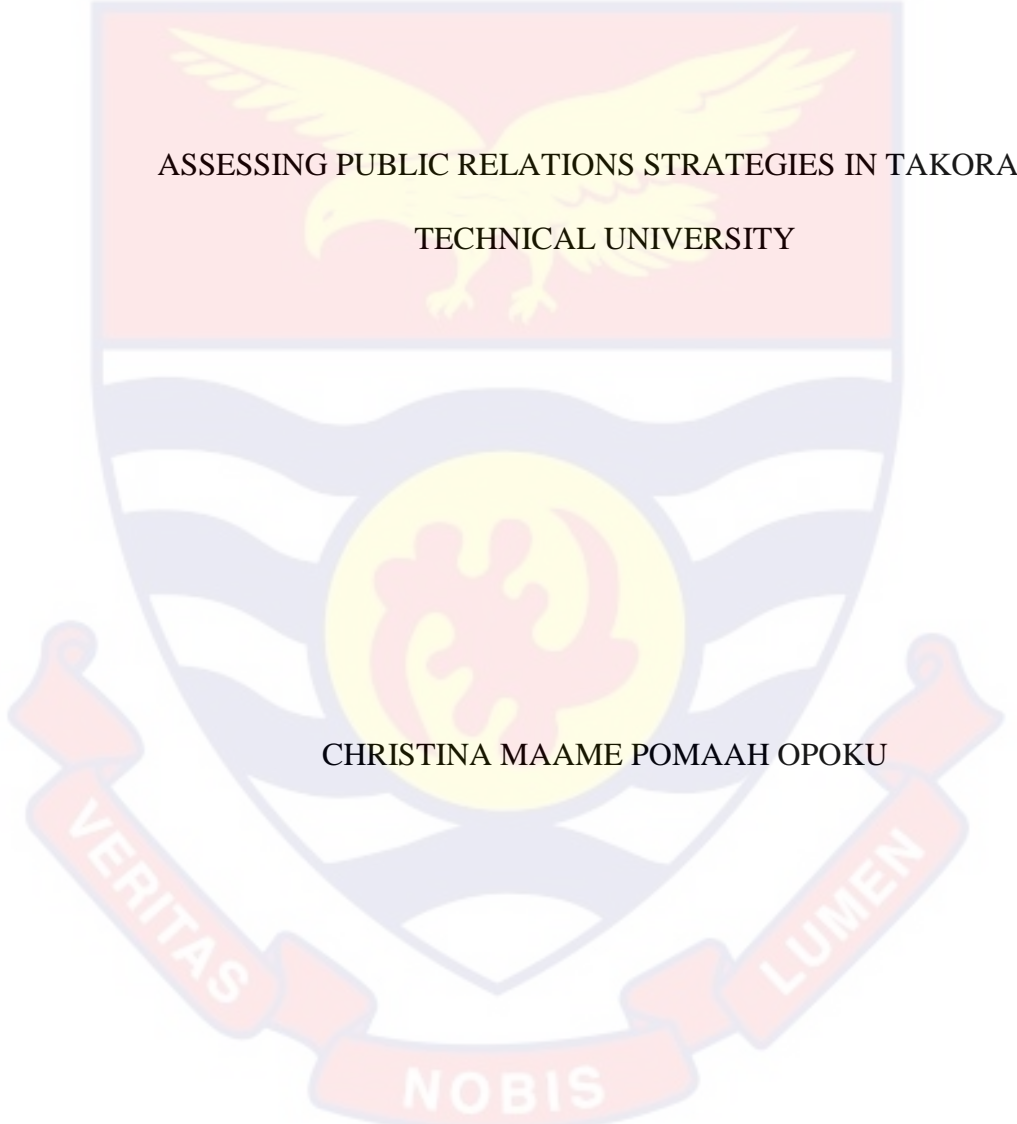


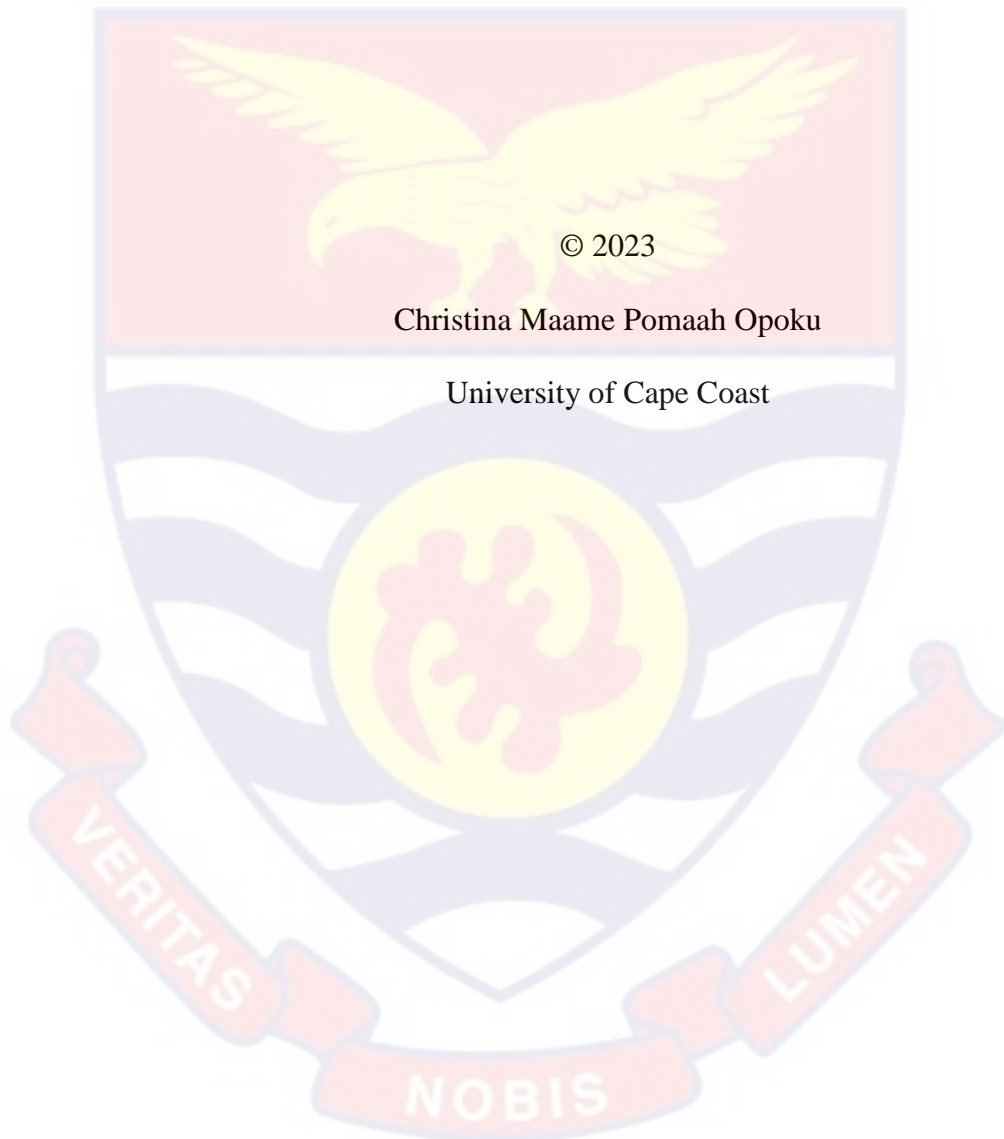
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



ASSESSING PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES IN TAKORADI
TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

CHRISTINA MAAME POMAAH OPOKU

2023



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ASSESSING PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES IN TAKORADI
TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY
CHRISTINA MAAME POMAAH OPOKU

Thesis submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
of the University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
award of Master of Philosophy in Administration in Higher Education

AUGUST 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature: Date.....

Name: Christina Maame Pomaah Opoku

Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised by the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature.....Date.....

Name: Dr. Alfred Ampah-Mensah

ABSTRACT

This study explored how important Public Relations strategies aid in the attainment of Takoradi Technical University's organizational goals. Specifically, the study assessed the public relations strategies employed at Takoradi Technical University, the roles public relations operations play in the attainment of the organizational goals, the challenges confronting Public Relations operations, and how important public relations has been in achieving the university's goals. The study adopted a qualitative approach using an exploratory research design. In all, 10 participants were selected using purposive and census sampling, and a semi-structured interview guide was used to acquire the primary data. The data were analysed using thematic content analysis. It was discovered that Takoradi Technical University employed many PR strategies that are used in the process of achieving organizational objectives. The results of the investigation also indicated that the TTU Department of Public Relations is responsible for coordinating information inside and outside of the academic community, engaging with the institution's alumni, plan and organize all public events for the university. The study revealed that the TTU PR directorate lacks Professional PR Practitioners. The findings revealed that the TTU PR directorate has helped improve the image and reputation of the university, and created a global brand for the university. The public relations departments of TTU should develop a comprehensive Strategic Public Relations Framework/Plan to assist in integrating all public relations operations for the achievement of the broader organizational goals.

KEYWORDS

Public Relations

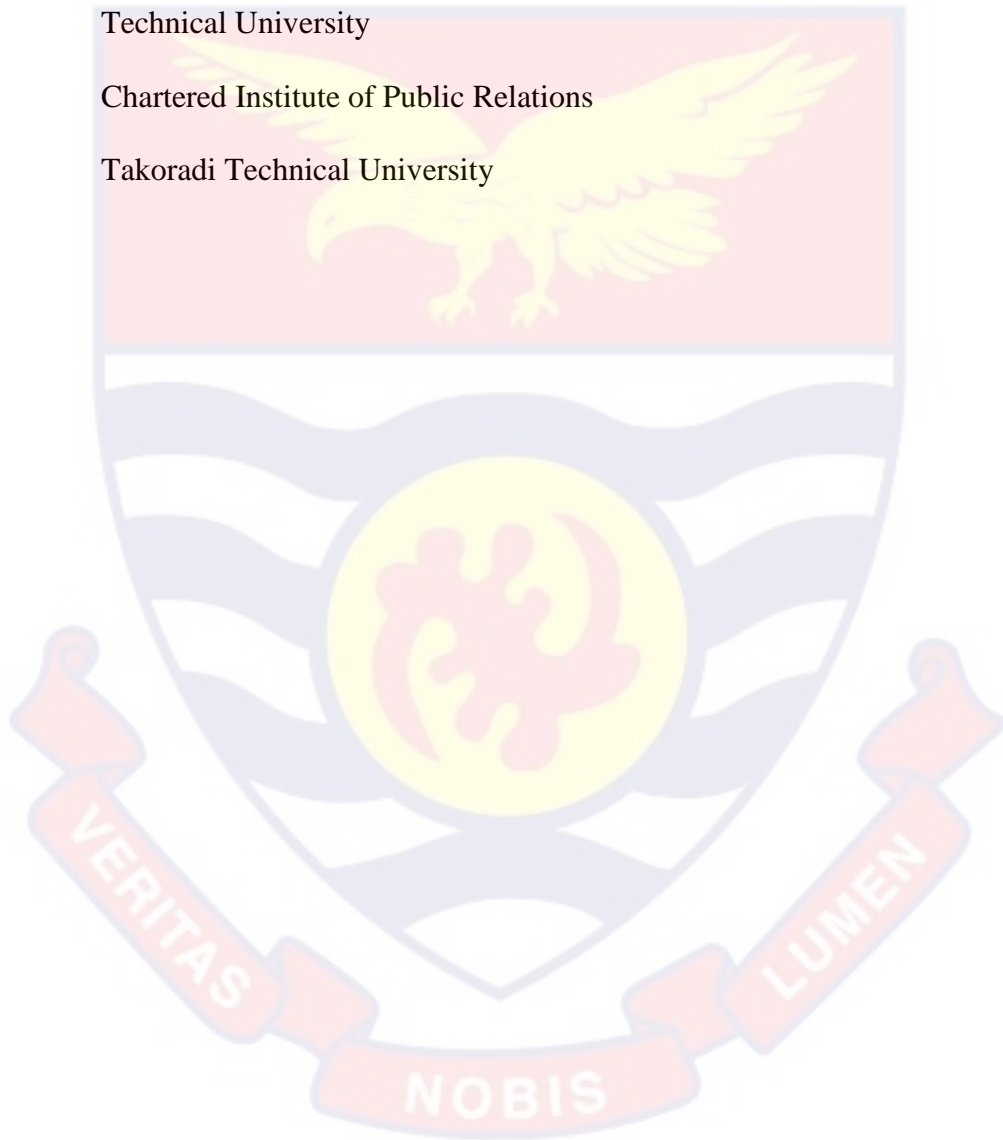
Public Relations Strategy

Organizational Goal

Technical University

Chartered Institute of Public Relations

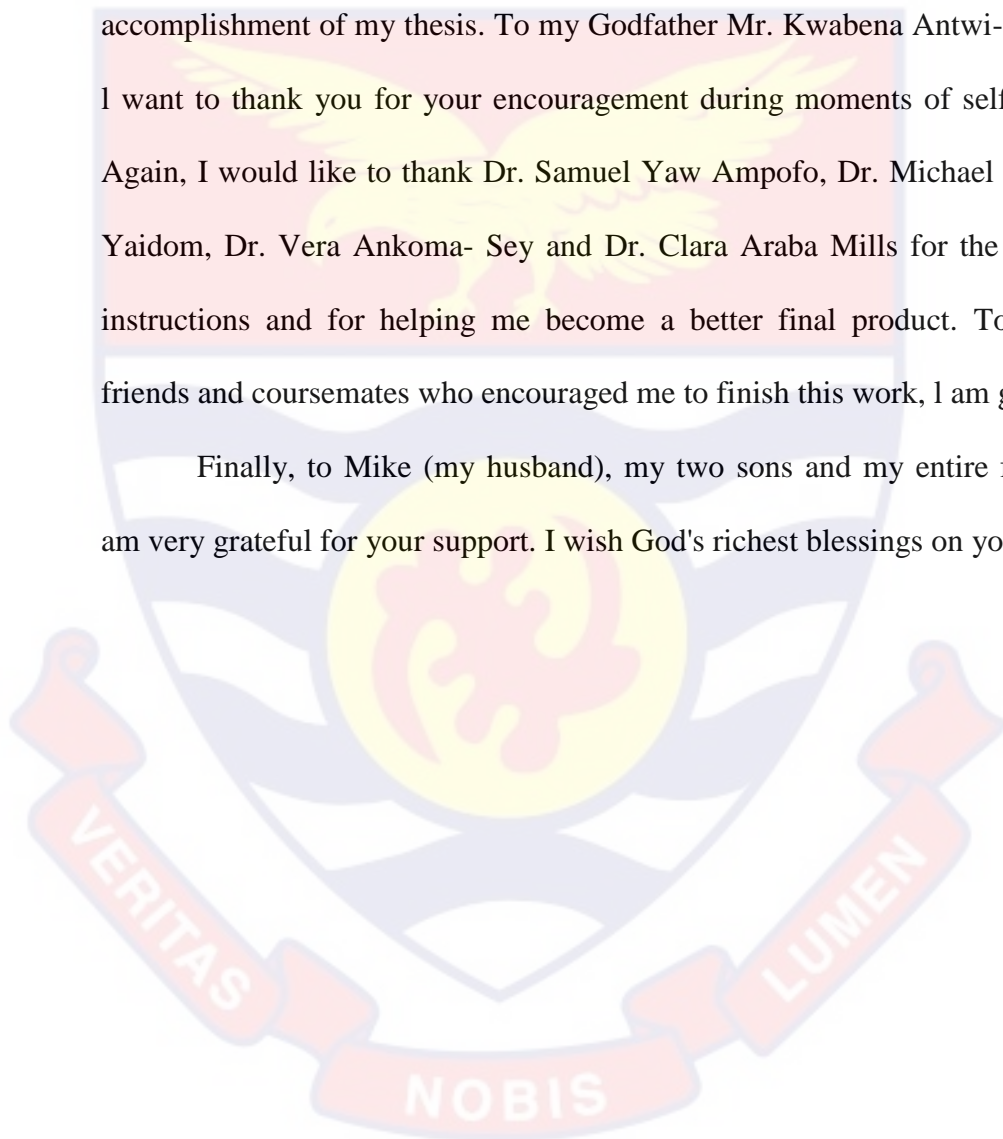
Takoradi Technical University



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DEDICATION

To my late father, Joesph Rollingstone Amoah Quarcoo.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PR This refers to Public Relations

TTU This refers to Takoradi Technical University

CIPR Chartered Institute of Public Relations



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study's outline was presented in this chapter. The study's background, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, delimitation, limitation, definition of terms, list of abbreviations, and organization of the study are all presented in this chapter. Additionally, it includes the study's significance, delimitations, and organization.

Background to the Study

Educational institutions are known to flourish based on the goodwill of their many stakeholders and also to stay competitive as a result of a well-established public relations department. As a result of this, an effective relationship between companies and their stakeholders is critical to the organization's success (Brønn, 2010). Rawjee, Reddy and Maharji (2012), argue that businesses must consider public relations as a crucial component of business planning and operations, based on their research into its theorization as a management function.

Most definitions in the literature agree that public relations is the process of establishing and maintaining connections with an organization's stakeholders. Bayçu, & Meriç (2019), defined public relations as the management function that builds and maintains mutually beneficial connections between a company and the public on whom its success or failure rests.

Nevertheless, Likely and Watson, (2013), emphasize the importance of communication in the formation and maintenance of these connections. For public relations practitioners to have a good influence on their business, they

must implement a well-defined public relations strategy as a vital instrument of social interactions through which strategic connections are built and maintained (Dahlan, Said, & Rajamanickam, 2021). Issues management, public affairs, corporate communications, stakeholder engagement, crisis communication, media relations, and corporate social responsibility are all included in these strategic public relations plans (Edwards, 2018). A structured public relations strategy may assist organizations in getting their word out to the appropriate people at the right time.

Strategic communication is viewed as a comprehensive framework that blends internal organizational communication, management theories, and marketing to make it simpler to comprehend and analyze modern communication processes both within and across organizations (Falkheimer & Heide, 2014). Since public relations and other kinds of corporate communication are overwhelmed with advancements occurring both in theory and practice, the authors argue that strategic communication is far more advantageous.

The importance of a strategic public relations plan as a framework for stakeholder engagements cannot be overstated as the demand for higher education increases and competition intensifies. According to Çoruk (2018), educational institutions, as social organizations, are more likely to confront challenges such as greater media criticism, increased competition, demography, and growing cynicism, all of which erode faith in their performance.

These findings bolster the need for educational institutions to hire not just qualified public relations specialists, but also to develop a comprehensive

public relations strategy. Rawgee (2014) believes that higher education administration should be better equipped for crisis management, emphasizing the need of having public relations and communications professionals on staff, as well as the capacity to communicate effectively at such times. According to Hussain (2014), an organization must involve its internal and external stakeholders in discussions concerning the intensity and nature of disputes when they occur. It is worth noting that, many researchers like Newsom and Kruckeberg (2012), conducted a study in South Africa into the impact of public relations on corporate image, challenges confronting the PR unit of tertiary institutions, and also the factors that influence the operations of PR unit in a tertiary institution. It appears that very few studies have been conducted on the PR practices of Technical University since their conversion from Polytechnic to Technical University. Aikin and Adu-Oppong (2015) explored the role that public relations plays in assisting the University of Education, Winneba in achieving its objectives. The results of the investigation showed that the University's public relations department does not have the resources necessary to fulfill the obligations that have been assigned to it.

Boakye et al (2012) conducted a study on the significance of public relations practice in the achievement of the goals of private universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana and found that three out of the four institutions sampled do not have public relations department. However, these studies failed to explore the PR strategies of the Technical University, thereby creating a research gap. The study seeks to explore the public relations strategies of Takoradi Technical University in the Western Region of Ghana

and the various tools they deploy in their communication and stakeholder engagements, as well as their effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

In the competitive world today, the flexibility to make and maintain a positive corporate reputation has become a useful asset (Ferguson,2018). Just like commercial entities, effective and efficient communication has also been seen to be a factor that affects the sustainability of higher education institutions like universities, especially in their management of crises and relationships with their various stakeholders (Rawgee, 2014).

In Ghana, although universities have publicity departments and units, the general public relations units haven't been accorded the same status as other departments (Aikin & Adu-Oppong, 2015). Research done by Acquah (2021), reveals that even as other sections of the universities play roles with specific objectives and a Public Relations Directorate is required to perform certain responsibilities. The Public Relations Directorate play major role in shaping public opinions about the colleges (Acquah, 2021). The promulgation of the Technical Universities Act, 2016 (Act 922 as amended) in September 2016 converted six out of the ten national Polytechnics into Technical Universities. This included Takoradi Technical University. Following the conversion, there were ensuing debates about the ability of these Technical Universities to perform at par with the traditional universities since they have been put at the same level in terms of stature and expected outcome and performance after all they had met all the eligibility criteria such as their institutional standing, academic staff requirements, and evidence of collaboration with industry (Stacks,2016). With this transition, there is a

critical need for effective PR strategies to communicate and highlight the significance of their new status to the public and the role PR plays in the attainment of organizational goals. (Arthur, 2018). Moreover, there is scanty empirical literature (Acquah, 2021; Aikin & Adu-Oppong, 2015; Boakye et al., 2012) on PR practices in Ghana and these studies also focused on the private universities, traditional universities, and challenges without looking at PR strategies and their roles in the attainment of organizational goals after the conversion from Polytechnics to Technical Universities. It is against this background that the current study was conducted to assess the public relations strategies at Takoradi Technical University and also add to the literature on the subject matter.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the PR strategies of TTU and how important PR strategies aid in the attainment of TTU's organizational goals.

Research Questions

1. What public relations strategies are employed at Takoradi Technical University?
2. What roles do PR operations play in the attainment of the organizational goals of Takoradi Technical University?
3. How important has public relations been in achieving the university's goals?
4. What are the challenges confronting the Public Relations operations of Takoradi Technical University?

Significance of the Study

- The findings of the study will be shared with the Public Relations Directorate of TTU. It is expected that this will enhance participants' and the entire directorate's understanding of the PR issues and provide a basis for them to foster effective PR strategies.
- The findings of this study will be useful to academic scholars and researchers in increasing literary citations and generating suggestions for future research initiatives.
- The study's findings will contribute to the professional growth of public relations competence and its role in enhancing institutional image in Ghana.

This study will shed light on public relations methods used by higher educational institutions in Ghana.

Delimitation

The study's scope is described as the study's delimitation. According to Hollweck and Yin (2014), delimitations are qualities that set the parameters and restrict the study's scope. The study seeks to explore how important PR strategies aid in the attainment of TTU's organizational goals. The study is however restricted to the Takoradi Technical University among other Technical Universities in the country. The study is also, delimited to three directorates that is the Public Relations Directorate, Human Resource Directorate and the Registry.

Limitations

The researcher even though persuaded the participants to feel free to respond to the questions in honesty and sincerity because their anonymity was

guaranteed, some participants were not too eager and comfortable to talk about some issues that boarded their superiors and the university management. Despite these limitations, the study's results provide a solid foundation for a report on scientific research.

Definition of Key Terms

Public Relations: "A management function responsible for establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial connections between a company and the public that determine its success or failure."

Public Relations Strategy: It is the sum of all efforts made to fulfill an organization's public relations goals and objectives.

Organizational Goal: Organizational goals are strategic objectives set by a company to define expected outcomes and direct workers' efforts.

Technical University: Technical University is a higher education institution dedicated to engineering, scientific, and technology-related fields, as well as technical and vocational education and training, applied arts, and related disciplines.

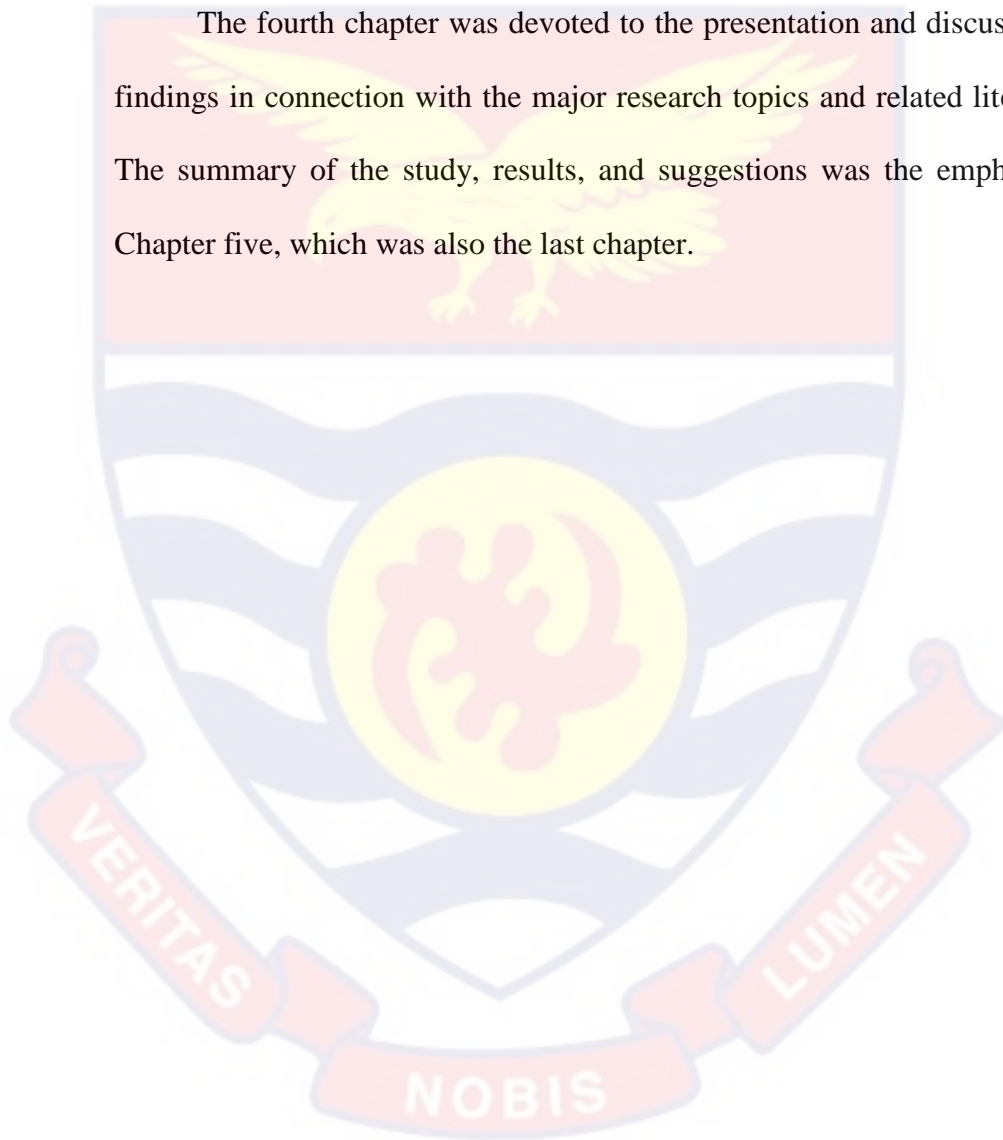
Organization of the Study

Five chapters made up the research. The first chapter will provide an overview of the study's structure. The relevance of the study, the scope of the investigation, and the limits of the study are all discussed in this chapter.

The literature review is the second chapter. This chapter focuses on analyzing and discussing relevant literature about the subject or phenomena under inquiry. The theoretical foundations of the study, as well as crucial topics, were discussed in this chapter. Finally, the chapter examined and reviewed additional relevant empirical investigations.

The methods used to accomplish research of this sort were discussed in Chapter 3. The study design and orientation were thoroughly examined, and the research technique, data collecting method, population, and target sample was all justified. The sampling process, as well as how the data obtained was treated and evaluated, will be thoroughly discussed.

The fourth chapter was devoted to the presentation and discussion of findings in connection with the major research topics and related literature. The summary of the study, results, and suggestions was the emphasis of Chapter five, which was also the last chapter.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to conduct a literature review on topics pertinent to the study's objectives. The debate began with an examination of the theoretical groundwork that served as the basis for this investigation. Following a discussion of fundamental ideas such as public relations, public relations strategies, and theories that form the basis of the work, the chapter draws to a close with an examination of relevant empirical research that is consistent with the objectives of the study.

Conceptual Review

This chapter provided an analysis and explanation of the ideas that were used to support the investigation. Within the context of this part, both the idea of public relations, PR strategies, and the relationships of workers were discussed.

The General Idea Behind Public Relations

Numerous academics have devoted their time and energy to researching and articulating numerous definitions of public relations. The primary and formative phases of public relations have been explained using the concept of persuasion. In this regard, Lattimore, Baskin, and Heiman are in complete agreement with one another. According to Steinbock (2013), the history of public relations can be traced back to ancient Greece. During this period, the Greek Rhetoricians were renowned for their persuasive powers, which they demonstrated via the use of visual narratives during festival parades. In addition, Mishra, Boynton, and Mishra (2014) argued that the word

"propaganda," which originated in the 17th century and was subsequently used by the Catholic Church to propagate the faith, was a pivotal moment in the development of public relations as a profession. According to Mishra, Boynton, and Mishra (2014), early definitions of public relations emphasized the roles that news agencies played, which laid the groundwork for the development of contemporary public relations. The only responsibility of the public relations officers, who are also often referred to as press agents, was to devise engaging narratives and engaging actions to capture the attention of the media.

Again, according to Brindusa Albu (2018), the primary objective of public relations was to attract the attention of the public, as opposed to the more contemporary objective of developing and sustaining an atmosphere of mutual understanding between an organization and its constituents. According to this, increasing awareness seems to have been the primary focus of public relations, according to Mishra, Boynton, and Mishra (2014). Despite this, Brindusa Albu (2018) proposed that around the middle of the nineteenth century, the most popular kind of public relations approach adopted by press agents was propaganda

At the end of the nineteenth century, there was a growing appreciation for public relations that were founded on journalism or public information. Krenzel (2013) proposed that historical developments such as the growth of the middle class in the United States and the expansion of the number of newspapers contributed to the need of serving this demographic. The development of industrialization led to the construction of a variety of institutions, including government regulations, trade unions, workers' rights,

and corporate social responsibility, among other things (Adjei, 2015). Each of these institutions requires the expertise of public relations specialists.

According to Novitaria (2017), the primary method of mobilizing and generating support for the First World War was the use of persuasive arguments. Kyere-Duah (2021) was likewise of the opinion that the development of public relations was attributable to increased knowledge and use of the field. Because of this rise, the definition of public relations has been expanded to include the need that organizations do research before taking any action, that operations be meticulously and precisely planned, and that a comprehensive analysis of the results produced by the different approaches is carried out. According to Kunczik (2016), public relations is not a one-time event but rather a continuing and methodical process that may be described as having been mentioned above.

According to Grunig (2013), the last stage of the historical development of public relations was ushered in by the contributions of Ivy-Lee, Edward Bernays, and John Hill's works. Truth-telling, shared knowledge between organizations and their public achieved by research, and the strengthening of mutually beneficial contact between organizations and their public are fundamental features of this new age, which is known as the two-way symmetrical era (Case & Given, 2016). This new period is known as the two-way symmetrical era.

Idealizing the job as a management function defined by essential tools like public involvement, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and accommodation to develop a long-term commitment between an organization

and its public is another change that has been made to the public relations concept (Kyere-Duah, 2021).

Public Relations: An Overview

According to Seitel (2017), the field of public relations is a multibillion-dollar industry with 160,000 professionals working in the field and a growing employment rate for public relations professionals. The expansion of the public relations industry may be blamed for the rise in the level of rivalry that exists in the business environment among companies of all different kinds and sizes. Seitel (2017). Even though there is no universally accepted definition of public relations, researchers and professionals in the field have very few disagreements on what it means. On the other hand, according to Sietel (2017), the Foundation of Public Relations Research and Education was created in 1975 to determine the definition of public relations that is most often accepted. After doing research on 472 different ideas with 65 public relations professionals, the foundation came up with a description of 88 words.

An organization's public relations department is responsible for the special management responsibility of establishing and maintaining mutual lines of understanding, communication, collaboration, and acceptance between the organization and its constituents. It comprises the management of problems or concerns, assists management in staying informed, is sensitive to public opinion, defines and stresses management's role to serve the public interest, and helps management maintain informed about the situation. It is an early warning system that helps management predict trends and helps management keep up with and efficiently use change. It also helps management keep up with change. As its primary instrument, it employs

research as well as methods of communication that are both ethical and effective (Ayhan, 2019). According to Doorley and Garcia 2020, the practice of public relations, often known as PR, is nothing more than the process of maintaining and strengthening the reputation of a particular company or organization, or, for that matter, of any person. In the harsh business world of today, when every corporation is making significant efforts to establish its brand image, public relations have now become a vital component of doing business. Every company has to have clear and productive communication with the demographic it serves. At no point should the flow of information be disrupted. According to Nolte (2016), the relevance of public relations is now readily obvious. Once again, the process of enhancing an organization's image in the eyes of the general public, stakeholders, workers, investors, and any other parties related to it is referred to as public relations. According to Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2010), companies that place a significant emphasis on the maintenance of their brand image will make a concerted attempt to recruit public relations professionals.

According to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), "public relations is a strategic or planned communication process that establishes connections between corporations and their publics that are mutually beneficial." It is concerned with influencing, engaging, and establishing connections with significant stakeholders across a range of different settings to define and shape the public perception of a company. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) defines public relations as the process of anticipating, analyzing, and reacting to events, as well as evaluating public opinion, attitudes, and concerns that have the potential to favorably or

adversely affect the actions and strategies of an organization. Practitioners have the additional responsibility of advising management at all levels of the corporation on policy choices, courses of action, and communications – including crisis communications – while taking into consideration the public's reactions and the organization's social and civic responsibilities.

According to the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) in the United Kingdom, "Public Relations is the discipline or specialty that looks after reputation, earns understanding and support, and influences opinion and behavior." Building goodwill and a shared understanding between an organization and its many stakeholders requires a concerted effort that is carried out continuously. According to Chu and Chen (2019), the discussion of reputation in the business world has grown more commonplace, especially in the context of huge multinational businesses. Discussions about reputation are now taking place in executive committees and boardrooms. As a direct consequence of this, the role of the Public Relations Manager is exclusively one of strategic management.

Public relations are described by Grunig and Hung-Baesecke (2015) as a separate management role that assists in creating and sustaining mutual channels of communication, understanding, and acceptance. Cooperation between an organization and its many publics, which may entail the management of difficulties or other issues; which may aid management in remaining aware of and responsive to public opinion; which may define and stress management's role to serve the public.

Public relations for the technology and industrial sectors. Iroha (2019) discusses the importance of public relations. It is the responsibility of

management to create and sustain relationships between an organization and the general public that are win-win in nature and determine the company's level of success or failure. With the use of these definitions, we can see that public relations are a process that is methodical, organized, and purposeful, and that assists firms in developing and preserving outstanding reputations. As the study demonstrates, the vast majority of academics believe that public relations at educational institutions of higher learning need to be maintained effectively and efficiently.

Public Relation Strategies

A corporation may plan, organize, and measure the performance of its public relations initiatives more effectively over time with the assistance of a PR strategy, according to Cheng (2018). Even though it is not a strategy for marketing, it helps with marketing activities that are being carried out. A plan for public relations may concentrate on a specific goal, such as the introduction of a new product, or it may consist of campaigns that span a whole year. Again, public relations strategies may be considered as a road map or a framework, which is developed by a company or institution in collaboration with a PR professional to assist the company or institution in raising brand awareness of its goods Kent, & Chen, (2017). According to Wang and Tzeng (2012), companies and other institutions engage public relations specialists so that the professionals may assist the firm or institution in establishing a strong brand image in the eyes of its target audiences, investors, stakeholders, staff members, and any other stakeholders via the use of PR tactics. According to Abbas and 2020's research, public relations methods are especially employed to build a favorable brand image. According to Stacks (2016), experts in public relations utilize PR techniques to reach

their target audiences, align with what they intend to market, and responsibly establish and maintain the reputation of their company. The following are some of the most prominent instances of PR techniques, drawn from both published material and personal experience.

Utilization of Conventional or Traditional Media

To increase people's knowledge of their employer, professionals who work in public relations promote it through many platforms of the media, such as television, radio, the internet, newspapers, magazines, and more. (Bala, & Verma, 2018) Public relations professionals develop and design a range of exciting and original tales about their organization and goods, and then they pitch these stories to different individuals working in the media. When it comes to enhancing their brand's image, businesses depend on the ties they have with various media channels. According to Zerfass, Veri, and Wiesenberg (2016), the following are some examples of media tools that are used in the field of public relations (PR):

Press Kits

According to Heyl, Joubert, and Guenther (2020), a press kit is a package of information that is supplied to media representatives to assist them in promoting events, organizations, products, or written content about the institution and its leaders. This material is given to the media representatives to help them promote the event, organization, item, or written content. A press kit is a media tool that can be found on the website of a company or other institution. It makes it extremely easy for journalists to learn about a brand and get photographs and videos that they may use in their stories. Since press kits provide all of the information that journalists may require, they are

free to focus on developing a story that is interesting to their readers (Lehmann, 2019).

Audio Disseminations

Audio releases and video releases are terms used to describe messages that have been prerecorded and may be distributed across a variety of media channels (Austerberry, 2013). According to Watson (2016), an audio news release is often composed of a noteworthy piece of information about a current issue, an upcoming event, or an exciting news item.

The Matte Versions

The term "matte release" refers to a certain kind of advertorial article that is tied to public relations and marketing. The matte release is a quick, feature-length story that is designed to mimic a newspaper article but which, in truth, involves persuasive communication geared at promoting a specific item or idea (Ott, & Mack, 2020). This narrative is meant to resemble a newspaper article since it is intended to be feature-length. According to Maartens (2020), when organizations do not have enough stories or pieces to publish, tiny local newspapers will accept items provided by such organizations. Maartens refers to these discharges as matte releases.

Press Room of a Website

Public relations experts might promote their firm along with the products and services it offers by using online press rooms to distribute news releases. According to Pavlik and Bridges (2013), a media tool known as an online press room may be described as a website, web page, or site section that provides information that can be distributed about a business or organisation.

The Media's Visit

Media tours are a great tool for public relations professionals to employ to get the word out about their business and the products they sell. During these tours, important employees of the firm go to prominent locations and provide a range of interviews to members of the media to promote their products (Stikkelbroek, Bodden, Kleinjan, Reijnders, & Baar, 2016). They make contact with persons working for various news networks, radio stations, and even print media, and they discuss the benefits and unique selling points of the products and services that they provide. Businesses often make use of celebrities or other well-known personalities to sell and promote their company (Zipporah, & Mberia, 2014).

Newsletters

To put it another way, newsletters are publications that are sent to specific audiences consistently (monthly or quarterly, for example). To increase consumers' knowledge of their products, public relations experts issue newsletters and collect extensive demographic data on their target demographic, such as names, addresses, and age ranges (Watson, 2012). Newsletter material might contain facts about the firm, crucial people interviews, product specifications, customer testimonials, etc.

Events/Functions

Lovejoy, Waters, and Saxton (2012) describe a public relations event as an occasion at which your business or product may be presented to the general public. Public relations professionals might organize special events, get-togethers, and parties to entice new customers and sell their wares to

existing ones to grow their businesses. Wang, Cheng, and Sun (2021) state that representatives from the media are also invited for coverage.

Speaking Engagements

One of the indirect means of advertising a firm and the products it sells is to interact with members of the target audience as well as prospective customers, according to Wang, Cheng, and Sun (2021). According to Cheng, Funkhouser, Raabe, and Cross (2022), executives from a business or firm have a responsibility to communicate with their target audience. These officials should not only talk about the company's products and services but also discuss topics that would generally be attractive to the company's intended audience.

Social Media

According to the findings of a significant amount of research, the combination of an effective public relations (PR) strategy with social media may have a significant effect on how the general public views a certain social cause. The purpose of this analysis is to define public relations through social media. When it comes to putting social campaigns into action, public relations strategies that make use of social media tend to be quite successful. This is likely since these strategies can deepen existing ties with stakeholders. Because of this, institutions are increasingly employing this relational approach while aiming to influence the behavior of stakeholders via campaigns on Facebook or Twitter (Auger, 2013). However, the landscape of social media and mobile devices is continually evolving about PR. As a result, PR professionals are required to experiment with new digital tools, technical breakthroughs, and mobile environments to align themselves with the alterations in the way that people consume information.

Authentic testimonies and the growth of storytelling as content that may boost public affinity and engagement for social change are revealed by an examination of the public relations strategy that is being used to deploy social media in institutions or organizations. This analysis was carried out using the word "reveal." The increasing use of social media as part of public relations strategies in the present day is incontestably a trend. Many companies have "eagerly adopted and actively employed social media as a part of their communication operations," admitting the value that it gives for reaching specific publics (Cho, Schweickart & Haase, 2014, p. 565). This is because many businesses have recognized the value that social media offers for reaching particular publics. The success of educational institutions in social media seems to greatly outstrip that of other organizations, and educational institutions are among the most active users of social media. The use of social media provides educational institutions with a great deal of new opportunities to communicate with the audiences they serve. In addition, such forms of communication are suitable for the usually limited financial resources that they have (Duhé, 2015). The issue, however, seems to lie in the process of establishing authentic interactive communication modes.

In the 1990s, which was an important decade for the development of the World Wide Web (WWW), Kent and Taylor (1998) conducted intriguing research on how organizations may utilize two-way dialogic communication channels on the internet. The study was published in 1998. They realized that the internet might provide wonderful opportunities to create organizational connections via dialogic approaches, which at the time included comment boards and email. Since then, new dialogical platforms such as Facebook,

Twitter, blogs, and WhatsApp have emerged, all of which have called into question a significant number of their preconceived notions. However, the fundamental relationship-building guidelines that Kent and Taylor (1998) presented appear to still be relevant today. These guidelines are as follows: (a) provide meaningful information; (b) consistently provide new content; (c) make platforms simple to use and navigate; and (d) work to keep the public connected (Briones, Kuch, Liu, & Jin, 2011).

Despite this, it seems that organizations utilize social media for information distribution largely as a supplemental support to traditional media rather than making advantage of the interactive component of social media rather than traditional media. In other words, rather than having a two-way symmetrical connection, the messaging strategies used in social media are still one-way communication. This is something that has been discovered in many study studies (Dhanesh, 2017). Auger researched these one-way models of persuasion (for example, in 2013), and he explains how they can be utilized for a variety of purposes, including expressing gratitude and recognition on Twitter, soliciting feedback from stakeholders on Facebook, and calling out important messages on YouTube. The researchers have only made a few passing mentions of various chat applications. They have suggested WhatsApp as the app that youthful users of smartphones find to be the most popular, and it serves organizational objectives such as connecting, sharing, and updating information as well as monitoring surroundings (Valentini, 2015). The prevalence of the sender metaphor is yet shown by this research. (Su, Scheufele, Brossard, & Xenos, 2017)

Despite the warnings that are given while utilizing social media, multiple studies support the idea that there are many benefits to using social media for companies. In particular, since the nature of these media offers a normative approach to excellence in solving social challenges, it not only encourages the development of existing relationships but also allows people to self-organize behind causes by working together (Maiorescu, 2017). In this way, it not only supports the growth of existing ties but also enables people to work together.

Employees Interactions

According to Mishra, Boynton, and Mishra (2014), employees are considered internal stakeholders, and understanding the importance of internal communications is essential for corporate leaders. According to Lemon, & Palenchar (2018), employees represent a potentially powerful channel of communication with those outside the firm, and their activities can either enhance or damage the image of the organization. The findings of this study led the authors of Bailey, Madden, Alfes, and Fletcher (2017) to the conclusion that the credibility of what employees say to their peers is much higher than the credibility of what a firm asserts about itself.

Employees and other internal stakeholders, such as corporate owners and labor unions, should be kept informed about the actions of the firm. To be efficient, the public relations department has to be able to interact effectively with the personnel. The company's image and message to consumers and other groups must be conveyed via publications and communications directed at employees in a consistent way (Igben, 2022).

It is impossible to exaggerate how important it is for companies to maintain open lines of communication with their employees and keep them abreast of all the latest corporate news and happenings. Emails, circulars, notifications, or even just having a conversation with employees should be sufficient for management or public relations experts to use when communicating current happenings and new product releases to staff members. Scholars have lauded the use of employee contacts as a PR strategy because they believe it to be fundamental in stakeholder engagements. Interactions with staff members might be reduced via the use of emails, circulars, announcements, or even simply simple face-to-face communication. Skills in public relations are to be anticipated.

In Lahav and Zimand-Sheiner's (2016) definition of a wide range of abilities and proficiencies, talents in public relations are often classified as belonging to the domains of communications and marketing. These capabilities may be put to use for several purposes, including the promotion of new products or services and the enhancement of a company's reputation. According to Ritchie, & Jiang (2019), the following are some skills that are needed of every public relations practitioner.

Excellent Writing Skills

Writing is without a doubt one of the most important skills needed in the PR industry. A person who writes professionally has to be familiar with public relations. According to Heath and Toth (2013), this person has to have a vivid imagination and the capacity to articulate their thoughts in a way that is clear and meaningful. To have the intended impact and persuade the audience, a PR expert has to be persuasive to portray the organization in the best

possible light, making sure that everything they write is relevant (Locker, & Kaczmarek, 2014). This allows the PR expert to present the organization in the best possible light, which in turn allows the PR expert to present the organization in the best possible light. As a consequence of this, as shown by the relevant research, a PR expert has to be able to write clearly and concisely.

A shrewd public relations practitioner can present their case to their audience without resorting to unnecessary filler and in a way that can be comprehended by the individual they are speaking with. In addition to the act of writing itself, one of the components of good writing abilities is the ability to pay close attention to details. The best writers are also excellent observers; they keep a journal of their ideas and pay close attention to the subtle details of their surroundings. They are required to have self-control, clarity of thought, an extensive vocabulary, the ability to adapt, and a strong interest in reading.

Creative

It is necessary for someone who works in public relations to be able to think creatively and innovatively. According to Karimi and Naghibi (2015), to successfully sell the firm and its products to the target market, the individual in question has to be capable of developing novel ideas. In today's fiercely competitive environment, marketing and public relations professionals need to continually experiment with new ways of thinking to generate goods that will be valuable to end consumers (Sharma, & Singh, 2021). The aforementioned examples make it very evident that creativity in public relations is a "big notion" that is all-encompassing, attracts attention, and transmits a message in an original manner. It functions as an overall theme that can be used to bids,

campaigns on platforms, and the marketing of items to a wide variety of people.

Capacity for Effective Communication

According to Dozier, Grunig, and Grunig (2013), professionals in the field of public relations need to be proficient in effective communication.

Speaking is an essential ability, and a professional shouldn't simply talk for the sake of talking. Public relations professionals have a responsibility to ensure that their message has been received and comprehended by the target audience. Successful public relations depend significantly on two-way communication, with the target audience having the ability to comprehend whatever is said (Nolte, 2016). One of the most important skills for a public relations practitioner to have is the ability to communicate effectively. Communication is a key element that must be present for good public relations. Therefore, for everyone to be on the same page, both sides must communicate with one another and make an effort to understand one another. Therefore, it is possible to draw the conclusion that successful communication requires comprehension of instructions, the acquisition of new skills, the making of requests, and the asking of questions, as well as the straightforward exchange of information. Although having strong communication skills is one of the most essential capabilities that an employee may have, organizations continue to place a high value on having them.

Proactive

According to Sorva, Karavirta, and Malmi (2013), a public relations professional has to have a strong desire to learn and have great grasping ability. As a result, he or she may find it necessary to always be proactive and

vigilant in their work. The ability to be proactive in public relations (PR) might mean that a PR person can seize control of the PR message that is being sent to the general public and works toward the goal of spreading the word before anything negative can take place. Being proactive has several benefits, one of which is the ability to be extremely organized on both the internal and the exterior levels. Again, you should construct your strategy while keeping in mind the things that are crucial at the moment. Proactive people are excellent problem-solvers, and they keep their focus on finding solutions rather than accepting that issues have the last word in every situation.

Personality That Is Enjoyable

A charming disposition is a vital quality for a public relations (PR) practitioner to have. According to Fitch and Third (2013), a pleasant personality is one in which a person is truthful, adaptive, polite, tolerant, respectful, humorous, and generally liked. According to Fitch and Third (2013), those who work in public relations should be approachable individuals who also professionally present themselves. Public relations practitioners need to be extroverted, according to Fitch (2013). According to Johnston (2016), a PR expert with a likable personality must possess traits such as being honest, flexible, polite, tolerant, respectful, humorous, and generally likable. To put it another way, they aren't embarrassed to smile and increase the confidence of others around them. In addition to this, these individuals usually have excellent listening and communication abilities. The information presented above demonstrates that having skills in public relations is beneficial not just to the individual who practices them but also to the organization to which they belong.

The vital role that public relations professionals play in organizations

Professionals in public relations are hired so that an organization may present itself in the most favorable light possible. Public relations professionals work to establish a favorable image for a specific product in the minds of target consumers by maintaining open lines of communication, issuing press releases and newsletters, conducting interviews, holding events and functions, naming a celebrity as a brand ambassador, and even getting involved in charitable activities (Hudders, De Jans, & De Veirman, 2021).

Public relations are an extremely important component of effective brand positioning. In simple English, the purpose of hiring public relations professionals is to improve public awareness of a business's name as well as the items or brands that the firm sells. (Users of preference).

According to Stoldt, Dittmore, Ross, and Branvold (2020), public relations professionals put forth a lot of effort to communicate with as many people as they can (i.e., prospective clients) and eventually raise the profile of their organization or brand. According to Daymon and Holloway's (2010) research, the fact that their brand is getting more well-known contributes directly to the rise in the company's sales.

It is essential for every company operating in today's market to have a solid grasp of the needs and wants of the customers they intend to serve. According to Ozanne, Ballantine, and Mitchell (2020), specialists in public relations ensure that there is an open flow of information between the company and its target audiences, which is crucial to the long-term viability of any firm. Accurate information must be conveyed to customers if you want them to have a loyal relationship with your company and its products. a

combination of products and services. According to Grunig (2013), specialists in public relations help businesses differentiate themselves from their competitors. People are better able to comprehend how their organizations function with the assistance of the Department of Public Relations (Ehling, White, and Grunig, 2013). This includes gaining an understanding of the organization's policies, processes, products, and services, as well as its clients and the rest of the world.

According to Fuertes, Alfaro, Vargas, Gutierrez, Ternero, and Sabattin 2020, specialists in the field of public relations focus on both the flow of information from an institution to its audience as well as the flow of information in the other direction. The views of prospective customers on the organization and the products it offers are being solicited and collected properly. According to Coombs and Holladay (2014), these assessments and remarks, regardless of whether they are positive or negative, contribute to the growth of an organization. Negative input is also taken seriously, and necessary modifications are made to the system to satisfy the expectations of the customer Meganck, Smith, and Guidry, (2020). Positive feedback is a reason to celebrate, but negative input is also considered seriously.

Conferring to Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg (2012), the role of a public relations professional becomes more important in the event of any kind of emergency or bad circumstance. The manager of public relations is responsible for ensuring that the organization's reputation is protected since this is part of their job description. He has to be on his toes to respond to questions from the public and the press and to accept any criticism in stride. The public relations manager is responsible for instantly addressing any

potentially damaging issue and coming up with strategies to turn adverse circumstances into an opportunity for the organization (Dozier, 2013). Public relations specialists, in the strictest meaning of the term, are the front-facing workers of every organization, and they exert a great amount of effort to protect and defend the image and reputation of the firm for which they work.

According to Krishna, Wright, and Kotcher's research from 2020, there is a brand-new strategy that is very successful in retaining touch with target consumers.

The Role that Public Relations Play in Organizations

The use of money in public relations may be of assistance to companies in accomplishing their objectives. It is not the goal of public relations to create a positive image for a subpar organization simply by spreading false information (Chandler, 2017). Misleading representations cannot be maintained for an extended period. Even if the firm, its goods, or its services are exceptional, it is still necessary to undertake an effective public relations campaign to promote and attract members of the public to the organization, its products, or its services Keller, (2013).

A favorable image may be created and kept up by an individual or a corporation with the assistance of an effective public relations campaign. When an organization is experiencing terrible news or is in the midst of a crisis, having a public relations strategy that is both successful and efficient may help reduce "misunderstanding" and develop mutual understanding between the business and its stakeholders (Ehling, White, & Grunig, 2013). In this regard, strategic public relations not only help in the establishment of connections between a business and its constituents that are mutually

beneficial, but they also greatly improve the company's ability to nurture and keep existing links, as stated by Van Ruler (2015).

According to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the following responsibilities fall within the management category of public relations:

- Anticipating, evaluating, and interpreting public opinion, attitudes, and concerns that may have a favorable or negative impact on the organization's operations and plans to prepare for such an impact.
- Providing guidance to management at all levels of the organization about policy choices, courses of action, and communication, taking into account the firm's social and civic responsibilities as well as the public implications of those choices.
- Protecting the good name of a corporation at any cost.
- Continually studying, implementing, and assessing action and communication programs to achieve the informed public awareness necessary to realize an organization's objectives to succeed in achieving those goals. Some examples of programs include marketing, finance, fundraising, employee, community, and government relations. Various examples include programs in various areas.
- Coordinating and carrying out the organization's efforts to change or affect public policy at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Establishing goals, developing plans and budgets, recruiting and training personnel, building new facilities, and so on; in other words, managing the resources necessary to carry out all of the aforementioned tasks.

They oversee the generation of content to raise the level of customer interaction and generate leads.

According to Seyedghorban, Matanda, and LaPlaca (2016), the ability to construct and sustain a positive corporate image has evolved into a valuable asset in today's cutthroat world of business and brand competition. As a result of this truism, Macnamara (2014) said that the era in which public relations specialists served only in the capacity of press agents has come to an end. Allison, Blair, Jung, and Boutin (2020) state that for an organization to be successful in the marketplace, it must have the support of a large number of different stakeholders. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of using public relations to manage relationships with stakeholders for an organization's overall success, according to Kanihan, Hansen, Blair, Shore, and Myers (2013).

This study investigated the public relations strategies used by Takoradi Technical University and how such strategies have contributed to the institution's success in meeting its organizational goals. In this regard, successfully navigating this research calls for an in-depth understanding of the objectives of the company.

PR strategy geared towards achieving institutional and organizational goals

Interventions in social life that support the accomplishment of set objectives via recognized collaborative efforts. People form organizations when they get together to work toward the same goal in the same direction. According to Newman, Ucbasaran, Zhu, and Hirst (2014), this concept comprises a wide variety of organizations, such as companies, schools,

hospitals, fraternal groups, and religious institutions. Also included in this category are religious organizations.

There are a variety of bodies, government agencies, and other such organizations, among other things. In their 2014 study, Lapointe, Vandenberghe, and Boudrias identified three key characteristics that organizations must possess. Organizations are social interventions that achieve their aims via the concerted and coordinated efforts of their members. The authors Stojanovic, Djokic, and Djokic (2013) assert that organizations are essentially composed of people. In most cases, the reasons an organization came into being are the same ones that provide the basis for the activities that the organization engages in. They say that although the majority of companies are motivated by profits, their goals are intertwined with those of other organizations. As a consequence of this, it is of the utmost importance to synchronize the objectives of the firm with the individual goals of the employees who work for the organization. According to Stojanovic et al (2013), as a direct consequence of this, organizational group activities are founded on the interactions and interdependencies that exist between members of the group and the organization as a whole. According to Iqbal, Baharom, and Shariffuddin (2017), the capacity of an organization to overcome obstacles and problems is also required for the organization to be successful in attaining its goals.

The majority of firms in Ghana are held together by their organizational goals and objectives. Goals and objectives are also established at the tertiary institution level, which serves to direct the myriad of strategies necessary to accomplish these goals. The institutions are organized in this way

so that their departments, units, and sections may work together to achieve their goals. On the other hand, the department of public relations is essential to the achievement of organizational success because of its capacity to generate a 'ring of goodwill' around the company. This makes the department one of the most important parts of an organization.

The significance of maintaining good relations with the public at institutions

Research in public relations investigates the interactions that take place between and among various organizations and the key target audiences that these institutions serve. If members of the public, members of the media or other business stakeholders generate bad ideas about the company, public relations research provides the department with information on why these impressions were formed as well as how to address and ultimately fix the issue. Al Neaimi, Al Ramsi, Al Shamsi, & Sae, (2016) The majority of employees working in public relations and public affairs need to be aware of the following:

- To compile a database of information that public relations professionals have to have to do their duties properly and effectively.
- To compile baseline information on the viewpoints of significant segments of the target audience.
- To arrange, improve, or otherwise alter a program, activity, or event that relates to public relations, public affairs, or marketing communications.

- When possible, and depending on the circumstances, provide appropriate help in advertising or promoting a certain program, event, or activity (Fawkes, 2018).
- When presented with an unexpected and abrupt crisis, emergency monitoring or polling may be able to assist put the challenges in perspective for the affected parties.
- To determine the overall effectiveness of a public relations or public affairs program or activity by contrasting the program's outputs and results with its intended outcomes.
- To follow or keep an eye on any projects, actions, or events that may be important to the firm.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of public relations gives a background for better comprehending a particular facet of human behavior that is associated with information and communication. The theories of public relations provide practitioners with tools to describe and anticipate human behavior and communication, which increases the efficiency of public relations campaigns and communication with various audiences.

Osanloo, & Grant, (2016) state that a theoretical framework is the "blueprint" for the entire research inquiry. This blueprint not only acts as the guide on which to build and support your study, but it also provides the structure to define how you will approach the dissertation as a whole philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically.

In addition, Osanloo and Grant (2016) defined a theoretical framework as "a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory constructed

by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships." As a result, a theoretical framework consists of the selected theory (or theories) that undergird thinking about how you understand and plan to research your topic, as well as the concepts and definitions from that theory that are relevant to the research. In other words, a theoretical framework consists of when it comes to accomplishing their missions, all types of companies prioritize doing a good job in all parts of their operational operations, including public relations. The social responsibility of management actions and the quality of connections with stakeholders are taken into consideration by the excellence and system theory in public relations to explain the value that public relations provide to businesses and society as a whole. Coombs and Holladay (2012) concluded that "over the last 20 years, a leading body of work has developed around Excellence theory," and that this leading body of work "has probably done more to develop public relations theory and scholarship than any other single school of thought." This conclusion was made to justify the essential role that excellence theory plays in modern public relations practice. As a result of this, the Excellence and system theories will serve as the primary theoretical framework that this research will be guided through.

The Theory of Excellent Performance

A long-term study was conducted by Grunig and Hunt in collaboration with the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) to determine what might be considered to be the definition of 'excellence' in public relations (Grunig 1992; Grunig et al. 2002). The results of this study led

to the development of a four-level analysis of what constitutes excellent public relations, which can be summarized as follows:

- The programme level addresses the "why," "when," and "how" of putting particular communications campaigns into action.
- The level of the department, which addresses how the PR department functions and how it interacts with the other departments.
- At the organizational level, the organization and its personnel demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the communication processes as well as the feedback provided by the audience.
- Economic level - The tangible value offered to the company by outstanding public relations (satisfied internal and external audiences).

According to Grunig (2002), the idea focuses on the efficacy of public relations and the success of the organization as a whole to justify returns on investments in public relations. The awareness of the value that public relations delivers to companies as well as the society in which they operate is an essential component of the theory. This is one of the most significant aspects of the theory. According to Grunig (2002), this value is predicated on the quality of the connections that companies cultivate with the diverse public that they serve. Lock (2019) argues that the incorporation of public relations into an organization's strategic management is necessary for the latter to get the maximum advantages that may be derived from the organization's involvement in public relations activities. The proponents of this idea believe that the success of an organization's strategic public relations objectives should determine how successful the company is. This highlights the connection between the aims of the company and the ambitions of the many

groups that constitute the stakeholder community. It is thus the responsibility of organizations to identify the different publics that are impacted by choices made by the organization as well as the section of the stakeholder groups that want an issue to be handled by the company. According to Grunig (2011), this is the factor that establishes the role that public relations play in the strategic management of a firm.

According to Grunig (2011), the idea suggests that to assist the process of constructing and maintaining long-term connections with the public that are mutually beneficial, companies should make an effort to communicate symmetrically with the public. Communication on both sides helps to guarantee that both the organization and its constituents are successful in meeting their objectives. Grunig et al. (2011) underline how fundamental, indispensable, and fundamentally important healthy connections with stakeholders are to the continued existence of the organization and its efficacy. Developing positive connections between companies and the people they serve has the potential to reduce the expenses that are associated with unfavorable occurrences, such as legal conflict, government oversight, restrictive legislation, and adverse publicity. Such positive relationships not only improve the odds of an organization providing the goods, products, and services that are required by its stakeholders, but they also reduce the risks associated with making decisions that could potentially have a negative effect on those stakeholders (Grunig, 2011). In addition to this, the excellence theory outlines four primary classifications for the role of outstanding public relations. According to Grunig (2011), the aforementioned classifications are useful in explaining the value that public relations and communication, in

general, provide to the efficiency of a business. The categories describe how the tasks of public relations ought to be arranged to get the most possible benefit.

I. Providing more authority to the public relations role

According to Grunig (2011), the excellence theory mandates that the public relations function be given the same level of authority as other strategic management functions. According to this dictum, it is prudent that the head of the public relations department should be an integral member of the organization's strategic management team as well as an effective contributor to the organization's strategic management practices. This is because it is expedient to do so. Moreover, this is because it is necessary. The strategic practice of public relations is an important one that needs companies to design programs to communicate to both the internal and external public. This is because public relations is a kind of strategic communication. Men and Tsai (2012), who refer to these publics as "strategic publics," claim that they represent possible risks and opportunities for/to the organization and that the best way to identify them is via environmental scanning. Men and Tsai (2012) also state that these publics are referred to as "strategic publics." Therefore, those who work in public relations need to have an understanding of the management and symmetrical responsibilities of public relations to be able to develop and carry out great public relations programs (Macnamara and Zerfass, 2012).

ii. Roles

Establishing roles for communicators is the second component that falls under the umbrella of the excellence hypothesis. According to Grunig

(2011), the theory proposes that there are two primary functions involved in the field of public relations: the communication manager and the communication technician. According to Macnamara and Zerfass (2012), the majority of practitioners in the field of public relations function in their capacities as both managers and technologists. According to the excellence idea, public relations departments that are not particularly outstanding have all of their communication practitioners, including their managers, acting in the capacity of technicians. This goes against the assumption made by this theory, which states that public relations departments need to be staffed by managers rather than technicians. According to Macnamara and Zerfass (2012), a senior communication manager is responsible for the formulation and direct implementation of public relations programs. This goes against the assertion made by this theory. The understanding of public relations as a management function is advanced and further solidified as a result of this.

iii. The structure of the communication function, as well as its connection to the other management activities.

According to Macnamara and Zerfass (2012), the excellence theory proposes that effective public relations activities should be defined by the integration of all communication programs and the cooperation of all departments within the business. According to Wirtz and Zimbres, (2018), a senior communications manager should be responsible for coordinating public relations programs that are aimed at various stakeholders. This classification falls under the excellence thesis, which also suggests that public relations as a management function need to be autonomous from the other managerial activities to protect the one-of-a-kind role it plays in an organization (Grunig,

2011). Macnamara and Zerfass (2012), in agreement with this perspective, argue that a merging of public relations tasks with other activities prevents the movement of communication resources between different strategic publics.

iv. Examples of effective public relations models

According to Grunig (2011), four different models of public relations give four different approaches to conceptualizing and carrying out the duties of public relations. These include the two-way symmetrical model, which is characterized by dialogue, participation, and cooperation; the public information model, which is focused on the dissemination of accurate and favorable information; press agentry, which focuses on positive publicity; and the two-way asymmetrical model, which uses the scientific approach to persuasion (Grunig, 2011). The communication function that is advised to use the most, in accordance with the precepts of the excellence theory, is based on the model of symmetry going in both directions. Communication programs are designed in this respect based on research, and conversation is used in the process of resolving disputes and cultivating connections with strategic publics (Grunig 2011). Consensus, mutual understanding, and benefit, as well as feedback, are defining characteristics of this paradigm. According to Christensen and Cornelissen (2013), this not only gives workers more autonomy but also encourages them to participate in decision-making. Therefore, those who work in public relations need to educate themselves on and get an awareness of the two-way symmetrical communication paradigm.

The Excellence theory offers a guideline for how public relations should be organized and carried out, providing a framework for the process. It describes how public relations may help the quality of a company. This

research makes use of the theory since it contributes to an understanding of the logic, purpose, and direction of TTU's public relations techniques. This makes the theory relevant to the study. The theory will also help determine how successful the public relations methods used by TTU are, as well as in determining the amount to which the University is gaining value from the public relations activities, they engage in. Because of its capacity to build and maintain long-term relationships between the organization and its stakeholders, the two-way symmetrical model is widely regarded as the model that is both the most effective and the most efficient. The theory will assist in determining whether or not the public relations practitioners at the university use this model, as well as the benefits that they have reaped from using it up to this point.

The System Theory

In contrast to the propositions made by classical school theorists like Max Weber, F. Taylor, and Fayol, who regarded the organization as a closed system, the work of Knight (1999) acknowledged the need for an organization to engage in interaction with the environment in which it operates. According to him, for an organization to live as a living creature does, the organization must function inside an open system and interact with the environment for the organism to survive. When one considers organizational management from the perspective of the organization as a machine, one's perspective shifts when one encounters an open system. The study area is Takoradi Technical University is an example of an open system since it accepts inputs and offers outputs to the environment. This kind of system allows for interaction between the system and its surroundings. Its very existence is predicated on a string of

transactions and an ongoing dialogue with its surrounding environment, both of which are necessary for its sustenance. As a result, it has certain duties to society as a whole. Things like technological advancements, societal trends, and economic events are never still but rather undergo continuous change. As a result, Takoradi Technical University has to transform, not only to continue existing but also to generate graduates who can integrate successfully into the rapidly developing globe. Despite this, the management of organizations is made up of a variety of internal subsystems that need to be continually coordinated with one another. This is necessary to guarantee that the activities of all of these systems are in harmony with one another and that they all contribute to the realization of the organization's overarching objective.

Because of the necessity for efficient coordination across all of these systems for the production process (Abah, 2017), an organization's internal systems must continue to develop and become more complicated as the business continues to expand. Because of these interdependencies, even a relatively modest occurrence in one of the organization's subsystems might swiftly snowball into serious unintended effects in another part of the business. There is no such thing as a company that functions in a vacuum; rather, every corporation strives to be tied to and also affiliated with other businesses operating inside the ecosystem. According to the systems theory, public relations practitioners are regarded to be boundary spanners since they straddle the border of an organization and look within as well as outside (Ahmed, Khan, & Minhas, 2019). Practitioners in public relations, as a result, work as go-betweens for their organizations and the external environments in which they operate. The practitioner of public relations fulfills two functions:

the mirror role, in which they provide the organization with an outside perspective, and the window function, in which they take the opinions of the business to the external environment. The system theory was used because it will help the practitioners to navigate the complex web of communication between TTU and its various publics.

Empirical Review

Strategies of Public Relations

Acquaah and Agyapong (2015) carried out research in which they investigated the significance of strategic public relations techniques used by educational institutions to cultivate good connections with members of the general public. They concluded that public relations departments at universities depend on university websites and events to communicate information to their respective audiences. According to the findings of the research, universities only made a little effort to cultivate healthy relationships via the utilization of community relations activities. In light of these results, Acquaah and Agyapong (2015) put up the proposition that public relations organizations need to be granted complete authority and supplied with enough resources to enhance community relations operations.

Research conducted by Kyere-Duah in 2021 revealed that polytechnics in Ghana did not dedicate enough time to public relations, despite the evident significance of public relations in the process of establishing and maintaining strong connections between companies and the people who have a stake in such enterprises. The need of having public relations operations that are both effective and efficient to assist the change management process of technical

universities cannot be stressed because all ten of the country's national polytechnics have been converted into technical universities.

The purpose of the study was to determine how effective their public relations strategies were and how they contributed to the achievement of their goals. To accomplish this, the researchers purposefully sampled six senior PR practitioners from six different Technical Universities and then conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with them.

The study found that the technical universities used a wide array of public relations strategies, including community relations, radio programs, social media, media relations, events and publicity, and media relations. However, the fact that the management role of public relations was not recognized caused challenges for the majority of them, leading to concerns such as insufficient budget allocations, poor logistics, and understaffed public relations departments. This was because the management function of public relations was not recognized. Contrary to what is said by the Excellence theory of public relations practice, the heads of the departments that deal with public relations were not a member of the dominant coalition.

Roles PR plays in the attainment of organizational goals

There have only been a few studies that have investigated public relations in academic contexts. Frandsen and Johansen (2016) state that the management of the flow of both internal and external communications is the normative objective of public relations in educational institutions. A key intangible asset (invisible asset) is a company's reputation and the connections it has with its internal and external public Daabu (2021). In educational

institutions, the public relations department is responsible for preserving this reputation and these ties.

Kyere-Duah (2021), on the other hand, proposed that the traditional and customary duty of public relations is analogous to that of a scribe and paper mover. In educational institutions, the majority of public relations practitioners' tasks include recording and publishing meetings, producing materials, and managing school newspapers. However, their job is to inform and publicize Kyere-Duah, (2021). On the other hand, in recent years there has been a growth in both the breadth and depth of the tasks that professionals in public relations play. Following this, Aikins and Adu-Oppong (2015) proposed that the modern public relations professional perform twenty distinct jobs, hence expanding the scope of public relations in educational institutions. A few examples of these roles are community relations, campaign management, public relations, marketing, advertising, and campaign management.

As Kilu and Akron (2014) pointed out, he based his appraisal of public relations techniques in the United States of America on the fact that public relations are considered a management function in the United States of America. This is proven by the priority that different boards of directors give to the position. According to him, the majority of companies delegate responsibility for communication and public relations to the vice presidents of such companies.

However, according to Aikins and Adu-Oppong (2015), the narrative is quite different in Ghana although a few of the public relations departments found in Ghanaian tertiary institutions do not get the same level of emphasis

as the other departments. He believes that the administration at Ghanaian higher institutions is responsible for spreading information to the public as part of their public relations efforts. To put it another way, the majority of the higher education institutions in Ghana do not consider public relations to be a management position. The customer must be kept informed since the public relations expert is accountable for reporting. According to Aikins and Adu-Oppong (2015), the bureaucratic nature of the system may be attributed to the department's lack of managerial position.

Challenges confronting public relations operations

The empirical studies that are shown here illustrate the challenges that public relations professionals confront while working at educational institutions. According to research conducted by Boateng, Chen, Ogunlana, and Ikediashi (2012), University Relations Offices (URO) are confronted with a variety of obstacles that make it difficult for them to do their jobs efficiently. Access to financial resources was the single most important factor. It is common practice for funds for public relations (PR) efforts to be made available to the office somewhat later than they should be if these operations are to have any meaningful and positive impact. As a consequence of this, the management of Takoradi Technical University is unable to ignore the importance of public relations.

Once again, Aikin and Adu-Oppong (2015) explored the role that public relations play in assisting the University of Education, Winneba in achieving its objectives. To collect information for the research project, a total of one hundred fifty employees at the university volunteered as responders. The results of the investigation showed that the University's public relations

department does not have the resources necessary to fulfill the obligations that have been assigned to it. The organization's ability to operate is hindered by a shortage of competent workers, official forms of transportation, and telecommunications equipment. Additionally, there are not enough employees with the necessary skills. In addition, the research found that the position of public relations manager is not accorded the same level of respect as other senior management jobs, nor is it sufficiently included in the process of decision-making. According to Johansson (2015), the absence of management education among PR practitioners is one of the eight obstacles that must be overcome before public relations may become a mainstream managerial function inside an organization. The following are the seven problems that are still outstanding:

1. the fact that there isn't a universal understanding of what the term "public relations" refers to, in addition to the ongoing discussion on how the parameters of this field or function need to be defined
2. because there is a lack of comprehension of the significance of the company's public relations activities
3. due to the lack of a management position that is officially recognized inside the firm.
4. Other administrative responsibilities interfere with or overlap with public relations tasks and positions.
5. the breadth of the public relations role and the pervasiveness of it in the majority of organizations
6. the extensive variety of PR-related activities and responsibilities

7. Public relations professionals come from a wide range of backgrounds, with the vast majority of them without a formal education in public relations or a discipline that is closely related to it, such as journalism. According to the authors, this is the reason why it has been difficult for senior practitioners to be perceived as needing to be a member of the dominant coalition.

Its operations are hindered in many ways, including by a scarcity of official vehicles, a dearth of skilled personnel, and a limited supply of telecommunications equipment. Acquah, (2021) researched the practice of public relations at Islamic University College and Valley View University, both of which are private colleges in Ghana. To discover how communication practitioners at these institutions handled communication at their institutions, the sorts of communicator roles they performed, and the public relations models they employed in their work, the research used an in-depth qualitative interview. According to the data, the vast majority of public relations professionals are not effectively managing communications inside their firms from a strategic perspective. The relationship with the media was these communicators' primary responsibility as communicators. In their communication, the public relations managers of the two institutions selected the less acceptable one-way public information model over the more acceptable two-way symmetrical model. This preference was brought about by the excessive focus placed on media relations. According to the conclusions of the research, it was suggested that the University's public relations section be provided with enough resources and that practitioners be given adequate authority. From the above literature reviewed, the studies done were all related

to public and private university leaving technical universities. It is against this background that this study is conducted to assess PR Strategies of Takoradi Technical University.

A Review of the Previous Work in the Field

Effective public relations techniques are required for an educational institution to make any progress that is even somewhat relevant. In their investigation of the roles that public relations play in higher education in the United States of America, Luo, Jiang, and Kulemeka (2015) placed a strong emphasis on the significance of tertiary institutions having fully-fledged and efficiently operating departments of public relations. According to the findings of the study, the communication functions at the two educational establishments that were taken into account were separated into a variety of sub-functions, including marketing communications, alumni relations, fundraising, and the university foundation. It was discovered that the director of marketing communications was in charge of the communication function; in addition, this individual acted in the capacity of the supervisor. This is in line with the expectations of excellence theory, which emphasizes the need of a public relations superintendent who is both highly skilled and experienced in the field. According to the findings of the study, top communication executives were found to be active participants in the decision-making processes of their respective organizations. During one of their interactions with a college, Werder, Nothhaft, Veri, and Zerfass (2018) discovered that the vice president for communication was an important member of the President's cabinet who reported directly to the President and was an integral element of the President's cabinet. According to the findings of the research, public

relations at tertiary institutions should be regarded as activities related to management. This is since top executives at both institutions actively participate in the decision-making process of the company.

The researchers Hussain, Rawjee, and Penceliah (2014) investigated the role of public relations in crisis communication at tertiary institutions.

They saw the process as an essential component of public relations duties. The researchers investigated the importance of communication in the planning and management of crises at tertiary institutions in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), South Africa, by conducting interviews as a form of qualitative data collection. They concluded that even while higher education institutions in KZN do include strategies for crisis communication and conflict management in their strategic plans, these initiatives are never prioritized. This was in part owing to the absence of a communication department or experts tasked with the responsibility of coordinating communication across diverse higher education institutions and their respective audiences. According to the findings of the research, departments of public relations and communication at higher education institutions need to be responsible for developing risk policies that specify their tasks. According to Hussain (2014), senior management at different tertiary institutions has to consider the establishment of public relations and communication departments as a priority for their respective universities.

Campbell (2018) researched public relations in higher education and discovered that there is a strong correlation between internal and external communication as well as the value that both of these types of communication bring to institutions. The outcomes of the research suggested that public

relations duties and processes were often documented in written form as a matter of standard best practice. This not only decreases the amount of operational ambiguity but also assures that workers working in public relations are aware of the appropriate practices as well as their roles and obligations. It provides practitioners with strategic direction, decreasing unplanned and knee-jerk responses to circumstances.

In addition, the most important discovery made by the research was that senior communication officers headed public relations and communications departments. These officers had substantial academic and professional competence, and many of them were also members of the institution's top management.

According to Mustofa and Kurnia, (2021), the reputation of an institution was shaped by the institution's use of lobbying and negotiation, as well as internal and external events, community involvement with stakeholders, the formation of institutional character (Identity), and institutional publicity. In addition, the institution was responsible for the formation of its identity.

The rise of capitalism in the countries that were once part of the Soviet bloc has led to the migration of students away from existing state-owned institutions and toward new commercial universities that provide more alluring packages. John KIMORI, O. M. B. E. S. O. (2017). As a result of the competition, public and private organizations are searching for methods to acquire an edge via public relations to stay competitive. On the other hand, contemporary research has suggested moving away from one-way

asymmetrical approaches and toward practices that reflect the characteristics of the Excellence study.

Act 922, in its amended form, has resulted in a significant increase in the number of public universities in Ghana. This increase was accomplished by transforming all ten of the country's national polytechnics into technical universities. The number of postsecondary institutions in Ghana is increasing, and in the most recent few years, the country has seen the establishment of numerous private universities and colleges. According to Kyere-Duah (2021), many private tertiary colleges have realized that they need an independent public relations department to improve communication with the many different audiences they serve. The findings of this study describe how public relations are carried out in various colleges and institutes in Ghana, especially those that focus on technical education.

The authors of the study, Boakye, Nsor, and Tabi (2012), conducted their investigation in the Ashanti Region of Ghana at four different private institutions to determine the impact that public relations had on the achievement of organizational objectives. Only one of them had a department dedicated to public relations. According to the research, the other three universities had Assistant Registrars and Registrars who were already loaded with administrative and other non-communication tasks functioning in the position of public relations practitioners at their various institutions. In contrast, the first university did not have a public relations practitioner. Assistant Registrars and Registrars are unable to realize the advantages of good public relations because of the burdensome responsibilities they are required to fulfill. These benefits include the development, acquisition, and

maintenance of mutual understanding and cooperation between organizations and their respective publics. Boakye & et al. (2012).

According to Boakye et al. (2012), all institutions should have departments of public relations, the major goal of which should be to undertake public relations operations inside the institution. These departments need to staff themselves with public relations professionals who have adequate qualifications and clear roles and responsibilities. This will assist in ensuring that Boakye and his colleagues communicate successfully to the internal and external audiences of the institution (Boakye et al., 2012).

According to Thompson (2018), public relations practitioners at higher educational institutions, namely a Technical University in Ghana, played a greater role in technical communication. This was especially the case in Ghana. Inadequate resources and a lack of knowledge of the aim of public relations were both identified as obstacles to successful public relations practice in the research. Both of these issues were a hindrance to effective public relations practice. According to the research, the office of public relations does not have the same relevance as other senior management roles, nor does it participate in the decision-making process to the same extent as other senior management positions.

Another research that was carried out by Flynn (2014) at McMaster University in Canada looked at the necessary competencies and skills for public relations practitioners working in the twenty-first century. It was found that theory development and empirical research have been eclipsed by the dominant, American-centric, two-way symmetrical model that was suggested some 20 years ago. This was shown to be the case when it was uncovered.

Despite the changes that have taken place in the media and professional communications areas throughout the last few years, there has been a lack of emphasis placed on the required competencies and abilities that are essential for current public relations practitioners. This study also demonstrated that there is a significant dearth of research on the competencies, skills, and knowledge that are required of persons in Canada who seek to join the area of public relations at an entry-level capacity. From the above literature reviewed, the studies done were all related to public and private universities' PR directorate practices and the challenges confronting them leaving technical universities. It is against this background that this study is conducted to assess PR Strategies of Takoradi Technical University.

Chapter Summary

This chapter included a review and discussion of significant prior research that will help navigate the rest of the study. The review was broken up into three parts: the conceptual, the theoretical, and the empirical parts. In terms of the theoretical framework, the excellence theory and the system theory evaluated public relations techniques. The issue of public relations was also investigated, with a particular emphasis placed on PR techniques and their role in educational establishments. In Ghana, there is a lack of relevant literature, according to a study of the relevant research that was conducted. This is although there are a great number of studies on public relations that are quite comparable being conducted at educational establishments all over the globe. However, there was no original study conducted at Takoradi Technical University in Ghana to evaluate the effectiveness of various public relations tactics. As a consequence of this, this study will contribute to the existing

body of information on the subject while simultaneously improving the visibility of Takoradi Technical University as well as all Technical Universities that have been transformed from Polytechnics.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The methods and techniques that were used to conduct the study are described in this chapter. This comprised the following: research paradigm and approach, research design, study area, population, sample, sampling technique, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis procedures, and ethical consideration.

Research Design

Every study procedure needs a research design since it helps to determine how a study should be conducted, making it essential. A research design, according to Baskarada, (2014), is how the information to be obtained (and the conclusions to be drawn) are connected to the original research questions. Some academics like Groat, and Wang, (2013) sometimes refer to research design as inquiry tactics.

According to Mohajan, (2018), a research design is the process that researchers use to carry out their study. It outlines the methods the researcher uses to create accurate and understandable information. An exploratory research design was used. According to Criado and Gil-Garcia (2019), exploratory research is used in investigations when the phenomenon under study is still in its infancy but it is not used to provide conclusive findings. An exploratory case study was conducted because according to literature little is known about the public relations strategies of Takoradi Technical University and also to gain a deeper understanding from the participants.

Research Paradigm

Interpretivism is the philosophical foundation of this study. People who practice interpretivism interpret social phenomena in light of their personal experiences, cultural norms, and social values (Al-Seghayer, 2014). Interpretivist uses methods like observation, interviews, oral histories, documents, analysis and audiovisual materials to collect data (Thomson, Petty, & Scholes, 2014).

The interpretative paradigm, which belongs to the constructivist theoretical perspective or worldview, served as the inspiration for the philosophical perspective of this study. According to constructivism theory, humans create meaning as they interact with the world they are interpreting. In discussing constructivism, Broido and Ro (2020) argued that the paradigm produces meanings that emerge from and are shaped by interaction with a human community and lead to a more complex understanding of subjects based on their historical and social perspectives.

In keeping with constructivism, the theory aims to capture the breadth and diversity of a phenomenon rather than attempt to represent a narrowly defined norm (Kankam, 2019). According to Pham, (2018), one's perspective on the concepts of social reality and knowledge affects how they approach learning about the connections between phenomena and social behavior as well as how they assess their research and other studies. This research would allow for more understanding of how PR strategies are used at Takoradi Technical University to help achieve organizational goals.

In terms of philosophy, the interpretative paradigm sees knowledge as subjective as opposed to objective. The interpretative paradigm must always

be seen from the inside, through people's personal experiences, as it can never be seen in an objective way from the outside. To comprehend, clarify, and demystify social reality through the perspectives of various participants is therefore the role of the researcher in the interpretative paradigm. It makes sense, then, that Creswell (2016) identified assumptions in these works that hold that people seek knowledge of the society in which they live and work. As a result, what a person perceives as reality depends on their relationships and experiences, which vary from person to person. This study was based on the interpretivism paradigm because it will give a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being investigated (ie exploring Takoradi Technical University's public relations strategies).

Research Approach

Compared to the other three approaches (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods), this study's research approach was qualitative. Unlike the quantitative research approach, qualitative research is theoretical and interpretive (Brennen, 2021). It emphasizes comprehending complex concepts and making sense of language, which is typically based on human experiences and interpersonal relationships (Martin, Scott, Brennen & Durham, 2018). For instance, qualitative studies emphasize latent meanings other than the number of events (Sykes, Verma, & Hancock, 2018). According to Catalano and Creswell (2013), qualitative research is primarily concerned with examining or exploring the meanings that people attribute to social phenomena rather than assessing a situation using predetermined yardsticks.

According to Rolón-Dow and Bailey (2021), social realities are individually created based on preexisting notions and unique experiences. The

attention to different designs, words, and images during the data analysis process is a key component of the qualitative research approach (Rolón-Dow et al 2021). The research was conducted using a qualitative approach, in accordance with Carrillo and Flores (2020). Qualitative research was used for this work because it explored Takoradi Technical University's public relations strategies and the researcher was able to speak with key people in the field about their public relations strategies and how they have enhanced their performance in achieving organizational goals.

Study Area

As a Government Technical Institute, Takoradi Technical University (formerly Takoradi Polytechnic) was operating under the Ghana Education Service of the Ministry of Education since April 1954. The institute conducted courses in commercial and technical fields mostly at the Craft and Technician Certificate levels during that time, earning Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and City and Guilds of London, United Kingdom. The Ghana Education Service took over the awarding of the aforementioned certifications, though, in 1990. With the President's approval, a Bill that the Ministry of Education submitted and the Cabinet of Government examined in 2014 was passed by Parliament as an Act in August 2016, turning selected polytechnics into full-fledged technical universities. As a result, the Takoradi Polytechnic Council decided to use the name "Takoradi Technical University," which has been properly registered with Ghana's Registrar General's Department.

There are now three campuses for Takoradi Technical University: Effia Kuma in Takoradi, Butumagyebu in Sekondi, and Akatakyi in Agona-Nkwanta. With a total area of 152.3 acres, the Akatakyi Campus is the largest

of the three. The justification for selecting the Takoradi Technical University of Ghana is that it is one of the best and leading technical universities. TTU has transformed from a Technical Institute to a Polytechnic and then to a Technical University. (MOE, 2019). Hence, they are expected to be able to provide the researcher with the necessary information for the study since they have been in existence since 1949. This delimitation notwithstanding did not affect the outcome of the findings or the work because the work did not aim at generalizing its outcome on all Technical University.

Population

Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017) claim that a population is a collection of components or variables, including people, inanimate objects, or even those that meet specified criteria and are of interest to researchers for generalizing findings. The population is also referred to as “the total number of subjects of your research that conform to a clearly defined set of characteristics” (Johnson, Constance, & Chrysostom, 2021). The population of this study consisted of every member of the Takoradi Technical University's public relations department as well as the registrar and a deputy registrar. This included eight (8) from the Department of PR and 2 from the registry and human resource office. A total of 10 people participated in the study because according to Clarke and Branu (2013) to achieve data saturation in qualitative research a sample size of at least 10 is needed.

Sampling Procedure

According to Sim, Saunders, Waterfield, and Kingstone (2018), choosing a sample size for a qualitative design is even more challenging than choosing a sample size for a quantitative study since there are no set

guidelines to follow. It will be determined by what you want to know, the aim of the investigation, what is at risk, what will be valuable, what will be credible, and what can be accomplished with the time and resources available (Thompson, 2012). With limited resources, as is always the case, you can choose between studying one single phenomenon in depth with a lower sample size or pursuing breadth with a larger sample size (Sim, Saunders, Waterfield, & Kingstone, 2018). Purposive Sampling is one of the most common non-probability sampling procedures used by researchers to pick a sample of subjects/units from a community. Aside from the purposive sampling approach, the study used the census approach in sampling the subjects from the registrars and human resource departments.

Purposive sampling, also known as judgment sampling, is the purposeful selection of participants based on the attributes that the individual possesses, according to Etikan et al (2016). Simply said, the researcher determines what information is required and then sets out to discover people who can and will supply it based on their expertise or experience. This entails identifying and selecting individuals or groups of persons who are skilled and knowledgeable about a certain topic (Mackey & Gass 2015). The census sampling approach is the name given to a methodical process used to gather and record information about people in the population (Sloan, Morgan, Housley, Williams, Edwards, Burnap, & Rana, 2013). The goal of census sampling is to collect data on every person in the population (Sloan et al 2021).

Purposive sampling is based on the notion of focusing on persons with certain qualities who are more suited to help with the study. In this study, two

(2) participants were purposefully chosen from the registrar’s office and the human resource directorate. Eight (8) participants were selected using census sampling from the Takoradi Technical University public relation unit because the researcher gathered information about every member of the unit.

Table 1: Sampled Population

Department /Personnel	Number of Participants
Department of Public Affairs	8
Registry	1
Human Resource Directorate	1
Total	10

Source: Field survey, (2022)

Data Collection Instruments

An in-depth interview was used to acquire the primary data, which will be recorded using a voice recorder by the researcher with the permission of the participants. As Catalano, and Creswell, (2013) point to induce a verbal response during an in-depth interview, the interviewer must provide verbal energy. In-depth interviews, according to Creswell (2014), allow for the collection of information on a wide variety of subjects that are related to the subject. Face-to-face and telephone interviews can be accommodated in this approach (Creswell, 2014).

In light of the aforementioned, the study will use this strategy to allow participants to express a wide range of thoughts and ideas on the subject matter. Scholars like Johansen & Werner, (2022), have acknowledged semi-structured (where the researcher asks questions based on relevant points listed in the interview guide) and unstructured interviews (in which the researcher

asks questions in a manner to ensure sufficient concentration) (where participants express their own opinions based on the subject on board). To collect primary data from the selected participants who are experienced in interacting with the current situation under study, the researcher adopted the semi-structured interview which enabled the researcher to ask more questions after receiving the information from them.

The interview guide was the major instrument used to collect data from the participants because interviews allow the researcher to enter another person's viewpoint, to better understand his/her perspectives (Peng et al 2020). Interviews also allowed for a wide range of participants' understanding to be explored and can reveal important aspects of the phenomena under study. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to focus on the research questions, yet open up new avenues for further questions (Dikko, 2016). Dikko, (2016) again, suggested that in a semi-structured interview, respondents should be asked the same questions, but in a more conversational way and that the interviewer must have more freedom to arrange the order of the questions or even rephrase them.

The interview schedule for the personnel at the PR unit, registry, and human resource office was a semi-structured one. This afforded the researcher ample freedom to formulate questions and determine the order of questions. Although interviews are more time-consuming and costly and offer less anonymity than other methods, the researcher's choice of interview guide stems from the fact that respondents had the opportunity to react verbally to items of particular interest: there is flexibility in it because the interviews were adjusted to meet diverse situations; it was easy to administer because it does

not require respondents to have the ability to read. It also allowed the researcher to observe the non-verbal behavior of participants. It is interesting to note that, Smith (2012), admits that ‘an interview is a useful way to get large amount of data quickly’. Lastly, the capacity for correcting misunderstandings of respondents was assured since the presence of the interviewer assisted in correcting misunderstandings as well as responding to questions.

In addition, to address research questions 1–4, eleven (11) open-ended interview questions were used. The researcher used the interview guide to acquire information from the participants. In line with the four research questions, the eleven (11) open-ended questions were specifically designed to cover the following key issues of the research:

Section One (PR strategies); Questions 1- 4 of the interview questions addressed this.

Section Two (Role of PR): Questions 5- 8 of the interview questions addressed this.

Section three (Challenges): Questions 9 and 10 addressed this.

Section four (Importance of PR): Question 11 addressed this.

Data Collection Procedure

In collecting the data, the researcher obtained clearance from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), UCC. A copy of the letter was forwarded to Takoradi Technical University's registrar's office to obtain authorization to conduct the research there and collect the data for the project. The covering letter sent contains the goals of the study as well as specified how confidential the data provided was and is considered pure academic work. In-depth

interviews with chosen university employees in the PR office as well as the registrar's office and the human resource directorate were conducted by the researcher. The researcher took four weeks to collect data.

Ten in-depth interviews were done, seven in person and three over the phone, each lasting around 20 to 30 minutes. Three were done on the phone because of the busy schedule of the participants. The goal of the study was clearly described first and participants were asked to sign consent forms. Again, each participant's full consent was requested for an audio recording of the interviews and they agreed to be recorded. The interviews consisted of a series of open-ended questions aimed at exploring Takoradi Technical University's public relations strategies. The questions were on public relations strategies, the role PR operations play, the obstacles facing TTU's PR operations, and the importance of PR in achieving the university's goal. These conversations were taped and then transcribed.

Pilot Testing of the Instrument

A pilot test of the interview guide was carried out at Cape Coast Technical University to determine its validity. This experiment was required because, according to Denscombe's (2017), every research tool should be tested in a small sample size to check the validity of the instruments. This exposed the uncertainty and poorly written, crafted, and structured questions. Due to its proximity and similarity in characteristics to Takoradi Technical University, Cape Coast Technical University was chosen. The piloting test consisted of five participants from Cape Coast Technical University and was done a week before the main one. From three chosen departments at Cape Coast Technical University, a total of 5 employees- two from the Registry and

human resource office and three from the PR unit were chosen. Five were chosen because, according to Denscombe (2017), the research instrument should be tested on a miniature population with similar characteristics to the study population. The exact interview questions that would be used at the real interview sessions were used during a face-to-face interview. The findings of the pilot study were recorded, and changes were made to the interview procedure to reduce errors in the main session. Some respondents found it difficult to respond to questions that seemed ambiguous. For better comprehension during the real interview, the researcher had to rephrase a few of the questions in the interview guide. Again, the initial items on the interview guide were thirteen but after the pilot testing some of the questions were merged. Even though this pilot stage helped the researcher to experience real planning, rephrasing of the questions, and management of time during the interviews, the researcher did not use any of the results from the pilot interviews.

Validity of Research Instrument

The degree to which a concept is precisely quantified in a quantitative investigation is termed validity (Goodhue, Lewis & Thompson, 2012). Reliability, often known as instrument accuracy, is the second criterion for evaluating the quality of a quantitative investigation. (Bush, & Moore, 2012). This suggests that validity and reliability are unfamiliar to qualitative research and are not a good fit (Noble & Smith, 2015). Because of this, qualitative research substitutes data trustworthiness for validity and reliability. Data trustworthiness according to Pilot and Beck, (2014), is the degree of confidence in the data, interpretation, and procedures employed to assure the

quality of a study. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are the four main criteria that qualitative researchers must articulate proof of to guarantee the reliability of the study's conclusions (Yeboah-Boateng, & Essandoh, 2014). According to Bush and Moore (2012), a study does not necessarily need to apply all of the criteria for data trustworthiness.

The researcher interviewed the various participants at different times and locations to ensure the independence and confidentiality of the responses thereby making the data credible. Thus, the researcher did not put all participants in a single setting. This ensured that the information individuals shared was what they wanted to share and was not influenced by the opinions of other participants. This increased the credibility of the information gathered.

The researcher also carried out an audit of the study to determine the dependability of the qualitative data. An inquiry audit is having a researcher other than the lead researcher examine the methodology used to collect data, the results of the data analysis, and the conclusions drawn from the study (Noble & Smith, 2015). The supervisor contributed to making the data collecting and analysis process in the assigned study dependable by going over all of the items in the data collection instruments one after the other and gave feedback on the ones that needed to be fixed.

The researcher also employed an audit trail approach to establish confirmability. An audit trail approach is used when a qualitative study describes the steps taken for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data (Rahman, 2020). Every step of the procedure, from the commencement to the

interpretation of outcomes, is shown in depth in this paper. Colleague researchers were also requested to analyze the transcribed data, themes that were developed, and conclusions drawn to see if there were any discrepancies. A few participants received copies of the transcribed interview so they could check the transcription to make sure they said what was recorded.

Data Processing Analysis

Denscombe, (2017) defined data analysis as working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others. According to Creswell (2007), there is no one right way to analyze data in qualitative research; instead, the researcher must determine what process is best and most applicable to the research and the type of data collected. The interview data were analyzed using a thematic content analysis, which is a descriptive presentation of qualitative data that may be obtained in the form of interview transcripts from research participants on the subject of study. There were five steps in this analysis process: transcribing, review and editing, analysis and interpretation, generalisation, and verification (Sarantakos, 1998).

Step 1: Transcription – The researcher copied discussion recordings onto a Microsoft Word document.

Step 2: Checking and Editing – Later, the transcripts were revised and checked for inaccuracies. After that, they were roughly categorized based on topics and then classed according to themes.,

Step 3: Analysis and Interpretation – Themes derived from stage 2 were interpreted. To facilitate generalization, the deduced meanings were then presented as fact.

Step 4: Generalization – The variations and similarities between the interviews were noted by the researcher.

Step 5: Validation – To confirm the results, the researcher re-read the transcripts and invited other academic pals to do the same.

Ethical Consideration

The interviewees had adequate time to read the interview guide when the researcher arrived for the interview session. To help participants with any questions they may not understand, the researcher was present. The participants had the option of participating or declining at their discretion, and they were free to respond to questions as it suited them. Since the participants were made aware of the research's intended use, they were guaranteed privacy and anonymity when providing information. Again, the work was tested for plagiarism at the University of Cape Coast library to avoid professional and academic problems and also to ensure a text is the author's property.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the appropriate research methodology that was used to achieve the objective of this study. The study was gleaned through the use of qualitative in-depth interviews. Ten participants participated in the study. Two were purposively selected while eight were selected using census sampling. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis in line with the themes inspired by the research questions of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The information gathered from participants regarding the public relations strategies used by Takoradi Technical University. Takoradi Technical University was selected for the study because it was one of the polytechnics converted to a university in 2016 requiring the need for effective and efficient public relations strategies to communicate and highlight the significance of their new status to the public and also for Takoradi Technical University to perform at the same standards as the traditional universities. Data for this study was gathered through semi-structured interviews with ten participants from the public relations department and the registrar's office of Takoradi Technical University. Themes derived from the data in response to the research questions that guided the study are exemplified and discussed.

In addition, information on the respondents' demographics as well as the various public relations strategies they employed, how they used a public relations plan to direct their stakeholders' engagements and communication, and how crucial the various public relations strategies are to the achievement of the Takoradi Technical University organizational goals are explored.

Demographic Data of the Participants

The participants were carefully chosen from TTU central administration, precisely the directorate of public affairs, the registry, and the human resource office. In accordance with the ethical considerations previously mentioned in this study, the participants were referred to as R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9 and R10 to hide their identity.

Table 1: Distribution of Participants by Age and Gender

Participant	Age	Gender
R1	55	Male
R 2	44	Male
R 3	54	Male
R4	44	Male
R5	35	Female
R6	30	Female
R 7	34	Male
R8	24	Female
R 9	28	Male
R10	54	Male

Source: Field Survey, (2022)

Table 2: Distribution of Participants by Educational Qualification and Years of Service

Participants	Edu. Qualification	Years of Service
R1	Master's Degree/ Professional Administrator	16years
R 2	Master's Degree	14 years
R 3	Master's Degree	14 years
R4	Master's Degree	11 years
R5	Master's Degree	2 years
R6	Master's Degree	5years
R 7	Bachelor's Degree	2 years
R8	Bachelor's Degree	2 years
R 9	Bachelor's Degree	2 years
R10	Doctor of Philosophy	5 years

Source: Field Survey, (2022)

Table 1 reports on participants ages and genders and in all three females and seven males participated in the study. Table 2 reports that the majority of the participants had attained a Master's Degree. According to the

study's findings on the number of working years (work experience), the majority of respondents had been employed by the institution for longer than five years. Regarding the minority, only **four** respondents said they had been with the company for two years.

Analysis and Discussion

The researcher transcribed all the interviews and thematically arranged the responses per the objectives of the study. The research questions served as the guide for the current section, where the researcher discusses findings from the interviews with support from the literature.

Public Relations Strategies Used by Takoradi Technical University

As noted in the literature (Juan-Carlos, María, Andréia, Gabriel, Elim, and Ricardo, 2017), public relations is a strategy-dominated area that is focused on communication through persuasion, attention capturing, and establishment of relationships with the public to achieve specific aims. This means that many activities (termed as strategies) form the area of public relations as explained by the aforementioned scholars in their discussion of the history of public relations. In engaging with the research respondents, the researcher found different perspectives about these public relations strategies that are used by the Takoradi Technical University.

Traditional Media

One of the most important public relations strategies the Takoradi Technical University has used in the course of carrying out its duties is the use of traditional media. The participants for the current study underscored different points at which the university used traditional media as a strategy to put the university in the good eye of the public. One of the most paramount

uses of traditional media as a strategy was during the COVID-19 pandemic when most activities of institutions and organizations were limited due to restrictions and safety protocols that demanded that face-to-face activities were not frequent to stall the spread of the virus. This was noted by Participant 1, who verified that the university had to resort to traditional media to make announcements to the university community and its surrounding community, which is the city of Takoradi.

Participant 1 stated that,

“In TTU we use our radio station a lot. Announcements are usually made on the FM station. Not long ago during Covid time, the strategy was to alert the entire community and in doing so announcement was made on the institution's radio station and also, flyers and notices were made for the larger community. Again, we had to resort to the media to make announcements to the university community and its surrounding communities. Audio releases were also done to be played on our FM station daily”.

The above quote from Participant 1 shows that the university used traditional media as a way of addressing its community at a time when it was hit by a global crisis.

Other participants noted key ways traditional media were used, where the university's programmes of study and other key information about the university reached the general public through various traditional media platforms. Participant 4 noted that the university used radio commercials to announce its programmes of study and other services the university had to offer.

“Last year, through one of the commercials on radio, the university advertised the products and courses the school offers to its various stakeholders”.

This shows that the university used the traditional media to drive attention its way, to bring more students to patronize the services the university has been offering. Thus, one can conclude that the university has used traditional media as a public relations strategy to advertise and create publicity for the university. Furthermore, face-to-face- interaction through public lectures and university open days have also been carried out in line with the use of traditional media as a key strategy in its public relations agenda. All these have advanced various public relations agendas that the university has had.

According to R6

“Recently the registrar held a public lecture and invited different stakeholders which included students, teaching and non-teaching staff, alumni, and the entire Takoradi community. It was covered by the university’s FM station and other media houses”.

Participant 7 also intimated that the university also uses traditional media to bring attention to some flagship events like seminars on health and education that the university organizes in favor of the students and the community within which the university was founded.

Another key aspect of traditional media that the Public Relations Directorate of the Takoradi Technical University engages in is inviting the media to cover events by the university. The Public Relations Directorate of the university invites them to come to cover all eventthatch the university needs the public to know about. Examples of such events are matriculation

and congregation. The coverage is carefully monitored by the department to ensure that whatever footage, sound bite, or text that will be taken away is in the best interest of the university. Participant 4 explicitly explained this:

“We also make arrangements for the media to cover major events that we feel need to be highlighted, such as matriculations, congregations, and other noteworthy occasions.”

All these responses receive more affirmation from Bala and Verma, (2018) who stated that public relations professionals promote their institutions through traditional media, including TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, and more, to raise awareness of it.

Employee Interactions

The researcher discovered from the data gathered that employee interactions within the Takoradi Technical University have been a relevant strategy for the university in its quest to have a very solid public relations backing. Takoradi Technical University has used it as part of its public relations strategies to advance its goals and vision as an educational institution. The respondents highlighted this as one of the main strategies the university employs. Participants 7, 5, and 10 indicated the means of such employee engagement.

“In TTU, we organized an in-house meeting among teaching and non-teaching staff. We popularly call it “Anopa Bosua” where issues are addressed and employees interact among themselves”. (R7)

“Durbars are organized for employees of the institution at the beginning of every academic year to update staff on the institutions vision and policies or any complex matters before the start of the academic year. This engagement

helps us to increase productivity and maintain performance”. (R5)

Respondent 10 noted this:

“At TTU, we arrange an internal gathering for the staff where issues are discussed and relationships among them are fortified. Once more, through employee exchanges, we are informed of the university's activities, which helps us stay current with whatever is new and taking place within the institution”.

From the above-quoted responses from the three participants, we can deduce that the university uses employee engagement as a PR strategy in engaging its workers. It can also be inferred from the above responses that the university uses this avenue to make sure the employees are well-informed of the universities activities and that they are up to date on whatever is new and whatever is going on within the institution. The University holds these meetings because they understand that the first positive testament of the university would surely come from its employees. As such, making sure all employees are informed, in a way that makes them feel included in various levels of discussion toward decision making and taking, is a good way to ensure that the management and staff are also part of the public relations plan of the university and that the general outlook of the school depends equally on how well they are informed.

The university also sees the public relations function of the university to include the management of communication among employees. This is also part of the concept of employee engagement. This means that the public relations section of the university is tasked with ensuring that there is constantly smooth communication among all staff and management.

Participant 9 noted this:

“Employee engagement is very key and instrumental to the growth and development of all institutions. Therefore, TTU regularly engages its employees in several ways to exchange and share ideas. This creates a congenial environment for employees and employers to air their grievances”

The findings above point out that TTU uses employee engagement as a PR tool to reach out to its audiences. The findings are at par with the assertion of Shen and Jiang, (2019), who proposed employee engagement as an effective PR strategy. Similarly, Lemon, and Palenchar, (2018), recommended employee engagement as an effective PR strategy.

Social Gatherings

About Social Gathering as a PR tool or strategy for communication, the findings of the study revealed that TTU communicates or reaches out to its stakeholders through social gatherings. Some excerpts from the data revealed that:

R9 indicated that:

“TTU is a very large institution and sometimes dissemination of information is hampered so the PR unit devices many ways to ensure information goes down to the last targeted person. In this regard, we adopt various approaches and mediums to reach out to our audience. During social gatherings such as matriculations, graduation ceremonies, investitures, seminars, and conferences just to mention a few”.

R9 was also of the view that:

“Communicating during durbars, seminars and workshops for employees and other stakeholders are other public relations strategies used by TTU for both academic and non-academic endeavors. Once more, the Public Relations Department works closely with the Students Representative Council (SRC) on initiatives affecting the student body”.

R10 added that:

“Most social gathering brings together an appreciating number of our target audience so we don’t take social gatherings likely because we can reach a larger number of our target audience”

The findings affirm the notion of Gills (2015), which states that social gatherings such as durbars, seminars, workshops, and conferences are also key strategies that institutions and businesses use to communicate to their stakeholders.

Cyber and Digital Media Platforms

Takoradi Technical University’s Public Relations Directorate has adopted cyber and digital media in its public relations agenda. This shows how the university is adhering to the recent developments in cyberspace and digital media forms such as social media. For Takoradi Technical University, the Public Relations Directorate has understood the need to expand its public relations activities to include the strategic use of digital means of communication for their communication with their internal and external public. Several participants noted the use of social media and other online means to maintain communication between the university and its public.

“At TTU we use social media platforms to monitor and develop news items and post content on the institution-owned site to enhance our reputation and support the policies of TTU”. (R10)

“We use social media a lot especially Facebook where we put out information on admissions, matriculations, and any upcoming event of the institution. It makes communication very simple and easy”. (R 1)

“Social media has been one of the effective PR strategies used by the institution, especially WhatsApp and Facebook. The institution can project its products on them. As we are

speaking, we have created a WhatsApp account where people can access and ask questions on admissions and other issues". (R 4)

From the above-quoted responses, what the researcher discovered is that the university's Public Relations Directorate has been making good use of the digital media forms that are available to it, especially social media. One can infer from the responses that social media forms such as Facebook and WhatsApp have been used strategically to bring information about the university to the general public or to the communities the university is surrounded by. In a more specific sense, social media has helped the university to announce its opening of admissions, matriculation, congregation ceremonies, and other key activities that concern both internal and external stakeholders of the university. The use of cyber and digital media spaces has offered the university a means to also engage the various publics on details of some information needed. For example, persons who are not clear on admissions processes can reach out to the university for clarifications and to make sure that their admissions processes are better.

Another significant application of cyber and digital media as a strategy for public relations is how these cyber and digital means are deliberately used as means to generate information on the university and various activities on the university's campuses to develop a positive reputation for the institution.

Participant 7 emphasizes this in detail:

"Here at TTU, we use social media channels to keep track of and create news items, as well as to post content on the institution's website to promote its policies and improve its reputation. (R6)

“Aside from our social media handles, we also communicate to our audience through other digital platforms such as student and staff portals, websites”

The findings are in line with that of Charest, Bouffard, and Zajmovic (2016) who pointed out social media and other digital platforms as good strategies to adopt so far as public relations is concerned since the world is gradually transiting from traditional media platforms to digital and social media platforms. These responses provided proof that TTU uses it as a respective media platform and a PR strategy to actively disseminate information to appropriate audiences. The study's findings concur with those of Jackson (2013), who found that digital media use is crucial to the spread of information. Additionally, Jungherr, Posegga, and An, (2019), posit that, while globalization has taken shape in institutional development, institutions have had to learn to adopt diverse digital media platforms to reach out to their target groups. In this regard, the use of cyber and digital platforms is an effective PR tool that helps in the effective dissemination of information (Dhanesh, 2017).

Sequel to the above evidence that supports the fact that cyber and digital platforms serve as one of the key strategies in public relations, Waymer and Heath (2019) also asserted that it is always a good idea to be aware of any newsworthy stories within your business. For instance, at TTU's public relations department, cyber and digital platforms are used for the announcement of new courses and senior-level staff appointments as topics for media releases.

The Role of PR Operations in the Attainment of Organizational Goals of Takoradi Technical University

As noted in the literature PR roles are formulated and enforced by the Public Relations Directorate of the university. These operations are in different formats, all of which are supporting the university in attaining its organizational goals. In engaging with the research respondents, the researcher found different roles PR plays in the attainment of the organizational goals of Takoradi Technical University. Some of the themes that emerged from this research question are as follows;

Creation and dissemination of information for the Media

The first role is the creation and dissemination of information across different media platforms. The Public Relations Directorate of the Takoradi Technical University focuses on bringing ideas to formulate messages on various activities of the institution such as admissions, congregation, matriculation, conferences, seminars, and public and inaugural lectures among others. This role is very critical to the university because it is through this that the entire university community and the community outside the university are informed of whatever the school is planning or may be up to. This information comes in different formats to suit the specific media platform that they want to reach with the message.

Participant 2 hinted much about this operation.

‘The creation of messages and their dissemination across the institution's various media platforms is the directorate's key priorities. During formal events like matriculation or inauguration, the PR department will prepare a report or news item for posting on social media and will provide it to the webmaster’. (R3)

“Developing messages and distributing them through the institution's many media platforms is the public relations department's key priority.”. (R 7)

” Our public relations department performs many duties. The first is that, it is our duty to create and disseminate information within the academic community. When I refer to disseminating information, I mean posting holiday notifications or any other message from management to the university community’.

*“We set up media coverage, create and disseminate information across various media platforms, for events like matriculation, congregation, and any other noteworthy instances we believe merit attention. By providing information across various media channels, we ensure that everything we discuss is in the university's best interests.”
(R4)*

From the above-quoted responses from the four respondents, we can deduce that the creation and dissemination of information across different media platforms is a role PR plays in the achievement of its organizational goals. It can also be inferred from the above responses that the university uses this avenue to make sure that its public is well-informed of the universities activities and that they are up to date on whatever is new and whatever that is going on within the institution. It is also in line with a study conducted by Aikins and Adu-Oppong (2015) who holds similar opinions, noting that higher educational institutions focus on the creating and dissemination of information as a role PR plays in attaining its organization goals. This action of creation and dissemination of information is also consistent with a study done by Tusinski Berg (2017) which emphasized that educational institutions use public relations to create and disseminate information across the various platforms of the organization.

Coordination of Information

In relation to the coordination of information, as another role PR plays in the attainment of organizational goals, the findings of the study revealed that the TTU Directorate of Public Relations is responsible for coordinating information within and outside the academic community. Some responses to the interview attest to this.

Participant 4 also added that,

“Our institution's public relations department has many responsibilities. The key one is that we are in charge of coordinating information within the academic community. When I say coordinating information, I mean posting notices and running commercials about the institution or any communication from management to the university public”.

‘The public relations department at TTU is charged with many duties. We are in charge of coordinating information. I mean posting notices and running commercials about the school or any correspondence from management to the university community. (R 6)

The two responses verify that coordinating information is a PR role that the directorate operates in the attainment of its organizational goals. Fuertes et al. (2020) emphasized similarly that public relations professionals focus on the coordinating of information to and from an institution to its audience and the opposite. This is also emphasized in literature by Bowen, (2010) who notes that public relations activities in organizations also include coordinating information to the organization's public. Again, respondents also noted that the department is in-charge of serving notices and running commercials on behalf of the university as a way of coordinating and disseminating information from the university.

Alumni Relations

According to the study's findings, one more role of the directorate is to liaise with the institution's alumni. TTU communicates with or reaches out to its stakeholders through social events with alumni relations as a PR role. Some replies to the interview attest to this. Respondent 3 reflects the university's consideration of and connection with the alumni by indicating the existence of an office for alumni relations:

“We have what is known as the alumni relations office under the PR directorate. This division has an officer in charge of it, who liaises with the alumni and the university”.

Respondent 1 hinted at this.

“The department of public relations is in charge of informing university stakeholders, such as alumni about issues concerning the institution by sending out notices and running commercials”.

Respondent 6 puts it in a more succinct context when he notes that

“The public relations department is in charge of connecting numerous stakeholders such as visitors, alumni, and other key people of the university “.

What is worth noting is that these connections with stakeholders do not only include the university's management, lecturers, and students but also the alumni of the institution. Be it information dissemination to these persons or planning events while including them, the public relations role covers this to achieve whatever goals the university has set that include alumni and visitors as stakeholders. Research done by (Graham and Avery,2013) showed that the public relations role where information dissemination is key includes the sending of information to the alumni of the institution and informing key

stakeholders and authorities of events, announcements, and promotions among other pertinent information.

The function of alumni relations is to sustain the university's relationship with past students for prospects and support McDearmon, (2013). This is to also centralize any activities that the alumni may want to pursue, such that they have a direct source to go to when they need to hear from the university management or to connect with other alumni. The ultimate summation of this role, according to the respondents is that the Public Relations Department under the Public Affairs directorate is the mouthpiece of the school. They operate the function of representing the school as the voice of the institution to the outside community.

Participant 9 expresses this:

“The Department of Public Affairs serves as the school's spokesperson and is in charge of overseeing all activities within the institution”.

Event Planning

Additionally, planning and organizing all public events for the university is another role of the PR department. The Public Relations Department of the university is tasked with organizing events that the university must undertake. Most of the planning is done by the Protocol and Events Services, the Information Technology Office among others. The Public Relations Department spearheads all these events, which include the dissemination of information about the events as well. This is verified by some respondents in the interview:

Participant 3

“The public relations office is responsible for planning all public events, and when given a specific duty to complete, they move quickly to complete it. There is a section we call Protocol and Event Services under the main PR directorate. The protocol officer is informed of any small events that will be handled by the administrator in charge of protocol and event services, who is essentially the institution's event manager. The officer is in charge of congregations and oversees all types of events on campus, including seminars and other small gatherings”.

Participant 2 also stated that;

“The Protocol and Events section of the PR department is in charge of organizing all events for the institution. The protocol section together with the registers office recently handled everything for the university's registrar's public lecture. The directorate also plays this duty.”.

From the above quotes from Respondents 3 and 2, it can be seen that there is a collaboration that exists between the Public Relations Department and other departments in the planning, organization, and coordination of events for the university. This brings the entire university management together led by Public Relations Department to achieve the goals of the university. This is also emphasized in literature by Knobloch-Westerwick, (2014) who notes that public relations activities also include the planning, promotion, and overseeing of events when circumstances permit.

Challenges Confronting the Public Relations Operations of Takoradi Technical University

As a result of the dynamism with various audiences, every public relations office may encounter some challenges. This is because there may be no best-fit strategies or operations that public relations offices can apply to all situations to work things out well. This surely points to the fact that there may be many challenges that will come up with the way these public relations

officers conduct various public relations practices. In the public relations practice of Takoradi Technical University, there are a few challenges that the respondents have identified. The themes that emerged from the data are as follows;

Inadequate Professional PR Practitioners

One of the major challenges has to do with the few public relations practitioners within the Public Relations Directorate of the university. The PR directorate of Takoradi Technical University lacks PR practitioners as stated by respondent 1:

“Our major challenge as a directorate is that we lack professional PR practitioners. The acting director of the directorate is not a professional practitioner himself, hence the directorate needs to be led by a professional in public relations to ensure the smooth running of the directorate”.

The above response shows that the respondent feels strongly that once the head is not a professional practitioner it is a challenge for effective PR practice. In interacting further with R1, the participant stated that this is a challenge because the head is not an accredited professional practitioner and so because of that the director is always found wanting. As to give clarity on found wanting, the respondent said that,

“The acting director is not able to develop press releases, PR concepts, and plan events properly”.

From the discussions above it can be deduced that the resultant effect will be that staff of the directorate may suffer from professional leadership and directions. This may affect work performance and output in the directorate. In addition, respondent 3 added to this perspective that the directorate needs a director with professional experience and qualifications in public relations.

“The directorate requires a director now that it is a directorate who has professional experience and qualifications. The acting director himself is not a professional and most of the employees, except for the person in charge of media relations, are not professionals. This affects how we run activities of the directorate.”

Respondent 3 specifically stated that the personnel with professional experience and qualification is within the media relations section and that this poses a challenge to the administration of public relations activities on behalf of the university because since there are no key public relations professionals to see to the strategies and plans that detail a public relations work for a university. This is consistent with Johanssen (2015) who noted that public relations work would be effective if done by professional PR practitioners.

Respondent 4 also noted that

“Most of us here are not professional PR practitioners and we are without any experience. I have a finance background and was transferred here to handle protocol and event sections without training. It is really difficult for me. We need professionals for the job. Apart from the media relations officer who is a professional the rest are not. Even our acting director is not a professional practitioner”.

The response above highlighted the reality that there is only one professional with requisite knowledge and qualifications in the field of public relations working as head of media relations. Most staff there are not professionally accredited public relations officers and as such, they do not have much technical/ professional knowledge needed for effective PR practice for the role within which they are placed. Hudders et al. (2021), Stoldt et al. (2020), and Ozanne et al. (2020) all underscored the relevance of employing public relations professionals with requisite knowledge and qualifications in

organizations and institutions in the literature. In their perspective, it is the professionals that bring the best of knowledge to the table after careful assessment of the organization, its public, and the best practices needed to advance a public relations agenda. Again, these perspectives resonate with Johanssen (2015) on the fact that many public relations outfits do not have professionals with public relations backgrounds and Hussain, Rawjee, and Penceliah (2014) who underscored the challenge of crisis management in universities in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa due to lack of public relations professionals in these universities.

Inadequate Staffing

Another challenge for the practice of public relations at the Takoradi Technical University is inadequate staffing at the public relations directorate. The respondents noted that there are rather few staff at the directorate that facilitates the university's public relations activities and this limits the extent to which the department can go in terms of ensuring the quality of the public relations activities and engagements of the university.

Respondent 2 hinted that;

“The absence of staff at the directorate to me is our greatest challenge at the directorate and it makes it difficult to manage logistical issues and equipment like cameras and microphones”

“I must add that the directorate of public affairs is a new division. We continue to face some issues and have some policies that need to be examined. We have serious concerns regarding the number of employees in the directorate. The number of employees we have available to manage our equipment and work in the directorate's four sections is limited”. (R7)

“In my perspective, the PR team is not adequately staffed and lacks professionals. We have four sections under the directorate and each section should have at least five staff.”. (R5)

Respondents 2, 7, and 5 all brought up the staffing issues that exist within the university's directorate of Public Affairs. The following replies were given by the respondents during the researcher's subsequent investigation about the appropriate number of staff members to be at the directorate.

“Within the Public Affairs directorate, there should be a total of at least twenty permanent staff members, with five people working in each of the four different sections. However, there are now just five of us, and this place a lot of work pressure on us.”. (R 2)

“There need to be a total of twenty permanent staff members working for the Public Affairs department. This number includes our director. But as we are speaking at the moment, we have five regular staff members in addition to three people who are national service personnel”. (R5)

“The current personnel in the directorate of Public Affairs consists of just five people, although ideally there should be at least twenty people working here. Due to the fact that we only have one director and no deputy, the directorate is not yet to be fully functional”. (R7)

Based on the responses from the respondents, it is possible to conclude that the number of staff members at the directorate should be twenty in total, which would include the director. However, there are presently only five people working there, which includes the acting director. Management of various public relations activities may become very difficult in situations where the staff is inadequate. Public relations professionals with the necessary knowledge and qualifications should be employed in organizations and

institutions in sufficient numbers to manage the many facets of public affairs, as pointed out by Huh, & Faber, (2022).

Inadequate Logistics

Another challenge highlighted by respondents is the Inadequate logistics at the Directorate of Public Relations of the university. In response to the interview questions, some respondents highlighted the extent to which the directorate falls short in terms of logistics. Participant 3 and 4 relayed that the directorate does not have some necessities that would help the work of public relations in the directorate.

“The directorate is short of working space and office supplies”. (R3)

“The under-resourcing of the public relations office, which has impeded our capacity to carry out our duties effectively, has been one of the major issues for TTU. This is made worse, again, by the unwillingness of some university leadership members to classify public relations as a management function. (R4)

“The unit lacks basic tools because the institution’s budget is inadequate and can’t provide everything and again our working space is very small to contain even five of us”. (R7)

“Our budget is one of our limitations. The PR office lacks the resources necessary for us to carry out our duties successfully. We do not have a car to use for our operations and again when you try to adopt any PR strategies, they think you are wasting money. Another difficulty is that the university leadership doesn't seem to understand the critical role of public relations. (R6)

From the above responses, it can be deduced that the directorate does not have many resources at its disposal to carry out the duties assigned to it. This challenge can also be attributed to a lack of enough budgeting by management to cover the entire needs of the directorate, as noted by

Respondent 7. Furthermore, as respondent 3 hinted above, the working space for the directorate to work is very limiting in terms of facilitating the work that is expected to be done. This is detailed by respondent 1 who noted the following:

“Our biggest difficulty is working with individuals from different units who do not have an in-depth understanding of the directorate and it becomes problematic. Again, the office we are currently using is too small to contain the five of us. We are scattered. As for equipment, we lack a lot. For a example, we do not have a camera on our own. We always rely on the IT people.” (R1)

From the above response, it can be deduced that the directorate does not have enough office accommodation and other logistics of its own. This makes it challenging for the directorate to conduct its duties independently and with ease. The researcher observed during the field data collection session that this was a big challenge as even at times it was difficult to have a conducive space at the office to have the interview session.

Lack of a PR Plan

During the field study, the researcher observed that the directorate does not have a PR plan that can be implemented to ensure effective PR activities. Thus, the public relations activities of the institution that have been carried out by the directorate of public relations have only been dependent on what is thought of as the most appropriate for the situation. This is noted clearly by respondent 2, who highlighted plans toward putting together a grand PR and communication strategic policy for the university, although that is not available now. Below are the responses from the participants.

“We regrettably lack a plan, and our actions have been guided by what we consider to be best practices or what we might refer to as best practices in the public relations field.”

We are going to look at a PR and communication strategy policy, but we haven't started yet, so like I said, our acting director brought up a recommendation, and we are looking into it. We are currently working to develop a plan for the directorate. (R2)

In the absence of the plan, respondent 5 noted that whatever they work with is in line with the university's strategic plan.

“Even though we do not have a plan, we try to work in line with the overall university strategic plan which unfortunately does not contain any PR strategic policies. We just use the overall strategic plan as inspiration as we would create one ourselves. Then again, when crafting we would make sure that it doesn't stray too far from the university's goals and objectives. We would evaluate our success in line with the university's PR goals”. (R5)

From the above responses, the challenge of the absence of a concrete plan does not auger well for the directorate about having an excellent and sure approach to public relations activities that help the university in diverse ways. The researcher followed up by checking to see whether there were any policies in place regarding public relations in the institution's strategic plan. Below are the responses from the participants.

“Sorry, no. Nothing like that exists, but we are using substantial public relations plans and techniques to sustain the university's aims. The University will consider it in our next strategic plan”. (R5)

“Unfortunately, the university strategic plan does not include PR strategic and communication policies, but we endeavor to sustain university goals while we are working on a plan for the directorate”. (R4)

According to the information presented above, it is possible to conclude that TTU's overall strategic plan does not include any PR strategic and communication policies. The respondents also said that despite the

difficulty, they are always typically directed toward assuring the preservation of the aims of the institution in the middle of the usage of substantial public relations plans and strategies.

Management Function

In relation to PR as a management function, the findings of the study revealed that TTU does not consider PR as a management function. Some excerpts from the data revealed that:

“Unfortunately, our director is not a member of management and this is our biggest challenge. This is because, according to management policy, when the registrar attends a management meeting, he represents all of the directors. As a result, whatever happens, the registrar returns to inform the directors, and the directors also carry out whatever needs to be done”. (R1)

“No, he is not a member of the institution's management and it hinders our work. That is why the budget allocated to the directorate is always not enough. He is only permitted to attend meetings for which, according to the statutes, he is designated as secretary and by the registrar, but he is not a member of management. (R4)

“Since the directorate is considered a part of the registry, every communication between the director of public affairs and the vice chancellor must go through the registrar. So, the registrar receives reports from the acting director of public affairs and this is a problem”. (R6)

“The answer to the question is a big no. But there are times when important decisions must be made, and in a normal situation, the PR director would be a member of the team. However, the director of public affairs is not part of management. (R7)

Again, the participants claimed that the management team of the university does not include the head of the public affairs directorate and

does not have a significant influence on management decisions at TTU.

“Our acting director isn’t part of the management team and does not have a significant influence on management decisions”. (R2)

From the responses above, what the researcher discovered is that TTU does not consider PR as a management function hence the director is not part of the university management. These findings are in contrast with a study conducted by Holtzhausen, & Zerfass, (2014), which states that public relations must be viewed as a management function because of how centralized it is in organizations. This is so that the PR directorate operations can run smoothly and its objectives may be achieved.

The Importance of Public Relations in Achieving Institutional Goals of Takoradi Technical University

From the responses, three main thematic perspectives were deduced about the importance of public relations. These are the improvement of image and reputation, the creation of a global brand, and the rise in enrollment of students. These were highlighted by the respondents based on what they had seen the public relations directorate achieve over time with the use of different public relations strategies and agendas and how these advanced the achievement of the goals of the institution.

Improving Image and Reputation

In responding to the question of how important has public relations been in achieving the institution's goals, the respondents noted that public relations have contributed to improving the image and reputation of Takoradi Technical University. Some responses to the interview attest to this.

Participant 2

” Our main goal now that we are a technical university instead of the Polytechnic is to rebrand that is to improve our reputation as an institution and PR has helped the institution in achieving this goal. We have started outreach activities and the public relations department has made this a top focus also we have been publishing news items in the traditional media and on e-flyers on social media which has helped improve the image of the university”.

The above response points to the various activities the university’s directorate of public affairs has carried out in the wake of the transition from polytechnic to technical university, to establish the new image and reputation the university needs to take on.

Again, participant 7 directly speaks to the fact that the public affairs directorate has focused on maintaining the image and reputation of the university and keeping it from damage.

“PR has helped the institution in improving its image and reputation. We in the office of public relations constantly want to make sure that our efforts and everything we do are geared towards improving the image and reputation of the university. We use various activities to improve the image and reputation of the institution. The university radio Premier FM is occasionally one of our most important tools for promoting the university’s image. To help the university achieve its objectives, we also control our interactions with the press, students, and other stakeholders, and all these help to improve the reputation and image of the university”.

The third participant also underscored the use of the radio station owned by the university as a tool for shaping the public perception and opinion about the university. (which is a key step in image and reputation building). According to Participant 3:

“The university radio station Premier FM is one of the key instruments we are using to alter people's perceptions. The PR unit uses the university's radio station to create awareness for the university while improving the image and reputation and maintaining a positive and customer-friendly image”.

The above responses all focused on the activities that the university has been engaging in to improve its image and reputation by keeping the public informed through various means. Indeed, it can be said that every institution or organization has its vision to see its image and reputation solidified, which is what the respondents underscored in their responses above.

Creation of a Global Brand

Another importance of public relations in achieving the institutional goals of Takoradi Technical University is the creation of a global brand for the university. This was outlined by the respondents, who noted that the university is using public relations to connect with other stakeholders across the world for the benefit of the university. Although participant 6 noted that the partnerships with international universities are not primarily the work of the public relations directorate, the directorate did put in some effort in ensuring that the university established links with its international compatriots, especially based on the tag of being a premier provider of technical education in Ghana. This was buttressed by participant 6, who noted that:

“The Directorate of International Programs and Institutional Collaboration manages the university's relationship with other universities globally but the PR section also put in some effort”.

When the researcher enquired further to know the effort the PR section put in, the participant responded that

“The PR department has launched a website that is accessible from almost anywhere in the world. The PR department continuously put the news on the website and since it is digital content it lives longer and generates continuous exposure and this helps them create awareness internationally.”.

Participant 10 leaps on the aforementioned tag, stating the university’s brand positioning via its mission as a contribution to the creation of the global brand.

“As a premier provider of technical education, our goal is to gain recognition on a global scale and PR has helped the institution to attain this goal through its online brand visibility”.

Participant 6

“PR's online brand presence has helped us achieve a worldwide reputation as a leading technical education institution. This helps the institution be visible out there.”.

Rise in Enrolment

Students’ enrolment has increased through intensified public relations activities by the public relations department of the university. This was indicated by

Participant 10:

“When we compare the present-day student population with that of the previous academic year, we realize that the population of the students has increased and this is as a result of a successful enrollment campaign embarked on by the public affairs directorate”.

Participant 7

“There is an enrollment campaign now being spearheaded by the public relations office at the university since the university has set a goal of increasing the number of students enrolled there. The public relations directorate's enrollment drive has increased student enrollment from the previous academic year when you compare the numbers”.

Participant 4

“We compare student counts from the preceding academic year to boost enrolment and when we did that, we could tell there is a rise in enrollment. In 2019 the population was 10,166 but now we are over 16,000 and this is as a result of some of the activities the directorate embarked on which I have stated earlier”.

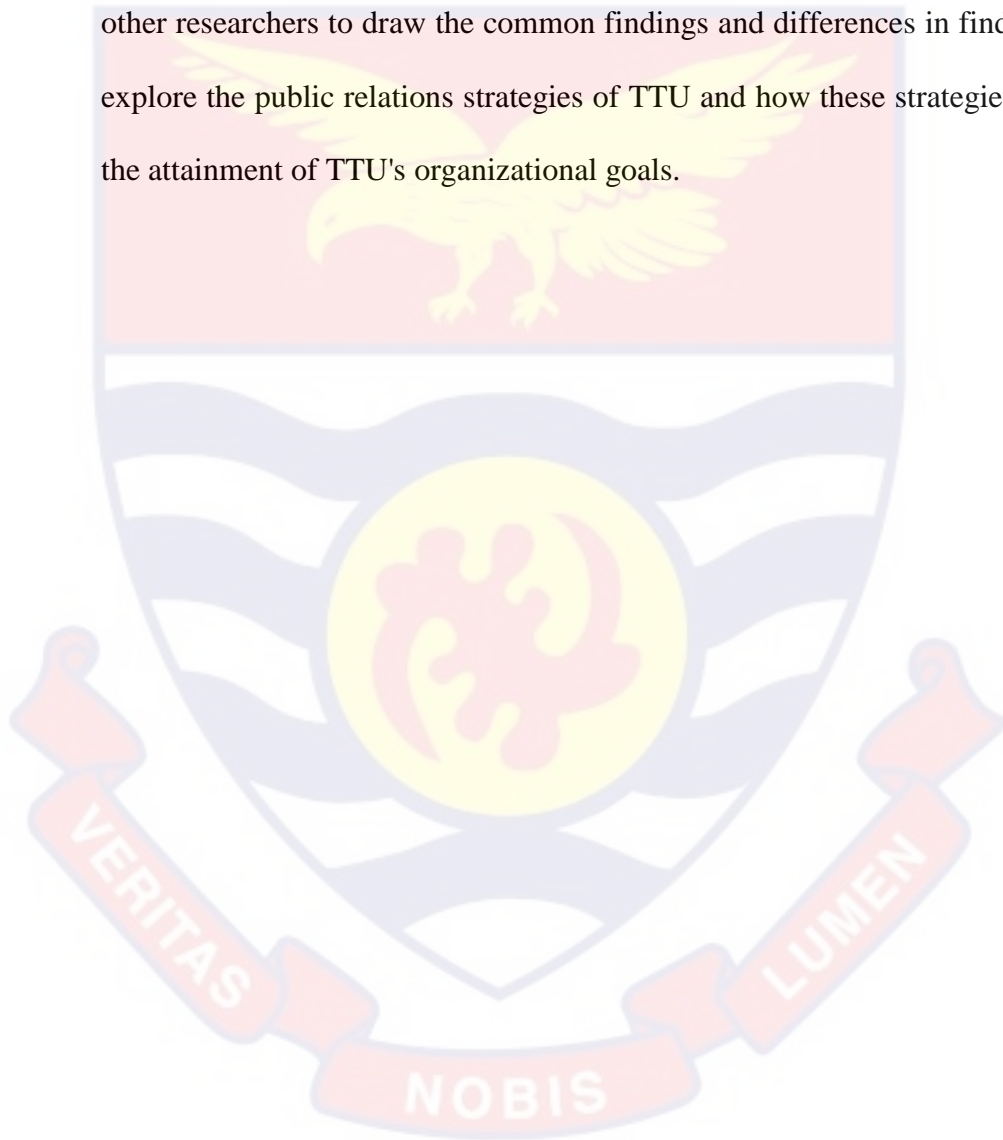
The responses did not only emphasize the comparison of enrolment in academic years but also highlighted that it was done to ascertain the success of the enrolment campaign which was launched by the university's public relations team. Participant 10 also adds that

“The public relations activities of the university have helped in the increase of students enrollment. When we compare the current student population to that of the previous academic year, we see that the public relations directorate's enrollment effort is effective”.

The importance of public relations to the university as underscored above is consistent with the research conducted by Ahmed, Khan, & Minhas, (2019) which states that public relations has assisted in building and maintaining a favorable image, informing target audiences about the positive connections that might be drawn with the services of the organization. It is also in line with a study conducted by Kang and Sung (2017), who notes that public relations have helped organizations to build a more positive image for an institution's brand and also as a tool for attaining institutional goals.

Chapter Summary

The qualitative method was used to analyze the data that was acquired from the research and was provided in this chapter. Discussion of the results has been done in accordance with the research questions that guided the study, and they have been compared to previous literature and the works of other researchers to draw the common findings and differences in findings to explore the public relations strategies of TTU and how these strategies aid in the attainment of TTU's organizational goals.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This is the last chapter, and it presents a summary of the results, the key findings, the conclusions of the study, and the recommendations for more investigations. In addition, this chapter concludes with some recommendations for further research.

Summary of Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the public relations strategies of TTU and how these strategies aid in the attainment of its organizational goals. The research was based on two different theories (System and Excellence), using a qualitative method of inquiry, and designing the study in an exploratory manner. The researcher developed four research questions to be answered by this study. The research questions are as follows;

1. What public relations strategies are employed at Takoradi Technical University?
2. What roles do PR operations play in the attainment of the organizational goals of the Takoradi Technical University?
3. What are the challenges confronting the Public Relations operations of Takoradi Technical University?
4. How important has public relations been in achieving the university's goals?

Participants drawn from TTU's registrar's office, Human Resource and Public Relations directorate made up the study's population. The researcher carried out the interview all by herself. The interview was carried out as

planned, and all of the people who were sampled took part in it. Although many different suggestion strategies were used to mitigate the accumulative effects of the constraints imposed on the research, the influence of those limitations on the results could not be completely discounted.

Key Findings

The results, which were based on research question 1 sought responses to the question, "PR strategies employed at Takoradi Technical University," indicated that Takoradi Technical University has employed many PR strategies that are used in the process of achieving organizational objectives. It was discovered that the university's public relations directorate utilizes the institution's radio station rather often to address its community and communicate the study programs as well as other essential information about the university. Again, face-to-face engagement via public lectures and university open days was also utilized to carry out in line with the usage of traditional media as a major strategy in its public relations agenda. The data also identified Employee interaction as a strategy where TTU engages its workers by holding durbars, in-house meetings, and other types of internal gatherings. Once more, it came to light that the institution had been using social gatherings as a vehicle for public relations to connect with or make contact with its many stakeholders and again the use of cyber and digital media spaces has offered the university a means to also engage the various public on details of some information needed and how it is used as a means to generate information on the university and various activities on the university's campuses to develop a positive reputation for the institution.

Concerning the second study question, which posed the inquiry, "What roles do PR operations play in achieving the organizational goals of Takoradi Technical University?", participants were asked their opinions. According to the results, the participants believed that public relations aids in the creation and dissemination of information across many media platforms, and that this information comes in a variety of formats to fit the particular media platform that they wish to reach with the message. Again, the results of the investigation also indicated that the TTU Department of Public Relations is responsible for coordinating information in and out of the academic community, engaging with the institution's alumni, plan and organize all public events for the university. Additionally, the department is responsible for coordinating information.

On the third research question, of how important public relations has been in achieving the university's goals the findings revealed that the TTU PR directorate has helped improve the image and reputation of the university, created a global brand for the university and helped in increasing the number of students who enrolled at the university throughout intensified public relations activities by the public relations department of the university.

Finally, concerning the question, which answered the challenges that are faced by the Public Relations operations at Takoradi Technical University, the study revealed that the TTU PR directorate lacks Professional PR Practitioners and the majority of the staff there are not professionally accredited public relations officers. Again, the findings also revealed that the PR directorate lacks logistics and the directorate does not have a PR plan and the overarching strategic plan for TTU does not contain any PR strategic and

communication policies. Lastly, the research revealed that public relations role at TTU is not considered a management function.

Conclusions

The objective of the research was to explore TTU's public relations strategies as well as how such strategies contribute to the university's overall progress toward achieving its organizational goals. Nevertheless, the research demonstrates that they were not represented in management meetings, which prevented them from being able to communicate the choices of management to the university's public. The findings of the research indicated that the public relations directorate at TTU does not have a PR plan which does not auger well for the directorate. It also reveals that the department is unable to employ a variety of public relations strategies because of obstacles such as inadequate resources, expertise, and an awareness of the function that the public relations unit plays.

Recommendations

From the summary of the major findings of this study, it is recommended that:

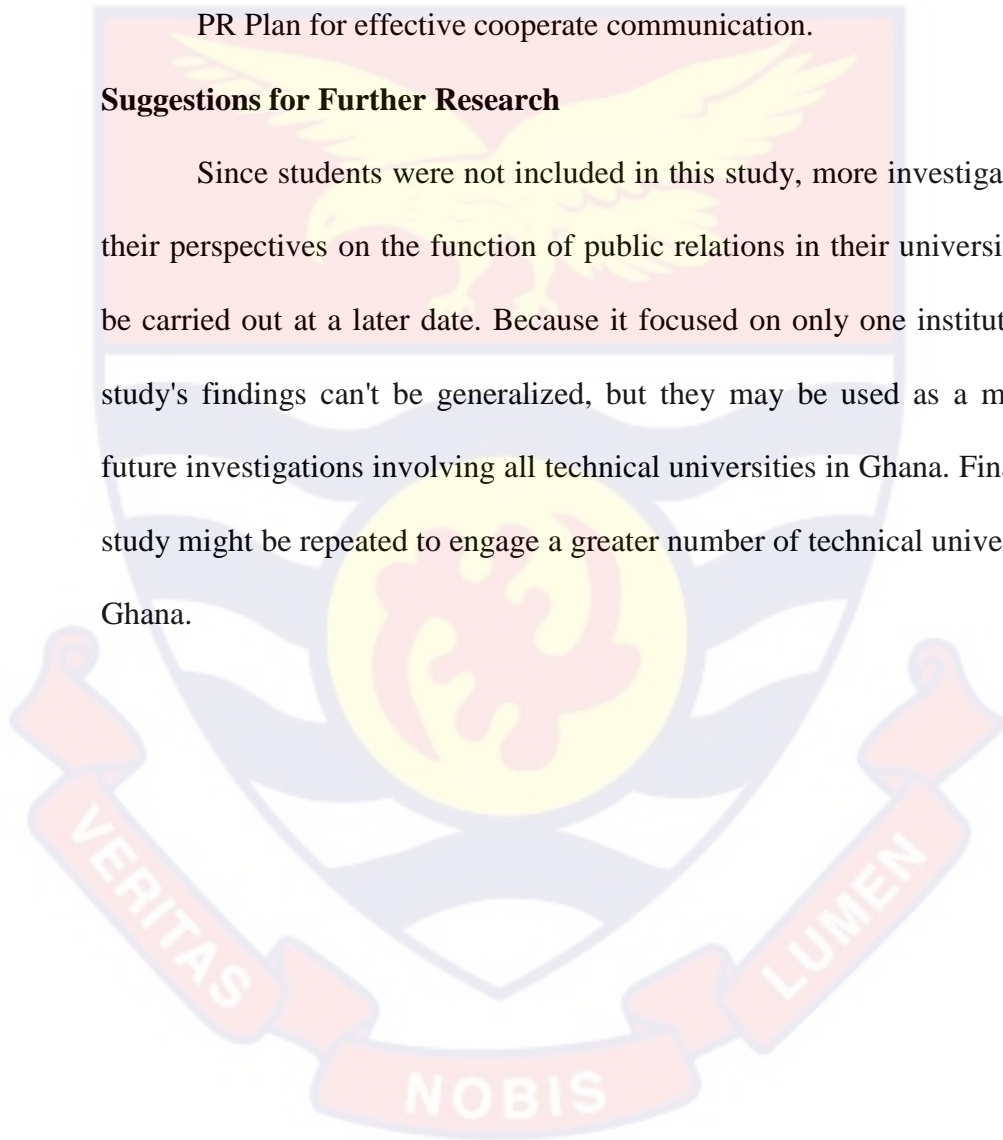
- The study found that TTU does not consider PR as a management function hence the director is not part of the university management it is therefore recommended that the management of TTU consider PR as a management function and be involved in the decision-making process of the University to ensure the smooth sailing of the institution.
- Again, the study found that the PR directorate lacks Professional PR Practitioners and it is therefore recommended that members of staff working in the public relations directorate of TTU should regularly participate in training, and also adequate resources should be made

available by management to the directorate to assist its members in becoming more creative, innovative and effective.

- Lastly, the study found that the public relations directorate at TTU does not have a PR plan and therefore it is recommended that the public relations directorate of TTU develop a comprehensive Strategic PR Plan for effective cooperate communication.

Suggestions for Further Research

Since students were not included in this study, more investigation into their perspectives on the function of public relations in their university might be carried out at a later date. Because it focused on only one institution, this study's findings can't be generalized, but they may be used as a model for future investigations involving all technical universities in Ghana. Finally, this study might be repeated to engage a greater number of technical universities in Ghana.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Instruction: Please, place a tick () in the appropriate columns to indicate your response.

1. Age: 25 – 34 () 35-44 (); 45-54 (); 55 and above ()
2. Gender: Male () Female ()
3. Religious Affiliation: Christianity (); Islam (); Traditional ();
Non-Religious ()
4. Educational Qualification:
Bachelor's Degree () Master's Degree () Professional Certificate ()
5. Position
Registrar ()
Director/Head ()
Deputy Director/Head ()
PR Practitioner ()
Administrator ()
Service Person ()
6. Years spent in the University: 4-10 (); 10-15 (); 15 and above ()

SECTION B

1. To what extent is the public relations department or team well defined in your university? What are their responsibilities?
2. To what extent is your institution's public relations strategy well-defined? What exactly is the nature of this scheme? What are the goals and objectives?

3. When was the last time the institution implemented a public relations strategy? How does your institution handle its connections with diverse stakeholders and publics in the absence of a public relations plan?
4. What are the different ways your institution communicates with different stakeholders? How effective were these methods? And have they been in use for a long time?
5. What functions does public relations play in your interactions with stakeholders?
6. Who are your institution's stakeholders, and how significant are they to the institution?
7. How important is participation of stakeholders to your institution, especially now that it has been promoted to the level of a university?
8. What are the objectives of your organization as a whole?
9. Is the university's public relations director a member of the executive committee? To whom does the PR director report?
10. What are some of the problems facing public relations, and how have they affected your responsibilities and the wider organization?
11. How important has public relations been in achieving these objectives?

APPENDIX B

ETHICAL CLERNACE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309
E-MAIL: irb@ucc.edu.gh
OUR REF: UCC/IRB/A/2016/1595
YOUR REF:
OMB NO: 0990-0279
IORG #: IORG0009096



5TH OCTOBER, 2022

Ms. Christina Maame Pomaah Opoku
Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
University of Cape Coast

Dear Ms. Opoku,

ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/CES/2022/100)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted Provisional Approval for the implementation of your research **Assessing Public Relations Strategies in Takoradi Technical University**. This approval is valid from 5th October, 2022 to 4th October, 2023. You may apply for a renewal subject to submission of all the required documents that will be prescribed by the UCCIRB.

Please note that any modification to the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation. You are required to submit periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kofi Fosuh Amuquandoh'.

Kofi Fosuh Amuquandoh

Ag. UCCIRB Administrator

ADMINISTRATOR
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

NOBIS

LUMEN

P.O.Box 18
Sekondi
WesternRegion
12th July, 2022

The Chairman
Institutional Review Board
University of Cape Coast
Cape Coast

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE

I write to apply for ethical clearance for my research work on **ASSESSING PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES IN TAKORADI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY.**

Sir, the thesis is a qualitative study and a total of 10 participants from Takoradi Technical University would be used. These participants, purposively selected include 8 Public relation practitioners in the university (the department of public relation) and the 2 from the Registry and Human resource directorate.

In view of this, I would appreciate your prompt assistance in processing my application since it is essential in fast tracking my research work. Please find enclosed herein following documents with regard to protocol for review.

I count on your usual cooperation.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Christina Maame Pomaah Opoku

EO/HET/21/0001

P. O BOX 18,
Sekondi.
Western Region
12th July, 2022.

The Director General
Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
University of Cape Coast
Cape Coast

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION FOR INTRODUCTORY LETTER

CHRISTINA MAAME POMA AH OPOKU (EO/HET/21/0001)


With reference to the guidelines of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Cape Coast which stipulate that in research that involves human participants, an ethical clearance should be obtained.

I therefore write for an introductory letter for UCC IRB for ethical clearance for my research on **ASSESSING PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES IN TAKORADI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY.**

I would appreciate your prompt assistance in processing my application.

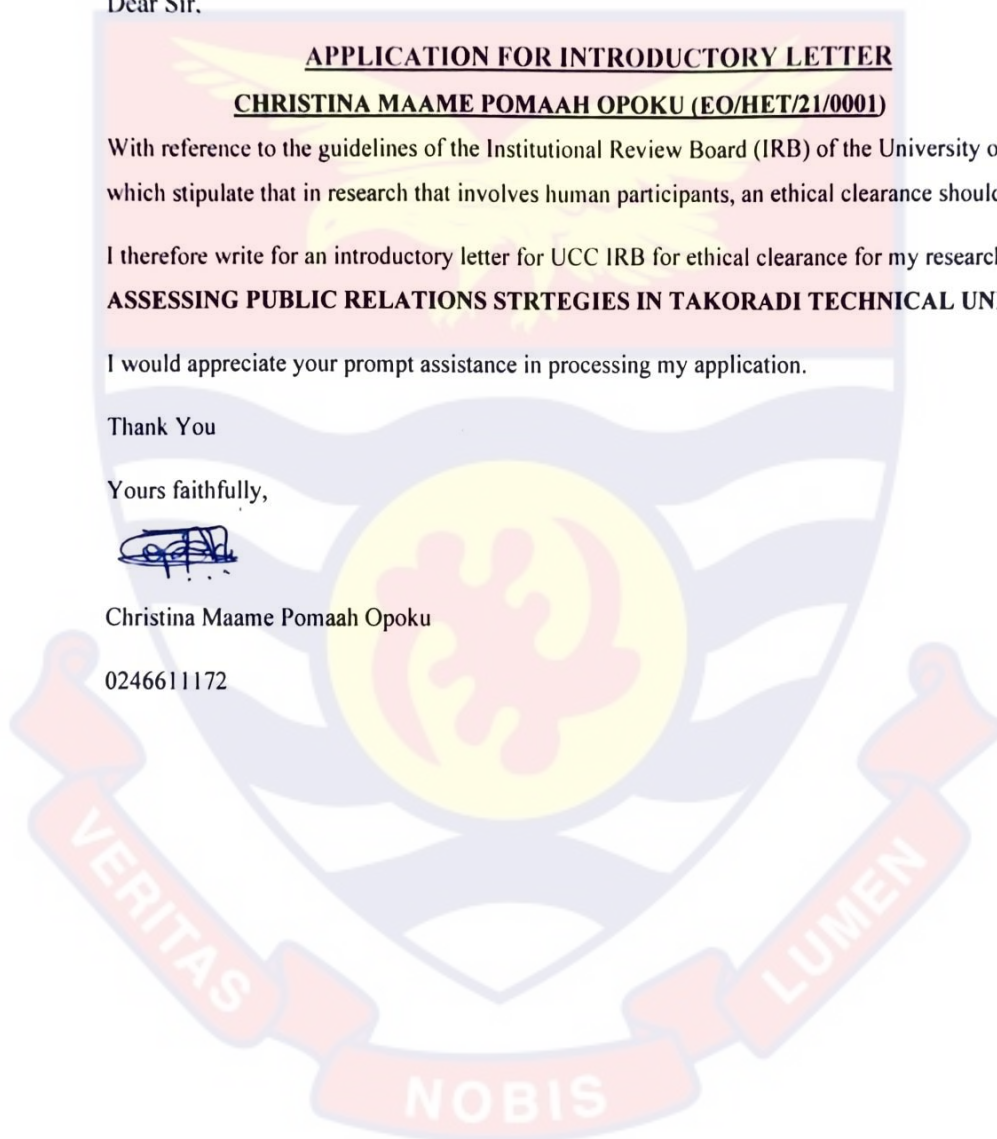
Thank You

Yours faithfully,



Christina Maame Pomaah Opoku

0246611172



APPENDIX C

REQUEST FROM IEPA



Our Ref.: IEPA-UNESCO /1.2/VOL.1/0125

1

The Chairman
Institutional Review Board
UCC

Dear Sir,

REQUEST FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE — CHRISTINA MAAME POMA AH (EO/HET/21/0001)

We write to introduce to you Miss. Christina Maame Pomaah Opoku, with reg (EO/HET/21/0001) an MPhil student pursuing Administration in Higher Educati

We wish to inform you that the Institute has approved Miss. Christina Maame P research proposal.

We would be grateful if ethical clearance could be granted to her to collec research topic is: **“Assessing Public Relations Strategies in Takor University”**.

Kindly find attached a copy of her proposal for your perusal.

Counting on your usual support.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. K. Owusu'.

Mrs. Alberta A. K. Owusu
AG. DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (ADMIN.& GEN. SERVICES)
For: DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERA (ACADEMIC PROGS. & PROFESSIONA

CC: MISS. Christina Maame Pomaah Opoku, IEPA