upon the core values of an organization

PR in India is fast emerging as an institution especially with its growing acceptance as a skilled and specialized profession.

#### **V. FINDINGS**

Use humour: This can be a way to show your audience you care about their satisfaction more than completing a sale. It also can be a way to stand out from other messages because it's a unique approach.

Enhance anticipation: When launching a new product, consider publicising it early to enhance the anticipation. This could include running advertisements about what the product does, taking pre-orders and getting email lists ready to get consumers excited before release.

Design a competition: Consider hosting a competition or contest to engage consumers. This can help build brand awareness and allow you to create more loyalty within your target market.

Create photo opportunities: Photos can help make your content more memorable, so consider capturing pictures at your next event. This can highlight your brand's involvement in the community and help customers put a face to your brand's name.

Remember the holidays: Consider supporting charities around the holidays because this is a time of year when people are full of goodwill. This can help create a great image for your company as being generous.

#### **VI. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the study was to gain an insight into public relations practices and its associated challenges in private universities in Ghana. The study revealed that public relations managers occupy management positions in the universities and play major roles in disseminating information to the public in order to create a good image and good will for the universities. The Public relations departments play major roles in shaping public opinions about the universities. However, the study further shows that they were not represented at the council which is the highest decision-making body in the universities to enable them disseminate management's decisions to the university's publics. The study also revealed that public relations units of the universities utilize the university's websites as the tool in communicating with both internal and external publics. This supports a study conducted by Wright and Hinson (2010). Additionally, the study also established that the public relations units of private universities are not adequately resourced in terms of logistics, finance and personnel to perform effectively.

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