



**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN BUILDING
ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE:
BONGA UNIVERSITY IN FCOUS**

TILAHUN BELAY

**JIMMA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

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TILAHUN BELAY

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SIGNED BY THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE

_____	_____	_____
Advisor	Sign.	Date
_____	_____	_____
External examiner	Sign.	Date
_____	_____	_____
Internal examiner	Sign.	Date

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ABSTRACT

This research paper deals with the study on PRs practice in Bonga University. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role public relations in building organizational image. The research studied what is the role PRs in building the image of Bonga University. What the major PRs tools are used in building the image of the University, how the internal staffs view the importance of PRs, and the challenges to implement the PRs practices. The research employed a purposive research approach, wherein, in-depth interview, document analysis and observations were used as data gathering instruments.

The study used qualitative case study research method. With regard to the sampling procedure, one public and foreign relation directorate, five senior experts and four assistance workers were selected for interview using purposive sampling techniques. The researcher has also used to document analysis and observation method as tool to conduct his research. The study has showed the PRs role in building the image of Bonga University, which established recently as government academic institutions, and it began its academic work performance through utilization of different technical instruments such as face-book account and telegram account, University website, Walata, Fana, South TV, FM radio. There have been photo exhibitions, brochures, booklets, leaflets, electronic suggestion boxes, and suggestion ledger and other means of communication to reach its customers in order to build the image of the University.

The study shows that PRs of Bonga University was conducted to ensure the organization image building activities. In this regard, the University PR directorate has played vital role in establishing ties between the University and its customers. Even though there were some limitations (lack of skilled PR practitioners, and lack of logistic supplies, and lack of shortage of printing shops), the PR activities brought significant change in dissemination of timely information to the community depending on the feedback collected from the public. Accordingly, the PR workers tried a lot to change the image about the operation of the University, and they ensured the objective to create strong bond between the organization and its customers. This helped the PR office to foster the two way relations, which play vital role in improving the success of the PR role in image building activities.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Public Relation is characterized as an applied social and behavioral science that measures assesses and deciphers the attitudes of the different pertinent publics and having a good relation is the most important factors to build a good relation with companies and various publics. Public relations are needed management function, which assesses attitudes of publics, recognizes the public's and methods of an individual association of activity to learn open comprehension and acknowledgment (Asemah, 2011). Bruning and Lambe (2008).

In the studies of public relations in Greece (Lyra, 1991) and India (Sriramesh, 1991), for example, nearly all public relations practitioners were interviewed and defined public relations in terms of image-making of one sort or another. The term image is also appeared frequently in books about international public relations. Similarly, the universal use of the term image in public relations suggests that something important underlies the concept (Wouters, 1991).

As to Banik (2006) sated that Public relation (PR) is an effort to inter policies and programs of an organization with the objective to establish a bridge of understanding and good will between institution and its publics. To sum up, there is no single organization or containing around the world that is not affected by rapid changes caused by global competition, customer's pressure and development in information technology (Banik, 2006). This implies the magnitude of public relation activities may differ due to size and nature, no matter what the philosophy the strategy and method is a like whether it is to the global understanding or to escalate relations with in the firms and its customers, agent's employees.

Among the communication strategies, public relation has been identified as the effective way of delivering message to the targeted group, and the main objective of public relations is to convey information that will impact individuals (Stokes & Rubei, 2010). The reason behind this assumption is considering PR as a tool to aware and save the public within the domain for mutual benefit on a mutual agenda. That is why; PR is defined as deliberate, planned, performance based, keep public interest, pursuit two-way communication and part of management function.

In accordance with the above point, public relations serves a wide assortment of organizations in the public eye, for example, organizations, exchange associations, government offices, intentional affiliations, establishments, healing centers, schools, universities and religious foundations. To accomplish their objectives, these institutions must create successful associations with a wide range of publics, for example, representatives, individuals, clients, shareholders, investors, and different organizations, and with society at large. Moreover, the public relations act as an advocate to management and as a mediator, making an interpretation of private points into sensible, publicly acceptable policy and activity. In this manner, it is unmistakably clear that public relations assumes principal part in political, monetary, social and ecological measurements of the general public (Rensburg and Cant, 2009).

Government public relations plays great role in creating mutual understanding between the government and the public it serves. It works to ensure active cooperation of the public in government programs and foster citizen support for established policies and programs (Seitel & Fraser, 2011). Public relation (PR) is an effort to inter policies and programs of an organization with the objective to establish a bridge of understanding and good will between organization and its publics (Banik, 2006:39).

Nevertheless, there is no single organization or containing around the world that is not affected by rapid changes caused by global competition, customer's pressure and development of information technology. Therefore, the magnitude of public relation activities may differ due to size and nature, no matter what the philosophy the strategy and method is a like whether it is to the global understanding or to escalate relations with in the firms. Every organization that wants to succeed must not only consider its image among its numerous public, but must continue to invest in the management of its organization image and typically, a organization image is designed to be appealing to the public (Seitel, and Fraser, 2011).

Furthermore, the higher educational institutions sector are a key for economic opportunities, training and scientific education, and it can offer many people a route out of poverty and educational institutions in developing countries generate both economic growth and social development (Amponsah, Asamoah & Isaac, 2015). There is also increasing recognition by governments, development actors and none government organization that broad based education sector.

Higher institutions development and its community relations activities are critical to economic advancement and sustainable poverty alleviation.

Education can lead in to developing innovative and affordable products and services that improve the overall quality of life. It also can take a leading operational role in the provision of basic needs (Orlando, and John, 2014).

University public relations play great role in creating mutual understanding between the university and the public it serves; and it works to ensure active cooperation of the public in university programs and foster citizen support for established policies and programs. In addition, the higher educational institutions are applicative responsible for society that extend beyond teaching and learning activity and it is the obligation of the organization, building smooth relationship between the institutions and society because it is important to continue in its commitment to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and the surrounding community at large (Anas and Batool, 2016).

The practice of public relations in government institutions lacks trust from citizens making it fail to get the public's attention. Even though government institutions have been trying to build their image, the citizens, especially those who have had first-hand experience with the institutions, did not focus to do with them. In this regard, Bonga University has not been left out in the blame. Therefore, this study is designed to investigate the role and how public relations focus in building organizational image in Bonga-University.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Public relations practice is the art and science of analyzing patterns and issues of the organization, anticipating their result, guiding all the general populations of the association and actualizing arranged program of activity which will serve both the association and its publics (Rosenberg, 2013). The practice of public relations, from management perspectives, according to Rosenberg (2013) are the oversight of organizational internal communications policies and actions, oversight of organizational external policies and actions and coordination of internal and external communications.

From the above idea what we have to understand

serving people is important for its growth and maintaining image to build and retain public trust. Image building by organizations cannot only be conducted through the media.

In modern conditions no government, industry, company or organization of any kind can operate successfully without the cooperation of its publics. Similarly, no matter how good an organization may be, if it does not communicate with its publics; it will lose out to its competitors who are using public relation more aggressively to ensure effective communication and no organization can satisfy its numerous public without being perceived first by the public's as trusted (Kotler, 2002:605).

Based on the above rationale, it is easy to see that how universities in Ethiopian are closely engaged in the internal as well as the external publics in teaching learning, research and community services activities, and the public relations' role in associating these internal and external stakeholders has a paramount importance. However, the situation from the ground shows that limitations have been observed in Bonga University, where public relation department is carrying out its responsibilities effectively.

Many researches have been conducted on public relation. For example, Tesfaye 2000 was conducted research on *The Practice and Challenges of Public Relations in Ethiopia: The Case of Government Universities*. Similarly, Muga Dorcas 2006, was also conducted research on *The Role of Public Relations in the Building the Image of the Kenyan Judicial System*; Zewdu Alemnew. (2019). "*Exploring the Practice of Government Public Relations. The Case FDRE Prime-minister's Office Press Secretariats.*"; and Gatwirij, G. (2010) was also conducted study on topic "*The Role of Public Relations in Enhancing Institutional Image in land use....*". The above authors have tried to show us the service public relation in different institutions. Except Tesfaya, others have conducted studies on non-academic institutions, and provided us information on the use and significance of PRs for the success of organizational goals and objectives. In addition, they failed to conduct research on the role of public relations in building organizational image in Ethiopian government universities, particularly on Bonga University. Therefore, these research limitations will be addressed; while the following research questions will be responded.

1.3. Research Questions

1. What does the public relation strategic plan look like in line with organizational image building?
2. To what extent does the office implement its plan?
3. What kinds of tools and techniques have been used to operate the plan?
4. What were the challenges the office faced to perform its duty?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this research is to assess the role of public relations in building organizational image in Bonga University

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the strategic plan of the office in line with the principles of organizational image building.
2. To identify the implementation of public relation works.
3. To examine the tools and techniques used to operate the plan,
4. To discuss the challenges which hinder the implementation of public relation activities

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study will have an insight to improve service delivery of Bonga University to its customers and enhance public relations through improved transparency, accountability and efficiency controls. The research findings will use as an indicator to conduct further research undertakings. The study also hopes to make theoretical, practical and methodological contributions. These research findings will contribute to professional extension of existing knowledge of public relations and its role in enhancing institutional image. In general, this study will be of great benefit and reference to the following bodies namely, researchers, organizational image makers' government, scholars and students in fields of studies.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is clearly defined in the research topic and that is why the researcher is interested in finding out the role of public relations which has played in building the organizational image. The study will delimit in the area of the study, selected study participants, and the problem (subject) of the study.

This study is confined to investigate its opportunities of Bonga university PR activity helps in order to build its image and overall development. Challenges being faced to build its image also will be study.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

Public Relations are the department burden with the responsibility of maintaining mutual understandings between management, staffs and the public. It is also a communication process that built beneficiary relationship between organizations and their publics.

Organizational Image Building: Refers to the overall reputation of an organization as determined by the various pictures, impression, knowledge, and information. This involves developing and establishing confidence or trust among the customer.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITRATURE

2.1 Meaning and Definition of Public Relations

According to literary sources, public relation is defined as a type of managerial service sector mainly focuses on implementation of different organizational administration oriented practical actions such as evaluation of public attitudes, identification of the policies and procedures of an individual or organization in account to public interest and execute program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance (Belch and Belch, 2004:23). It is also defined as management practice ensures information flow between an organization and its public. It is also defined as important means to enhance organizational or individual exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and new items that do not require direct payment, which implicitly notes that PRs is special alternative channel through which mutual understanding can be created between an organization and its public (Seitel, and Fraser, 2011). Further, Banik (2004:5)

Similarly, both Grunig and Hunt (1984) confirm that the term PR is described as, "...the management of communication between an organization and its publics. On the other hand, Grunig (1992) is defined the term public relation from its practitioner point of views. He has defined it as important area of action, where the PR practitioners play a central role in implementing of organizational strategic management duties. In contrast to this, PR is further defined from different perspectives such as the goal of PR, the dissemination of information flows, the role of PR in facilitating mutual understanding and resolving conflicts between an organization and its publics. PR, today, is perceived as a complex professional practice in which hundreds of thousands of people are involved in different organizations such as businesses, government agencies, professional and trade associations, schools and universities, hospitals, hotels, and many more. Therefore, the term PR is described as a complex management function which arranges public attitudes, defines the policies, procedures and interests of an organization; it is fostered its function with the intention to earn public understanding and acceptance (Edward Louis Bernays and Ivy Lee, 2011).

PR is also identified as the relationship conducted between an organization and its stakeholders. Here, an organization is expected to create communication with various stakeholders, both internal and external, which determine the direction of public relations flows (Orlando, & John, 2014). Here, the term stakeholders refer to different agents like customers, suppliers, employees, the media, educators, potential investors, government officials and society in general. Thus, the phrase public relation can be viewed as means creates favorable environment for the success of relation between an organization and its stakeholders represented by its clients, i.e., people, countries, regions, local residents, etc., who are expected to create positive the image of the total organization (Pride, 2005 and Pride, 2005).

Bahil (1994) adds that PR is defined as a systematic approach to solve organizational problems. It is creating an understanding between the organization and the target audience, with the objective of building good will and good image. It is also viewed as special investment enables officers establish good communications and good relationship between organization and its stockholders. Banik (2004) is also defined PR as the two way of communication flow that established to resolve conflicts of interest and the establishment public understanding about the operation of the organization, which provides the society with the services based on truth, knowledge and full information. Thus, PR is considered as a sort of interaction between organization and its clients, and it requires executing communication program and ensures public acceptance and crates common understanding of the organization, which established to chive national, regional and local development schemes.

From the purpose point of views, PR is differently described. Different firms are differently perceived the meaning of the term PR. Some of the firms give it different meanings, which emanate from the purpose that they expected to secure from the function of PR, and they tried to define the term depending on the varieties of ways they intended to use it. When they are failed to draw desirable result out of it, they start neglected it. Most firms have a compact organizational structural in which there is a small public relation department, whereas this task should be undertaken by the marketing department that is versatile enough to make public dealing. Till recently, therefore, many firms did not realize the value of public relations. For them, it was a wasteful activity. After the economic became open, they felt the need for it and started taking it seriously (Monga, 2003).

2.2 Concepts of Images

There is no clear idea or literary work, which is clearly indicated about the origin and the time when the term “image” is used as one of the vocabularies of public relations. Regarding its origin, Cutlip (1991) notes that the term “image” is derived from Latin term called “*imitation.*” In contrast to this, Horowitz (1978) said that the root meaning of the term “image” is replicated from something else, which is vague contention to convey message to his readers. Those precipitations have been simply related to the use of the term “image” in art and literature, where an image is perceived as a replica of something else. The fact that artistic images can be constructed or projected would seem to suggest the origin of the projection vocabulary in public relations. The artistic concept of image, therefore, is believed to have perceived the term image as something that a communicator creates, constructs and projects or gives to other people who often are called receivers. In psychology, in contrast, receivers construct meaning, the term image is perceived as personal observation or symbol of reality given to them by other people. Most psychologists have perceived the term image as mental idea that is visual, sensory, or spatial analogues of reality. However, all what have seen are not an exact picture of reality (Anderson, 1980, p. 64; Denis, 1991, p. 103).

The concept of mental images has had a long history in psychology. Horowitz (1978) was traced the concept image to the period of Aristotle who categorized the concept to the basic elements of human thought. Horowitz added that philosophers such as John Locke, David Hume, and John Stuart Mill followed. As should be apparent, however, these early philosophers and contemporary cognitive psychologists have conceptualized images more narrowly than the concept used today by public relations practitioners. Psychologists are conceptualized the term image as a type of human cognition, while people of public relations are perceived the term image as everything that takes place in the human mind.

On the other hand, marketing practitioners and theorists are tried to use the term image as sum total or composite of messages (e.g., Baskin and Aronoff, 1988, p. 62; Clavier and Wright, 1987, p. 27; Kotler and Andreason, 1987, p. 624; Markin, 1990, p. 21). This sum total is usually consisted of several concepts such as attitudes, cognitions, perceptions, or beliefs – concepts that, if measured, are so different that they cannot be added into a composite index.

At the same time, many public relations and marketing writers failed to create the difference between concepts of image as a message produced by the organization and image as some sort of the composite in the minds of publics. The difference between the artistic concept of image as symbols and the psychological concept of image as something are constructed by the receivers of those messages. All of these confusions about the term image production and consumption and about the different ways in which people consume messages (perception, cognition, and attitude) suggest that the term image is taken as an umbrella term covering all of the communication activities and their effects that occur between an organization and its publics at least as the concept of image is used in public relations (Kotler 1991).

2.3 Objectives of Public Relations

Public relation has its own objectives and goals require establishing positive image of the company and among its publics (Belch and Belch, 2004:23). Therefore, public relations target to create a conducive work environment for the company and its activates; and public relations have played vital role in developing as well as implementing organizational program to meet its objective by maintaining suitable image bridging; and PR is important means to maintain different rationale, i.e., customer loyalty, employees suppliers or ensure labor groups action and the general public concern to the function of the organization (Belch and Belch, 2004:95)

According to Kotler (2006:475), public relation department is needed to perform any or all of the following functions such as attract attention to a person product, or service, publicizing specific products, building and maintaining national or local community relations, building and maintaining relations with government officials to influence legislations and regulation, it maintains relationship between shareholders and other in the financial community and, it foster health relation between organization and donors or members of not for profit organizations to again financial or volunteer support. Therefore, the PRs practitioners are expected to activate relation between organization and its customers like distributors, consumers and opinion leaders with the objective to ensure the success of the interests the organization as well as customers (Shaun and Raut 2003).

2.4 The Role of Participating on Social Events for Public Relation

Practice According to Clow and Baack (2003:411) the company is needed to design and get employees, who involve and enhance productivity, and secure the community demands expected to be addressed by the organization, and thereby, employees have contributed a lot for the success of organizational image building activities. According to Doyel (2002:272), employees are special agents of the company, which provides employees with favorable work environment in which they enhance their participation in different social service giving instruments such as the medias, newspapers, journals, and televisions, which play positive role in disseminating persuasive stories among the company customers about the company, its people or its product, creating and reinforcing the corporate image. Participation in social events enable the company improve its communication system, which is sensitive to identify and recognize the immediate public demands and feelings and render its duties in line with the success of these prerequisites, which can be highly effective means in demonstrating the value of the organization to the community.

2. 5 Public Relations in Service Sector

It is said that any organization is needed to have its own action plan. This enables the organization to foster active PRs interventions, which are essential actions to achieve the organization goals, aims, objectives, etc. There have been several organizational or service sector goals, which needed effective PR interventions in order to achieve the end. Thus, PR interventions are important actions, which provide the organization with capacity to bringing sustainable structural and strategic changes; and thereby, the service sector has got competence in improving their growth and expansion, and they easily promote their services in more refined and effective styles, and they adequately respond to the increasing problem faced by the service sector; and they can build a desirable image of the community about the service sector through the use of suitable PR strategies and actions, and the service industry being more directly in touch with the user or consumer. Therefore, service sector needs suitable PR interventions because it is easily identified by its clients, and it needs to provide its clients with quality service in order to have positive image in the minds of its customers, and it is expected to perform its duties in line with the satisfaction of the needs and demands of its customers (Banik 2002)

2.6 Aspects of Public Relations

In the largest business world, there have been several aspects of public relations. It is early that modern business organizations are expected to provide support for their workers, who played significant role in maintaining customers' satisfaction, and get support from their stockholders, who identified as important elements of the organization structural settings, and they have special share in regulation and improvement of organizational services. Therefore, existence of health PR is important pre-request provides the firms with the chance to have confidence, and trust in the minds of their customers, and thereby, they have fulfilled their internal and external duties, and stay long in the widest global competitive economy system (Banik 2002). Therefore, from management point of views, there are two aspects of PR analyzed in the following way.

2.6.1 Internal Public of Public Relation

The employees are counted as important part of the company's internal elements. They are important elements of the organization because they participate in the operation, production and formulation of ideas which leads to achievement of organization objectives. For creativity and productivity in an organization, a prerequisite is needed to create harmony between the employees and the management. Hence, communication between management and employees is of great importance. The objective of an internal communication programmer, should be the creation of understanding and merited support, of co-ordinate interchange of high marble and high efficiency, an organizations internal image and morale of the work force depend a great deal on the flow of information through internal communications which have successfully launched a program for the flow of information through international communications which have been branded as modern. Organizations which refuse to communicate with their internal constituent and take them for granted, fail to effectively handle the flow communication and on many occasions are compelled to face undesirable consequence (Banik, 2004:40-41).

2.6.2 External Public of Public Relation

- Any company is composed of both internal and external elements, which played significant role for the success of its goal. Specifically, external elements of the organization include people, who are outside the organization, but play important part

in policy formulation and adjustment of the organization structural settings in line with the implementation of strategies, programs, objectives, etc.

Therefore, external elements of PR are identified as people outside the organization since necessary to communicate with deferent groups of people, the external target population has to be defined. It is also very important to carefully identify the public group in order to reach them effectively otherwise it may be difficult to achieve the desired objectives. Generally, public sector organizations have normally the following groups of people external to the organizations. These are customers, government, shareholders and opinion leaders on the other hand, private sector companies being owned by individual or shareholders, opinion leaders, mass media, community at large, civic and government bodies, financial, institution, citizen's action group and public at large. Hence, PR can help in controlling and setting right some of the customer options and generally protecting the company's reputation concerning the companies' products or service among customers or users PR is, therefore used to build organizational image (Banik, 2004:46).

2.7 Implementing the Public Relation Program

Any organization has its own procedural activities. Primarily, it needs to identify its target audiences. Next, it requires developing the public relations program. Finally, the program is delivered to receivers. For the purpose, the company needs to use different tools. These include press releases, press conferences, exclusives, interviews and community involvement (Blech, 2004:573). One of the most important publics press is to be factual and the medium as well as to its audience. It is less often used by organization and corporations, it can deliver message very effectively. Most public relations effort seek a variety of channels for particular medium. An exclusive for distribution, an alternative strategy is to offer one particular medium. An exclusive right to the story of that particular medium research at substantial number of people in the target audiences offering an exclusive may enhance the likelihood of acceptance. Mostly someone will raise specific question and a spoke person of the firm will replay them. Many companies enhance their public image in local community through the use of community participations. They also use internet service to address their customers. It is said to have been the most effective means of information disseminating way by means of which companies and organizations benefit the most.

Lubbe and Puth (2002) shows that public relations practitioners are involved in a variety of work assignments or functions which may include research, strategic planning, counseling, communication, evaluation, media relations and placement, organizing, writing, editing, media production, speaking, training, management. However, the most common prevailing perspectives that influence the function of public relations in broad concept, as Venter (2004) put it, are communication, management and marketing.

2.8 The Most Common Prevailing Perspectives that Influence the Function of Public Relation

2.8.1 Communication Perspective of Public Relations

PR is affected by different factors. One of the important factors, for the success of high level officers, is the basic ingredient to make a good decision that can contribute to the goals of an organization. On the other hand, lack of efficient public relations practitioners is imposed impact on the provision of managers with effective or good information which may be vital for managers in order to impart the right decisions. The communication perspectives of a public relation are, therefore, used to provide genuine data or information about their organizations. The communication perspective of public relations is also emphasized by He stressed that public relations have to be interpreters and functions as communication links between an institution and all of its publics (Rosenberg, 2013).

2.8.2 Public Relations and Management

The practices of public relation are conducted on the basis of the organization internal communications policies and actions Rosenberg (2013). Here, the organization external policies and actions have played vital role in coordinating the organization internal and external communications. On the other hand, according to Theaker (2004), there are two folds of public relations taken from the management perspectives point of views. These include information collection from the social environment and interpretation that in account to the success of things for the implementation of the strategic decision making activities. The other is related to the communication strategic vision. In broadly expression, the notion of public relations as a managerial function is emphasized in many definitions put forward to explain the nature of the discipline (Kitchen, 2003).

Numerous studies have been done and gave explanations on the role of played by the management sector for the success of public relation activities; e.g., Cutlip et al., 2000; Skinner et al., 2001 and Seitel, 2004 advocate that public relations demand we-established management system; and thereby, the PR practitioners must demonstrate comfort with the various elements of the organization itself. They must be the interpreter of the organization's philosophy, policy and programmes, all which emanate from top management. Similarly, Onwunali (2006) states that "public relations are an instrument of management and its consideration should be taken into account when formulating policy". He also suggested that "public relations should be placed at top management level of an organization".

Gruning (1998) contextualize that "when public relations is part of the organization, it is likely to manage communication programs strategically". By drawing on the concept of the management's role of public relations, Gruning have been able to show that "public relations must report to those who run the organization". However, in many organizations, this reporting relationship has not always been in practice.

Seitel (2011) pointed out that the function of the management sector relies in evaluation of the internal and external opinions, attitudes and needs on an ongoing basis; it is also responsible to provide advice to the concerned bodies to act as an instrument in bringing about policy changes and in directing new courses of action. Hence, the high-level of organizations and the practitioners of public relations should know very well their publics to achieve organizational missions. These organizational missions can be determined by the external and internal stakeholders. The public relations practitioner acts as a counselor to management and as a mediator, helping to interpret private aims into reasonable, publicly acceptable policy and action. As we have seen this view clearly indicates that relationships are at the center of public relations, and is seen as an important ingredient for the effective functioning of an organization.

2.9 History of PR in Ethiopian Context

Research practices on public relations in the African continent is for the most parts parse and disintegrated, a huge extent of it accomplished on specific aspects of practice in distinct nations. There are lamentably few investigations that endeavor to regard Africa as an entity and from communication viewpoint.

Nonetheless, the report "The Public Relations Landscape in Africa" (2006), performed by the UK-based consultancy Gyroscope, is one that cases a proportion of achievement in this pressing undertaking.

Solomon 2000, cited in Tesfaye Bezabih 2018: p.27, argued that the practice modern public relations is started in 1960's in Ethiopia. In fact, the emergence of the practice of modern public relations in the country came as a result of the establishment of the Ministry of Pen in 1940's. Then media organizations such as Radio, News Agency and Television services were organized and administered under the ministry of Pen. After serving for some time, the ministry was replaced by the then Ministry of Information and tourism in 1950's with similar task of administering the media organizations in addition to carrying out the responsibility of culture and tourism related issues. Later in 1960's when the Ministry of Information replaced it, the responsibility of leading the media organizations was also transferred to the new ministry. The head of government public relations, around the final years of Emperor Haile Selassie, explained the practice at that time as routine occupied by activities, for example, gathering, and convention and, to some degree, caring for publications. In an interview about the public relations practice at that earliest time, the former head of public relations said that strategies about how to promote the country also, building agreement were unbelievable.

The practice of public relations that started to take shape during the 1960's continued for years without any change in form and content. The major purpose of the public relations then was merely serving the interest of the ruling class. As the public relations at those times were so unprofessional, it was unable to respond to the situations arising in those times. One incident that can be mentioned to substantiate the failure was the case of the devastating famine that occurred in 1974 Solomon (1998). Nothing was known to the nation as well as the whole world about the fatal famine. It seems that the system was convinced the story would remain untold forever; so it opted to focus on working how to hide instead of trying to manage the crisis. Though it is not possible to find out when modern public relations have begun in Ethiopia there is a belief that it might have been in 1960s (Solomon, 1998,p.20). Prior to this period, the beginning of newspapers since 1900's that provided advertisement space for business organizations together with the introduction of printing press, telecommunication and the rail way by Emperor Minilik II (MoI, 2003).

Now days, public relation activities are mainly considered as hub of developmental activities; thus, in each government offices, there is public relation office.

Among these offices, the state (government) universities in the country have opened offices for public relations practices which aimed to promote and report the day-to-day teaching learning, research, community services and technology transfer issues to the internal and external publics. Not only this, they are highly engaged working on to play their role in order to develop the organization by build image externally and internally.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical perspectives play a role as the filter for focusing and bounding the data to be collected. This study is attached to Role Theory, System Theory, and Situational Theory. Role theory deals with every day activity performed by different stakeholders of an organization. For example, Bonga University has stakeholders (the community, teachers, students, and institutions-Churches, mosque, and the like). Each of them has a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms, and behaviors that they have to face and fulfill for the success of goals and objectives of the university. Here, Role theory focuses on the roles of all actors, who expected to act according to different rules, and contribute their own share for the success of the university goal. This theory is used as a framework to interpret the way through which PRs role have been conducted. It is also useful means to discuss about the contributions and their impacts on the function of the university under study. System Theory is focused on how public relation helps understand and manage the relationships an organization has with its stakeholders and publics who make up its environment. It focuses on their situations and customers and other stakeholders the part of the open system (Pat Jackson, Grunig, Grunig and Dozier). System Theory was used to deal with issues like, how the PRs operated, what interconnected channels used to promote active PRs role with the objective to build strong organizational image, and it used to interpret public reward to information obtained through the process of PRs. On the other hand, Theories of Persuasion and Social Influence is the use of communication to attempt to shape, change, and reinforce perception, affect fillings, thinking and behavior.

It enables people to learn new emotions and to act in certain way (Pfau and Wan). Here, people are open to new ideas and positive criticism.

It helps to look up the internal functions of stakeholders of the organization. At a minimum, a successful persuasive attempt generates some type cognitive, effective, or behavioral in the target (Miller and Levine). Therefore, the study was conducted through the use of Persuasion and Social Influence theories, which enabled the researcher to discuss on how Bonga University PRs were conducted through the use of different media channels in order to enhance public awareness about operation of the university. The theories provided the researcher with opportunity to investigate the role to which PRs have played to build the image of the institution in the minds of internal and external customers.

2.11 Summer of Review Literature

The study was backed by review of literature that conducted on the basis of their reliance to the topic under investigation. In so doing, the researcher has tried to focus on how sources gave credit to the contribution of PRs to build organizational image, and helped to create close association between the organization and the stockholders, who played vital role for the success of organizational goal, which manifested itself through the changes brought on social, political, economic, cultural affairs of the broad society in general. Many of literary works focused on the role of PRs to enhance public awareness on the service provided by any organization without touching the role expected from the stakeholder. In contrast to this, this study was mainly focused on the role of PRs in building the image of Bonga University. The research also aimed to discuss on how PRs were established and promoted in particular reference to Bonga University and its stakeholder. In line with this, the researcher intended to fill the gaps seen in above-mentioned sources.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the practice of public relations in Bonga University. This chapter discusses the methodology employed to address the research questions and attain the objectives. The data types and data collection methods, the sampling procedures, method of data analysis employed are discussed as follows.

3.2 Research Design

This study was employed qualitative research design, which helped the researcher to analyze qualitative data gathered from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered from oral informants, while secondary data was collected from different literary sources.

3.3 Sources of Data

The data for this study was obtained from the PR office (directorate of PR), documents analysis from PR office, and assistance workers of PR and observations of activities accomplished by the University.

3.3.1 Target population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

No.	Position of Interviewee	
1	public & foreign relations Directorate (M1)	1
2	Experts (M2)	5
3	Assistance workers (M3)	4
Total		10

Table 1: Position of Interviews

The target population of the study was included workers from PR office from which data was collected through interview, document investigation, and observation methods.

Through observation technique, the researcher was observed different information centers such as studios, photo gallery, and document room. Respondents who included in this study were part of public relations practitioner team, PR office assistance workers team, document analysis and observation of activities. All 10 respondents would be included in the research.

3.3.2 Demonstration of the sampling table

As it is indicated in the above table, the number of sample is taken from PR office which means public relation practitioner team, from the office of PR assistance team of the University. As it indicated in the above table, the respondents ample were taken from the PR office team, which represented the office of PR assistance team of the University. Finally, the process ended with the administration of interviews to the respondents in order to elicit the required information.

3.4. Instruments of Data Collection

Information was collected through interview, document analysis, and observation methods. As to the document analysis, the strategic plan of the PR office should be in focus, their PR works that aim at building their image (with any kind of PR TOOLS), assessment of the works done in line with the principles of organizational image building, shall be considered.

3.4.1 Interview

An interview is employed to gather data from Public relations **practitioner** team who is led by public & foreign relation directorate of the University. The data will be collected through interview, document analysis and observation will be described qualitatively.

3.4.2 Observation

The researcher was observed different centers. These include offices like photo gallery office, document rooms, where journals, magazines, brushers, and newspapers together with suggestion box and posters were observed. Observation was employed with the objective to gather real information useful inputs to substantiate the study at hand.

3.4.3 Document Analysis

According to Denscombe (2007), document investigation was employed with the objective to get information useful inputs to the study. In so doing, the researcher was investigated documents such as annual, monthly, and weekly plans with the interest to get information on how, what, and when each and every activity was conducted by the concerned bodies. Thus, document investigation was conducted to get access to a vast amount of information from the documents available in the organization. Depending on the nature of the documents, the researcher was focused on investigation of additional sources like boards' reports, letters, contractual agreements, Ethiopian Broadcast Authority's directives, proclamations and related documents. Cost-effective: Documentary research provides a cost-effective method of getting data, particularly large-scale data such as those provided by official statistics. Permanence of data: Documents generally provide a source of data which is permanent and available in a form that can be checked by others. The data are open to public scrutiny (Denscombe, 2007, p.253).

3.5. Data Analysis

After the data will be collected, quantitative data will be analyzed using various statistics. The data gathered through interview, will analyze by using descriptive statistics. The research questions required to investigate the role of public relation in building organizational image. On the other hand, Qualitative data will analyze qualitatively using content analysis based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondents' information

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DESCUSION

4.1. Introduction

Chapter four mainly deals with data analysis and discussion. This begins with the presentation of some important preliminary information on socio- demographic profiles of respondents and their response given to the research questions will be presented in three themes. Data obtained from the public and foreign relation directorate, public and international relation officers, communication senior experts and camera and film experts will be presented. So as to strengthen the research findings, data collected through personal observation as well as document analysis will be the concerns of this chapter. Therefore, this topic focus on investigation of the PR role in building the Bonga University image based on the vision, PRs policy and strategy, with purpose of image building activities.

4.2 Result from Interviewees

The Bonga University Public and Foreign Relation Directorate office (BUPFRD) was organized with the interest to achieve organizational image building activities and create close relation with its partners, which begins with the formulation of both strategic plan, and annual plans. In order to obtain first-hand information on the stated concept, oral respondents were provided with the following research questions and their responses also analyzed accordingly.

4.2.1 How Public Relation Strategic Plan Look Like in Line with the Principles of Organizational Image Building?

There have been respondents, who responded the question above in the following way. In this regard, M1 was responded on the above question and argued that the Bonga University's public relation strategic plan was designed and implemented in line with the success of the organizational image building activities. As respondent M1 said, in Bognga University, five years strategic plan was prepared once at a time, and expected to be served as general work framework and stayed as active reference for about five academic successive years.

There have been work plans developed from the five year strategic plan, and prepared in every academic year from which, in turn, monthly and weekly plans developed and changed into practice accordingly. This was how the Bonga University PRs activities were promoted depending on the strategic plan, which indicated the objectives that played vital role in indicating the University PR practitioner, who were the most important change agents in realization of the University PRs activities. He argued that PRs were conducted with the intention to enhance organizational image, which realized through different activities as it was planned earlier. For instance, by sharing information's about good practice of the University to the internal and external publics.

On the other hand, one of the respondents represented by (M 2) argues that Bonga University was employed active PRs, which run by the public relations directorate office depending on the plan that has been introduced from the initial for the purpose of organizational image building. As the informant said, the Bonga University PR was conducted on the basis of the yearly plan, which segmented out into monthly and weekly activities. As to this informant, there was work evaluation activity conducted by the PR Directorate Office with the intention to get information about plan implementation, and aimed to suggest correction on some drawbacks on plan implementation effort, which initiated to maintain customers' satisfaction as well.

4.2.2 How Do Public Relation Tools and Techniques Used as Means to Realize the PR Activities?

There have been respondents, who presented their responses on the question above in the following way.

One of the respondents represented by (M3) argues that there were several tools and techniques, which used in order to operate public relations activity in terms of image building and to reach their plan. He confirms that these tools and technics were exhaustively used in order to organize and manage events mainly focused on the organizational image building. According to (M3), there have been several image building events promoted through organization of public exhibitions represented by

photo galleries exhibitions provided to the local stakeholders, scholars, community leaders and for different participants with the intention to enhance public awareness about academic as well as community oriented activities promoted by the Bonga University; and thereby, the stockholders have informed about the role that expected from them in order to enhance cooperative action and achieve common development goal. On the other hand, according to (M3), there were different tools (website account, face book account, FM radio, Fana, Walta and South TV, and printing media) used as important channel to disseminate information and enhance organizational image building activities. These tools played pivotal role in creating sustainable PRs between different stockholders and Bonga University. He adds that the PR activities were also done using both written and voice messages recorded and used by the University as special inputs to improve the course of PRS activities. Customers also provided with such tools in order to give their comment, suggestion and complaint through electronic devices which were stuck on the external wall of the buildings of the universities which is found in different places. The information was gathered by the University PR directorate office workers in order to analyze and use it to facilitate their organizational image building activities as well.

According to M1, in Bonga University, PRs were channeled through different mechanisms. The university public relation directorate office was mainly used the media channels through which the office released various current issues like public discussions, research reports or findings, local and external academic news, administration successes and failures, measures taken to improve service provisions, support given to improve female students academic performance, and others. In return, using such tools, the office collected and analyzes feedbacks to enhance the university's image in the minds of the stakeholders. Furthermore, there have been data gathered in the form of written and voice messages from customers in the form of comments and suggestions through the use of electronic suggestion box, which stacked on the external wall of the university buildings. The data or information was used by the university PR directorate office workers as input to improve their organizational image building activities.

4.2.3 What Were the Challenges of PR Office Faced to Perform Its Duty in Terms of Building the Image of Bonga University?

On the question above, two of the respondents (M1 and M2) were responded and their responses analyzed in the following way.

According to M1, the Bonga University PR activities were affected by different constraints. These include lack of well-trained professional workers, budget shortage, lack of commitment, shortage of electric power, lack of technological technical tools like camera, printings materials, etc. He adds that there were efficient social security service provisions like poor motivation, lack of incentives, and less concern given to the well-beings of the PR workers. M1 confirms that all the indicated challenges were become important factors for the growth of the number of job leave and turn over that reduced the number of skilled human resources without which the success of PR activity would have been unthinkable effort.

Similarly, M2 confirms that the PR activities were faced serious challenge related to lack of adequate training, which did not more than short term workshop training provision. He adds that PR was obstructed by the interference of an urgent works like unplanned meetings, filed visits and additional works which dispatched from the top office managers down to lower functionary groups, who faced job burden as a result of which the PRs activities failed to hit their objectives. In addition, there were some inconvenient factors that imposed impact on PR activities. These include lack of favorable work environment, shortage of human resource, and lack of printing materials,

4.2.4 Do You Think that Your Current Public Relation Activities Are Effective Enough to Maintain Good Relationship with Your Customers and Work on Image Building?

The question above was responded by respondents of (M1 and M2), and their responses analyzed in the following way. According to M1, Bobga University was experienced with the practice of effective PRs, which made unreserved attempt to ensure customer satisfaction.

However, M1 confirms that the University public relation activities were failed to be more effective enough to maintain good relationship with the organization customers and work on image building because of lack of well trained professional PR practitioners. As to informant, most of the PR workers were provided with short term trainings, which did not bring effective professional improvement in account to the demands of the changing technological skills of the current world.

On the other hand, there have been responses responded by M2 on the question above. According to M2, Bonga University has developed knowledge on the use of PR in the course of organizational image building. According to M2, Bonga University was known by the practice of effective PR through which organizational image building effort. He adds that there were different rewards came from customers, which reflected the extent to which the University was fostered effective PR activities without which organizational image building objectives would have never been achieved their ends.

4.2.5 How Do You Express Your Departments Efforts on Addressing Complain and Comments from Your Customers and Its Public Respectively?

This question was provided to M1 and M3. Accordingly, the respondents were answered the question, and their responses interpreted in the following way.

As to M1, in Bonga University, departments were played important role in addressing complain and comments came from customers. For the purpose, as to M1, departments used different tools (achieve) to gather complain from customers, and thereby, department heads tried to interpret information gathered from clients and worked hard to improve their services in order to ensure customer satisfaction. Similarly, information gathered from M3 shows that electronic suggestion boxes were put in different area of the University in order to collect information and use as initial inputs and measure customers' satisfaction.

On the other hand, both M1 and M3 believe in that internal and external customers were provided with the chance to put their voice and written complain, comments and suggestion, which collected by department heads and evaluate their service provision to their customers, and tried to ensure organizational image building activities.

4.2.6 Do You Think that Public Relations Activities Have Different Contributions for the Success of Bonga University?

According to informants M1 and M2, in Bonga University, public relations activities were contributed different positive outcomes. Mainly, according to information gathered from the informants, public relations professionals were rendered unreserved effort in shaping an organization's image. They played pivotal role in building organizational image in the minds of its customers. They also took part in formulation and spread the organization's message and minimize the effect of negative publicity.

In addition, informants agree that the Bonga University public and foreign relation directorate office was played role by briefing day today activities and good practice of the university to the public through mass media like FM radio, printed media, photo gallery, panel discussion and by creating strong net-work with different stake holders. There was strong continuous assessment done to ensure the internal and external customers satisfaction. Moreover, departments have taken the lion's share in realization of the University strategic plan, and built sustainable organizational image building, and worked hard in order to reduce the consequence of negative publicity.

4.3 Result Discussion

As it stated above, Bonga University Public and Foreign Relations Directorate Office (BUPFRDF) was organized with the aim to enhance organizational image. In this regard, oral information confirms that organizational image building activities were fostered depending on the University public relation strategic plan, which developed to serve for five years. Informants suggested that how public relations were implemented depending on the development of a yearly plan, which is further segmented out into monthly and weekly plans. Accordingly, the success of PR activities was also evaluated by PR Directorate office.

From the information obtained from oral informants, we understand that PR was conducted using different tools and techniques, which facilitated condition for the realization of the University public relations effort fostered in terms of organizational image building. PR activities have been done in line with the focus of organizational image building. For the purpose, PR actors were used different tools such photo galleries and different programs in order to make things clear for all stakeholders, scholars, and community leaders. These mediums helped PR actors to create awareness and inform stockholders about the good practices of the University in order to enhance the image of it. In addition, there have been different PR tools used to enhance public image. These include the university website, face book account, FM radio, Fana, Walta and south TV, printed documents of the University, and private media services.

On the other hand, according to oral informants, the Bonga University PR activities were faced different constraints. In most cases, lack of well-trained professionals has taken the lion's share because each and every technical work performed by well-trained operators. On the other hand, PR activities were obstructed by different factors like lack of commitment, shortage of electric power, limitation of technological material supplies (camera, printing materials, etc.). Despite that there have been efforts conducted to cope with the challenges and ensure the PRs objectives. For the reason, Bonga University public relation directorate office has organized successive work shop sessions to enhance the skills and knowledge of the PRs practitioners. All the challenges were emanated from the infancy nature of the Organization to fulfill all the necessary requirements useful to foster effective PR activities.

According to oral information, the Bonga University PR activities were carried on the basis the procedures, techniques, tools, objectives, evaluation techniques, etc. It is stated that the PR activity accomplishment was also evaluated by PR Directorate office, which is said to have been the only concerned organ to coordinate, direct, follow up, evaluate activities and propose solution vital to enhance public awareness in the minds of its customers. In most cases, the evaluation was also done to see the success and limitations of PR activities in account to the standard pre-determined in the main plan, and use the result for the purpose of image building activity improvement.

Furthermore, the PR activities were done depending on information gathered through written and voice message from customers, who expected to give their comments, suggestions and complaints through electronic devices which stacked on the external wall of the buildings of the universities which is found in different places. The information used by the PR directorate office workers as input in order to improve its organizational image building in the minds of the University customers.

According to informants, PR was established with the objective to ensure the success of academic provisions at national level in general and the study area in particular. In doing so, the office expected to serve as a bridge of information between the government and its public. The office has been serving the national public with providing accurate information about the country in general and Bonga University in particular.

4. 4 Results of Document Analysis

Under this sub title the researcher analyzes the documents related to the Bonga University public & foreign relation directorate office such as customers' suggestion book, strategic plan and annual plan, brochures which is written monthly, quarterly, in midterm and yearly. There is also workers performance evaluation format document, which is analyzed here under.

4.4.1 Strategic Plan and Annual plan

BUPFRD office strategic plan was designed on the basis of strategic plan preparation principles, which put each and every headings of the plan sequentially. Moreover, the plan is prepared by the BUPFRD office experts to serve it as a bridge between the public and the government managing information flow from the public to the government and vice versa. It is also prepared serve as general guide line from which specific annual plan will be prepared and use to ensure a better information flow and the public's access to information which is a right enshrined by the constitution as well as media information access rights. It serves as a broad framework from which the PR specific work objectives would develop and implement with the objective to build the university image.

The PR activities are guided by annual plan that prepared on the basis of the strategic plan. It is prepared by the PRs office lower mangers on the basis of the strategic plan.

Here, the plan consists of different sections and specific activities expected to be implemented with a one year time duration.

The plan is divided into several segments; each segment contains closely related work activities that emanated from the strategic plan. In most cases, annual plan is more specific compared to the strategic plan, which indicates each and every work activity represented by the action verb, which is measurable in its characteristics. The PRs annual plan is represented by fig 3 here under.



Fig 3: Annual Plan

The Bonga University PR activities changed in to practice on the basis of annual plan, which, guided divided into different categories. Each activity implemented in account to achieve organizational image building objectives. There have been different activities implemented within specific month, which in turn segmented into four weeks, each week again re-divided into five days, in addition, each day supplied with specific work activities, expected to be performed within specific time duration. There are sections that indicate the expected inputs, outcome, standards, practitioners, etc., vital elements of the plan and help officers to assign duties to each responsible body, give direction, control, and evaluate the success on the basis of evaluation format presented here under.

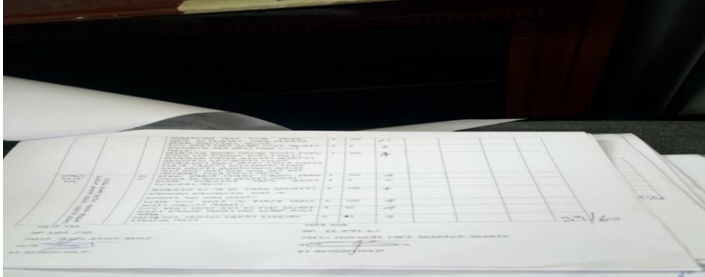


Fig 4: Performance Evaluation Format

The above evaluation format shows that the organization image buildings activities were composed of different tasks changed into practice with the objective to enhance public understanding about the function of the organization under investigation. Accomplishment of the tasks was backed by close supervision service, which facilitated condition for the realization of evaluation techniques. The evidence above confirms that image building activities were given due account with the intention to ensure the university image building activities.

4.4.2 Brochures

PR is established through the use of different communication channels. Bonga University has built strong public image based on the effort conducted by the PR office, which becomes responsible to prepare and distribute brochures to the concerned parties, individuals, organizations, etc., during the time of special occasions like graduation day, public meetings, holidays, ritual places, etc.

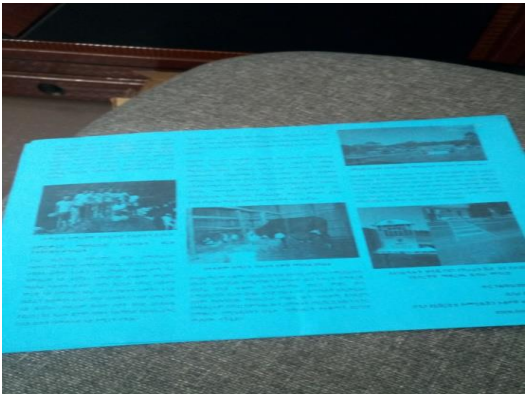


Fig 1: Brochure

By its nature, brochure depicts several activities carried out by the university. It provides clients with adequate information and enhances their awareness about the overall academic and administration services conducted in the organization. It also shows the extent to which image building activities were carried out; and it has been a channel that enabled the PR office to conduct smooth communication between local and external parties. It contains summery report, which presents the overall academic and administration activities.

4.4.3 Electronic Suggestion Box

Suggestion box is also used by Bonga university PR office to enhance the organization image in the minds of its customers locally and abroad. The box is an electronic instrument, which has capacity to collect both voice and written messages came from anybody who is interested to give his/her personal satisfaction on the service provided by the university. It is more of secured, and gives freedom of expression, and thereby, customers have been confidential presented their comment the university; and it has been kept on the front side of the wall of the university building, which is visible to all internal and external customers. When the need was there, the suggestions were taken out from the suggestion box by the concerned body, i.e., the PR office experts in order to identify covenants, arguments, and suggestions given by customers and use that to evaluate the PR service and make improvement on their day-to-day activities, i.e., internal and external communication adjustments with the objective to build the image of the university. So, there have been changes brought in the minds of customers. The tool plays pivotal role in image building activities. It enabled experts to get fresh feedbacks from their customers, whose information has vital role in image building.



Fig2: Electronic Suggestion Box

4.4.4. Suggestion Ledger

PR office uses suggestion ledger to get proper feedback information from stockholders. The document is used to collect information from customers, who provided with service and expect to write their comment on the document kept in the guest room by the PR office for the purpose.

It is important means to get feedback and correct the errors and improve the course of PR. Information obtained from the document use as input to enhance internal and external relations and facilitate the way for image building activities. The document plays vital role in improving of the university service. It gives no freedom of expression of one's perception i.e., dissatisfaction on the university service. This is because suggestion givers will be identified by the office workers to tear out or detach the paper from the document or ignore the suggestion. Hence, it is traditional and out-dated instrument to collect suggestion from customers.

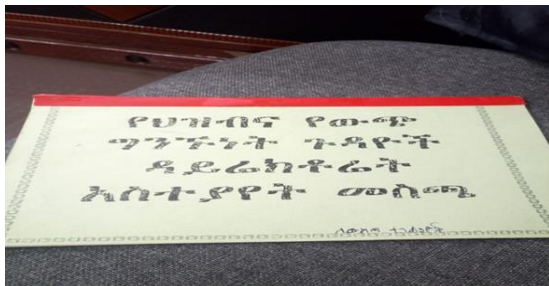


Fig 3: Suggestion Ledger

4.5 Result from Observation

Observation is said to be one of the most important data collection tools. It entails being present in a situation and making a record of one's impressions of what takes place. It provides the researcher with the chance to appear in person at the spot and record what is important for the purpose of his research. It enables the researcher to use his multisensory organs and collect first hand data. It needs some preliminary preparations such as checklist, and lists of observable facts or events in order to avoid confusion (**Somekh and Lewin, 2005**).

In this research, observation method was used to collect information by way of researcher own direct observation without asking the respondents with the intention to observe what is done carefully and accurately, the method enabled the researcher to find information on what is currently happening without subjective bias. Unlike the interview or the questionnaire method, it is independent of respondents' willingness to respond.

In the study the researcher observed how and when the PR activities were carried out by officers like expert, director and lower officers; and the focus was given to observe how they behave in the office what they did and how to cover their task within the specific office hours. In doing so, observation was thoroughly conducted in the document room and photo gallery centers, which analyzed in the following way.

4.5.1 Document Room

The Bonga University PR office activities are backed by dissemination of information through the use of different documents that printed in private small printing centers found in Bong town. The method is supported by the provision of different equipment, which facilitate the process with the objective to provide timely information to the university customers internally and externally. It is observable fact that image building activities are promoted through timely published magazines, brochures, booklets, journals, posters, etc. Among these the university yearly magazine plays pivotal role in the course of image building activities. It provides customers with adequate information about different organizational activities like administration services, academic services, community services, and collaborative actions conducted between the university and the surrounding communities in account to the success of the university mission and vision as well. For the purpose, observable evidence justifies that Bonga University has well-organized document room, which provided with less PR workers, who lacked competence to organize, classify, disseminate, and preserve documents. The room is very conducive to identify and read different materials and get information about the overall PR activities. It serves as important information source to plan and execute effective PR service. Hereunder, the Bonga University documentary room is represented by Fig 5.



Fig 5: Document Room

4.5.2 Photo Gallery

Bonga University has instituted very board photo gallery, which is very important documentation system of different occasions conducted within and outside the university in different time. It is supplied with different technical instruments such as cameras, video, sound receivers, etc. There have been different events recorded and preserved in the gallery room. These include administration issues, graduation ceremonies, seminar sessions, panel discussions, public meetings, and students' well-come sessions, internal and external work visits, staff meetings, field visits, etc., are given attention. In the gallery, observable evidence indicates that the PR image building activities are supported by the provision of visible facts, i.e., photo evidence to customers who play pivotal role in image building activities. Moreover, photo gives accurate information and depicts the truth from actual ground point of views, it indicates the truth from time, place, etc., perspectives, thus it is modern communication means and powerful method to transfer message from the organization into customers in more attractive way. In this regard, the Bonga university PR office image building activities are supported by more advanced figurative expression system that presented in the following fig 6.



Fig 6: Photo Gallery

Observation evidence depicts that PR is also supported by photo exhibition session. The center is always open and provides the whole day service. It is visited by customers came from different localities. There is photo gallery center built within the university compound. It served to preserve different photos collected from different occasions. The center has provided customers a free visit, which guided by the university camera workers in order to enhance their knowledge about the operation of the organization.

4.2 Discussion

According to Somekh and Lewn (2005), observation is conducted to collect firsthand information useful to enrich the research findings. Evidences gathered reveal that image building activities are carried out using different tools. However, some of these tools did not suit to the quest of the time. For example, performance evaluation format is very weak technique, which is incapable to depict the exact action and success of the workers or practitioners. This is because some of the standard measures are vaguer and less likely to measure specific action and its success and to give accurate numerical symbol. Marschll and Rossman (1989) also argue that observation is systematic description of the events, behaviors, and artifacts of social setting. In line with this, the research was conducted on the basis of data collected through direct observation, which helped the researcher to observe actual tools, techniques, etc., that employed by the PR office to enhance public awareness.

Blech (2004) argues that organizational image building is conducted through the use of different methods such as press releases, press conferences, exclusives, interviews and community involvement. Similarly, Banik (2004) has suggested his view in that how image building activities are carried out by using different methods, and he adds that feedbacks collected from customers are very important inputs to enhance image building. However, he contested his idea in that how the failure to enhance image building activities has had bad consequence, which is very difficult to cope with. Similarly, Grunig (1992) point out that how PR is played vital role in organizational conflict resolution depending on information gathered from customers.

Accordingly, the evidence above reveal that how image building activities of BUPFRDF was supported by the service of modern electronic tool. Unlike the other tools, it is very sensitive and efficient to collect information in different forms, i.e., voice and written messages, need multiple information analysis techniques and make early intervention with the interest to improve service provision and attract the attention of public toward the university. However, there is lack of alternative, when such tool may get a sort of technical defect or inability to give proper function. In contrast to this, observable evidences such as photo gallery and document room are very impertinent tools to build image, but they are rarely visited by external stakeholders, except staff members and the communities within the university.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSSION AND RECOMANDATION

5.1 Concussion

The main aim of this study is to investigate the Public and Foreign Relation Directorate Office of Bonga University PR role towards image building. The study intended to investigate the ideas such as suggestion box, Facebook, email, Fana radio, etc., used by the office in order to achieve its objective, i.e., image building in the minds of local and external customers. The study is initiated to investigate the extent to which image building activities were conducted depending on the office strategic plan from which other monthly and weekly plans are formulated and changed in to practice by the office workers and evaluated their work performance by the office experts.

Many of literary sources indicate that PR was differently defined and perceived by different writers. Many of sources have tried to represent PR as reciprocal relationships conducted or established between service organization and their customers. In this regard, it is fair enough to cite Theaker (2004), who indicates that public relation is a twofold process, which enabled officers to collect and interpret information from the social environment so that strategic decision can be made. He adds that PR is an established relation between organization and the publics it serves. Lubbe and Puth (2002) shows that public relations practitioners are involved in a variety of work assignments or functions which may include research, strategic planning, counseling, communication, evaluation, media relations and placement. There have been scholars who contributed their findings in the sphere of historical development of PR in Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular. In Ethiopia, the history of PR laid its foundation in 1940s. Later, in the 1950s and 1960s, PR became important means to build organizational image in the minds of the publics. However, PR became valuable means to secure the ruling class interests than the public needs. Despite that 1960s marked the turning point in the history of the beginning of the establishment of PR between organizations and partners in order to achieve common good.

The research was conducted on the basis of system Role theory, which indicates that how customers get satisfaction from the service provided by the organization.

The theory indicates that people were received fair returns for their inputs. Role theory Social is mainly focused on the role played by policy functionaries, who supposed to have played vital role in organizational image building of Bonga University. Thus, the study aimed to interpret the media channel through which PRs realized, and brought significant change in the minds of climates of the organization (Asemah, 2009).

The research was guided by four guiding questions such as image building activities according to organizational plan, public relation tools and techniques to operate activities; the challenges Bonga university public and foreign relation office image building activities and extent of public and foreign relation office plan implementation in terms of image building. Result discussion also conducted depending on information gathered from respondents in order to the objectives of the study. For the purpose qualitative data was collected through interview and observation techniques and interpretation also conducted accordingly. The research was ended with identification of major findings such as PR activities accomplished in terms image building in Bonga university; the way through which PR office promoted its image building activities; tools used in image building activities like suggestion box, media (radio, TV, posters, photo gallery, document room, etc.) ; there was also PR workers performance evaluation format was used by the PR office experts to check whether the objectives of the PR office achieved or not in account to the result obtained from the office practitioners work performance measures; the extent the PR office was accomplished its pre-designed work plan; how the PR office cope with the challenges confronted in the course of image building activities conducted to enhance public awareness on the overall service provision of Bonga University. The study proved that the PR image building activities were carried out through the use of more advanced technological tools facilitated condition to provide activate image building activities.

Therefore, according to social exchange theory (Asemah, 2009), it is essential to establish strong link between organizations and its publics for public relations to value by the organization their serves.

He indicates that practitioners are needed to demonstrate their efforts to contribute the organizations goal.

Mostly, the higher educational institutions, like Bonga University, have been in a position is a social work, which needs the involvement of different stakeholders without which the final success would have never been achieved its objectives. Higher institutions, like Bonga University, are expected to produce efficient work force. This is possible when there is well-designed institutional mission and vision, which give direction on what to do, how to do, when to do, and with whom to establish relation, etc., in order to achieve national development goal. In this regard, Bonga university has established the Public and Foreign Relation Directorate Office, which is responsible to employ different image building mechanisms with the intention to attract the attention of its customers, whose contributions (materials, finance, suggestions, ideas,, etc.) are very important inputs to ensure quality education provision and produce efficient man power, whose professional service is vital means to bring change at local and national perspectives.

Thus, the establishment of strong public relation is the quest of time without which the success of the objectives of education provision is unthinkable truth. In the light of this, Bonga University is organized the PFRDF with the intention to promote active image building activities conducted through utilization of different methods that are valuable means for the success of its objectives. Basically, image building is nothing, but it paves the way for the success of academic services with the support obtained from local and international donors. It enhances the image of the organization and attracts potential clients who have interest to work on education in collaborative manner. Customer's 'feedback is the reflection of the PFRDF unreserved activities conducted to enhance public awareness about the function, mission and vision of the university. The research confirms that Bonga University was established strong PR. There were proactive and strong PR practitioners who operates day today activities and who played vital role in disseminating the University successes and the changes brought on academic matters. There were also timely report provisions to the community and different stakeholders abut success and challenges of the University, which needs to improve its service best.

In addition to this, the study proves that Bonga University was recently established university. Despite that there have been exhaustive attempts made to build the image of the university through the use of different image building channels as it is stated above.

5.2 Recommendation

Public Relation is defined as the management function which evaluates public attitudes and identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or organization with the public interest and execute program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance (Belch and Belch, 2004:23).

- In light of this, Bonga University, organized Public and foreign relation office with the intention to establish strong ties between organization and its partners in order to foster the two way relations, which play vital role in improving work performance and the success of organization goal. For the purpose, it is essential to sort out the methods, i.e., **tools, techniques**, etc., efficient to enhance organizational image building activities.
- The research findings confirm that how the PR office is worked to enhance the University image about the services provided by the university to its customers. There have been **tools and techniques**, which enabled the PR office to maintain the course of its organization. There have been feedbacks came from partners depending on the office tried to improve its image building activities. In this regard, PFRDF has to play vital role establishing strong ties between organization and its customers. For the purpose, the PFRDF has to be enriched itself with the provision of well-trained PR practitioners, who begin their professional service with development of its plan, which embraces a clear vision and mission of the aim of organizational image building activities. Besides, there is a need to conduct research on PR in order to establish healthy relationship between stockholders and academic institution, like Bonga University. In doing so, PR practitioners required to give emphasis to the identification of important issues, which can be changed into practice on regular basis.

In addition, the PR professionals are expected to arm themselves with the test of modern technological knowledge of the PR concepts in order to perform their activities in account to the success of the PR objectives.

Therefore, the PR office is become capable to provide enough service to its clients as way to satisfy its customers. For the purpose, the PFRD office has to create a **system** that enables the sector to be efficient in its service provision in the area of image building activities internally and externally. Even if there were some limitations (lack of printing shops in the area, trained PR practitioners), the Public and foreign relation office workers provide active service with the intention of minimizing customers dissatisfaction and brought timely information for all of its stakeholders and customers. On the other hand, performance evaluation also conducted in account to pre-described the PR work guidance standards, and the result used to improve the PR activities) performed by the existing man power. Therefore, the PR office has tried to change by day today exhaustive commitment in order to avoid negative image which obstacle the development of the University from the minds of the customers through unreserved effort rendered by the PR workers of the University.

5.3 FURTHER RESEARCH

The researcher doesn't believe that this research finding can fully satisfy the organization need on PR role in terms of image building. Therefore, other similar research works will satisfy more question and demands on the study area. Thus, it is recommended that other studies on PR role especially according to building organizational image will definitely fill the gap. Moreover, the researcher would like to recommend Bonga University public and foreign relation directorate Office should take a look at the findings and recommendations of this research paper so that it can fill the gap in PR related activities.

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APPENDIX I

Interview questions for BUPRD office

JIMMA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTEMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Interview guide pared on **investigating the role of public relations in building organizational image: Bonga University in Focus**

Dear respondent,

This interview guide is prepared to conduct a study on **investigating the role of public relations in building organizational image: As the result of the research totally depends on your responses, you are kindly requested to provide your reliable and accurate answers to the interview. I would like to assure you that the information is used only for research purpose.**

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

1. Respondent demographic Information:

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Age: 21-29 30- 39 40-48 49- 55 56 and above
2. Educational status **Certificate** **Diploma** **First Degree** **Second Degree and above**
3. Field of Study: -----
4. Work experience in Public Relations -----years
6. Position/Role of the respondent: -----

Interview Questions for PR Practitioner

This interview guide will prepare to collect data from Bonga University public relations officers and experts in order to **investigate the role of public relations in building organizational image** of Bonga University. The researcher will exhaustively list as much questions as possible to get the necessary information that would help the research get complete information.

Interview Questions

1. What is your public relation strategic plan look like in line with principles of organizational image building?
2. To what extent does the public relations office implement its plan in terms of image building?
3. What kinds of tools and techniques have been used to operate public relations activity in terms of image building and to reach its plan?
4. How do you express the role of public relation in building organizational image in the mind of your customers and its publics?
5. What are the mechanisms that your department is using on making relationship with the public and stakeholders?
6. Do you think that your current public relation activities are effective enough to maintain good relationship with your customers and work on image building?
7. How do you express your departments efforts on addressing complain and comments from your customers and its public respectively?
8. What were the challenges of your PR office faced to perform its duty in terms of building your Organization image?
9. Do you think that Public relations activities have different contributions for the success of Bonga University?
10. Are Public relations practitioners skilled enough to be good ambassadors to build the image of the University?

S/N	Type of document to be checked and analyzed	Remark
1	Check the documentation of strategic plan of public relations practitioners at the office.	
1.1	Is there any strategic plan which helps in order to build image of Bonga University?	
1.2	Are there any PR tools which have been used to operate public relations activity in terms of image building?	
1.3	Is there any documented objective prepared being aligned to the goal or in the way that meets the goal of the PR office of the University?	
2	Check the document of implemented plan of public relations	
2.1	Are there documents of the implemented plan of public relations activities?	
2.2	Are there implemented and documented public relations activities according to the planned one?	
3	Check the performance evaluation/ assessment documents of public relations.	
3.1	Are there documents of public relations practitioners that show outcomes of PR activities in terms of image building?	
3.2	Is there a document of lesson learned from the evaluation that supports the next planning?	

Check List for Document Analysis of Bonga University at PR Directorate office

Check List for Observation Technique of Bonga University at PR Directorate office

S/N	Type of item to be observed	Remark
1	Are there tools/strategies of the Public relations which indicate on image building activities like billboards, photographs, notices, posters, brushes etc.....?	
2	Are there enough logistics and equipment for the Public relations practitioner's activities?	
3	Is the office arrangement appropriate and adequate for the Public relations practitioners?	
4	Engagement in events such as, forum, sports, rally to react its community in terms of image building Bonga university	

APPENDIX II

PHOTO EVIDENCE COLLECTED DURING OBSERVATION



Fig. 1 Topographies of Bonga University



Fig.2.....BUPFR Office



Fig.3

Bonga University Public and Foreign relation Directorate



Fig.4 PR Communication Experts



Fig.5 PR Tools



Fig.6 PR Tools



Fig.7 PR Tools



Fig.8 Photo indicated Some of PR activities



Fig.9 Photo indicated Some of PR activities



Fig.10 Photo indicated Some of PR activities