

**PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL: A STUDY OF
NASARAWA STATE UNIVERSITY, KEFFI**

BY

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DECLARATION

I Bamisaye Funmilayo declare that this project was carried out by me on the enable supervision of Dr. T.M Akase to the best of my knowledge and belief, this work as it is structured and presented has never been submitted either in Nasarawa State University, or any other institution for the award of degree. All sources of information are specially acknowledge by means of referees.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by Bamisaye Funmilayo Bukola with matriculation number NSU/PGD/MCM/0011/17/18 has been approved as meeting the requirements for the Award of Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) in Mass Communication in Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the father of the whole universe, the Almighty God for his guidance and protection throughout the duration of this programme.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration into the role of Public Relations in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi with a view to ascertaining how effective it has been what can be done to make it very effective. A survey method was adopted, using the instrument of questionnaire to gather responses from some selected publics of the University comprising selected students from all the faculties, staff (both academic and non-academic) as well as residents of Angwan Lambu and High Court, both communities surrounding the University. Thus, after analyzing the data collected from these respondents, it is found out that public relations has not been properly utilized in the management of the University. This is one of the reasons which made its effects not to be well felt by the university's publics. Therefore, for a better appreciation of the role of public relations, it is recommended that it should be integrated into the top management level of the university and be given all the necessary attention and support it requires to enable it function well.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Public relations is a concept that has come to be generally accepted as an important element of business, government and all aspects of everyday life. It is regarded by many individuals, groups and organisations as a formidable management system that ensures the attainment of corporate goals.

Formal settings, whether in the public or private sector, can hardly carry out their statutory functions effectively without good public relations. This is because all activities that are tailored toward the production of goods and rendering of services depend on effective communication.

Similarly, the management of an organisation or institution requires relevant and accurate information to perform various pertinent functions. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of public relations is to handle such information needs and to establish two-way communication between an organisation and its publics.

In this connection, public relations is required not only to create and promote a good image for an organisation but to also foster mutual relationship between its various publics in order to create an environment that allows for good communication and smooth performance of assigned roles.

It is often argued that most organisations suffer from the problem of negative image because of lack of or poor public relations while those that enjoy positive image do so due to the existence of a well-defined and effective public relations. Thus, public relations involves the management of problems and communication related issues, as

it helps an organisation's management to be informed and be responsive to public opinion. It also helps in defining and emphasising the responsibility of an organisation to the interests of its publics, based on its understanding of human behaviour and pattern of relationship.

Consequently, most organisations, seeing the beneficial effects of the application of public relations, are now placing premium on the incorporation of the practice into their management process. In fact, some organisations specifically create departments, sections or units to handle public relations. To underscore the importance of the functions of public relations, some organisations appoint managers who are placed at managerial level to coordinate the functions. The impact which public relations can have on the management of such organizations is the main thrust of this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nasarawa State University, Keffi- the focus of this study, is one of the organizations with a unit that is saddled with the responsibility of performing the functions of public relations, using the nomenclature "Information and Protocol Unit". The unit is essentially established to lend its professional contributions to the management of the university by serving the information and communication needs of the institution and those of its publics.

However, despite the existence of this unit, the university is still faced with a myriad of problems such as negative image and perception from its publics, poor communication as well as lack of good understanding of management's policies and actions by its publics.

It is against this backdrop, that this study seeks to examine the practice of public relations in Nasarawa State University, Keffi with a view to ascertaining its effectiveness in the management process of the institution and identify ways through which it can be more efficient and productive.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This, study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To unravel how the practice of public relations in Nasarawa State University, Keffi is organized;
- ii. To ascertain whether there are adequate “working tools” for effective public relations practice in the University; and
- iii. To establish best practices in the management of public relations.

1.4 Research Questions

This research is set to provide answers to the following questions:

- i. What are the factors that hinder the effective use of public relations in the management process of Nasarawa State University, Keffi?
- ii. In what ways have the application of public relations principles affected the smooth running of the university?
- iii. What better way(s) can be adopted to make public relations effective in the management of the university?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research is significant because it can contribute to a better understanding of the role of public relations in the management process of any given organised

establishment or organisation. Considering that the study focuses on the contributions of public relations in the running of Nasarawa State University, Keffi, it will be of immense significance to the management, staff and students of the university by way of conscientising them on its indispensability, and creating as well as maintaining mutual relationship amongst the various publics of the university.

Also, the study would add and offer useful literature to students as well as other members of the public who may want to or are embarking on a similar study.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research work focuses on ascertaining the effectiveness of public relations in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Therefore, the study does not dwell on other constituents of mass communication but only makes reference to them where it is deemed necessary.

Consequently, the study is solely centered on Nasarawa State University, Keffi and not other universities or higher institutions largely due to the limitation of time and fund.

1.7 Operational Definition of Significant Terms

Words are often understood differently by different individuals. Therefore, it is important to draw some working definition of terms to enhance understanding and appreciation of this study.

- **Public Relations:** Public relations is the art and science of achieving harmony within an organization through mutual understanding based on truth and full information.

- **Public:** The term public is used to refer to the generality of people. However, public is used in this study as everyone that is interested in or affected by an organisation, whose opinion can affect the organization. In this case, public comprises of management, staff and students of Nasarawa State University, Keffi as well as those who relate with the university either directly or indirectly. These could include members of the university’s host community, suppliers to the university and providers of services such as accommodation, transportation and a host of others.
- **Two-way Communication:** This is a technical term that is used to refer to communication that is to and from an organisation and its publics.
- **Management:** Management, in this study, has dual meaning. In the first phase, it is the act of running and controlling a business or an organisation. It could also be a skillful coordination of any human activity. In the second phase, it connotes the composition of those who make policy or make decisions for the overall running of an organisation. They are often referred to as the “management team”.
- **Mystique:** This is the quality of being mysterious or secret that makes somebody or something seem interesting or attractive. Its usage in this work refers to the clear or unhidden nature of public relations.
- **Perception:** Perception is a way of regarding, understanding or interpreting somebody or something; intuitive understanding and insight. The study uses the term to explain the opinion, impression or view of the public about an organisation.
- **Organisation:** Although organisation can also be said to be the act of making arrangements or preparations for something, it is more employed in the study

to refer to a collection of individuals who have come together for the purpose of achieving a common objective. Organisation is used interchangeably in this work with the word “institution”.

- **Internal Public:** This refers to people existing within an organisation.
- **External Public:** This refers to people existing outside an organisation but whose activities also affect an organisation and those who could be affected by the activities of the organisation either directly or indirectly.
- **Goodwill:** It refers to the established reputation of a business or an organisation, often regarded as a priceless asset.
- **Goal:** The term is used in this work to refer to an aim or a desired result which an organisation seeks to achieve.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of relevant body of literature which illuminates and lends credence to the subject matter under study. In order to effectively realise this, the chapter is sub-divided into different segments. These include the concepts of public relations and management tool, review of related studies as well as the theoretical framework.

2.2 Review of Concepts

Two main concepts are reviewed in this study. They are:

- i. Public relations
- ii. Management tool

2.2.1 Concept of Public Relations

It may be disappointing to know that there is no universally accepted definition of public relations because as Odozi (2007, p.3) notes, “there are as many definitions of public relations as there are public relations practitioners, and those with different cultural backgrounds and practical settings.”

An attempt was made by Dr. Rex F. Harlow, a renowned public relations consultant to put some popular handle on the concept. After examining books, journals and magazines on public relations and asking 83 public relations executives for their definitions. Harlow found 472 definitions of public relations. It is, however, generally believed that there are over 600 recorded definitions of public relations.

Nwosu (1997) concurs with this assertion and further argues that there are even more number of public relations definitions in existence. This, he insists, is especially so when the list of other recorded and unrecorded definitions are added together. Therefore, there is a danger in devoting too much emphasis on the question of definitions of public relations suggested during the past five decades.

However, it is necessary in this study to consider a few statements of objectives that can pass for the definition of subject matter of public relations.

The International Public Relations Association (1960) cited in Keghku (2005, p.4) defines public relations as “a management function of a continuing and planned character, through which public and private organisations and institutions seek to win and retain the understanding, sympathy and support of those with whom they are or may be concerned by evaluating public opinion about themselves, in order to correlate, as far possible, their own policies, and procedure, to achieve by planned and widespread information more production, cooperation and more efficient fulfilment of their common interest.”

Similarly, Griswold (1977) states that public relations is the management function, which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or organisation with the public interest, and plans and executes a programme of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.

Examining and analyzing the 472 definitions identified in his research, Harlow (1997, p. 110) distilled these definitions into a lengthy definition of public relations. According to him, “public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organisation and its publics; involves the management to keep

informed on, and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasises the responsibility of management to serve public interest; helps management to keep abreast of and effectively utilize change; serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound ethical communication techniques as its principal tool.”

One definition that has attracted the attention and gained the acceptance of most practitioners is that given by 30 national and regional Public Relations Association at a meeting in Mexico City in 1978. According to Ajala (1993), the Mexican Statement as it is popularly called states that public relations is the art and social sciences of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organisation leaders, and implementing planned programmes of action which serve both the organisation's and public interest. This definition, according to Wole and Tayo (2007, p. 19), combines the letters and spirit of the older and newer definitions of publication relations.

The Mexican Statement points out that public relations is an art and social science because it uses expertise and techniques of these broad disciplines. Public relations consciously borrows techniques from public speaking, music, photography, modeling and creative arts, particularly in the composition of public relations messages. It also uses techniques of disciplines such as psychology, sociology, political science and mass communication so that it can monitor and assess its publics.

According to Black (1989, p. 120), public relations is “the establishment of a two-way communication to resolve conflict of interests by seeking common grounds or areas of mutual interest, and the establishment of understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information.”

On the other hand, Canfield and Moore (1973) view public relations as a social philosophy of management expressed in policies and practices which through two-way communication with its publics, strives to secure mutual understanding and goodwill. He emphasises that the management of an organisation has a social responsibility to satisfy its publics in order to secure goodwill. This implies that, though communication is an essential element in achieving public goodwill, other practices are equally used.

Giving a conceptual definition of public relations, Childs (1973, p. 78) asserts thus:

Public relations is not the representation of a point of view, not the act of tempering mental attitude nor the development of cordial or profitable relations... it is to reconcile or adjust in the public interest, those aspects of our personal attitude and corporate behavior which have a social significance.

Organisations need to communicate because they are part of the world and do not operate in a vacuum. It is not simply a question of promoting the organisation, gaining more sales or ensuring that a charitable appeal is well supported; it is often a case of defending and justifying a course of action. Buttressing this view, Keghku (2000) opines that public relations is the process of making known and acceptable, an organisation's policies, programmes and actions through effective communication for the overall mutual benefit of the organisation and its target publics.

From these myriads of definitions, it is evident that public relations, like communications, which are interwoven, is a vital resource or tool used by an organisation to attain its goals and objectives. This is achieved through planned and well-executed programmes which are intended to influence public opinion in a

manner that the relations between the organisation and its publics remain favourable for the purpose of sustaining the goodwill and understanding of such publics for corporate survival.

Publics in Public Relations

There are perhaps only very few ways of explaining and understanding public relations without taking cognisance of the concept of publics. The term is used in public relations as a collective noun to refer to the various groupings of people an individual or organisation relates with. It is the application of segmentation and delineation strategy to behaviour management.

Offonry (1985) sees publics as any group of people with associated interests with whom an organisation has, ought to have, or wishes to have communication. In the same vein, Odozi (2007, p.2) views publics as “groups or individuals whose interests can be affected by what you do, or stakeholders whose activities are likely to facilitate or hinder what you do or who you are.”

Accordingly, Cutlip and Center (1988) stress that the essentiality of public relations in an organisation is beyond debate, especially in a world bound together by interdependence and swift communication, yet split by recurring crises of change and confrontation. Thus, the concept of publics recognizes the fact that no entity, be it for profit or non-profit, can survive in autarchy. This is because the human society exists as a result of the basic biological symbiotic principle based on reciprocity and interdependence.

Furthermore, Abodunrin (1995) avers that the word “publics” is a professional jargon in public relations which is used to refer to the segments of the population which a

particular organisation has responsibility to relate or deal with. In his view, the concept of publics is central to the liaison, communication and sensitivity functions of public relations because the functions are performed for the benefit of a particular set of people. This set of people is the publics. He says it is in view of the relevance of this concept that practitioners and theorists of public relations have formalized publics into two divisions: internal and external.

The internal publics, also referred to as primary publics, are those who are directly involved or affected while the external or secondary publics are those who are not directly involved but whose interests can be affected on the long run. For example, the internal publics of Nasarawa State University, Keffi can be broadly categorized into management, staff (academic and non-academic), students and internal other service providers such as security and cleaners. On the other hand, the external publics consist of government, host community, groups and organisations that provide external services, other members of the general public.

The activities and interests of the various publics mentioned above determine greatly the success or failure of the university. It, therefore, behooves the public relations unit to design its programmes in such a way that will serve the interests of its various publics, into consideration the goals of the organisation.

Function of Public Relations

Scholars and practitioners are yet to agree on unified or specific functions of public relations. This can partly be attributed to the fact that public relations, as a branch or offshoot of communication, is a developing field. Scholars are, therefore, quick to remind us that there are different varieties of functions public relations performs. It is, however, necessary to point out here that there are similarities in the functions of

public relations given by different scholars. But for the purpose of this study, we shall dwell predominantly on the functions of public relations articulated by Adekunle (1993), cited Wole and Tayo (2007, p. 150-1510) and Wole (2005, p. 15).

- a. Counselling (organisation's management) based on the understanding of human behavior. This is because public relations serves as a means of fostering mutual understanding and cooperation between various publics and corporate bodies. It therefore studies and gives informed counsel to its organisation's management on matters of public importance.
- b. Analysing the trends of affairs and predicting their consequences for now and the future. These trends are considered not only on the perspective of current events but even future ones, in order to place the organisation in a better position to effectively deal with an existing problem and avert future occurrence.
- c. Researching into public opinions, attitudes and expectations. Through this, the organisation is likely to have a good knowledge of its publics which will in turn place it in a good stand to be able to appropriately and effectively relate with its publics.
- d. Establishing and maintaining two-ways communication based on truth and full information. This entails that an organisation must sincerely strive to not only communicate with its publics but also listen and objectively react to responses coming from its publics as this will enable it win public goodwill and patronage.
- e. Preventing conflicts and misunderstanding. In public relations, emphasis is laid on conflict prevention rather than resolution. This is because when a crisis situation is identified and treated early, it saves the organisation a lot of troubles and distractions.
- f. Promoting mutual respect and social responsibility. An organisation is expected to attend certain social needs of its publics. This is expected to help in creating a environment for the organisation to operate.

- g. Harmonising private and public interests. Every organisation is established for a purpose. While an organisation strives to actualize the purpose for which it is set up, consideration must also be given to the interests of the publics it relates with. Therefore, organisation ensures that there is social harmony between its interest and those of its publics.
- h. Promoting goodwill with internal and external publics, such as stakeholders, staff, suppliers, and customers.
- i. Promoting good employee relations. Public relations in an organisation ensures that there exist a good working relations between staff of various departments or units that make up the organisation. It puts to the consciousness of its organisation's employees that they are all working towards the actualisation of the collective objective(s) of the organisation.
- j. Projecting corporate identity. This is one of the commonly known functions of public relations. Knowing fully that no organisation that knows its worth would joke with its identity or image, public relations ensures that the organisation is always projected and seen in good light by its publics, largely because good corporate identity also contributes to the actualisation of organisational goals.

In performing these functions, public relations could be said to be indispensable in the management of an organisation. Whenever organisations take cognisance of the efficacy of good public relations, organisational goals are easily achieved and in such a way that all those concerned would benefit from it.

2.2.2 Concept of Management Tool

Public relations practitioners have always expressed the desirability of recognising the profession as a management function (Wole and Tayo, 2007). In other words, the

notion public relations as a management function is commonly interpreted to mean that officers who conduct this function in an organisation should be made managers and attend management meetings. Giving the crucial roles expected of the public relations executive in the pursuit of achieving corporate goals, it is proper to ensure that the management of an organisation gives public relations its due. In this way, the organization would be able to derive maximum benefits from it.

Therefore, public relations as a management function can be seen as “the process of providing the right communication which enables the organisation as a whole to achieve its goals in an atmosphere of shared knowledge and understanding with its publics” (Odozi, 2007, p. 14). This can rightly be realised by analysing public perception of the organisation, the attitudes they manifest as a result of their perception and how these affect the operation of the organisation.

Public relation does not only identify the climate of opinion in which its organisation operates but initiates professional measures to change or intensify it for the benefits of the organisation. These and other reasons underscore the necessity of the inclusion of public relations in the management process of every organisation.

Public Relations Strategies

Rodman (2006) says public relations professionals use different strategies including news management, community relations, crisis management and lobbying.

a. News Management

News management includes all the activities that public relations professionals do to get desired information about their clients into the news and to keep undesirable information out of the news. News management techniques include publicity stunts,

news hooks, media relations, government news management, leaks and trial balloons and exclusives.

- i. **Publicity Stunt:** effective news management makes a product newsworthy. This has always been the idea behind the publicity stunt. According to Rodman (2006), a publicity stunt is any action designed to create a human interest story. Many publicity stunts are outlandish (strikingly unfamiliar) or outrageous (shocking, scandalous, shameless). When Justin Timberlake ripped Janet Jackson's costume during the 2004 Super Bowl Halftime show, leaving her partially topless, every news organisation in the United States carried the story for days. The incident occurred just before she released a new album. Therefore, that was something intended to attract attention and publicity to her (a stunt) shortly before the release of that album.
- ii. **News hooks:** Rodman (2006) says news hook is the angle or approach that makes an organisation's activities newsworthy. In other words, it is the viewpoint that will interest media gatekeepers in the information that the client wants to publicise. One way to give an activity an automatic news hook is to get a celebrity involved. Non-profit organisations are quick to solicit the services of celebrity spokespersons: Elizabeth Taylor and Elton John for AIDS research, Ted Danson to stop ocean pollution, Kim Basinger to fight the use of animals in research.
- iii. **Media relations:** part of the art of news management is media relations (also called press relations, particularly when referring to the print media), the practice of developing and maintaining contact with reporters. When a public relations practitioner needs to get a press release to a news outlet, it helps if that practitioner knows a reporter personally. Reporters, for their part, have deadlines that limit their time, so they tend to appreciate help with their stories. Public relations practitioners do all they can to act as resources for reporters. That way, when reporters do not know where

else to go, they will turn to the public relations agency and ask: “Do you have an expert in this area?”

- iv. Government news management: Governments try to manage their news coverage by controlling the flow of information to the press. In the 1990-91 Gulf War, for example, the US government carefully controlled what journalists could see and report on. In the invasion of Iraq that began in 2003, the government embedded journalists with military units, hoping that they would bond with the soldiers and accept their common objectives. And the US government has done only what every other country attempts to do in times of conflict - it is an inevitable truth that public relations is an integral part of every war effort. During the 1999 bombing campaign against Yugoslavia by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), for example Yugoslavian authorities at first kept reporters out of the Serbian province of Kosovo and away from the physical evidence of the Serbs' atrocities against civilians. But when NATO planes accidentally killed civilians, suddenly reporters were being given tours of the carnage.
- v. Leads and trial balloons: Governments and corporations both try to control news through methods such as leaks. Technically, leaks are unauthorised disclosures to the press. In reality, leaks are often planned to publicise information without attribution to a source, as when a politician wants to throw mud at an opponent without getting himself or herself dirty. Leaks are also used to publicise information that the source is not legally permitted to make public. In 2003, for example, when a former US ambassador spoke against President George W. Bush's Iraq policies, someone in government leaked to a journalist that the ambassador's wife was an undercover agent for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Exposing the identity of a CIA agent is a federal crime.

vi. Exclusives: An exclusive, a story granted to just one news outlet, can be used to increase the impact of publicity. According to Howard Kurtz, in his book *Spin Cycle*, President Bill Clinton would have his Press Secretary grant exclusive stories to carefully chosen news outlets. *USA Today* got an exclusive on a \$5 billion proposal to renovate schools, the *New York Times* got one on tracking illegal gun sales by computer and American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC's) Peter Jennings got one on Kids and Cigarettes. Kurtz remarks: "Marginal stories that would barely rate a mention on television were pumped up by virtue of being exclusive" (Rodman, 2006:386). This would create a "two-day bounce" for the story, forcing everyone else to cover it the day after the exclusive. There is risk involved with exclusives, however, the media outlets that did not get the exclusive might be less helpful the next time the public relations practitioner wants coverage of an event.

b. Community Relations

According to Rodman (2006), community relations involve aiding groups of people in the society. These groups might be local, national or global. On the local level, public relations seeks to maintain a good relationship with government and community groups in those places where the company maintains an office, store or manufacturing facility. That relationship might come in handy if the company needs to gain official or public support for such projects as building or expanding a factory; it might also mean the recruitment of better employees. Perhaps most important, community relations provides an example of organisational citizenship that the company can brag about anywhere. Today, multinational corporations truly have to think globally and act locally because good and bad publicity travel quickly around the world. To that end, businesses have adopted the practice of corporate aid. This form of large-scale community relations can involve anything from "adopting" schools (which usually

involves supplying everything from computer equipment to volunteer's teacher aides) to adopting highways (by being responsible for their clean up).

Corporations provide aid on the national level as well. In Nigeria, the "telecommunications giant, MTN, has established the MTN Foundation through it offers assistance, nationally, in diverse areas such as education, health, sports, etc. Similarly, in 2013, Etisalat announced an annual prize in support of literature.

With community relations, public relations can truly be what its proudest practitioners claim it is: the practice of doing good and getting credit for it.

c. Crisis management

Nothing tests an organisation's public relations ability more than a crisis, defined by Hanson (2005) as an event that is perceived by the public as being damaging to the reputation or image of an organisation. To Rodman (2006), crisis management is the action used to repair a client's public image following an emergency such as a major error, accident or sabotage. Perhaps a manufacturer has to recall a product or an airline has to explain a crash. Part of the public relations function in crisis management is getting clients to take action during a period when the disaster might otherwise have them paralysed.

Thus, in the Tylenol Capsules' poisoning case where someone poisoned the capsules in 1982 in an attempt to drag the name of the manufacturing company to the mud, crisis management had to be used twice (Rabiu, 2013). First, public relations counsellors helped the company manage its response by recalling all of its capsules and reintroducing newly manufactured capsules in tamper-resistance packaging. After

more deaths occurred in a second round of tampering, the company then pulled the capsules for good and came out with caplets, which are more difficult to alter.

Principles of Crisis Communication

What should a company or organisation do when it faces a crisis? In general, according to Hanson (2005), it should communicate promptly and honestly with all its publics. More specifically, he adds, there are five principles of crisis communication.

- i. **Be prepared:** The most important aspect is to have a crisis management plan. For every company, there are certain things that are unlikely to happen but would be enormously damaging if they did. Such events could, if serious enough, put the existence of the company at risk by damaging its most important assets: its credibility and reputation. Airlines should have a plan in the event of a plane crash; universities should have plans in the event of an academic or athletic scandal; a factory should be prepared for a chemical spill. These events might be unlikely to happen but they can and should be prepared for.
- ii. **Be honest:** One of the problems with lying is liars are often caught. Cover-ups almost always end up being exposed and the cover-up look worse than the original problem. Instead, the story should be gotten out and over with quickly. For President Bill Clinton, lying about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky was infinitely more damaging to his reputation than was the affair itself. The truth is going to get out. Therefore, better get it out of your lips.
- iii. **Apologise and mean it:** The company or organisation should respond with real action, not just words. When Ford Motor Company had trouble with the tyres

- on its Explorer SUV, it apologised to the public and backed up the apology by stopping production of the Explorer in order to have enough tyres for the recall
- iv. **Move Quickly:** Public relations critics say that how a company reacts in the first few hours after a crisis occurs will determine how the crisis is perceived from that point on. Paul Shrivastava cited in Hanson (2005) says all crises a window of opportunity to gain control of 45 minutes to 12 hours. Beyond that point, people will have already decided what they think about the crisis and once they have made up their minds, they are reluctant to change them. In the past, companies could build their response around the time the morning newspapers were published or the nightly news was broadcast but cable news channels and newspaper websites can publish speculations at any time and gossip websites are willing to print speculations that traditional news outlets might avoid. Bad news can also spread very rapidly over the internet. Even when things move quickly, the company still needs to act carefully. Crisis management decisions are much more difficult to make than conventional decisions because they deal with things that have important consequences. They also need to be made quickly with the whole world watching.
 - v. **Communicate with the press and other constituencies:** These include the company's own employees and management, stakeholders, government regulators and customers, as well as the press.

d. Lobbying

Rodman (2006) says the term "lobbying" refers to any attempt to influence the voting of legislators. This form of persuasion gets its name from the traditional practice of public relations representatives speaking to lawmakers in the lobbies outside their hearing room. US corporations spend hundreds of millions of dollars in their lobbying

efforts annually. Some people are shocked to hear that this practice is even legal, multimillion-dollar industry associations are set up purely for the purpose of influencing how laws are written.

Companies that try to rise above lobbying, however, soon see the error of their ways. Microsoft, for example, was a powerful innovator in software but not very active in lobbying-that is, until the government brought against it an anti-trust suit for which Microsoft's competitors had lobbied. Those competitors, who had hired powerful public relations firms to lobby for them, had testified at Senate Judiciary Committee hearings up to the suit-hearings from which Microsoft was barred.

Microsoft fought back: "They are using the government to compete against us rather than competing in the marketplace," a Microsoft spokesperson complained. "We have to respond to that campaign," (Rodman, 2006:388). Microsoft proceeded to hire its own high-pressure lobbyists, including two former congressional representatives, one of whom was a Democrat and the other a Republican. When former Senator Bob Dole sent out letters to businesses, trade associations and consumers urging them to join the anti-Microsoft movement, Microsoft quickly distributed a floor speech Dole had made a few years earlier, in which he stated that it was un-American for the government to dictate how Microsoft did business.

Microsoft continues to battle with the government on anti-trust issues but its lobbying efforts have helped to minimize the impact of these battles on the company's bottom line.

Some Public Relations Tools

Public relations practitioners perform their functions using a variety of tools. Some of these-such as brochures, newsletters and company memos-are fairly traditional. Here, we will look at some specialized tools, especially those used to reach out to external publics: press releases, video news releases, press kits, special events and corporate sponsorship.

- a.** Press releases: A press release, also known as a news release, is a short document, written in standard news form, which contains the information needed to write a news report. Press releases are often written by a public relations firm on client letterhead, with prominent contact information in the upper-left-hand corner. Their sole purpose is to place favourable information about the client or product in a news report.

Press releases that arrive as a digital file to be inserted into newspaper feature or editorial sections with no change are known as canned news. Local newspapers with small budgets for news gathering are eager to use canned news. And audio news release is recorded material ready for insertion into broadcast news reports. Usually sent to radio stations, audio news releases typically include interviews and sound bites. Sound bites are short, carefully crafted phrases that repeat a major idea that the speaker wants to emphasise.

- b.** Video news release: This is a ready-to-broadcast tape designed for use in television programmes. Created by professionals, these videos feature good production values. Most VNRs include not only a pre-produced news story, complete with reports and voice over but also the same footage without the reporter-to allow stations to use their own reporters to package the story. Taking advantages of the fact that local news operations do not have the resources to

cover everything, public relations practitioners will, for example, videotape the arrival of one of their client's executives at the local airport along with excerpts of his or her speech at the local chamber of commerce. They will also prepare videos of the special events they have arranged and celebrations for the introduction of products. For the introduction of a new drug, a company will often distribute a VNR that provides interviews with experts who have developed and tested the drug.

VNRs have become an integral part of crisis management. Several years ago, a man Tacoma, Washington claimed to have found a hypodermic syringe in a can of Diet Pepsi. As the story broke, several other people across the country came up with similar reports, claiming to have found a broken sewing needle, a screw, a bullet and narcotics via Pepsi products. Company officials announced that the insertion of such object in their bottling lines was impossible but no one seemed to be listening. The story was too compelling, the evidence was mounting and people still remembered Tylenol poisoning incident that had caused seven people their lives. Pepsi send out VNRs showing how their high-speed canning lines actually worked, with cans moving at 2,000 a minute, far too fast for tampering to occur. This helped out but the real crisis was averted when a surveillance camera at local convenience store caught a customer inserting an object into a Pepsi can after she opened it. Pepsi then went to a cashier and complained. Pepsi acquired the tape and included it with its other evidence in a VNR sent to every television station in the country. The tape included a reassuring statement by Pepsi's Chief Executive Officer, Craig Weatherup. The crisis was over within 24 hours.

c. Press Kits: Whereas the press release is a simple document, usually no more than two or three typewritten pages long, a press kit is an elaborate collection of

publicity, photos, colour slides, product samples and fact sheets. Many press kits also contain backgrounders, which articles are going into depth on such matters as company history, the management team, the product or market. All of these items are usually contained in a large, especially designed folder that features the company logo, arresting graphics and pockets for the various contents. The folders are either sent directly to media outlets or given out at news conferences. Often, press kits are used for the kick off of a new product or announcement of a major special event.

Press kits are more expensive than press releases but they are still cost-effective. For example, Levi Strauss & Company sent out a press kit to publicise a survey it had conducted on the lifestyles of university students. Results of the survey, called the Levi's 501 reports, were sent to fashion editors at the top 500 US newspapers and within three months, 345 articles appeared. The total cost of preparing and sending the press kit was \$20,000, a mere fraction of what that much newspaper advertising would cost. Moreover, the news articles, having more credibility than advertisement, had a value to the company far beyond what any advertising would have had.

Special Events: In the 1980s, Coca-Cola made a classic marketing blunder. It changes the formula for Coke. Consumers rejected the New Coke and the company had returned to the earlier formula, renaming it Coke Classic. Coke's image had been shaken, though, so the company needed a special event to brighten it up. The answer was a celebration of its 100th anniversary. The planning for this event took several years and cost the company more than \$23 million. Publicity began several months in advance and included press releases, press kits, VNRs, interviews and advertisements. The day of the celebration included a parade in Atlanta, home of the company's

headquarters, with 30 floats and marching bands and 12,500 Coco-Cola employees from 120 countries.

Some special events, like the Coke anniversary, are planned from the start, whereas others take advantage of unforeseen circumstances.

Corporate Sponsorship: Another tool used by public relations practitioners to polish the image of their clients is sponsorship of someone else's special event, such as sports contest. MTN, for example, has been sponsoring Africa's peak soccer event, the Nation's Cup. And in December 2010, it won the sponsorship of Nigeria's Premier League, to which it committed about ₦2 billion. In the previous two seasons, the league was founded by a Nigerian Telecommunication Company, Globacom.

2.3 Review of Related Studies

2.3.1 Emezi S. (2000), Public Relations: A Weapon for Effective Communication: A Study of Nigerian Breweries Plc. Unpublished B.A. Project, Abia State University, Uturu

In the statement of the problem, the researcher identifies lack of sound communication mechanism as one of the major factors militating against the effective running of many organisations. He adds that most organisations have triumphed in business due to the use of positive image strategy while others have failed due to bad image, noting that good communication between an organisation's management and its publics is a very important element of an effective and result-oriented organisation.

The objective of Emezi's study was to critically and systematically examine the role and effectiveness of public relations in the management of an organisation, with particular focus on the Nigerian Breweries Plc.

Emezi employs the survey method of research in the collection and analysis of his data through the administration of questionnaire and conduct of interview.

In his findings, Emezi establishes that effective public relations is essential in the management of Nigerian Breweries Plc as it is needed in the coordination of both human and material resources of the company. He also discovers that apart from its image making functions, public relations can assist the management to read the signs of the times, correctly and constructively applied them and be fully involved in any process of change in the organisation.

The study concludes that, with the current complex nature of management, public relation is a “MUST” for any organisation that wants to realise its set objectives. That since effective public relations is a bye-product of effective communication its proper utilisation will help in enhancing the corporate image of an organisation.

The present study is similar to that of Emezi’s as it also examines the role of public relations in the management of an organisation. Also, the two studies make use of the survey method of data collection. However, while Emezi makes use of both questionnaire and interview, this study only utilises questionnaire as it was most convenient for the researcher to use.

Once of the areas where this study differs from Emezi’s is in the scope of the study. While Emezi focuses on the usage of public relations as a weapon for effective communication Nigerian Breweries Plc, which is a profit making venture, this study looks at the role of public relations in the management of Nasarawa State University, which is an educational institution.

The gap identified in Emezi's study is the absence of any mention of the importance of the inclusion of public relations in the managerial carder of an organisation. If public relation is to be used to achieve organisational goal, there is a need for the person in charge of public relations job in that organisation to be integrated into its decision body where his professional views an ideas would be captured in the policies and actions of the organization.

2.3.2 Ekele, A. (2010), Public Relations Management and Public Perception of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Unpublished B.A. Project, Nasarawa State University, Keffi

In the statement of the problem, the researcher observes that most institutions of higher learning, particularly universities are faced with a number of criticisms from their publics mostly due to some anomalies in the operational and management strategies of such institutions. He mentions some of these problems to include riot, strikes, protest. These according to him, are mostly products of communication gap between the management of these institutions and their publics.

The purpose of Ekele's study is to analyse the role of public relations in Nasarawa State University, as it relates to the management and public perception of the institution. This is mainly to ascertain its effectiveness and to encourage its adoption by other universities where it does not exist or is poorly utilised. He also sets to find out certain factors that hinder effective use of public relations among higher institutions with a view to finding a way forward.

Ekele uses the survey method in collecting and analysing his data. He engages only the instrument of questionnaire as he finds it more useful and suitable for his study.

In his findings, Ekele discovers that a greater population of the Nasarawa State University's publics is oblivious of the existence of public relations department/unit in the university, which handles issues relating to public perception. This, according to him, is capable of affecting the image of the university. He also finds out that the university authority does not accord its public relations department adequate attention to enable it function effectively, hence its ineffectiveness and unpopular nature.

Ekele avers, in the conclusion of his study that Nasarawa State University has not fully embraced and effectively utilised the practice of public relations in its management process in order to manage negative criticisms against it.

The present study relates to Ekele's as it also examines the role of public relations in the management of Nasarawa State University and also attempts to show how effective it can be if it is properly used.

Also, the study is similar to that of Ekele in the aspects of scope and research method. The two studies are confined to Nasarawa State University and use the survey method of research in data collection.

However, what distinguishes this study from the above study is the fact that it spreads its tentacles to the entire process of management of the institution as against Ekele's specific dwelling on a particular aspect of public relations functions, which is image making or good public perception as it is used in the study.

Therefore, the contribution which the present study is making which Ekele's could not do is the emphasis on the need for public relations manager/officer in an organisation to be incorporated into its management team for effective and efficient result.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Agenda Setting Theory and Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations. It therefore follows that the theoretical underpinnings for this research is eclectic in nature.

2.4.1 Agenda Setting Theory

Located within the models of indirect and longer-term effects of mass communication, the agenda setting theory came into being through the intellectual efforts of Maxwell Mcombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. The theory, according to Anaeto, Osifeso and Obabanjo (2008, p. 89), has three basic principles.

1. The Mass Media, such as the press, do not reflect social reality because news is filtered, chosen and shaped by newsroom staff or broadcasters.
2. People get their news from limited sources because people do not pay attention to all outlets; thus they rest on the mass media.
3. Few media agenda, which were chosen by professional gatekeepers, lead people to perceive given issues as important.

The theory, therefore, argues that the facts which people know about public issues tend to be those which the mass media presents to them (Anacto et al, 2008). Also, the significance which they ascribe to the same issues tends to be proportionate to the amount of attention given to the same issues in the media.

Supporting the above argument, McQuail (1990, p.62) says “amongst a given range of issues or topics, those which get more media attention will grow in their familiarity and perceived importance over a period of time, and those which get less will decline correspondingly”. In other words, what the public think about and discuss are influenced by the amount of emphasis given to those issues by the media.

Folarin (1998) posits that the mass media are believed to be supremely effective as mind controlling agents, stressing that the media have the power to control the mind of the audience who are exposed to it. McQuail (1977, p.76) also argues that the mass media ascribe the “considerable power to shape opinion and belief, change habit or life, actively would behaviour and impose political system”.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that the mass media can be used by the public relations officer or manager of an organisation to set agenda on certain issues for the publics of that organisation. In other words, the public relations manager of an organisation should appropriately utilise the mass media by choosing for the publics of his organisation what issues they should preoccupy their minds with. Through this, he can be said to be using the media to set agenda for the public and getting them to react to issues in a manner that is favourable to his organisation.

2.4.2 Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations

The Two-way Symmetrical Model as propounded by James E. Grunig in 1984 is also presented as a theoretical alternative in this study to explain the need for effective public relations in the management of an organisation, vis-a-vis the relationship between an organisation and its public. According to Grunig (2001), two-way symmetrical model uses communication to negotiate with publics, resolve conflict, and promote mutual understanding and respect between the organisation and its stakeholders (publics). This shows its dialogic nature and why it is considered by most public relations practitioners as one of the best models to be adopted in the management of modern day organisations.

Accordingly, Craig (2009) argues that the application of two-way symmetrical communication is the best way to build and sustain long-lasting, mutually beneficial

relationships between an organisation and its stakeholders. He adds that the model makes a meaningful contribution to an organisation by increasing understanding of various factors by often desperate groups of people.

In the two-way symmetrical model, dialogue exists instead of monologue. The roles of a public relations practitioner in such a system, is to establish a scenario where the publics of his organisation come together to dialogue, so that they understand the position of each other. As Grunig (2001) puts it, symmetry in public relations is about balancing the interests of organisations and publics. Therefore, one of the dimensions of applying the two-way symmetrical model is for practitioners to consistently remind themselves and management that they may not be right all the time and indeed, that their organisation may be better off if it listens to others (the public).

Furthermore, the model embraces plurality of perspectives as against the alienating hubris displayed by most organisations' heads who feel they know it all.

The two-way symmetrical model is relevant to this study in the sense that is preoccupies itself with the idea of organisations working together with their stakeholders to generate fresh perspectives, new ideas and resolutions to issues. The model helps in developing social equity among the various publics of an organisation who are indisputably essential to the actualisation of organisational goals. Public relations practitioners, when properly empowered, can help to incorporate and institutionalise the two-way symmetrical model in focused and result-oriented organizations, to enable them achieve the purpose for which they are being established.

2.5 Summary

Basically, this chapter critically reviewed the concepts of public relations and management tool with a view to illuminate the study for better understanding.

Also, the researcher reviewed two related studies to justify the factors that necessitated the present study, one of which is the absence of any mention of the need for public relations to be included in the management level of an organisation for effective maximum and beneficial result.

The chapter contained a discussion on relevant theories adopted for this study. Attention was placed on two theories, the agenda setting theory and two-way symmetrical model of public relations. Using the former, the researcher suggested that the public relations officer can employ the tool of mass media to set agenda on certain issues for his organisation's publics. For the latter, a case was presented on how the model can help an organisation to realise its set goals through dialogue with its publics.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter principally deals with the research method adopted in this study for the collection and analysis of data. As Sayer (1992, p.58) rightly puts it, a method is “a practical matter that must be appropriate to the nature of the object of the study”. It is worthy to note here that a researcher can use one or more of the different research methods, depending on the topic he or she is researching on, in order to obtain facts from the target publics. Therefore, to successfully accomplish this research work, it becomes necessary to choose a research design that is relevant in providing the necessary and desired data.

3.2 Research Design

Research design can be referred to as the process of developing a research study. Accordingly, Selltitz (1939) views research design as plans that specify how data for research should be collected and analysed during the conduct of research. Supporting this view, Adepoju (2003) stated that research design is the systematic arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a pattern that attempts to combine relevance to research purpose with economy in procedures.

In this study, therefore, the researcher makes use of survey method for the collection of the needed data. This method is chosen largely because of its convenience and relevance in the conduct of research in social sciences.

Okoro (2001: p, 14) rightly observes that “surveys are useful in the measurement of public opinion, attitudes and orientations which are dominant among a large population in a particular period”. Also contributing, Ada, Abud, Ker and Okwu

(1997, p.33) state that “survey design is a strategy used to find meaning and obtain an understanding of the present conditions, attitudes opinions, beliefs”.

Survey design is the process of arriving at dependable solution to problems through the plan and systematic collections, analysis and interpretation of data (Owuamahm, 2012).

As Wimmer and Dominick (1987, p. 103) explicitly point out, survey design has a lot of advantages that make it very important in a study of this nature:

First, it can be used to investigate problems in realistic setting. Secondly, the cost of survey is reasonable considering the amount of information gathered. Thirdly large amount of data can be collected with relative ease from a variety of people. Finally, data helpful survey already exists.

Because of the reasons stated above, the researcher considers the survey design to be the most suitable for this study.

3.3 Population of Study

Nworgu (1991, p.9) defines population in relations to research “... to include all members or elements, they are human beings, animals, trees, objects, etc of well defined group.” Corroborating Nworgu’s view, West and Kahn (1986, p.111) describe population as “any group of individuals that have one or more characteristic in common, that is of interest to researcher.” They add that the population may be all the individuals of a particular type or a more restricted part of that group. Simply put, population is the total number of observable unit in a given research environment that is relevant to a research study.

Consequent upon the above explanations, the population of this study consists of the undergraduates and staff of Nasarawa State University, Keffi as well as residents of surrounding communities.

3.4 Sampling Technique

Sampling is the process of selecting units, for example, people, organisation from a population of interest so that the researcher may fairly generalise results on the population from which they were chosen (Trochim, 2006). In the same vein, Dowinnie and Heath (1974) sees sample as that part of the study population selected for statistical investigation.

Furthermore, Jonah (2000, p.68) is of the view that “sampling technique makes possible the conducting of otherwise impossible studies by carefully delegated units from the population, so results can be used to draw inferences about the total population.”

Therefore, the sample size for this study was drawn from the undergraduates and staff of Nasarawa State University, Keffi as well as some selected residents in Angwan Lambu and High Court, which are both communities surrounding the university through the use of purposive and random sampling techniques. Thus, the sample size is 210 undergraduates which cut across the clusters of the population. This will be distributed in the following order:

a. Undergraduates		
i.	Faculty of Administration	= 25
ii.	Faculty of Agriculture	= 25
iii.	Faculty of Arts	= 25
iv.	Faculty of Education	= 25
v.	Faculty of Law	= 25
vi.	Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences	= 25
vii.	Faculty of Social Sciences	= 25
b. Staff		
		= 15
c. Residents		
		= 20
Total		= 210

3.5 Description of Research Instrument

The research instrument employed in this study is the questionnaire on the topic “Public Relations as a Management Tool: A Study of Nasarawa State University, Keffi”. This instrument is used because it is considered by the researcher to be more appropriate for a survey research of this nature.

According to Obasi (1999) questionnaire is a data collection instrument whereby respondents are asked standardised questions or uniformed questions are asked and to be completed in written form. Similarly, Osuala (2007, p.273) describes instrument “that permits wide coverage for a minimum expense in m affords not only wider geographical coverage than any other technique, but individuals who are normally difficult to contact.” In other words, the approach is used in asking questions and allowing the respondents to provide answers by ticking the box provided with alternative answers.

For the purpose of this study, 210 questionnaire are administered to each of the respondents in the clusters of the sample size. The questionnaire was designed in two sections - A and B. Section A consists of 6 items which solicits for the demographic data of the respondents while Section B. consists of 9 items which were designed to address the main research questions.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Data Gathering Instrument

The researcher considers the questionnaire as the most valid and appropriate instrument for gathering relevant information needed for this study, especially in answering tin questions that are raised in the study.

The validity of the questionnaire, which is the data gathering instrument for this study, is achieved by the researcher by making sure that all the questions asked in the questionnaire fully address all that are implied in the research problem. It was ensured that the questionnaire gives good representation of the various dimensions of the effectiveness of public relations in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Reliability, on the other hand, implies consistency in the results derived final data gathering instrument. This will also be achieved by using the same measuring instrument (questionnaire) to take separate measurements, on the same population, the same conditions, the same location, over a short period of time. The higher the correlations between the various measurements, the higher the reliability of the measuring instrument (Nnamdi, 1999).

3.7 Method of Data Collection

In every research work, certain method of data collection must be used in other to source for relevant information on the subject matter. In this case, the research adopted both the primary and secondary sources of data collection.

The primary source of data collection in this research work is the questionnaire, while the secondary sources include textbooks, journals, unpublished works and the internet.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Data are the relevant materials that a researcher gathers in the course of a research work to enable him achieve the objective of his study. According to Ihemeje (2000, p.99), data are those “raw items collected which have to be processed to obtain information for a specific purpose.”

To ensure accurate interpretation and analysis of the data generated for the study, simple tables, numbers and percentages are used. Percentages are used to reduce different sets of numbers to a common base, while tables are used to make statistical analysis and manipulation easier to interpret.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter basically dwells on the presentation and analysis of data generated from the respondents based on the administered questions.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

In order to effectively and accurately cover the scope of this study, a total number of 210 copies of questionnaire were administered to some selected students, staff and residents of some surrounding communities of Nasarawa State University, Keffi and all copies were retrieved.

For the purpose of easy understanding, the responses of respondents are presented in tables and short essay with figures and simple percentages using cross tabulations of relevant variables.

Table 1: Sex of Respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	137	65%
Female	73	34.7%
Total	210	100%

The data in table 1 shows the sex distribution of the respondents. The figures indicate that 137 (65%) of the respondents were males, while 73 (34%) were females. This shows that males form a greater percentage of respondents in the sample size of the study.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
18-25	22	10.4%
26-3	120	57.1%
36-45	45	21.4%
46-55	15	7.1%
Others	8	3.8%
Total	210	100%

The above table shows that 22 respondents who constitute 10.4 percent of the population of the study were between 18-25 years; 120 respondents constituting 57.1 percent were between age 26-35; 45 respondents constituting 21.4 percent were between the age of 36-45; 15 respondents constituting 7.1 percent were 46-55 years while 8 respondent who constitute 3.8 percent were above the age of 55.

The analysis above indicates that 120 respondents who constitute 57.1 percent of the population of the study and who are mostly undergraduates took the highest percentage while those above the age range of 55 carried the least percentage (3.8%).

Table 3: Faculty of undergraduate Respondents

Faculty	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Administration	25	11.9%
Agriculture	25	11.9%
Arts	25	11.9%
Education	25	11.9%
Faculty	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Administration	25	11.9%
Agriculture	25	11.9%
Arts	25	11.9%
Education	25	11.9%
Law	25	11.9%
Natural and Applied Sciences	25	11.9%
Total	175 (out of 210)	100%

Data in Table 4 shows the departments from which the 25 respondents allotted to each faculty are selected from. Each of the 7 departments represents each of the 7 faculties as shown in Table 3 and takes 25 respondents each. The total number of the selected undergraduate respondents which spread across all the faculties of the university is 175 and constitutes 83.3 percent of the population size of the study.

Table 5: Category of Staff Respondents

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Academic Staff	6	2.8%
Non-academic Staff	9	4.2%
Total	20 (out of 210)	100%

The table above shows the category of the staff respondents of the study. The academic staff has 6 respondents representing 2.8 percent while non-academic staff has 9 respondents representing 4.2 percent of the entire sample size.

Table 6: Category of Resident Respondents

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Angwan Lambu	9	4.2%
High Court	11	5.2%
Total	20 (not 210)	100%

Table 6 shows the distribution of the category of resident respondents. 9 (4.2%) respondents were from Angwan Lambu while 11 (5.2%) respondents were from High Court. The two communities are both situated within the university surrounding.

Table 7: Significance of Public Relations in the Management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very Significance	78	37.1%
Significant	113	53.8%
Less Significant	19	9.0%
Total	210	100%

The thrust of table 7 is to ascertain the significance of public relations in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Out of 210 respondents, 78 representing 37.1 percent assert that public relations is very significant, 113 representing 53.8 percent opine that it is significant while 19 representing 9.0 percent say it is less significant.

Table 8: Utilisation of Public Relations Unit In Nsuk

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	6.1%
Partially	23	10.9%
No	174	82.8%
Total	201	100%

Table 8 seeks to know if the Public Relations Unit of Nasarawa State University, Keffi has been fully utilised. The data generated reveals that 13 respondents who constitute 6.1 percent accept the fact that public relations unit is fully utilised, 23

respondents constituting 10.9 percent admit that it is partially utilised while 174 respondents constituting 82.8 percent state that the unit is not fully utilised by the university.

It could be deduced from the table above that, majority of the population (82.8%) do not see the university’s management really making good use of its public relations unit in the performance of its day to-day activities.

Table 9: Reason Why Public Utilised Relations is Not Adequately

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Lack of good knowledge of its usefulness in management process	128	60.4%
Lack of fund to finance the unit	30	14.2%
It is not necessary	11	5.2%
It may interfere with the naming of Die university	28	13.3%
Total	197 (Out of 210)	100%

Table 9 aims at determining the reason why public relations is not adequately utilized by the authority of NSUK. Out of the 174 respondents that respond to the question, 128 representing 60.4 percent of the entire population contend that it is as a result of lack of good knowledge of the usefulness of public relations in the management of the university, 30 respondents representing 14.2 percent argue that it is a problem of paucity of fund, 11 respondents representing 5.2 percent insist that public relations is not necessary while 28 respondents representing 13.3 percent argue that given too

much attention to the Public Relations Unit will make it interfere with the running of the university.

It is evidenced in the above analysis that public relations cannot thrive or be effective when the organisation that employs its services does not know or appreciate the unignorable role it can play in the management of the institution.

Table 10: Factor that Hinders Effective Public Relations Practice

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Inadequate attention to its roles	77	36.6%
Lack of research into public relations-oriented issues	36	17.1%
Uses of unqualified personnel in handling the unit	31	14.7%
Wrong choice of channel of communication	66	31.4%
Total	210	100%

The manifest data in Table 10 shows that 77 (36.6%) respondents aver that inadequate attention to the roles of public relations is capable of hindering effective practice of public relations in Nasarawa State University, Keffi while 36 (17.1%) maintain that it is the problem of lack of research into public relations-oriented issues. Similarly, 31 (14.1%) respondents insist that the use of unqualified personnel in handling the public relations unit is responsible for its ineffectiveness. 66 (31.4%) respondents, however, feel it is wrong choice of channel of communication.

Table 11: Most Used Channel of Communication by Nsuk's Public Relations

Unit

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Radio	42	20%
Television	24	11.4%
Magazine	13	6.1%
Newspaper	31	14.7%
Newsletters	65	30.9%
Meetings	35	16.6%
Total	210	100%

Table 11 seeks to identify the channel of communication that is often used by the Public Relations Unit of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. 42 respondents who constitute 20 percent of the population are of the opinion that radio is the most used channel, 24 respondents who constitute 11.4 percent opt for television while 13 respondents who constitute 6.1 percent settle for magazine. Additionally, 31 respondents representing 14.7 insist on the channel of newspaper, 65 respondents representing 30.9 percent go for newsletters while 35 respondents representing settle for meetings as the channel mostly used by the Public Relations Unit of NSUK in communicating its activities to the public.

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very Effective	46	21.9%
Effective	54	25.7%
Averagely Effective	91	43.3%
Not Effective	19	9.0%
Total	210	100%

In Table 12, the researcher seeks to know the effectiveness of the medium of communication used by NSUK's Public Relations Unit. From the data gathered, 42 (21.9%) respondents feel it is very effective, 54 (25.7%) respondents are of the opinion that it is effective, 91 (43.3%) respondents say it is averagely effective while the remaining 19 (9.0%) respondents insist the medium used is not effective at all.

Table 13: Way of Making Public Relations Effective in the Management of Nsuk

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Inclusion of public relations in the management level	111	52.8%
Adequate funding of the unit	61	29.0%
Professional training for staff of the unit	38	18.0%
Total	210	100%

The data in table 13 is aimed at getting the opinions of the respondents on how public relations can be made effective in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Out of the total number of 210 respondents, 111 respondents, constituting 52.8 percent of the population suggest that for public relations to be more effective in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi, it should be integrated into the management team of the university. However, 61 respondents, constituting 29.0 percent opine that it is only by adequately funding the unit that the best can be gotten from it while 38 respondents, constituting 18.0 percent believe the way out is to give the staff of the unit proper professional training.

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that majority of the population of the study strongly believe that if the public relations unit of NSUK is incorporated into or placed at the management level, it will be very effective compared to where it is currently positioned.

Table 14: Implication's) of Inappropriate Application of Public Relations Principles

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Communication Gap and Crisis	146	69.9%
Usurpation of Management's Power	28	13.3%
Government or External Intervention	36	17.1%
Total	210	100%

In the above table, attempt is made to ascertain what implication(s) wrong application of public relation principles is likely to have on the management of Nsuk 146 (69.5%) respondents are of the view that inappropriate application of public relations

principles is capable of causing communication gap and crisis and 48 (22.8%) respondents feel it is likely to make the management of the university usurp its power. Similarly, 28 (13.3%) respondents believe interference from government or external bodies could be the implication of misapplication of public relations principles.

Table 15: Major Role(s) of Public Relations

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Promoting corporate image and consulting organisation's management	72	34.2%
Preventing conflicts and misunderstanding	48	22.9%
Covering the failure and problems of an organization	31	14.7%
Establishing and maintaining two-way communication	59	28.0%
Total	210	100%

The data in the above table shows that 72 (34.2%) respondents say public relation is mainly meant to promote the corporate image of its organisation and the counsel it management, 48 (22.8%) respondents state that public relations is basically to prevent conflicts and misunderstanding, 31 (14.7%) respondents feel the role of public relation is to cover an organisation's failures and problems while 59 (28.0%) respondents are of the view that establishing and maintaining two-way communication is public relations' main function in an organisation.

Judging from the above data, the popular opinion of the population of this study is that public relations' major role is to promote the corporate image of the organisation

where its services are employed and to counsel the management of that organisation on the right action(s) to take so as to enable it achieve its corporate objective.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The above analyses clearly revealed that public relations is essential in the running of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. This is because communication, which is the center of public relations, is involved in every human activity. No organisation, whether public or private, can survive without public relations, especially with the complex nature of modern society. This assertion can be substantiated in the data provided in Table 7 where 37.1 percent of respondents rated public relations very significant while 53.8 percent rated it significant.

The research findings also disclosed that Nasarawa State University, Keffi does not utilise its public relations unit for efficiency and productivity. This is contained in Table 8 which indicates that 82.8 percent of the respondents feel the university does not take advantage of the existence of its public relations unit. This disclosure is a pointer to the fact that the purpose for which public relations department/unit is created in the university cannot be achieved because it has not been put into proper use. A follow-up finding as to the reason why public relations unit is not adequately utilised in Nasarawa State University, Keffi revealed that the management of the institution lacks good knowledge of the usefulness of public relations in the management process of an organised system such as university.

Again, in seeking to identify the factor that can hinder effective public relations practice in NSUK, results from the findings indicate that inadequate attention to the roles of public relations and wrong choice of channel of communication are the two major impediments. However, lack of fund was also believed to be one of such

factors, though it is an unpopular opinion when compared to the ones earlier mentioned.

Furthermore, the findings also show that the medium of communication used by the Public Relations Unit of Nasarawa State University, Keffi is not effective enough in reaching out to its publics. In public relations, channel of communication is very important, just as it is the case with other endeavours. Since public relations deals with publics, it must make effort to identify the medium that is most likely to reach a good number of its publics. Otherwise, it will hardly yield the needed result.

Also, the study found out that for public relations to be effective in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi, it must be included in the management cadre of the university. By implication, the public relations section should not just exist as a unit but a department with a professional as the head. This will make it more recognised and will make the department's input be sought for in terms of decision making and policy implementation.

Another discovery made by this study is that when public relations principles is wrongly or inappropriately applied, the end result will be communication gap which is also capable of leading to crisis situation.

On the whole, the study evidently shows the indispensability of public relations in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi and that for its impact to be felt, it must be given its proper place in the scheme of things.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This research took its premise from the ever-increasing need for the services or principles of public relations to be employed in the management of organisations, especially higher institutions. The research basically focused on Nasarawa State University, Keffi with a view to ascertaining the effectiveness of public relations and what should be done to make it more effective and efficient in the university.

In the light of the above, the research discussed the background of the study, which gave an overview of the subject matter. It went a step further to examine the problem that triggered the researcher into carrying out the research. The overall objectives of the study as well as the area of coverage that is the scope of the study were also established.

Also, an exploration into the very nature and essence of public relations was made through the review of body of literature which immensely helped in putting the work in proper perspective. The concepts of public relations and management tool which are the two basic concepts in the study were reviewed. Accordingly, the works of Emezi (2000) “Public Relations: A Weapon for Effective Communication” and Ekele (2010) “Public Relations Management and Public Perception of Nasarawa State University, Keffi” were critically reviewed under the review of related studies. Agenda setting theory and Two- way Symmetric Model were chosen as the theoretical framework upon which the study was based.

A suitable research design was adopted in chapter three of this study. The research utilized the probability and non-probability sampling techniques using the instrument

of questionnaire for data collection. A vivid presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected were then made under chapter four. The data analysed revealed that public relations is not well utilised in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi and various reasons were adduced as to why it is so. Some other findings were established and a brief discussion on them was made.

Finally, the research logically summarised the assertions of the entire work, drew a conclusion, and made some recommendations for further research in the field under review.

5.2 Conclusion

From the data collected, presented and analysed, it can be deduced that public relations is indispensable in the running of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Though a few percentage of the population of the study feel public relations is less significant, their view, however, is not enough to make otherwise conclusion.

Inadequate attention to the role of public relations and its exclusion from the management level are among other reasons why the university has not from its Public Relations Unit (Information and Protocol Unit) since its establishment. This has left us with no other option than to uphold that public relations have not been properly utilised, hence its ineffectiveness in the management of the university.

Further analyses of the data, especially on the implications) of the inappropriate application of public relations principles helped us to conclude that crisis which mostly arise as a result of communication gap can be managed or prevented through the instrumentalism of public relations.

Therefore, for greater and effective functioning of public relations in Nasarawa State University, Keffi, there must be an upgrade in the status of the unit and it must be duly recognised when it comes to matters of policy making and implementation. This understanding becomes inevitable if the university is to achieve the purpose for which it was established.

5.3 Recommendations

Arising from the findings of the study and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made for a better appreciation of the problems identified in the study:

- i. Nasarawa State University, Keffi, should as a matter of necessity, give adequate attention to its public relations unit and ensure it is made part of its top management cadre by way of changing its nomenclature from Information and Protocol Unit to Public Relations Department.
- ii. Enough funds should be budgeted for public relations activities in the university.
- iii. The Public Relations Unit of the university should strive to identify the medium of communication that is capable of reaching greater percentage of its publics.
- iv. A well-trained professional should be employed to handle the unit and be supported with competent hands that will help him/her in achieving the essence of the unit,
- v. The unit should cultivate the culture of making regular research into public opinion so as to be abreast with the perception and reaction of the public about the university. This will help members of its publics.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

It is suggested that further studies should be carried out in the following areas to foster better appreciation of the role of public relations:

- i. The implications of managing modern day organisations without public relations.
- ii. The contribution of public relations in the maintenance and sustenance of organisation's image.

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APPENDIX

Department of Mass Communication,
Faculty of Faculty of Social Sciences,
Nasarawa State University,
Keffi.

8th April, 2019.

Respondent,

I am a final year student of the above address conducting a research on the topic “Public Relations as a Management Toed: A Study of Nasarawa State University, Keffi” as part of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A Hons) degree in Mass Communication discipline.

Please kindly tick the options that best explain your disposition to the questions asked and ensure that your choice is devoid of bias opinion.

The exercise is purely academic and guarantees confidentiality of your answers.

Thank you in anticipation for your response.

Yours faithfully,

Bamisaye Funmilayo Bukola
(NSU/PGD/MCM/0011/17/18)

QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTION: please, indicate your answer by ticking the appropriate box among the options provided.

SECTION A:

1. Sex: Male () Female ()
2. Age range: 18-25 () 26-35 () 36-45 () 46 -55 ()
Other ()
3. Faculty: Administration () Agriculture () Arts ()
Education () Law () Natural and Applied Sciences () Social
Sciences ()
4. Department: Public Administration () Animal Science () Mass
Communication () English Education () Civil Law () Microbiology
() Psychology ()
5. Staff: Academic () None-Academic ()
6. Resident: Angwan Lambu () High Court ()

SECTION B:

7. How significant is Public Relations Unit in the management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi? (a) Very Significant () (b) Significant () (c) Less Significant ()
8. Based on your understanding of Nasarawa State University, Keffi, would you say the unit has been fully utilised by the university? (a) Yes () (b) Partially () (c) No ()
9. If your answer to Question 8 is “B” or “C”, then which of the following is the reason why public relations is not adequately utilised by the university? (a) Lack of knowledge of its indispensability in management process () (b) Lack of fund to finance the unit () (c) It is not necessary () (d) It may interfere with the running of the university ()
10. Which of the following do you consider to be the factor that can hinder effective public relations practice in Nasarawa State University, Keffi? (a) Inadequate attention to its roles () (b) Lack of research into public relations oriented issues () (c) Use of unqualified personnel in handling the unit () (d) Wrong choice of channel of communication ()
11. Which of these channels of communication is the most used by NSUK’s Public Relations Unit for its activities? (a) Radio () (b) Television ()

(c) Magazine () (d) Newspaper () (e) Newsletters () (f)
Meetings ()

12. How effective is the medium used? (a) Averagely effective () (b) Effective
(c) Averagely effective () (d) Not effective ()

13. Which of these will help most in making public relations effective in the
management of the university? (a) Inclusion of public relations in the
management level () (b) Adequate funding of the unit () (c)
Professional training for staff of the unit ()

14. What is/are the implications) of the inappropriate application of public
relations principles on the management of the university? (a) Communication
gap and crisis () (b) Usurpation of management's power () (c)
Government or external interference ()

15. What do you think is/are the major role(s) of public relations? (a) Promoting
corporate image and counseling organisation's management () (b)
Preventing conflicts and misunderstanding () (c) Covering the failures
and problems of an organisation () (d) Establishing and maintaining two-
way communication ()