



SEEK WISDOM, ELEVATE YOUR INTELLECT AND SERVE HUMANITY !

Addis Ababa University
አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ



School of journalism and communication

Public relations practice and challenges in multinational Companies in Ethiopia: A descriptive study of coca cola beverage Africa and Multi-Choice.

By: Yosef Shumye

**Public relations practice and challenges in multinational Companies in Ethiopia: A
descriptive study of coca cola beverage Africa and Multi-Choice.**

By: Yosef Shumye

**A thesis submitted to the collage of humanities language studies, journalism and
communication in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of masters in
public relations and strategic communication**

Advisor: - Tadesse Zinaye(Asst.Prof) ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

June, 2022

Declaration

I hereby declare that I completed this research in partial fulfillment of my Master's Degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communication at Addis Ababa University under the supervision of Tadesse Zinaye (Asst.Prof). I declare that this is my original work, which has never been submitted for a degree elsewhere.

Submitted by

Yosef Shumye

ID No: GSE/2069/12

Department of Public Relations and strategic Communication

Approved by

Advisor: Tadesse Zinaye (Asst.Prof)

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
AND COMMUNICATION**

This is to certify that Yosef Shumye's thesis, Public relations practice and challenges in multinational companies in Ethiopia: A descriptive study of Coca-Cola beverage Africa and Multi-Choice submitted to Addis Ababa University in partial fulfillment of a Master's Degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communication, is in compliance with the University regulations and meets the required standards in terms of quality and origin.

Approved by

Internal Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

External Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor _____ Signature _____ Date _____

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgment -----	X
List of Figures -----	XI
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations -----	XII
Abstract -----	XIII

1. CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION -----	1
1.2. Background of the study -----	1
1.3. Statement of the problem -----	6
1.3. Objectives of the study -----	8
1.3.1. General objectives -----	8
1.3.2. Specific objectives -----	8
1.4. Research Questions -----	8
1.5. Significance of the study -----	9
1.6. Scope of the study -----	9
1.7. Limitations of the study -----	9
1.8. Organization of the study -----	10

2. Chapter two

2. Related literature review and theoretical frame work -----	11
2.1. Introduction -----	11
2.2. Theoretical Framework -----	11

2.3. System theory -----	11
2.4. The Excellence Theory -----	14
2.5. Models of Public Relation -----	18
2.6. Related literature review -----	20
2.7. History of public relations -----	21
2.7.1. Early Beginnings -----	21
2.7.2. The Middle Ages -----	22
2.7.3. The modern age -----	23
2.7.4. History of public relations in Ethiopia -----	23
2.8. Conceptual and professional definitions of Public Relations -----	24
2.9. Public relations roles -----	28
2.10. Public relations in multinational companies -----	30
2.10.1 Political system -----	32
2.10.2 Level of economic development -----	33
2.10.3. MEDIA -----	34
2.10.4. Activism -----	34
2.10.5. Legal System -----	35
2.10.6. Culture and Language -----	35
2.10.7. Task environment -----	36
2.10.8. Sector -----	37
2.10.9. Size -----	37

2.11. The Role of Public Relations in Multinational Corporations -----	38
2.11.1 Managing corporate Reputations -----	39
2.11.2. Media Relations -----	40
2.11.3. Customer Relations -----	41
2.11.4 Employee Relations -----	42
2.11.5. Investor Relations -----	43
2.11.6. Government relations -----	44
2.11.7. Marketing Communications -----	44
2.11.7. Environmental Relations -----	44
2.12. Localization in global public relations practice -----	45

3. CHAPTER THREE

3. Research design and methodology -----	47
3.1 Choice of Research Questions and Participating Companies -----	47
3.2. Research design and Methodology -----	47
3.3. Sampling Procedures -----	48
3.4. Data Collection -----	48
3.4.1. Primary Data -----	48
3.4.2. Secondary Data -----	49
3.5. Qualitative Interviews -----	49
3.6. Data Analysis -----	50
3.7. Ethical Considerations -----	52

4. CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data analysis and interpretation -----	53
4.1. Introduction -----	53
4.2. Theme One: The Public Relations practice -----	53
4.2.1. Sub-theme: empowerment of public relations function -----	53
4.2.2. Sub-theme: communicator role -----	54
4.2.3. Sub-theme: Organization of communication function -----	57
4.2.4. Sub-theme: Public relations models -----	58
4.2.5. Sub- theme: relationship to head quarter -----	61
4.3. Theme two: public relations challenges -----	61
4.3.1. Sub-theme: Public relations challenges at multi-choice Ethiopia -----	61
4.3.2. Sub-theme: Pr challenges at CCBA -----	62
4.4. Theme three: ways of improvement -----	63
4.4.1. Sub-theme: ways of improvement for multi-choice Ethiopia PR -----	63
4.4.2. Sub-theme: ways of improvement for CCBA -----	64

5. CHAPTER FIVE

5. Conclusion and recommendation -----	67
5.1. Conclusion -----	67
5.2. Recommendations -----	70
5.3. Future Research -----	71
Reference -----	72

Appendix A - Sample Consent Form	75
Appendix B - Interview Guide	77
Appendix C - Coding Reference Sheet	78

Acknowledgement

Over the years, I've come to recognize that I followed this research not because of my own brilliance, but because God aided me greatly. I couldn't have completed this dissertation on my alone. Several people have offered me support, guidance, and encouragement along the journey.

I'd want to express my gratitude to my adviser, Tadesse Zinaye (Asst. Prof), for patiently and deftly leading me through the entire procedure. I appreciate his tremendous insight, attention, time, and emotional support. He always read my chapters lightning fast and responded with fantastic changes and extremely detailed input.

I'm also grateful to the participating firms, Coca-Cola Beverage Africa-Ethiopia and Multi-Choice Ethiopia, for providing me with this chance. This study would not have been possible without the dedication and attention of Ezana Wubeshet from multi-choice and Behialu Ayele from Coca-Cola Beverage Africa- Ethiopia.

Last but not least, I owe thankfulness to my entire family for their unwavering support during my journey.

List of Figures

Figure 1 Open Systems Model of Public Relations -----	14
Figure 2 Esman's organizational relationship linkages -----	37

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMWSC - Ambo Mineral Water Share Company in Ethiopia

CCBA – Coca cola beverage Africa

CEO- chief executive officer

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

DSTV- Digital Satellite Television

EABSC - East Africa Bottling Share Company

FDI – foreign direct investment

IABC - International Association of Business Communicators

IMC - Integrated marketing communications

IPR – international public relations

MNC - Multinational Companies

MPR - Marketing public relations

NGO - Nongovernmental organizations

PR - Public Relations

Abstract

Through effective communication, the fields of public relations have grown dramatically in order to build relationships between an organization and its key publics. The purpose of this thesis is to look into the practice of public relations in Coca-Cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia and multi-choice Ethiopia. It took the form of a qualitative case study. The study's target was on public relations professionals. The information was gathered through a qualitative in-depth interview and a document review. The researcher used a qualitative data analysis and interpretation strategy. The major findings of the study indicate the Public Relations practice in the study area is in a good condition with few things to be corrected. The public relations departments in both companies under study have a management function. The public relations department in coca cola beverage Africa -Ethiopia directly reports to the CEO but the department at multi-choice reports to corporate affairs. Both the public relations departments have a smooth relationship with their respective head quarters. Budget dependence and lack of human power was mentioned as major challenges for multi- choice Ethiopia public relations department. While at coca cola beverage Africa –the political instability in Ethiopia and the continuously changing of business related are the major challenges. The researcher recommended multi-choice Ethiopia to structure the department independently and hire additional human power to the team. Building strong government relations and investing more on corporate social responsibility are among reconditions given for coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an overview of the whole study. It comprise background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the study

As World Bank report discloses Ethiopia has become one of the leading recipients of foreign direct investment (FDI) flows. Due to a belief that foreign direct investment opens the door for technology transfer, helps in human capital and economic development, the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia government adopts a series of measures to attract multinational companies. Subsequently, the number of multinational companies (MNCs) investing in Ethiopia has expeditiously boosted over time. Huajian Shoes, Heineken, the Blackstone Group, KKR, GE, Orange, Etur Textile, the BDL Group, Jiangsu Lianfa Textile Co, Diageo, SABMiller, PPC, and Starwood Hotels, coca cola beverage Africa, Ethiopia and multi-choice group are only few of the MNCs investing in Ethiopia (Mesfin and Begum, 2016, p. 14).

Mitchell et al (1997) explained that, these multinational organizations do not exist in isolation with the rest of the world. They are one aspect of the whole dynamic market climate with many complementary entities. These entities include “individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies” such as employees, suppliers, customers, shareholders or communities (p. 855). The terms public and stakeholders are two words usually used reciprocally, they consist of the groups above discussed, thus, they refer to people who are affected by the activities of an organization or groups with which an organization wants to build up and maintain a relationship. Public relations can be broadly divided in to two major parts: domestic and international public relations. One of The main players in international public relations are Multinational companies (MNCs) with a variety of global business goals such as increased global sales or creating global brands and nurturing brand awareness.

International public relations is the planned communication activity of a (multinational) organization, a supra- or international institution or government to create a positive and receptive

environment through interactions in the target country which facilitates the organization (or government) to achieve its policy or business objectives without harming the interests of the host publics (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P.115).

From the preceding definition, we may deduce that international public relations, like domestic public relations, are a planned communication activity of multinational corporations or governments that must be legally and morally acceptable to the host countries.

International public relations, also known as global public relations, refers to a company's, institution's, or government's planned, intentional, and structured attempts to establish and maintain long-term ties with the public's of other countries. These publics are groups of people who are touched by, or have the potential to affect, the activities of specific institutions or perhaps an entire industry in some way. In today's global economy, practically every public relations action now includes a worldwide component (Wilcox et al, 2015, p.544). As a result, international public relations serves as the glue that holds globalization together, assisting multinational corporations in reaching new audiences and markets. It is more important to succeed in the international arena than simply reaching new audiences and markets.

All companies operating globally must constantly reinforce the notion that they are responsible and concerned residents of local communities of the host nations. This is the key to be accepted and supported by the target publics. Not only being concerned, smart multinational companies also support local causes and incorporate celebrities in their public relations effort. Incorporating these well-known and respected celebrities in their activity brings trust by the publics that the organization wishes to establish a mutually beneficial relationship. In other words, the most well known and successful companies around the world and best brands in the planet recognize the golden proverb of “thinking global, acting local” to build lasting friendship and support in other countries (stiel, 2017, P.330).

As discussed above in the era of globalization, the potential reaches of public relations become now worldwide. As with any public relations challenges, “the key is to know the audience you want to reach. Once you have this information, you can develop new strategies, refine existing communications plans, and create your “story” with key messages to share locally in each

market”. This focus on local public relations has always been a hallmark of public relations as far back as its origins in the home country (Page and Parnell, 2019, p.879).

The MNCs in focus for this research, Coca-Cola Beverages Africa (CCBA) and multi-choice Ethiopia are both based in South Africa and operate in many countries including Ethiopia. Coca-Cola Beverages Africa (CCBA) is the eighth largest Coca-Cola bottling partner worldwide and the biggest on the African continent. Whereas Multi-Choice Group Ltd is also a South Africa based Entertainment Company providing video entertainment to the African Markets. While making compelling DSTV, M-Net and Super Sport satellite content available through five packages, Multi-Choice is operating in Ethiopia since 2000.

Multinational companies are expected to practice public relations towards the societal context and environment phenomenon within which it operates and on which its failure and success depends. The above MNCs are operating in Ethiopia, a developing country, where the stakeholders and the publics’ needs are different from its home country by language, culture, political landscape, economic standard, social values and other elements. This difference demands coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia and multi-choice Ethiopia to take into account different contexts in the host countries (in this context Ethiopia) while planning and executing public relations activities.

Because public relations in multinational companies introduces additional complications that require practitioners to think and act along different vectors, multinational companies' public relations departments must be aware of the distinct futures of their profession in order to perform their tasks.

The lawful vector is one of those vectors. In recent years, practitioners have been more forced to think about the legal implications of their plans and activities. A practitioner from the home country who is assigned to work in the host nation must become familiar with a variety of legal issues that may affect his or her employment there. This includes being familiar and act in accordance with privacy law, copyright and trademark law, libel and slander law, and other regulatory laws from government institutions. Another challenging aspect that practitioners must contend with is ethics. The importance of using public relations techniques and approaches for the greater good of the societies in which they are practiced is critical, both to enhance the

profession's credibility and because it is the proper thing to do. multinational companies and other organizations possess the ability and even the obligation to act as moral agents on a global market, then implementing of standards of public relations excellence points to the conclusion that the public relations department of an organization plays a feasibly substantial role in that entire process (Freitag and stokes, 2009, p. 11).

Caroll A.B, (2015) investigates how companies sought legitimacy in the eyes of other countries, particularly developing countries, and how this became a challenge in the 1990s and beyond. In these countries, being a socially responsible business is the surest path to legitimacy. One reason driving MNCs to practice public relations in the context of the host country is the need for them to operate legally and being credible in the eyes of key stakeholders in the host country (p. 90).Hence, the researcher will examine the practices and challenges of public relations in multinational companies operating in Ethiopia with the specific reference of multi-choice Ethiopian and coca cola beverage Africa, Ethiopia.

Brief History of the organizations under study

Coca cola beverage Africa, Ethiopia

The Coca-Cola Company is a multinational American beverage firm headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia that manufactures retails, and markets soft drink beverage concentrates and syrups. The company is best known for its premium brand Coca-Cola, which was created in 1886 by pharmacist John Stith Pemberton in Columbus, Georgia. The Coca-Cola Company has established a franchised distribution structure since 1889, in which it exclusively produces syrup concentrate, which is then sold to several bottlers with exclusive territories across the world.

Coca-Cola Beverages Africa (CCBA) is the world's eighth-largest Coca-Cola bottling partner by revenue, and the largest on the African continent, accounting for about 40% of all Coca-Cola volumes distributed in the continent. The Coca-Cola Company has been investing in Africa since 1928 and has a presence in every African country. CCBA, based in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, has a diverse pan-African footprint, with more than 37 bottling operations serving over 600,000 outlets across the continent, supporting a total population of more than 300 million people. Coca-Cola Beverages Africa serves 13 Sub-Saharan African countries, including South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Namibia, Comoros, Mayotte, Eswatini,

Botswana, and Zambia. Coca-Cola Beverages Africa (CCBA) aspires to refresh Africa every day and make the continent a better place for everyone, according to the company's vision statement.

The research specifically focuses on Coca-Cola Beverages Africa, Ethiopia. Coca-Cola Beverages Africa (CCBA) operates the East Africa Bottling Share Company (EABSC) and the Ambo Mineral Water Share Company in Ethiopia (AMWSC). EABSC operates three plants in Addis Abeba, Dire Dawa, and Bahir Dar, while AMWSC operates one in Ambo. Apart from providing quality beverages to Ethiopians for the past 60 years, EABSC seeks to create greater shared opportunity for the company and the communities in which it operates across the value chain.

Coca-Cola entered Ethiopia six decades ago and has since created over 2100 direct and more than 50 000 indirect jobs in the country. Ethiopia has the second-largest population on the African continent. Since 2010, CCBA has invested an approximately 150 million US dollar in Ethiopia. Annually, the company contributes an estimated 217 million US dollars to the economy through salaries, taxes, manufacturing, distribution, and local shareholder profits. In July 2020, it was announced that a 300 million US dollar investment over the next five years will be made to enhance CCBA's operations in Ethiopia. An immediate investment of more than 70 million US dollars is planned for 2020, with the balance of the investment going toward the construction of a fourth plant in Sebeta, 25 kilometers outside of Addis Ababa, and a fifth plant in Hawassa.

Multi-Choice Ethiopia

Multi-Choice Group Limited is an entertainment firm established in South Africa. It is a forerunner in the provision of pay television services throughout Africa. Super Sport, DSTV, GOtv, M-Net, SHOWMAX, DSTV Media Sales, and IRDETO are among the company's brands. Super Sport is a sports broadcaster that produces and transmits sporting events for pay television (TV) customers. DSTV is a video entertainment provider that offers clients entertainment channels and services via satellite, web, and mobile applications. GOtv is a digital terrestrial television platform, and M-Net collaborates with service providers to create and purchase video content. SHOWMAX is an Internet-based video-on-demand subscription service that offers TV series and movies. DSTV Media Sales is the Company's sales arm, managing media solutions

such as advertising airtime, on-air sponsorships, content integration, and internet sales. IRDETO safeguards platforms and services used in video entertainment, video gaming, linked transportation, and Internet of things (IOT)-enabled enterprises. Multi-choice Group had over 20 million customers spread throughout 50 African countries.

The study focuses on Multi-choice Ethiopia, a branch of Multi-choice Group Limited, which began as a franchisee in Ethiopia in February 2000. Multi-choice Ethiopia's headquarters is in Addis Ababa, Africa's diplomatic capital. Multi-choice Ethiopia is an entertainment firm that offers a wide range of TV programming using the DSTV platform. Although most customers are driven primarily by high demand for coverage of sports provided by Super Sport, DSTV has five English language packages that are categorized in different genre namely General Entertainment, Movies, Lifestyle, Documentary, Sport, Kids and Teen, Music, Religion, News and Specialist. Multi-choice Ethiopia gives efficient, high quality audiovisual subscription-based service with modern technologies. For the target consumers to enjoy the DSTV service, they need to purchase DSTV receiver, Dish, LNB, Cable and package that suits their need and also a technician to install them and make the provided service functional.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Scholars in the discipline of communications are highly interested in public relations research. It is a crucial subsystem of an organization, and its efficient implementation is inextricably linked to the organization's success. It enables enterprises to successfully monitor, interact with, and react to other key groups within the corporate environment (Rawjee and et al., 2012, p. 4).

Multinational companies are one of the focus research areas of public relations. Unfortunately To date, the majority of studies on MNCs have been undertaken from an economic and management standpoint. There is very little empirical or theoretical work on MNCs public relations practices or the impact of history, culture, and context on these tactics (Ihedioha&Evelina, 2014, p. 2).

Tench & Yeomans (2009) on their book explores that The Public Relations departments in an organization help develop and maintain a good relationship with the public as well as help the organization achieve its objectives (p. 26). This definition asserts that mentioning a good and mutually beneficial relationship with publics of the organizations is a key to achieve

organizational objectives. It also states that building this fruit full relationship is primarily the responsibility of public relations practitioners.

Businesses operating in other countries have the same public relations concerns as those working in the host country. Their goals are to compete successfully and effectively handle conflict, but the task is more challenging on an international and intercultural level. (Wilcox et al, 2015, p.550).

Based on the Excellence Project, Vercic, L. A. Grunig, and J. E. Grunig (1996) proposed that five environmental characteristics can be leveraged by public relations practitioners to build country-specific public relations tactics. Political ideology, economic system (including the level of development of the country's economy), degree of activism (the degree of pressure organizations experience from activists), culture, and media system are the five variables (the nature of the media environment in a country) (Sirirmash and vercic, 2003, p. 3).

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, little research has been conducted on public relations practices and challenges of public relations in multinational corporations. For example, Ihedioha and Husar (2014) observed in their thesis "Public Relations Management in Large and Innovative Multinational Corporations" that both internal and external factors influence PR management in large multinational corporations. Internal elements include sector, size, stage of organizational development, and culture, whereas external factors, primarily made up of the public, include various media sources.

On the other hand Lina Sinatra (2019) on her thesis entitled "The Practice of Marketing Public Relations in Multinational Companies in Indonesia" find out the marketing communication models applied in Multinational companies operating in Indonesia. The study provides an analysis of the role of marketing public relations in Multinational companies and also explores the role of marketing public relations in the multinational or global companies in Indonesia.

In Ethiopia's context there are some studies conducted about the public relations practice and challenges in multinational companies operating in Ethiopia. For instance Abinet Tsegaye (2018) studied the social responsible marketing practices of East Africa Bottling Share Company (EABSC) which recently renamed as coca cola beverage Africa Ethiopia (CCBA) and identify whether it aligns to the parameters stated as significant indicators of the Practice. Daniel Fiseha

(2020) also assesses the social responsible marketing practices of BGI Ethiopia and identify whether it aligns to the parameters stated as significant indicators of the Practice. Berihu Gereziher (2019) on the other hand explores the CSR practices of a multinational Brewery Company in Ethiopia with specific reference to Heineken Brewery. But these studies field to address the public relations practice and challenges in these companies. Especially the concept of how do these multinational companies are practicing public relations in Ethiopians context which is different from their respective headquarters and the challenge they are facing duo to cultural, language, media, economic development and other deference's in Ethiopia.

Therefore this thesis tries to fill the research gap by exploring the public relations practice and challenges of the selected multinational companies in Ethiopia. In an attempt to find out more about factors that are affecting public relations and how it can help firms to be successful and achieve their goals this study aims to provide an answer to the research questions below.

1.3. Objectives of the study

1.3.1. General objective

The main objective of this study is to explore the practices and challenges of public relations in multinational companies in Ethiopia with specific reference to multi-choice and coca cola beverage Africa Ethiopia.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

The specific objectives are therefore:

- To investigate the public relation practices in the selected MNCs
- To identify the major challenges in practicing public relation activities in the selected MNCs
- To recommend ways of improving the public relations practice in the selected MNCs

1.4. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- How the selected the selected MNCs are practicing public relations activities?
- What are the major challenges in practicing public relation activities in the selected MNCs?
- What needs to be done to improve PR practice in these selected MNCs?

1.5. Significance of the study

As mentioned before in the introduction part, there is no study conducted in public relations practice and challenges of MNCs in Ethiopia. Hence, this may help upcoming researchers and learners as a starting point for further studies. The study will also benefits the MNCs under study (multi-choice Ethiopia and coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia) to find out effective strategies for better practice that my result a success for the organizations. Furthermore it might also help MNCs who intend to invest in Ethiopia to get some understanding of the practices in Ethiopia.

1.6. Scope of the study

This study concentrates on the investigation of public relations practices and challenges in coca cola beverage Africa - Ethiopia and multi-choice Ethiopia. The thesis is limited to the people and environment in the head office of the two MNCs. It will look at how public relations is being practiced, the challenges in practicing public relations and ways of improving the practice of public relations in this selected multinational companies. Due to financial and time constraint, the study focuses only on the public relations practices data from September 2020 to august 2021. Also due to time and financial restraints, methodologically the study will apply two methods of gathering data. These are data from primary sources and key-informant interviews.

1.7. Limitations of the study

Taking into consideration the limitation of time and budget, from many multinational companies in Ethiopia, the study will be restricted to coca cola barrage Africa- Ethiopia (CCBA) and multi-choice Ethiopia. Thus, this research will exclusively study the strength, weakness, challenges and opportunities of public relation practices of the selected multinational companies.

1.8. Organization of the study

This study has five chapters, Chapter one establishes background, statement of the problem, and presents objective of the study. It also deals with significance, scope and limitation of the study. Chapter two then deals with all about review of related literature. Chapter three presents the research methodology. Data presentation and analysis is what chapter four covered. The final chapter incorporates conclusion, summary and recommendation of the study.

Chapter two

2. Related literature review and theoretical frame work

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the assessments of knowledge gained on the topics of public relations and its applicability in multinational corporations with exploration of theoretical frameworks used to examine the research questions and important topics to the study.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

Theory provides a framework for comprehending, organizing, and integrating public relations' numerous actions and goals. Furthermore, the practice necessitates a corpus of theoretical understanding. Public relation is concerned with the relationships that organizations establish and maintain with the general public. In an ever-changing world, these interactions are vulnerable to political, social, economic, and technical change forces. Proper evaluation and monitoring of these dynamics assists organizations in charting a safe, steady course through new ground in the increasingly global community. To paraphrase Darwin, those who can change and adapt to a changing environment will survive (cutlip and center, 2013, P. 371).

Professor James Everett, as cited in cutlip and center (2013), also investigated A good theory is important because it leads our thinking, informs our activity, and establishes imperatives for furthering our understanding (cutlip and center, 2013, P. 400). A theory is a forecast about how events and activities will unfold. In public relations, we have theories concerning numerous behaviors and events. Some ideas serve us well because we test them on a regular basis and see the same patterns over time (Lattimore, 2012, P. 52). Everyone who attempts to solve problems provides recommendations and forecasts future needs. Therefore this study has been mainly informed by two theories: The Excellency theory and The Systems theory.

2.3. System theory

The consideration of changes and their impact on companies shows that understanding what motivates public relations requires a systems perspective. Since public relations deals with the mutually supportive interactions generated and maintained between organizations and their

publics, the systems viewpoint is appropriate (cutlip and center, 2013, P. 377). Systems theory is useful in public relations because it provides a framework for considering relationships. In general, systems theory views organizations as a collection of interconnected pieces that adapt and adjust to changes in the political, economic, and social settings in which they function. Organizations have clear boundaries within which a communication system that guides the organization's sections to achieve organizational goals must exist. These internal structures are created and maintained by the organization's leaders (Lattimore, 2012, P. 52-53).

The definition of public relation as well as the ideas of adjustment and adaptation makes use of concepts and propositions from systems theory. A system is a collection of interconnected elements that persists over time inside a defined boundary by responding to and adjusting to changing environmental constraints in order to attain and maintain desired states. The collection of interacting units in public relations includes the organization and the stakeholders with whom it has or will have relations. They are mutually influenced or engaged in some way. (cutlip and center, 2013, P. 377). According to the systems approach, companies rely on resources from their surroundings for the services or goods they provide, such as "raw materials, a source of employees, and clients or customers." The organization's products and services are required by the environment." Public relations professionals are used by organizations with open systems to provide back information on how productive their interactions are with clients, customers, and other stakeholders. Closed systems organizations do not seek new knowledge. Decision makers make decisions based on what has happened in the past or on their personal preferences (Lattimore, 2012, P. 52).

Open and Closed Systems

All mechanical, organic, and social systems can be classed based on the amount and quality of interaction with their environs. On one end of the spectrum, there are closed systems, while on the other, there are open systems. Because closed systems have impenetrable barriers, they are unable to exchange matter, energy, or information with their surroundings. Interaction occurs solely within the system. Open systems, on the other hand, exchange inputs and outputs with their environments across porous boundaries. Social systems, of course, cannot be completely closed or completely open, thus they are either somewhat open or relatively closed. The distinction is critical. The degree to which systems are closed or open reveals their sensitivity to

their surroundings. Closed systems are incapable of absorbing new matter, energy, or information. Closed systems, in short, do not adjust to external change and eventually collapse. Open systems, on the other hand, notice and respond to environmental changes. The survival and expansion of open systems are dependent on interaction with their surroundings. The most successful firms are "particularly adept at responding to change of any kind in their environments" (cutlip and center, 2013, P.383).

Open Systems Model of Public Relations

The emphasis of a closed system approach to public relations is on maintaining the status quo within the business while attempting to affect the organization's publics. The purpose of establishing and maintaining relationships between the organization and its constituents is to align the public with the organization's plans. A functional view of public relations, on the other hand, asks for an open systems approach that alters both the organization and the environment. The specific environment of an organization includes those "constituencies that can positively or negatively influence the organization's effectiveness." It is unique to each company and changes depending on the circumstances." (cutlip and center, 2013, P.393).

The open systems functional approach has a significant impact on public relations practice. Unlike the more popular functionary model, which seeks to maintain the status quo and exert control over environmental factors, the open systems model sees adjustment and adaptation as more realistic and suitable responses. The open systems paradigm employs "two-way symmetric" techniques, which imply that communication is two-way and that information flow results in changes on both sides of organization–public connections. Applying the open systems approach to public relations necessitates, first and foremost, intentional sensing of the environment in order to anticipate and identify changes that affect corporate connections with the public. Public relations must be selectively sensitive to clearly specified publics that are mutually influenced or involved by corporate policies, processes, and activities, according to an open systems perspective. The open systems model of public relations necessitates research skills in order to monitor publics and other environmental factors, as well as internal organizational influences (cutlip and center, 2013, P.398).

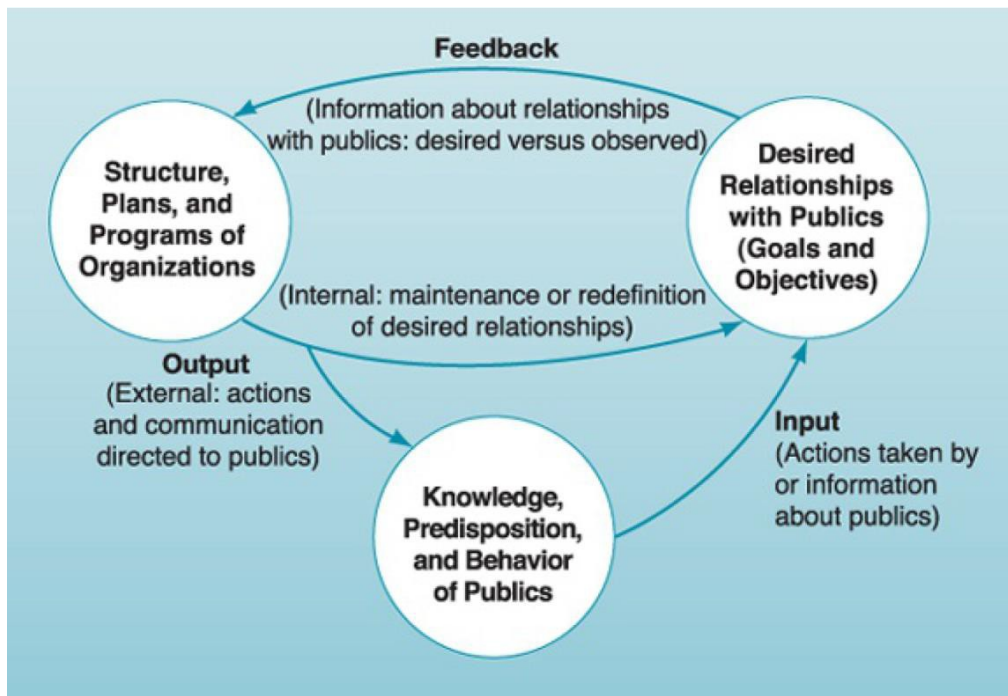


Figure 1. Open Systems Model of Public Relations (cutlip and center, 2013, P.398).

Open system public relations can also launch corrective activities within organizations and direct programs to influence the knowledge, predilection, and conduct of both internal and external publics. The desired outcomes are the preservation or attainment of goals that reflect the common interests of organizations and their constituents. Those shown to be at odds with mutual interests are modified or removed before they become concerns or problems. The most important and helpful component of the open system model of public relations may be proactive and remedial action. Thus, organizations that use open systems public relations keep their relationships going by shifting and adapting themselves and their audiences to ever-changing social, political, and economic settings (cutlip and center, 2013, P.399).

2.4. The Excellence Theory

The excellence theory is a broad public relations theory that emerged from a 15-year research of best practices in communication management financed by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Research Foundation. The research resulted in the publication of three volumes (J. E. Grunig 1992; Dozier et al. 1995; L. A. Grunig et al. 2002). This general

theory incorporates a number of middle-range public relations theories, such as theories of publics, public relations and strategic management, public relations models, public relations evaluation, employee communication, public relations roles, gender, diversity, power, activism, ethics and social responsibility, and global public relations. Survey study of heads of public relations, CEOs, and employees at 327 organizations (corporations, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and associations) in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom was used to test the theory. The survey research was followed by qualitative interviews with heads of public relations, other public relations practitioners, and CEOs from 25 firms that received the greatest and lowest ratings on a scale of excellence based on statistical analysis of the survey data.

The excellence theory originally emphasized the importance of public relations to businesses and society by emphasizing the social responsibility of managerial actions and the quality of connections with stakeholders. According to the notion, for an organization to be effective, it must act in ways that resolve issues and fulfill the objectives of stakeholders as well as management. If it does not, stakeholders will either put pressure on the organization to change or will oppose it in ways that increase the cost and risk associated with organizational policies and decisions. Organizations must scan their environment to identify publics who are affected by possible organizational decisions or who want organizations to make decisions to solve problems that are important to them in order to behave in socially acceptable ways. Then, in order to build high-quality, long-term connections with publics, companies must communicate symmetrically with them (taking both the organization's and publics' interests into account). According to the interviews with CEOs and senior public relations officers, good relationships are valuable to organizations because they reduce the costs of litigation, regulation, legislation, and negative publicity caused by poor relationships; reduce the risk of making decisions that affect different stakeholders; or increase revenue by providing products and services that stakeholders require.

The excellence theory derived criteria of how the function should be arranged to maximize this value based on this theoretical premise about the worth of public relations.

Scholars in this research lineage have continued to refine and expand the theory since the end of the excellent study by undertaking research to assist public relations practitioners in strategic decision processes. This research has focused on environmental scanning and publics, scenario

development, public relations empowerment, ethics, relationships, public relations return-on-investment, evaluation, relationship cultivation strategies, conflict resolution, complexity theory, specialized areas of public relations, and global strategy (Vercic, Grunig, and Grunig, 1996, p. 58.). Grunig's Excellence Study discovered a number of factors that influence organizational success. Grunig and the Excellence Study's researchers condensed the most essential variables for public relations in contributing to total organizational effectiveness after many years of research. These variables were distilled using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Because the factors discovered in the data did not differ across cultures or geographical boundaries, or by the size of the firm or industry, they were dubbed generic principles of excellence. The team behind the Excellence Study identified ten generic principles of successful public relations:

1. **Involvement of public relations in strategic management:** The inclusion of public relations in the strategic management function enables more participatory decision making, better organizational policy from the public's standpoint, and more long-lasting decisions. Publics who were addressed by a corporation in its strategy formulation process expressed higher levels of satisfaction with the engagement.
2. **Empowerment of public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management:** In order to advise on topics involving publics, values, and ethical decision making, the public relations function must be allowed to report directly to the CEO. Although the researchers hypothesized that reporting directly to the dominant coalition would improve public relations, subsequent study indicated that public relations is best when reporting directly to the CEO.
3. **Integrated public relations function:** An integrated public relations function has exposure to and power at all organizational levels and functions. It is not secluded or pigeonholed, and it is not encroached upon or swallowed by marketing or other activities.
4. **Public relations as a management function, separate from other functions:** It is critical that public relations be treated as a separate management function inside the organization in order to prevent marketing or legal departments from interfering with the functions and duties of communication management. When these functions are taken over by other organizational functions, it is usual for smaller or less strategic publics to be overlooked in organizational decision making.

5. **Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician:** The public relations department should always be led by a professional public relations manager, rather than someone who is just good at writing. Managers have the research knowledge required to collect information, facilitate dispute resolution, engage in issue management, set budgets, resolve ethical quandaries, and manage the public relations department's workforce. Technicians are typically experts in writing or other technical parts of manufacturing, but they are not typically trained in management. Without a manager in charge of public relations, it is more likely to be categorized as media relations rather than a legitimate management job.
6. **Two-way symmetrical (or mixed-motive) model of public relations:** It is critical for an excellent public relations department to employ the two-way symmetrical public relations model because a dialogue-based approach has been shown to be more successful than any other in resolving disputes, preventing problems, and maintaining good relationships with the public.
7. **Department with the knowledge needed to practice the managerial role in symmetrical public relations:** Excellent public relation departments have the expertise required to manage public relations properly, in that it can do advanced research to understand publics and engage in negotiation and collaborative issue resolution.
8. **Symmetrical system of internal communication:** Internal communication systems focused on dialogue are critical for fostering teamwork, enhancing employee morale and job satisfaction, and lowering staff turnover. Issue research also enables issue managers to discover problems early on, allowing them to be resolved before they become more serious.
9. **Diversity embodied in all roles:** It is critical for public relations departments to have a diverse workforce in all roles so that decisions and messages reflect multiple points of view. Inclusivity generates brilliance because it reduces feelings of alienation caused by excluding or failing to engage the ideas and opinions of particular publics (Vercic, Grunig, and Grunig 1996, p. 58).
10. **Ethics and integrity:** Four years following the publication of the Excellence Study, the excellence researchers added ethics and integrity as essential considerations, stating that ethics is important enough to constitute a stand-alone principle of excellence. When

ethics is planned, trained, and implanted throughout the business, research shows that ethics is integrated in the decision making of the most successful organizations' issues management, leading to higher levels of organizational effectiveness. They expanded on ethics as the tenth generic principle of public relations, implying that logical consideration of ethical quandaries could be the most essential facilitator of organizational effectiveness (Bowen, 2004, p. 311-324).

These concepts can be used to design an organization's public relations function, structure its internal interactions with management and the rest of the organization, and staff the public relations department in a way that makes it more effective. The greater the presence of these variables in a public relations function, the better that function should be. Another key consideration is that the CEO be aware of the contributions that public relations and communication in general may make to the overall effectiveness of the firm. He or she is presumably aware of how a company's reputation can affect its bottom line, and how the public relations department can help to improve and defend that reputation. The industry, the size of the organization, the goals, and whether those goals are judged through the happiness of principle components or through the goal attainment approach all influence how firms measure excellence. The excellence study, on the other hand, revealed that these basic principles of excellence apply to any sort of organization, any size of Endeavour, any industry, and across cultures (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P 481-82).

2.5. Models of Public Relation

The most significant and useful thing for public relations practitioners to grasp is the existing distinct models and their concepts for public relations practices. It is crucial to understand how those models are related to or separated from one another. Gruning and Hunt (1984) outlined four research-based public relations models. The four models of public relations are press agency/publicist, public information, the two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric model.

- ❖ **Press Agency:** - was developed in the middle of the 19th century and it was explained by Grunig and Hunt as “public relations-like activities”. This model employs persuasion and manipulation to persuade an audience to act in accordance with the organization's wishes. Practitioners of press agency seek attention and propaganda. According to

Grunig, those practitioners "seek attention for their organization in almost any way possible."

- ❖ **Public Information:** - is similar to press a gentry in that one-way information transmission is the goal of the activity, but it differs in that truth is central to its mission. The data must be correct, true, and specific. This model's primary goal is to be informative. Practitioners who follow this technique conduct little research on their target audiences in addition to checking the intelligibility of their message (Gruning, 1984).
- ❖ **Two-way Asymmetric Model:** - is primarily concerned with persuading people to agree with the organization and its publics by bringing them over to the organization's way of thinking. To strengthen the persuasiveness of its communications, this strategy leverages the social science research method. Feedback from the public is utilized to improve communications methods, not to change the organization's viewpoint, or the organization is far more interested in having the public adjust to the organization's interests than the contrary. It is impossible to establish a good relationship for mutual benefit with this concept.
- ❖ **Two-way Symmetric Model:** - intended to generate mutual understanding. The two-way communications process should laimed at fostering mutual understanding The two-way communication process should result in shifts in both the public's and the organization's stance on an issue. Through this two-way communication paradigm, the organization and its constituents adjust to each other in order to develop mutual understanding and maintain a happy relationship. (Gruning and hunt, 1984, p. 13).

Furthermore, the two-way symmetrical communication model is both genuine and normative. It is a paradigm that organizations can employ but rarely do since an authoritarian dominating coalition regards it as a danger to its power. However, two-way symmetrical public relation exemplifies professional public relations and represents the field's growing corpus of knowledge. This ethical approach also contributes more to organizational effectiveness than other public relations models. Practitioners of the two-way symmetrical model have mixed goals; they seek to protect the interests of their employers as well as their own. There is a considerable body of knowledge that advises practitioners on how to collaborate interpersonally with the public as well as how to use media symmetrically to connect with them. The enhanced two-way

symmetrical model is a critical component of excellence in public relations and communication management (ibid).

In general, the author found that public relations practitioners must grasp the various models of public relations and their aims, and then adopt the model that best compromises and serves both the organization's and the public's interests for mutual gain. As a result, the two-way communication model adds to the efficiency of public relations activities by fostering mutual understanding between internal and external audiences in order to achieve corporate goals and serve the public interest. Furthermore, it aids in the development of harmonious relationships, the management of communication, and the creation of a positive image of the company among diverse publics.

Using the generic principles of excellence theory, this research will attempt to examine public relations practices in the study area, how public relations makes organizations more effective, how it contributes to organizational effectiveness, and the conditions in organizations and their environments that make organizations more effective. When applied to communication, however, the systems theory paradigm aims to explain the interdependence of human communication rather than focusing on a single aspect. Interrelationships between various areas of businesses aid in obtaining a holistic vision in order to be productive. This study's framework focuses on the perspectives of the general principle of excellence theory, the interrelationships of stakeholders via open system theory, and the two-way communication model.

2.6. Related literature review

Studies on public relations practice and challenges have been done by different researchers in Ethiopia. The Practices and Challenges of Public Relations on Marketing and Promoting Tourist Destination Sites in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau by Fekadu Gedif (Addis Ababa university, 2011), The Practices and Challenges of Public Relations within Two Ethiopian Towns: Harar and Dire Dawa by Geremew, Chala (Haramaya University, 2017), The Practice and Challenges of Public Relations in Ethiopia: The Case of Government Universities by Tesfaye Bezabih Gezihagne (Wollo University, 2018), the practice and challenges of public relations in Ethiopian federal government offices by zemdekun tekle (Addis Ababa university, 2014) are some of them. Unfortunately the practice and challenges of public relations in

multinational corporations operating in Ethiopia is not well studied. The only study the researcher can find is that a paper entitled “Corporate Social Responsibility Practice of Multinational Companies in Ethiopia: The case of Heineken Brewery S.C” by Berihu Gereziher, (AAU, 2019). But this study is only focused on the CSR practice of multinational company’s operating on Ethiopia with a specific reference of Heineken Ethiopia. Though the overall practice, challenges and opportunities of public relations in multinationals companies in Ethiopia is not yet studied.

2.7. History of public relations

2.7.1. Early Beginnings

Almost all public relations thesis and textbook contains a chapter on the history of the profession in the first few chapters, and this is a good idea for various reasons. Understanding the cultural foundations of public relations can aid practitioners and academics in appreciating the dynamic factors that have influenced and continue to affect the discipline's evolution. Second, understanding how all those factors influence the profession will enable practitioners and academics to predict, anticipate, and be prepared for the profession's anticipated future trajectories. Furthermore, a global practitioner who understands the relationship between public relations history and practice will indeed be able to examine environments in regions and countries with which he or she is unfamiliar, particularly where public relations is in its early stages, and then formulate strategies that are compliant with the latest dynamic trends (Alan and Ashli, 2009, p.18).

Public relation is a concept which is almost as old as human communication. People were convinced to accept the authority of government and religion in many ancient civilizations by using conventional public relations strategies including interpersonal communication, speeches, art, literature, staged events, and publicity. Of course, none of these attempts were named public relations, but their goal and consequence were almost always the same as in today's practice. Indeed, some themes in public relations have remained similar throughout the centuries. (Wilcox et al, 2015, P.35) The use of communication to change people's words and actions can be dated directly to the earliest civilizations. Archaeologists have found an 1800 B.C. farm bulletin in Iraq that instructed farmers on how to cultivate their crops, water them, deal with field mice, and

harvest their products. Thus, the authors contend, the more food farmers cultivated, the better the citizens ate, and the wealthier the country became a prime illustration of deliberate persuasion to target a specific public for a particular function, or public relations (Cutlip and Center, 2013, p.195).

Communication skills were also highly valued by the ancient Greeks. In reality, the best speakers were frequently chosen to positions of leadership. Occasionally, aspiring Greek politicians engaged the help of sophists (those known for their reasoning as well as their eloquence) to help them win linguistic fights. Sophists gathered in the day's amphitheaters to praise the qualities of specific political candidates. As a result, the sophists laid the groundwork for today's lobbyists, who try to influence legislation through successful communication strategies (Seitel, 2017, p.56).

Saint Paul, the most prolific author of the New Testament, is also eligible for the public relations hall of fame. According to the authors of *Managing Public Relations*, James Gruning and Todd Hunt, The apostles Paul and Peter utilized speeches, letters, staged events, and other forms of public relations to obtain attention, adherents, and to build new churches. Similarly, the four gospels of the New Testament, which were written at least 40 years after Jesus' death, were public relations works meant to spread the faith rather than to provide a historical account of Jesus' life (Gruning and hunt, 1984, P.15).

2.7.2. The middle Ages

Even during the middle Ages and particularly within the Roman Catholic Church which influenced not only theology but also politics and even economic matters (Alan and Ashli, 2009, p.18). Pope Urban II employed symbolism, orchestrated events, and propaganda to entice thousands of followers to join the Crusades during this period of time. Six centuries later, Pope Gregory XV established the College of Propaganda to govern foreign missions and train priests to disseminate the religion, making the Church one of the first to use the term propaganda.

During the middle Ages, Gutenberg (1450) invented the printing press, which had a tremendous impact on the gathering and diffusion of information for the next 500 years. The printing press fundamentally enabled individuals and groups to communicate directly with the public and advertise a wide range of activities (Wilcox et al, 2015, P.65).

2.7.3. The modern age

Professional techniques and people-centered services have given public relations a fresh lease on life in the twenty-first century (Johnston, 2019, p.29). Digital and social media have facilitated two-way contact between organizations and the general population. It has established a substantial role as a key managerial function in today's corporate world.

In modern corporations, public relations practitioners assist their clients in favorably reaching their target audience and frequently use the media to provide a third-party endorsement for the organization's products and services. Public relation has evolved as a dynamic profession and a technique of developing rapport between corporations and various publics. It is unavoidable when it comes to establishing and keeping long-term partnerships for improvement of organizational management and business marketing efforts (Carr, 2019:05).

2.7.4. History of public relations in Ethiopia

The use of public relations techniques is not a new concept on the African continent. It dates back to the origins of African civilization. According to Narty in Rensburg (2002), the concept of public relations was practiced in Africa prior to colonialism. Pharaohs in ancient Egypt proclaimed their great accomplishments via word-pictures on magnificent monuments. Narty continues to explain how the role of the chief's spokesman in traditional villages is indeed very equivalent to that of a public relations practitioner. No African chief, according to tradition, ever spoke directly to a visitor who came to the chief's seat of power. A spokesman handled all interactions and communication with the chief. These spokesmen were well-versed in the village's customs and traditions. Such people rose to positions of prominence and were held in high regard by the general public. This, incidentally, is still the case in some of Africa's most remote and traditional rural areas. As a result, according to narty public relation is not a foreign concept in the African context, but it has been exercised in a different system and is deeply rooted in its culture (Rensburg, 2002, p. 6).

Ethiopia, as one of Africa's oldest states, has a long history of public relations practice. However, according to Solomon (2000), a practice that resembles modern public relations is thought to have begun in the country in the 1960s. In fact, the establishment of the Ministry of Pen in the 1940s resulted in the emergence of modern public relations practice in the Ethiopia. The ministry

of Pen organized and administered media organizations such as radio, news agencies, and television services at the time. After some time, the ministry was replaced in the 1950s by the then Ministry of Information and Tourism, which had the similar task of administering media organizations in furthermore to carrying out the duties of the ministry.

The main goal of public relations at the time was to serve the interests of the ruling class. Because public relation was so unprofessional at the time, it was unable to respond to the situations that arose. One incident that can be used to support the failure is the case of the catastrophic famine that occurred in 1974. Nothing about the deadly famine was known to the nation or the rest of the world. The system appears to have been convinced that the story would go untold forever, so it chose to focus on figuring out how to hide rather than trying to manage the crisis (Solomon, 2000, p. 20).

Now days, almost all government offices and many of the private sectors have public relations department. There is a significant improvement in the practice of the profession too. At list organizations understand its purpose and hire personnel for the position. But when compare the practice in Ethiopia with the developed countries as concluded in many public relations studies a lot has to be done to make the practice more professional and to enable the department in helping organizations to be successful.

2.8. Conceptual and professional definitions of Public Relations

Definitions give at least two main purposes: they help us understand the world around us and they can be used to argue for a specific worldview of how one concept corresponds to other concepts. As a result, the definition of public relations explains what it is and what it does, as well as how it relates to other managerial operations. There are still no universally accepted definitions for the profession of public relations. Hundreds of definitions have been written in an attempt to define public relations by enumerating the major operations that comprise the practice of what public relations do. We can divide the definitions attempted so far in this into two categories.

A. Public relation associations definitions

Practitioner definitions of public relations are more grounded in the realities of the job, they regularly use the term "public relations" interchangeably with other terms like "organizational communication" or "corporate communication" (Grunig,1992,P.10), and frequently include concepts of persuasion and influence.

At the First World Assembly of Public Relations Associations in Mexico in 1978, PR was defined as "the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizational leaders, and implementing planned programs of action that will serve both the organization and the public interest" (Newsom et al. 2000, p. 2).

The phrases 'art' and 'social science' are useful for describing the continuous conflict between public relations' perception as a measured, scientifically-based use of communication tools and many practitioners' preference for the broader, more creative aspects of the profession.

In response to the lack of an agreed-upon definition, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the leading professional organization for public relations practitioners, launched an effort in 2011 to establish a more "current and accurate definition of public relations." The initiative took the form of a "crowd-sourced" endeavor that included PRSA members, renowned academics, and industry professionals in order to gather feedback for a future "official" definition of public relations. This months-long process yielded the following definition, which was published in 2012. "A strategic communication approach that establishes a mutually advantageous connection between a company and its target audience is known as public relations." (Page, P. 47, 2019).

When the British Institute of Public Relations defined public relations as "the deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding" (which has also been adopted in a number of Commonwealth states), it emphasized mutual understanding as an effect.((Grunig and Hunt,1984, p.32).

Several critical terms should be highlighted here: 'planned' and 'sustained' imply that these interactions are neither automatic nor effortless. They must, indeed, be 'established' and 'maintained.' It's also worth noting that the goal isn't popularity or approval, but rather goodwill

and understanding. Many people believe that public relations is only about promoting an organization, however most public relations work entails ensuring that the public has an accurate impression of the organization, even if they don't agree with what it does.

It is critical; however, to emphasize those public relations is not about interacting with "the public," as many people believe. There is no such thing as the public in public relations; instead, there are numerous various groups of people, including suppliers, employees, and trustees, members of local and national trade and political associations, and local inhabitants, among many others. One of the key ideas in public relations is that various groups or publics have distinct information needs and place varying demands on organizations. Understanding these distinctions is a critical PR skill (Theaker, 2004, p. 4).

B. Scholars definitions

The late Edward Bernays, widely regarded as the father of public relations, described the role of his fledgling public relations consulting firm in 1923 as "providing information to the public, persuasion directed at the public to modify attitudes and actions, and efforts to integrate the attitudes and actions of an institution with its publics and of publics with those of that institution." (Seitel, 2017, P.34).

And, back in 1975, when no one understood what "public relations" was, the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education sponsored one of the most ambitious searches for a uniform definition. The late Rex F. Harlow, a long-time public relations professor and professional leader, amassed a collection of about 500 definitions. He discovered common elements and merged them into the definition below:

“Public relations is the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication as its principal tools”.(cutlip and center,2013, P.43)

Effective Public Relations by Scott Cutlip and Allen Center, one of the first major textbooks on the subject, stated that "public relation is the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends." (cutlip and center,2013, P. 46) Because all organizations must maintain ties with their constituents, this definition classifies public relations as a management role. It also emphasizes mutually beneficial interactions between organizations and the public as the profession's moral and ethical foundation. At the same time, it proposes criteria for evaluating what is and is not a public relation.

Public relation is a leadership and management function that aids in the achievement of company goals, define philosophy, and facilitate organizational transformation. Public relations practitioners connect with all important internal and external publics in order to build positive relationships and ensure that business goals and social expectations are in sync. Public relations professionals create, implement, and assess organizational programs that facilitate the interchange of influence and knowledge among an organization's constituent parts and publics (Lattimore et al, 2012, P. 4). The management function was also emphasized more than 25 years ago in Managing Public Relations by James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt. They said, "Public relation is the management of communication between an organization and its publics."(Wilcox et al, 2015, P.33).

Those are not the only definitions of Public relations. There are many more left. It may not be required to memorize any specific definition of public relations. But it is more crucial to remember the main words that appear in the majority of definitions that frame today's modern public relations. The important terms that appear in majority of the definitions includes:

- **Deliberate:** The use of public relations is deliberate. It is intended to persuade, educate, inform, and solicit feedback from individuals who will be influenced by the activity.
- **Planned:** Public relations activities are planned. Problems are solved and logistics are planned over time, with the action taking place over a period of time. It is methodical, necessitating research and strategic analysis.
- **Performance:** Actual policies and execution are the foundation of effective public relations. If the organization has weak policies and is inattentive to public issues, no amount of public relations will build goodwill and acceptance.

- **Public interest:** Public relations should be mutually advantageous to both the organization and the public; it is the alignment of the organization's self-interests with the concerns and interests of the public.
- **Two-way communication:** Public relation is more than just conveying information; it is also the art of listening to and conversing with various publics.
- **Management function:** Public relation is most efficient when it is a strategic and integrated part of senior management decision making. Counseling, problem solving, and the management of competition and conflict are all aspects of public relations. Wilcox et al, 2015, P.34).

2.9. Public relations roles

Public relations specialists can, in general, be communication managers who coordinate and integrate communication operations, or communication technologists who primarily compose and construct messages. Broom and Smith (1979) and Dozier and Broom (1995) conducted studies that identified two prominent public relations roles:

- **The communication manager:** develops and administers public relations programs, advises management, makes communication policy decisions, and supervises implementation. The communication manager contributes to an organization's strategic planning and must be able to conduct research and measurement, as well as providing data that helps managers make better decisions about how to handle crucial public relations relationships. The communication manager thinks strategically, which means he or she will be focused on the organization's activities that contribute to mutually beneficial partnerships that assist the company achieve its bottom-line goals. These activities include keeping an eye on an organization's external environment, scanning for potential threats, and supporting a business in adjusting to its stakeholders' demands.
- **The communication technician:** They do not participate in corporate decision-making, but they are in charge of implementing public relations initiatives such as composing press releases, planning events, and creating site material. Technicians are the 'doers,' not the 'students.' They are the 'doers,' not the 'students.' Communication technicians are where the great majority of practitioners begin their careers. This role requires the use of communication methods such as press releases, staff newsletters, position papers, TV

spots, Web site content, speeches, blogs, and social media messaging to carry out strategies. The majority of practitioners in this sector aren't involved in issue definition or solution creation, instead relying on their writing skills. (Tench and Yeomans, 2009, P. 29).

The communication manager role is also classified into three distinct types:

- **The expert prescriber:** investigates and defines public relations problems, creates programs to address these issues, and then implements them, often with the support of others. The role of the expert prescriber is similar to that of a doctor with a patient: he or she is an authority on a given sector, problem, or type of public relations and is given main responsibility to handle this purpose as a counselor or with little input or participation from other senior management.
- **The communication facilitator:** functions as a communication broker, ensuring two-way contact between an institution and its constituents through liaising, interpreting, and mediating. It acts as a bridge builder, listening to and brokering information between the organization and its important stakeholders. The purpose of this function is to supply information to both management and the public in order for them to make mutually beneficial decisions.
- **The problem-solving process facilitator:** Helps organizations in resolving communication issues and serves as a counselor/adviser in program planning and implementation. Both expert consultancies and in-house employees can execute this duty. The problem-solving facilitator collaborates with other managers to define and address challenges. The professional must be a member of the organization's dominant coalition and have access to other senior managers to perform this position. The problem-solving facilitator helps other manager's work through organizational problems from a public-relations perspective.

Two other roles, sitting between the manager and technician are also are also noted:

- **Media relations role:** This is more than just message delivery; it is a critical function in which the media's needs are met in a sophisticated manner. an extremely competent job that requires extensive knowledge and comprehension of the media this is more than just

message delivery; it is a critical function in which the media's needs are satisfied in a sophisticated manner. A well-known journalist who has shifted into public relations commonly fills this position.

- **Communication and liaison role:** a person who represents the company at events and gatherings and enables contact between management and the internal and external publics (Tench and Yeomans, 2009, P. 29).

2.10. Public relations in multinational companies

A multinational corporation, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, is "any business that is registered and operates in more than one country at the same time." In most situations, the corporation's headquarters are in one nation, with subsidiaries in other countries that are wholly or substantially controlled by it. The corporation's main office reports to its subsidiaries. According to the worldwide handbook of public relations, these businesses are "hierarchically controlled" from a central location, with subsidiaries in other countries that are tiny clones of the firm and use collaboration (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P.481).

The world has become a global marketplace. Being a multinational firm and engaging in foreign business, on the other hand, is far more difficult than operating within a single country. This is due to the fact that diverse laws and cultural standards frequently cause significant confusion. Competition conditions are frequently extremely varied as well. Many restrictions that do not exist in the corporation's home country can be discovered in international business. This is why major firms require a global public relations strategy (Lattimore et al, 2012, P. 359). The notion Global public relations, also known as international public relations, refers to a company's, institution's, or government's deliberate and structured attempts to establish and build ties with the public of other countries. These publics are the many groups of people who are touched by, or have the potential to affect, the activities of a certain business or even an entire industry. In today's global economy, practically all public relations activity includes an international component (Wilcox et al, 2015, P. 545).

“International public relations is the planned communication activity of a multinational organization, a supra- or international institution or government that aims create a positive and receptive environment through interactions in the target country which

facilitates the organization (or government) to achieve its policy or business objectives without harming the interests of the host publics” (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 146).

According to Ralph Tench and Liz Yeomans, global public relations actions can be preparatory, with the goal of building and cultivating a hospitable environment, or situation, when a specific topic or scenario frequently drives communication, such as international pressure group activities. IPR can be merely promotional when product or service promotion is at the center of the program and PR is assisting the global marketing role, or it can integrate and drive communication in an ideal instance. IPR is essentially the glue that holds globalization together, allowing multinational firms to reach new audiences and markets (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 146). One of the famous public relations scholars Janis Page explains the trick, as with every PR challenge, is to understand who you want to reach. Once you have this information, you can design new tactics, improve the existing communications plans, and build your "story" with essential themes to communicate locally in each area (Page, 2019, P. 879).

Recently it is familiar to hear that globalization is making the world a single village. The benefits of globalization for organizations practicing international public relations include expanding the scope of operations, making more money in new markets, and chances to achieve greater social and environmental impact with more diversified audiences. As a global corporation, public relations may assist in achieving consistency in authentic and trustworthy communications. However, globalization is not only bringing benefits to these organizations. It increases the likelihood of unexpected effects, miscommunication, and faux pas. To avoid these risks, public relations practitioners must comprehend the significance of environmental variables in public relations as well as the importance of localization. Public relations mean what the words imply. It is concerned with the ties that organizations have with their numerous publics, both internal and external. These publics are made up of individuals who are influenced by societal events and trends. Organizations function in a dynamic environment. Society is evolving: new concerns and trends emerge, some of them rapidly. Given the essential role that public relations plays in building and preserving goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics, it is evident that both the external and internal environments in which it operates must be carefully considered (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 20).

There are numerous external elements that influence public relations, but three of the most powerful and interrelated are politics, the economy, and the media. To be effective in this interconnected world, public relations professionals must be able to adapt to numerous contextual circumstances (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64). Sriramesh and Vercic (2003) also feel that three infrastructure components are critical to international public relations: a country's political system, extent of economic growth, and degree of activism. Each of these elements determines the nature of public relations practiced in a country, and they are all inextricably linked (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P. 3). The elements that influence the practice of public relations in multinational companies further discussed below.

2.10.1. Political system

The political system of a country has an impact on its social structure. Sirirmash and Vercic suggested the following seven types of political systems in their book Handbook of Global Public Relations:

- 1) **Democratic system:** It is a system in which various parties and individuals participate in open elections for the right to rule for a set length of time (unless there is a constitutionally mandated reason for earlier elections). Opposition parties have a reasonable prospect of gaining power or participating in power sharing as members of a coalition government in democracies.
- 2) **Restricted democratic practices:** To sustain the status quo, a single party controls crucial constituents such as political institutions, the media, and the electoral process. Countries on this list prohibit voting rights based on characteristics such as gender, race, and socioeconomic status.
- 3) **Monarchy:** This is a political system comprised of constitutional monarchies (a constitution stipulates the powers of the monarch, frequently delegating some power to elected and other authorities), traditional monarchies, and absolute monarchies (the monarch reigns as tyrant).
- 4) **Authoritarian regimes:** is a system that usually is single-party states or military dictatorships noted for significant human rights violations.

- 5) **Totalitarian regimes:** This is when a single political party gains entire control of society, including interference into private life (for example, Marxist–Leninist and national socialist regimes).
- 6) **Colonial and imperial dependencies:** These are which are dominated by massive imperial systems, as seen primarily in the early half of the twentieth century.
- 7) **Protectorates:** a system that, on its own initiative, seeks protection from a more powerful neighbor or is temporarily placed under international protection by the international community (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P. 4).

This different political system prevalent in different countries has an impact on the social structure and practice of the nation. As a result, public relations practitioners should understand the role of politics and how it can inform and affect their efforts in the countries where they operate candidly (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64).

2.10.2. Level of economic development

A macroeconomics or microeconomics course can also help you better comprehend and perform public relations. This is due to the fact that economic systems and situations, such as poverty and literacy rates, have an impact on the public relations sector both at home and overseas. Professor Hong Tien Vu, whose study focuses on global and development communication and digital media and is quoted in Tom, puts it succinctly:

When you have enough economic resources, you can think about things like the environment or gender equality. When you're living in poverty, it's hard to think about anything other than putting food on the table (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64).

The economic prosperity of a country, which is inextricably related to its political structure, provides opportunities as well as obstacles for public relations specialists. Poverty and illiteracy are directly affected by a country's level of economic growth. These two powerful elements have a direct impact on the methods and approach those public relations specialists in a country may employ. The lack of an appropriate communication infrastructure also poses significant obstacles to multinational public relations professionals attempting to run information campaigns in developing countries, where folk and indigenous techniques of communication may be more effective (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P. 6). For public relations practitioners in underdeveloped

countries, the rate of economic development poses a distinct set of difficulties. Literacy, media access, and the amount of information sources available to individuals can all differ greatly. When your audiences lack the information or tools to engage in discourse, two-way communication can be very difficult (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64).

2.10.3. Media

Internationally, people perceive and consume media in different ways. Even though our audiences have access to the same communication technologies that we do, that doesn't guarantee they're using them to obtain news or interact with organizations. We must be wary of assuming that all people use technologies and online media in much the same way that we do (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64). This scholar gives attention for how people and why perceive and consume media and knowing the reason behind is the key for successful public relation practice. Others argue that maintaining effective media relations necessitates public relations professionals understanding who controls a country's media companies and whether such control extends to editorial content (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P.13). Her who owns the media matters. In addition it insists the public relation practitioners to understand wither the ownership extends to the content the media house produce. Having brief information of who controls the media helps a lot for effective media relations.

2.10.4. Activism

In their book "the global public relations handbook," Sriramesh and Vercic group activism with political systems and levels of economic development because they feel the three are inextricably linked. Because only pluralistic cultures accept any form of activism, a country's politics has a fundamental influence on the level of activism in that country. Furthermore, the extent and nature of activism in a country are closely influenced by its level of economic growth. Activism creates opportunities and problems for public relations professionals (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P.7). As a result, it is vital for the public relation practitioner to examine the type of activism widespread in a community and establish how it effects that country's public relations actions. The international public relations practitioner cannot overlook activism.

2.10.5. Legal System

A country's legal system is also inextricably tied to its level of political and economic development, posing numerous obstacles to the international public relations professional. Every culture has its own methods of controlling and enforcing behavior in its citizens and organizations. Whereas legal codes tend to be explicit in Western democracies, the legal framework in many other parts of the world may appear to be vaguer and embedded in social or religious rules, implying that we must investigate the impact of theocracies on public relations practice as well (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P. 7).

2.10.6. Culture and Language

Communication affects culture and culture influences communication. If public relation is about building and maintaining mutual understanding through symmetrical communication between an organization and its publics, then culture is important to the practice of public relations. Culture is only essential in terms of program effectiveness, and culture is frequently reduced to a single variable (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 124).

If we define a public as a collection of individuals who have common interests, we can see how the concept of culture applies to almost any public, whether they be residents of a town, pupils in a school, volunteers for a nonprofit, top management of a company, or opponents of a political activity. While we may believe we understand diverse cultures, when it comes to planning and executing public relations efforts, we must double-check our assumptions. Understanding low-context and high-context communication, as well as Hofstede's five cultural dimensions, can assist us in developing our cultural intelligence (Tom, 2021, P. 351). The goal of 'understanding' different cultures is simply to guide and control behavior, influencing public views and behaviors in ways that benefit the organization. Building trust with a wide range of stakeholders and creating a "shared understanding of meaning" among diverse cultures necessitates a greater understanding and appreciation of other cultures through increased cooperation and discussion (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 124).

Researchers have discovered that in countries with a large power distance, governments tend to wield great control over society; as a result, it is critical for public relations practitioners to cultivate tight ties with government decision-makers. It may also be more difficult for public

relations professionals to influence organizational decision-making if they are not senior enough inside their organizations.¹⁷ (Tom, 2021, P. 354) to create and implement global public relations practice, as well as adjust campaign parts to local culture, the public relations professional must be conversant with:

- ✓ environmental factors that influence the practice of PR
- ✓ the cultural profile of the country
- ✓ its effects on communication
- ✓ The „public relations culture“, including the way PR is practiced in the country (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P.125).

2.10.7. Task environment

Aside from the macro external environment, businesses are also influenced by items closer to themselves, referred to as the 'task environment.' These elements are more under their control and usually refer to groups of people (publics) with well-defined characteristics, such as consumers or stockholders. According to Esman (1972), cited in Tench and Yeomans (2006) those publics are categorized into four types based on their relationship with an organization.

The following examples may assist to clarify how these linkages work:

- Enabling linkages link the organization with people who have the authority and resources to make it a reality.
- Functional linkages either provide some kind of input to the organization or consume its outputs.
- Normative linkages are to peer organizations.
- Diffused linkages are to those who have no formal relationship with the organization, but may take an interest in it.

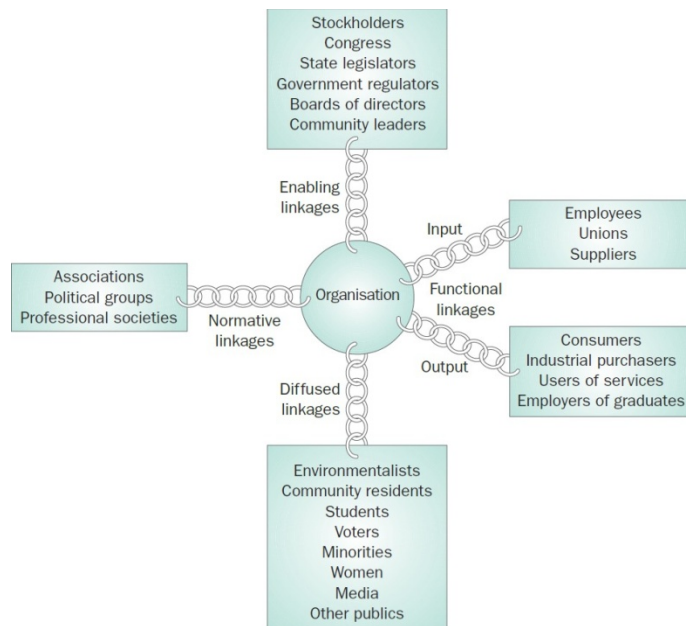


Figure 2. Esman's organizational relationship linkages (source: Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 23).

2.10.8. Sector

Different industries necessitate different types of programs. The emphasis in the confectionery industry is likely to be on marketing communication, whereas local government activity is more likely to be on community involvement. Furthermore, working for a government department, or any work in the public or non-profit sector, necessitates communication professionals being aware of the need for accountability to the taxpayers. Working in the private sector implies that shareholders and the profit incentive are important, which results in distinct communication priorities (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 24). This concept clearly implies that the type of sector that the company is operating matters on how to communicate and what the priority of the company should be.

2.10.9. Size

Small, multifaceted public relations departments are common in small organizations. Public relations services could even be completely outsourced to a public relations firm. It's possible that public relation is merely one of a single person's tasks, such as a sales, marketing, or general office manager. Such persons may be members of the management team, and their efforts will be

viewed as vital to the organization's success. Larger firms may have large public relations departments, with multiple public relations specialists handling a variety of tasks. They may or may not work in separate public relations departments, and they may or may not be in management (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P.24).

2.11. The Role of Public Relations in Multinational Corporations

According to Lattimore et al (2012) the global public relations challenge is to minimize as many impediments to successful communication as feasible. As a result, communication must be able to cross cultural and geographic boundaries. As discussed before Language, legal, and cultural issues are frequently encountered as key impediments in business and public relations. Other impediments in many countries include overly bureaucratic governments, a plethora of languages, and underdeveloped mass media. The author's further explains three major parts to the public relations function in multinational organizations. In one position, public relations practitioners represent multinational corporations at home, engaging with public opinion and governmental activity relating to specific corporations as well as the global enterprise as a whole. The second function of multinational public relations is to assist in bridging the communication gap that inevitably occurs between overseas operations and senior management at the global headquarters.

Finally, public relations must be carried out in the corporation's numerous host countries. Corporations frequently hire consultants to handle the numerous communication duties required to compete effectively in domestic and international markets. Strategically located worldwide agency offices guarantee that the corporation has access to professionals who are familiar with the culture, language, government, media, and other vital characteristics of the country in which they are attempting to operate. The unbiased perspective and depth of knowledge in dealing with organizational difficulties are two important benefits that outside firms bring to a corporation (Lattimore et al, 2012, p.360).

Page (2021) further explains a strong and effective corporate communications team must be able to accomplish the following:

- Identify and enlist the relevant stakeholders.
- Obtain tremendous and lasting media coverage

- Create thought leadership opportunities (studies, speeches, and events) to increase executive exposure and foster think leadership.
- Create and use CSR projects to promote the business brand and improve reputation.
- As needed, handle concerns and crisis situations.

The author further explores the basic formula for successful public relations in multinational corporations. The more positive news the corporate PR team generates and the better it manages unfavorable stories (e.g., difficulties and crisis situations), the more likely the company will boost sales and revenue, engage stakeholders, and successfully service the market. This may appear to be a straightforward task, but as any seasoned corporate communicator can attest, it is far from it. To "solve" this equation, the corporate communicator must be skilled, ethical, honest, and as transparent as possible with both internal and external stakeholders (Page, 2019, P. 618).

New product debuts, mergers and acquisitions, layoffs, lawsuits, and new technologies have all required businesses to adapt to increasingly complicated and dynamic settings. Business leaders must manage relationships with a wide range of publics while balancing answers to the various competing demands of these diverse publics. Public relation assists corporations in dealing with this complex environment, and it is critical that these efforts complement the entire business mission and objectives of the organization. This is accomplished in a variety of ways, including assisting corporations in anticipating and adapting to societal demands and trends; positively influencing a company's image and reputation, leads to better operating environment; and smoothing and improving a company's operations that can lead to an increase in sales (Lattimore, 2012, P.352). Tasks as a corporate public relations practitioner (both domestic and multinational) include the following.

2.11.1. Managing corporate Reputations

The strategy for an organization's identity, image, and reputation is the most important aspect of any corporate communication function. Through corporate communication efforts, the organization's principal aim is to protect its identity, image, and reputation (Argenti, 2009, P. 53). The world's largest firms have operations and clients all around the world. These businesses work with the public and government on a local, regional, national, and international scale. Their operations have an impact on the environment, govern the employment of thousands of people,

and have an impact on the financial and social well-being of millions of people. Corporations' huge scale might put them at odds with their stakeholders. A corporation has a "face" its products, logo, and brand are frequently seen in advertising and billboards (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 292).

To have a good impact on public attitudes about business, business and private enterprise must be viewed as honest and accountable. Public relation assists a company in developing a world-class reputation. Positive ties with major publics, as well as the resulting shared understanding on policies and concerns, can boost a company's standing in its community and industry (Lattimore, 2012, P.362). Corporations strive for improved reputations for a number of reasons. For starters, ethical company practices deter increased government regulation. Second, there is also the issue of employee morale: organizations with good practices and reputations have lower staff turnover. The bottom line is also affected by corporate reputation (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 294).

2.11.2. Media Relations

The media relations unit is one of the most important parts of any company communication function. The media serves as both a constituency and a channel for investors, employees, and consumers to obtain information about and create opinions about a company. Many of today's companies are under constant inspection from a variety of stakeholders. This public vigilance is accompanied by a need for instantaneous knowledge, and the pressure grows with each new technology advance. Managers must be prepared to meet this need by taking into account all constituencies, online and offline when interacting with media professionals who inform them. Businesses can tap into this potent "conduit constituency," the media, to guarantee that their voices are heard by carefully drafting messaging and using appropriate media outlets (Argenti, 2009, P. 172). The media is a primary source of public knowledge about business in general, and about specific companies in particular. In recent times, the news in the media has not been very beneficial to corporations. Negative publicity can have a negative impact on a company's reputation. Therefore careful management of the media and building a smooth relationship with the media is very important of the company's success and survival (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 295). Today's public relations professionals must work with a variety of media types. They are divided into three categories.

A. Paid Media

Paid media is just that: media that you pay for. Advertising is the most common kind of paid media. Previously the domain of marketing and advertising departments, public relations advertising has evolved into a hybrid of advertising and editorial. Ads about core competencies, issues, community involvement, and philanthropy are more common today than ever before.

B. Owned Media

Owned media are "new media" outlets that we own and operate. They can be websites, mobile apps, blogs, Twitter accounts, YouTube channels, Facebook pages, or anything else that social media can think of. This is the magical world of public relations, and there are plenty of opportunities for social media savvy public relations specialists. The advantages of owned media include the ability to control content once more.

C. Earned Media

The legacy public relations value of "third party endorsement" is represented by earned media. Earned media is defined as "earned" in the sense that objective reporters are persuaded to write positively about your business. Earned media is favorable publicity that results from traditional news releases, story pitches, press conferences, and other devices based on friendly connections with reporters, editors, bloggers, and other neutral reporters (Seitel, 2017, P.203-04).

Because the media and business rely on one another to some level, most businesses strive to make the most of these partnerships (Argenti, 2009, P. 59). As a communicator, your aim is to contribute to the creation of an accurate, balanced narrative that represents the company's point of view and communicates your essential messages to attract the target audience while meeting the reporter's needs. The autonomy of the media organization and reporter, as well as the company's point of view, must be respected. That is the foundation of corporate media relations' mutually productive working relationship (Page, 2019, P. 624).

2.11.3. Customer Relations

Consumer public relation is concerned with enhancing a company's reputation and improving brand awareness. In many ways, customer service is the front line of public relations. A single

incident, or a series of episodes, can seriously harm a company's reputation and undermine public trust in its goods & services. Because of the Internet and blogs, a single unhappy consumer can alert thousands, if not millions, of people about his or her dissatisfaction in a single posting (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 296). Customer relations efforts have progressively become such an element of corporate communication as a result of consumer pressure groups attempting to exert influence on a company. Rather than just ensuring that the consumer is satisfied with the product or service, corporations today must engage in quasi-political activities with constituencies claiming to represent the firm's customers (Argenti, 2009, P. 59).

2.11.4. Employee Relations

Employees, like customers, are the core public for any profit-making firm. Employees are the front line of any effective public relations operation in many ways. How rank and file employees feel about their employer can help or hurt a company's reputation. Employees have been referred to as "ambassadors" for their organizations since they represent the company to a vast circle of family, relatives, and friends. If morale is low or employees believe the organization is not treating them fairly, their dissatisfaction will most likely be mirrored in their words to others. On the other side, passionate employees may do a lot to improve an organization's reputation as a good place to work in the community. Individuals who appreciate management, take pleasure in their work, and perceive they are treated fairly are critical to company success (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 301).

Internal communications in the twenty-first century is about more than memos, publications, and broadcasts; it's about creating a company culture based on principles and having the ability to drive organizational transformation (Argenti, 2009, P. 183). Employees who are well-informed are frequently satisfied. They are more productive workers who get more out of their jobs and contribute more to the organization. Well-informed employees who communicate with an organization's stakeholders outside of work will have a substantial beneficial influence on relationships with customers, the community, investors, and the media, to mention a few crucial groups. In a nutshell, when employers and employees communicate openly, organizational goals are more likely to be met (Lattimore, 2012, P. 212). Ultimately, good internal communications should reaffirm employees' beliefs that they are valuable assets to the organization. This

reinforcement can occur only if management believes it is true and the communication effort is done professionally (Argenti, 2009, P. 186).

2.11.5. Investor Relations

The National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI) defines investor relations as “a strategic management responsibility” that integrates finance, communication, marketing and securities law compliance to enable the most effective two-way communication between a company, the financial community, and other constituencies, which ultimately contributes to a company’s securities achieving fair valuation (Lattimore, 2012, P. 288). Good communication with present shareholders and prospective investors is another important measure of organizational health and prosperity. Investor relation (IR) is important to this process. To effectively portray a company's investment prospects, effective investor relations combine the specialties of communications and finance. Financial analysts, individual and institutional investors, shareholders, prospective shareholders, and the financial media are key audiences for these activities (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 302).

Investor relation (IR) has emerged as the fastest-growing part of the corporate communication function and a hot topic for all businesses. Traditionally, the finance function handled investor relations, generally reporting to the company's chief financial officer (CFO), but in recent years, the emphasis has shifted away from "just the numbers" and toward how the numbers are really presented to diverse constituencies. IR specialists primarily engage with shareholders and securities analysts, who are frequently a direct source for the financial press, which this sub function cultivates in collaboration with media relations experts. Individual and institutional investors are strongly interacting with by IR specialists. They are also heavily involved in the financial statements and yearly reports that every public company is required to prepare (Argenti, 2009, P. 60-61). ultimately, any organization's success is determined by its capacity to attract resources from its surroundings. Capital the money with which other assets can be purchased is one of the most significant of these resources. Corporations raise funds in a variety of ways, including the sale of stock, the issuance of bonds, and the acquisition of loans from financial institutions. In all situations, a corporation can only attract funds if investors have faith in the company and its management. The investing public cannot have this confidence if financial reporting is not accurate and honest. Investor relation has emerged as a specialist public relations

function in the last 30 years, "to build and maintain relationships with financial audiences, primarily institutional investors, analysts, and individual stockholders" (Lattimore, 2012, P.288).

2.11.7. Government relations

Every organization can profit from having connections with legislators at both the local and national levels. In terms of business and the economy, government today serves as a stimulant, referee, rule maker, engineer, and pursuer of social goals, as well as a defender, provider, customer, and controller. Businesses must be prepared to engage with the government in any of these capacities in order to be successful. The government's immense power and ability to actively participate in business management are further impetuses for corporate involvement. Power is shifting from the government to business, then to activist groups, and back to the government. Public affairs professionals should examine and predict the government's potential interests in company activity, and then respond accordingly (Lattimore, 2012, P. 310).

2.11.8. Marketing Communications

Many businesses utilize public relations techniques and tactics to help them achieve their marketing and sales goals. This is referred to as marketing communications or marketing public relations. Marketing public relations (MPR) is defined by Thomas L. Harris, author of *The Marketer's Guide to Public Relations*, as the "process of planning, executing, and evaluating programs that encourage purchase and consumer satisfaction through credible communication of information and impressions that identify companies and their products with the needs, wants, concerns, and interests of consumers." In many circumstances, marketing public relations communications are coordinated with those of a company's advertising, marketing, direct mail, and promotion. Companies coordinate all sources of information about a product or service through integrated marketing communications (IMC) to guarantee optimum message penetration. In today's public relations practice, IMC is a critical idea (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 302).

2.11.9. Environmental Relations

Corporate concern for the environment and sustainable resources is another facet of corporate responsibility. At the turn of the century, there were huge disagreements and confrontations between companies and activist nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) over a variety of

environmental and human rights issues (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 302). Good community relations help the organization get what it needs from the community and provide what the community expects. Furthermore, it aids in the protection of organizational investments, the increase of product and stock sales, the improvement of the general working atmosphere, and the reduction of costs associated with interacting with government authorities. When organizations fund community health and education programs, positive community connections can have an impact on worker productivity. Additionally, positive community views may affect employee sentiments toward the firm. The best community relations programs are those that arise naturally from the resources of the organization (Lattimore, 2012, P. 235).

2.12. Localization in global public relations practice

"There is no such thing as global public relations," says senior global public relations executive Amanda Glasgow. She rather explains in a thought leadership article for the International Public Relations Association:

“On the most basic level global public relations doesn’t work because as most PR practitioners will tell you, the best PR is local. Good PR gets at insights that are specific to a consumer, or has a flavor that is distinctive to her country, her city, her neighborhood” (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64).

Similarly, Weber Shandwick, a global consulting firm, emphasizes the significance of globalizing strategy and standards while localizing techniques. According to a poll of senior corporate communication executives from large international corporations, "global integration" required consistent brand positioning and the rapid flow of knowledge across global teams, but it did not imply repeating methods across numerous regions. Participants emphasized that, while introducing ideas from other nations may work, the decisions should be made by local markets. Press releases, media pitches, and news conferences are some of the most widely employed methods in media relations. Other strategies include using digital and social media, finding local spokesmen and influencers, and holding unique events (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64).

Localization can simply be “do in Rome as Rome do”. It specifically refers to the offshore subsidizer of multinational businesses' investment and business activity in host countries. Its primary goal is to become acquainted with the host country's political, economic, and cultural environments in order to adopt the localization policy in business management, allowing the firm

to integrate into the host country and become a local company. This localization includes localizing content in to the host countries cultural and language context (Huang, 2019, p.6)

A fine balance must be struck between standardization and localization in global public relations. Making sure your procedures and messages are consistent while still reflecting local circumstances requires a lot of thought and can be difficult. Add to that social media's global reach and it can be even more difficult to predict how your audiences (and even those who aren't) will react (Tom, 2021, P. 360-64).

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research technique employed in this thesis, as well as the reasoning behind it and how it contributes to answering the research questions. The data collection and analysis method is also detailed.

3.1. Research design and Methodology

The selection of a research design is based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researchers' personal experiences, and the audiences for the study. The main goal of this study is to investigate the practice and challenges of public relations the given companies. For the reason that qualitative research enables in exploring emotions, experiences and the personal perspectives of participants it has been chosen as the perfect design for the study . Qualitative research is a method for investigating and comprehending the significance that individuals or groups attach to a social or human situation. The research process includes developing questions and procedures, data collection in the participant's environment, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher providing interpretations of the data's meaning (Creswell, 2009, P. 22).

Furthermore Given the goal of this study, which is to obtain a knowledge of the current condition that PR is in at different companies, it has been determined that the study would be best handled as a descriptive study.

According to Gay (1992: 217), descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. A descriptive study determines and reports the way things are. Descriptive research is scientific research that describes about event, phenomena or fact systematically dealing with certain area or population. In this study, the descriptive research was done to find out how the selected multinational companies are practicing public relations and the challenges in their practice. The researcher tried to get deep data and information about the subject. Descriptive studies set to describe the natural phenomena which occur within the data in question. The goal set by the researcher is to describe the data as they occur it is a comprehensive summarization, in everyday

terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals (Yin 1984, p.23). The researcher then tried to present the real experience and situations in the companies under study.

3.2. Sampling Procedures

Selecting a study sample is also critical stage in every research effort because studying full populations is rarely possible, efficient, or ethical (Marshall, 1996, p. 522). Similarly to quantitative sampling, qualitative sampling is a source of substantial consternation for researchers. This is largely due to a misunderstanding of the qualitative approach's goals. The sample size of the study is the public relations department workers of the two multi-choice group and coca cola beverage Africa, Ethiopia. According to Marshall (1996), there are three general ways to selecting a sample for a qualitative study: convenience sampling, judgment sampling, and theoretical sampling.

Marshall (1996) says that the sample method chosen is determined by the purpose of the investigation. For this study, judgment sampling, also known as purposeful sampling, was selected as the most appropriate sampling strategy to meet the study's goal. The researcher intentionally selects the most productive sample (those with a good knowledge of the topic) to answer the research question in this technique (Marshall, 1996, p. 522); the other two sampling techniques, convenience and theoretical sampling, are not addressed further in this study. Therefore, one from each companies totally two respondents were picked for the reason to be in the greatest position to speak for the PR department under study.

3.3. Data Collection

3.3.1 Primary Data

Primary data is information gathered specifically by the investigators for the study in which it is used (Sekaran, 2003, p. 219). The qualitative technique was used to collect primary data for this investigation. The qualitative method, as previously stated, consists of semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions with the public relations departments of the participating organizations. The semi-structured interviews were chosen to provide for more extensive responses and a better understanding of how the businesses participate in public relations. The

planned interview questions were open-ended, with no set of responses to pick from, to encourage elaboration from the interviewee. The interviews were conducted face to face. The length of the interviews varies according to how long respondents take to respond to questions. Because the study is qualitative, each respondent's response to each question was different; as a result, the authors make an effort to satisfy each respondent's ethical standards. Further research into secondary data was also conducted in order to build a stronger case and compare a larger collection of facts.

3.3.2. Secondary Data

Secondary data, or data gathered in previous studies or for objectives other than this study, were used to learn about the topic and create a theoretical framework (Sekaran, 2003, p. 59). The framework and relevant ideas were then used to understand and evaluate the primary data that had been collected. Secondary data on public relations and its theories came from textbooks and peer-reviewed works published in academic journals. To find scientific articles, the academia library website and Google scholar were used. The most common search term was "public relations," although other terms such as "public relations in multinational corporations" and "international public relations" were also used to find more detailed information a review of the literature aided in the extraction of pertinent material including vital facts and theories for the investigation. Background information on the participating organizations was taken from their company websites. Secondary information about the companies and their public relations activities was obtained from their websites, news releases, and other articles about them, as well as their social media accounts such as YouTube channels, Face book pages, and so on. The utilization of secondary data was done with caution and with a critical eye.

3.4. Qualitative Interviews

According to Hon and Brunner (2000, p.315), open research employs qualitative in- depth and open interviewing methodologies. Descriptive research may also include the use of other research methods such as observation, documentation, and so on (Fisher, 2010). The most acceptable interviewing strategies for this study are qualitative, in-depth, and open. The reasoning is basic and straightforward. This strategy is utilized when the researcher is unsure what type of response they will receive from the responder (Fisher, 2010, p. 181). Semi-

structured interview questions were derived from the theoretical concepts covered in Chapter 2 and arranged together before being emailed to the appropriate authorities at the companies. The questions were sent out ahead of time to give responders time to familiarize themselves with the issues. However, the goal of the chosen approach is for the interviewer to engage in an informal conversation with the respondent about a specific area of interest (Fisher, 2010, p. 175), so the interviewer does not attempt to fit the interviewee answers and experiences into a predetermined frame, but rather lets the interviewer steer the conversation a little bit by picking up on the points raised by the interviewees and encouraging interviewees to expound (Fisher, 2010; Hon & Brunner, 2000).

The researcher utilized an interview protocol to ask questions and record replies during this qualitative interview. This protocol includes a heading (date, location, interviewer, interviewee), the questions (typically an ice-breaker question at the beginning followed by the main questions), and a thank-you statement at the end to appreciate the interviewee's time spent during the session. The interviews were conducted in person and recorded on the researcher's I Phone using the Voice Memos app. Even though the interview was taped, the author took notes in case the recording equipment failed. Following the interview, the audio data was translated to written words (Creswell, 2009, P: 170). Case studies and qualitative interviews, like all research approaches, have limits. When compared to quantitative research, the most prevalent source of uncertainty in qualitative research is that there is no universally accepted method for analyzing a case study. This is something that the case study researcher must figure out by themselves. As a result, preparation for data gathering is not as complicated as determining how to analyze the material once it has been obtained (Fisher, 2010, p. 205).

3.5. Data Analysis

The most difficult component of analyzing qualitative descriptive study data is that there are no "fixed formulas" or "cookbook recipes" to follow (Yin, 1994, p. 102). Varied ways would be employed to analyze the acquired data - the approaches have to be different because the methods used to collect the data vary as well. Qualitative data is a collection of information gathered through interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. This gathered data must be appropriately structured and evaluated in order to extract the relevant findings for future research. As a general rule, there is no single method for analyzing qualitative data. Several

researchers have offered various ways for analyzing qualitative data. Creswell (1998), for example, created a data analysis spiral that can be applied to almost any qualitative approach. The next steps emphasize these levels:

- Step 1: Prepare and organize the data for analysis. This includes transcribing interviews, optically scanning material, typing up field notes, and sorting and organizing data into various forms based on the sources of information.
- Step 2: Examine all of the information. The first step is to obtain a sense of the material and consider its overall meaning.
- Step 3: Begin the full analysis by coding. Coding is the process of separating information into parts or segments of text before giving the information meaning.
- Step 4: Create a description of the location or persons, as well as categories or themes for further investigation, using the coding method. Description is a thorough depiction of facts about people, places, or events in a setting.
- Step 5: Plan ahead of time how the description and subjects will be expressed in the qualitative narrative. The most typical approach is to use a narrative piece to convey the analysis's findings.
- Step 6: The final step in data analysis is to interpret or analyze the data (Creswell, 2009, P. 172- 73). The researcher used these steps to analyze the data that was collected.

Following the initial evaluation of the data and consideration of the study questions, the excellence theory, system theory, and other conceptual frameworks addressed in chapter two, a coding scheme (Appendix C) was devised. Then three major themes emerged: Theme One: The Public Relations practice. This theme represents responses that demonstrated the public relations practice by assessing the department's status in the selected multinational companies, the role they execute, their communication function to the organizations, and system and models they apply while practicing public relations. Sub-themes included empowerment of public relations function, communicator role, Organization of communication function and Public relations models. The next theme was public relations challenges and the final theme was finding the ways of improvement for better public relations practice in the selected multinational companies.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

In social studies, the researcher followed research ethics. And, first and foremost, determine the objectives of the study and interview questions. Second, I got a collaboration letter from the AAU School of Journalism and Communication, which granted me access to key sources and critical documents at selected multinational firms. The researcher then explained the study's goals and significance to the participants. Finally, with the consent of the respondents, an interview was conducted and recorded. Their permission was asked for confidentiality and the publication of their name in the research report.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATION

4.1. Introduction

In order to meet the study's purpose, this component of the study attempts to present findings. The analysis and presentation examined the practice, roles, tools, and challenges that affect the PR practice. The goal of the study was to link the analysis to the related literature review and theoretical framework mentioned in Chapter 2. As a result, the findings are presented in this chapter as a set of three overarching themes that arose from the research questions and data.

4.2. Theme One: The Public Relations practice

Generally, this theme represents answers that demonstrated the public relations practice by assessing the department's status in the selected multinational companies, the role they execute, their communication function to the organizations, and system and models they apply while practicing public relations.

4.2.1. Sub-theme: empowerment of public relations function

This sub-theme represents the effort that these organizations made to empower public relations department as a critical management function. The structure of the department, its location in the organizational chart, and its involvement in strategic management functions were asked to obtain answers to this sub-theme.

In multi-choice the department is named public relations and communication. It is located under the corporate affairs and regulatory function. The department has one manager and recent they added one personnel on technical role of public relations. Public affair, communications and suitability department is the departments name in coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia (CCBA). The function had one director, two managerial level employees (one for communication and the other for suitability function). Under the managers other to public relation specialist are assigned.

The perception and knowledge of the meaning and practice of public relations determine the location of public relations in a specific organization, as explained in the review of literature above. The integration of public relations in the strategic management function, as noted in the

excellence model, allows for more participative decision making, better organizational policy from the public's perspective, and more long-term decisions. It's also a big part of what it takes to run a great company. Public relations according to Wilcox, is most effective when it is a strategic and integrated aspect of senior management decision-making. Counseling, issue solving, and competition and conflict management are all areas of public relations. (Wilcox et al, 2015, P.34). Both key informants stated here they feel included in the top management. Manager-1: “we are part of every decision. We advise the top management in all our actions for a better decision making”. Manager-2: “The top management briefly understands the value of public relations. For this reason the department is included in every decision making. It advises the consequence of every decision”. The result shows here the public relations departments in both multinational companies are included in organizations decision making.

The public relations function must be allowed to report directly to the CEO in order to advise on matters affecting publics, values, and ethical decision-making, according to the other idea of excellence theory. Although the researchers hypothesized that reporting directly to the dominant coalition would improve public relations, a subsequent study found that reporting directly to the CEO improves public relations. The practice in Africa-Ethiopia, where Coca-Cola is produced, is perfectly consistent with this philosophy. The public affairs, communication and sustainability department directly reports to the CEO. Manager-2: “our department directly reports to the CEO. In addition we also report to the head quarter based in South Africa”. The department has a chance to report directly to the CEO and its help full for better practice and interaction. On the other hand, the public relation and communication department of multi-choice reports to the public affairs and regulatory function.

4.2.2. Sub-theme: communicator role

This sub-theme focused on addressing the public relations department role. As briefly discussed in chapter two, Public relations specialists can, in general, be communication managers who coordinate and integrate communication operations, or communication technologists who primarily compose and construct messages (Tench and Yeomans, 2009, P. 29).The excellence theory then stressed that, to be a successful organization The public relations department should always be led by a professional public relations manager, rather than someone who is just good

at writing. This is because managers have the research skills needed to gather data, mediate conflict resolution, handle issues, set budgets, address ethical dilemmas, and supervise the public relations department's employees. Technicians are often skilled in writing or other technical aspects of manufacturing, but not in management. It's more likely to be classified as media relations rather than a legitimate management position if there isn't a manager in charge of public relations. The practice in coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA) is aligned with this principle. Manager-2: "The Public affairs, communications and suitability department's director has a managerial role of managing the department's staff, conducting of research to identify opportunities and challenges and advising the management regularly".

The phenomenon in multi-choice is a bit deferent. Both the public relations managerial and technical role are performed by one senior practitioner. MANAGER-2: "Managing this entire role fully is almost impossible for a single practitioner and the respondent disclose that he play some managerial roles by advising the management and give more time for technical roles". The research indicates that the public relations department in coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia is structured with enough staffs (currently 6) that help the manager to execute only managerial roles. In contrast the practice in multi-choice is different with only two practitioners (the second is hired

Recently) and this makes things difficult for the manager to execute all the managerial tasks as expected. The other excellence theory principle also states that to perform managerial function having the role is not enough. Its duo to the reason that the public relations department the knowledge is needed to practice the managerial role. Excellent public relation departments have the expertise required to manage public relations properly, in that it can do advanced research to understand publics and engage in negotiation and collaborative issue resolution. The director in coca cola beverage Africa has a master's degree in international law and 15 years of experience in the public relations and communications field. The public relations and communication department head in multi-choice rather had a communication educational back ground and 8 years of experience in the sector.

A good and effective corporate communications staff must be able to identify and engage important stakeholders, secure compelling and influential media coverage, and more, according to Page (2021). Create and use CSR efforts to promote and increase executive visibility. Develop

thought leadership opportunities (research, speeches, and events) to promote and enhance executive visibility (Page, 2019, P. 618). The practitioners in this multinational companies listed almost similar roles. Manager-1: “our department roles include reputation management, issue management, internal communications (it is a big role because a culture you create in your company helps a lot), we have program called multi-choice talent factory that enables us to perform our corporate social responsibility (it is a scholarship type that invest in young and talented film makers), media relations and stakeholder engagement.

We address them by various communication channels”. Manager-2 “we play a role of corporate branding and managing media relation government relations, internal communication and conduct SWOT and PEST analysis to as part of advising the top management in decision making”. The result shows that the public relations departments of these multinational companies have experience of executing corporate social responsibility activities that can help in building reputation and trust.

The other important concept to be discussed here is ethics and integrity. While executing the above mentioned roles, the public relation practitioners in these multinational companies should consider ethics. The concept is also included in grunungs excellence theory principles, stating that ethics is important enough to constitute a stand-alone principle of excellence. When ethics is planned, trained, and implanted throughout the business, research shows that ethics is integrated

In the decision making of the most successful organizations' issues management, leading to higher levels of organizational effectiveness (Bowen, 2004, pp. 311-324). There for the researcher asked respondents how do they consider ethics and integrity while practicing public relations in their respective organizations? Answers from both the respondents show that these companies have ethical guidelines to be considered. Manager-1: “we have guidelines. There are some guidelines also forwarded from the head quarter. Even as a behavior in our day to day life we have a way of live called the multi-choice. It incorporates 8 behaviors and we should have to follow them. It simplifies life and makes all the staff to have a common practice. We also include ethical guidelines that fits Ethiopia“s context”. Manager-2: “the low of the country directs our activities. Not only government laws we consider social norms, The Company has five factories in five cities. People in these cities have different culture and life style. So the communication strategy we used in this place varies based on their context. On the other thing we do have

internal values. Our mission is refresh Ethiopia everyday and creating a better tomorrow for everyone. This mission cannot be successful without building trust with the community. To build trust we should practice pr ethically. In addition, to create a sense of belonging we work hard on our corporate social responsibilities. Water (providing underground water for societies), economic inclusion (economic support for women and adults) and world without waste (we collect that equals 100% of our plastic bottles wastage every year) are our pillars for corporate social responsibility". The practice implies that both the public relation departments consider ethics as a very important element and try to match their practice with ethical guidelines necessary.

4.2.3. Sub-theme: Organization of communication function

Under this theme, the public relations of multinational companies' public relations communication function are discussed. The status of the public relation team was asked to obtain the data. An integrated public relations role has access to and power at all levels and functions of the organization. It isn't isolated or boxed in, and it isn't encroached upon or gobbled up by marketing or other activities. Separate from other functions, public relations is a management function: To avoid marketing or legal departments interfering with communication management activities and obligations, it is vital that public relations be handled as a separate management function within the organization. The companies had integrated their PR departments in the way that they worked very closely with other departments but the structure of the integration differed between companies.

In the case of multi-choice Ethiopia the budget of the department is under marketing department. Even though the respondent claimed that the department is independent and works closely with other functions. Manager-1: "pr works closely with the managing director. For example when our director has an interview, in dealing with different issues, when communicating with government officials the pr department is there. We work very closely with the sales and marketing teams too. Because when the marketing team puts a billboard, when a sales person communicates something, when our managing director briefs a direction, they all have sort of content". One can easily understand that in every internal or external communication the pr is there to make sure the content is presented in a right tone that expresses integrity. And it asserts that the functions understand the department's importance. The department in Coca-Cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia is also independently structured and works with integration with other functions.

Manager-2: “it’s integral. It has its own budget. We manage all the corporate events. We closely work with departments like marketing for a better result but we are independent function”. The results discover the public relation department is independent form any structural influence and works together with other corporate functions to maximize organizational success.

4.2.4. Sub-theme: Public relations models

Under this sub-theme, the system and models that the public relations department applies are discussed. The aim was the interrelations of stake holders through open system theory and two way communication model. Key informants where asked which system better express their practice and the model they apply while communicating their key publics.

Concepts and premises from systems theory are used in the definition of public relations as well as the ideas of adjustment and adaptation (cutlip and center, 2013, P. 377). According to an open systems perspective, public relations must be selectively responsive to clearly defined publics that are mutually influenced or involved by business policies, procedures, and actions. Organizations that employ open systems public relations maintain their relationships by altering and adapting themselves and their audiences to constantly changing social, political, and economic environments, which has a significant impact on company success (cutlip and center, 2013, P.399).

The respondents also explain that they understand the term very well and they always try to adjust and adopt their public relations practice to the dynamic environment. Manager-1: “grand strategies and agendas forwarded from the head quarter. But Things here are a bit deferent. So there are two things. One we have to know the working environment very well, influencing the environment and build a strong reputation is the other task. Building smooth and tight relationship with stakeholders like government, which can have a direct influence in the market, is important”. Manager-2: “When we introduce new ideas and trends we should have to inform and persuade our stakeholders. We have a chance to bring good experiences from other countries too. After changing few things you can make it work for our context. In every practice of public relations having a deep understanding of culture and social life is a must”. Both key informants agreed that Ethiopia’s culture, social life and context is different from others and to be successful

having a good understanding and implementing strategies that can fit the context is a job must be done.

All the practitioners in the selected multinational companies are Ethiopian. As a global corporation, public relations may assist in achieving consistency in authentic and trustworthy communications. However, globalization is not only bringing benefits to these organizations. It increases the likelihood of unexpected effects, miscommunication, and faux pas. To avoid these risks, public relations practitioners must comprehend the significance of environmental variables in public relations as well as the importance of localization (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, P. 20). Respondents stressed that the fact practitioners are all Ethiopian helped a lot in minimizing the risk of miscommunication. Manager-2: “You can’t simply apply a communication strategy that works some ware else. Starting from the director our entire public relation practitioners are all Ethiopian and this helps us to understand the context”. Manager-1: “all the practitioners are Ethiopian, this helps to understand the culture and environmental factors to be considered, which result better practice”. Both departments believed here the context here in Ethiopia is a bit different and localization of content that can math this phenomena is very important.

The other concept discussed here is the communication model discussed in the review part, the public relation departments of selected multinational companies apply while communicating with their publics. The two-way symmetrical public relations model, as stated in the Grunings excellence model in communicating stakeholders, is critical for an excellent public relations department to employ because a dialogue-based approach has been shown to be more successful than any other in resolving disputes, preventing problems, and maintaining good relationships with the public. The organization and its constituents adjust to each other through this two-way communication paradigm in order to create mutual understanding and sustain a pleasant relationship (Gruning and hunt, 1984, p. 13).

Respondent from multi-choice argued that it is difficult to say their practice is fully two-way symmetrical. Manager-1: “There are things that we can’t change. For example service fee and packages the group provided. Sometimes Customers ask that to offer them only this specific channel or program. We can’t change anything here because this is forwarded from the head quarter and works for all 50 African countries that the multi-choice group is operating. Without these specific areas we consider our public’s interest and try to crate mutual understanding

between the organization and our stakeholders”. It seems here the department applies both the two way asymmetrical and two way symmetrical models. Because sometimes they tend to persuade only their customers and sometimes they try to create a common ground for both the organization and the public’s. The respondent from coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia rather states that they always try to mediate the management and stakeholders for a win win agreements. Manager-2: “as a public relations department we always try to create a common ground. Our communications tools are mostly two way”. The two way symmetrical models look prominent in their public relations practice.

Not only for communicating with external stakeholders, but also for developing teamwork, increasing employee morale and job satisfaction, and minimizing staff turnover, internal communication platforms based on discussion are essential. Issue research also allows problem solvers to identify issues early on, allowing them to be addressed before they become more serious (Bowen, 2004, p. 311-324). Both the respondents claimed that their department truly understands the importance of internal communication and made a continuous effort to it. For multi-choice creating organizational culture is important. By using social media and internal magazines they always try to engage their employees.

Manager-1: “We are now trying a new trend. We select volunteers from our employees as vibe managers and these volunteers listen to a heartbeat of our internal publics. They work very closely with us and this helps a lot for our useful internal communication”. The trend of vibe manager as a support for public relations practice was new for the researcher and it sounds that can help a lot for better engagement. The practice at coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia is more or less similar. The practitioners understand the value of internal communication. Manager-2: “our employees are our key publics. The companies” fate is based on them. We extensively use social media platforms like telegram groups to engage them very well. The communication is two-way”. The result here also shows that the internal public looks given a special attention. Social media platforms are also used as key tools for in communicating these publics in both companies.

4.2.5. Sub-theme: relationship to head quarter

To obtain answer for this phenomena interviewed key informants where asked the relationship between their department and the head quarter, the headquarters role in public relations practice and the efforts they made to localize and adapt contents to the context they operate.

Localization can simply be "do in Rome as Rome does," as stated in the review section. It refers to the offshore subsidy of multinational corporations' investment and business activity in host countries. Its primary purpose is to become familiar with the political, economic, and cultural contexts of the host country in order to implement a localization policy in business management, allowing the company to integrate into the host country and become a local company. This localization includes adapting materials to the host country's cultural and linguistic environment (Huang, 2019, p.6). In global public relations, a delicate balance must be maintained between standardization and localization. It takes a lot of thinking and effort to ensure that your procedures and communications are consistent while still reflecting local circumstances.

For multi-choice Ethiopia the relationship to the head quarter is very close. Manager 1: "We have a constant meeting. We send reports. There are directions forwarded from them. For example in internal communication there are key performance indicators forwarded from the head quarter. We modify them into Ethiopia's context and execute". It can be understood that the communication with the main office based in South Africa is excellent and constant. The headquarter role seems implementing grand strategies and interpreting this grand strategies into Ethiopian context is the public relations department role. On the side of coca cola beverage Africa, Ethiopia (CCBA) the word close is not enough to express the relationship they have to their head quarter. Manager 2: "We have their full support.

For example when we communicate higher officials like the prime minster they share us the international experience. They create content. Then we localize it to Ethiopia's context. I can personally communicate and ask for help to the head quarter public relation department. We do have that platform". The practice looks one and the same in concepts like support and room for localizing contents. Both key informants stated that the major role of head quarter revolves around formulating major strategies for all subsidizers and localizing to their specific content is their task.

4.3. Theme two: public relations challenges

As has been covered in chapter 2 many factors may affect a PR department and its outcomes. The factors are identified by asking key informants what are the major challenges they face as a multinational companies and how those factors affect their practice. The main factors then are discussed here under.

4.3.1. Sub-theme: Public relations challenges at multi-choice Ethiopia

The main factor affecting multi-choice Ethiopia was the sector in which they operate, and just as Tench & Yeomans claims, the sector will determine what programs are better suited for a particular market (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 24). This concept clearly implies that the type of sector that the company is operating matters on how to communicate and what the priority of the company should be. The sport and entertainment industry is not a new phenomenon by its self. But the company introduced a new concept of pay TV access. This raises a challenge for public relations practitioners informing and persuading customers with the new practice. Manager-1: “The trend is new in Ethiopia, people access TV for free. It was a tough challenge to introduce the business and persuade people to pay for TV service”. From the sector perspective a new competitor from France (canal plus) also joins the market in Ethiopia. The respondent from multi-choice considered this as both a “challenge and opportunity”. Manager-1: “the coming of a competitor it is a challenge because the company come here to compete and share the market. On the other side they will help us to aware the society paying for television service is a well-known trend globally the coming of competitor also makes you strong and motivates you to work hard”. Being the practice of paying license fee for television and the new competitor in the industry mentioned as a challenge in the public relations practice.

In the literature part Page (2019) explores the basic formula for successful public relations in multinational corporations. The more positive news the corporate PR team generates and the better it manages unfavorable stories (e.g., difficulties and crisis situations), the more likely the company will boost sales and revenue, engage stakeholders, and successfully service the market (Page, 2019, P. 618). This may not be simple as it is said. It needs the public relations team to be well equipped with qualified personals in all roles. Respondent from multi-choice states that lack of human resource as a challenge for the team. Manager-1: “one senior manager (me) was

managing all the roles of public relations department. We recently add one practitioner but still in contrast with the size of the company and the duties we perform additional workforce is mandatory to execute all our duties in a better way". The result tells that lack of public relations practitioners in all roles has its effect on the performance and strategic importance of the team.

4.3.2. Sub-theme: Public relations challenges at Coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA)

Level of economic development of a country was claimed as a challenge in coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia. The economic prosperity of a country, which is inextricably related to its political structure, provides opportunities as well as obstacles for public relations specialists (Sriramesh and Vercic, 2003, P. 6). The concept becomes a challenge for coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia public relation practitioners. The respondent expresses the challenge as "there is a shortage of hard currency" (manager-2). The shortage of hard currency is a problem as a country. The public relations practitioners then expected to engage officials for favorable response. Manager-2: "We need to have smooth relationship to the government officials for a positive response". That is why Lattimore (2012) stressed that Government today serves as a stimulant, referee, rule maker, engineer, and pursuer of social goals, as well as a defender, provider, customer, and controller. Businesses must be prepared to engage with the government in any of these capacities in order to be successful (Lattimore, 2012, P. 310). In addition to the hard currency the respondent raised another government related challenge. "Business related Policies formulated regularly" says manager-2. Every organization can profit from having connections with legislators at both the local and national levels (Lattimore, 2012, P. 310). Respondent from coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia states that the company tries to build smooth relationships with policy legislators for a "favorable regulations". On the other hand once a policy or regulation is formulated "being resilience and adapting oneself" with the new policy is the assignment.

The political stability in Ethiopia was also mentioned as a challenge here. "There are security problems" manager-2. To win this problem, good environmental relations was taken as problem Solving mechanism. Manager-2: "To resolve the security issues we engage stakeholder's very well. In all cities where our factories located, we execute our corporate social responsibility". Corporate concern for the environment and sustainable resources is very important part of

corporate responsibility (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 302). The companies' social responsibility pillars are also related to this concept. Manager-2: "Water is our main raw material for production. To replace it we plant trees on large amount of land every year. We engage economically excluded women and adults by supporting them to succeed their dream. To keep the environment clean we collect 100% bottle of our production to recycle".

4.4. Theme three: ways of improvement

The focus area under this theme was to find the ways of improvement for better public relations practice in the selected multinational companies. To obtain the necessary data for the focus point the question, what should be done for improving public relation practice in your organizations? Respondent's answers were discussed here under.

4.4.1. Sub-theme: ways of improvement for multi-choice Ethiopia PR

Working more on internal communication and engaging the employees is the first way of improvement for multi-choice Ethiopia public relations department. Employees are the core public for any profit-making firm. They have been referred to as "ambassadors" for their organizations since they represent the company to a vast circle of family, relatives, and friends (Wilcox et al, 2014, P. 301). The department understands this value and stated improving internal communication and creating a sense of family between the staff as a key for success. Manager-1: "working more on the organizational culture is important. Because it helps all employees to walk on the same line. This contributes a lot on the public relations practice because every employee will have a role in image building and issue management".

Public relation assists corporations in dealing with complex environment, and it is critical that these efforts complement the entire business mission and objectives of the organization (Lattimore, 2012, P.352). To perform the given roles and help the organization to be successful there is no doubt that the department should be structured with adequate human resource with all the necessary skills needed. Shortage of staff of the public relations team (at present only two Employees) is reported to have mitigated the efficiency of the departments function and "adding public relations practitioners" as a very critical assignment.

As clearly stated in the excellence theory principles it is critical that public relations be treated as a separate management function inside the organization in order to prevent marketing or legal departments from interfering with the functions and duties of communication management (Vercic, Grunig, and Grunig 1996, p. 58). To prevent the above interference from this departments being independently structured and having owns budget is fundamental. The respondent here stated that the budget of multi-choices public relations team is under marketing department. The key informant added that having budget independence is job must be done for a better practice manager-1: “The pr budget is also under the marketing department. Budget independence is very important”. This working practice mismatched with the excellence theory and that may result the independence and freedom of the team at risk.

4.4.2. Sub-theme: ways of improvement for coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA)

To improve the public relations practice and help the organization to achieve its goals working what they are practicing now with full capacity and commitment was mentioned one way.

Respondent also rose strengthening the departments’ effort of executing corporate social responsibility practices is also important for a better practice. Multinational profit making organizations carry out their corporate social responsibilities to show the human face of their business by protecting the environment and the safety of people living in the surrounding of their plants. As listed above in the public relations challenges them one of the challenge in coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia was security issues duo to the political instability. The fundamental to any effective community relations program is positive, socially responsible activity on the part of the organization to serve the community.

Good community relations help the organization get what it needs from the community and provide what the community expects (Lattimore, 2012, P. 235). To include this community relations the public relations team believes that strengthening their corporate societal activities are important. “It will be better if we can perform better in practicing our corporate social responsibilities. This is the tool that helps us to create a sense of ownership to the community” said manager-2.

For a batter public relations practice the third thing the respondent mentioned was the need for public relation practitioners equipped with knowledge of Ethiopian context and practice. The

excellence theory of public relations also stated that having a varied workforce in all areas is vital for public relations departments to ensure that choices and messaging reflect multiple points of view (Vercic, Grunig, and Grunig 1996, p. 58). The concern of the respondent here is “we need localized content” that matches the context on the ground. Manager-2: “As a corporate or even as a country its better if we have public relations professionals that equipped with all the knowledge of Ethiopians phenomena. We all learn the international theories and content at university. When we try to implement this contents some of them works and some of the not. We need localized content for a better practice”. The point the respondent make is a topic to be further studied. But at list in their practice learning international theories and concepts of public relations and implementing the concepts while practicing the profession in Ethiopia stated as a challenge.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents conclusion that can be drawn from the research findings and recommendations that the researcher suggests for future improvement and efficacy of public relations in the multinational companies under study.

5.1. Conclusion

This research paper has focused on the public relations practice and challenges of multinational companies in the case of multi-choice Ethiopia and coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia. It explores how public relations is being practiced and the challenges this multinational companies facing in practicing public relations.

In searching for how public relations is being practiced in the multinational companies under study, the open system theory, excellence theory principles and other related literatures are used as a frame work. Then result shows that the practice in these companies is not that much far from the principles with few things to be resolved for the future. As highlighted in the excellence model the inclusion of public relations in the strategic management function enables more participatory decision making, better organizational policy from the public's standpoint, and more long-lasting decisions.

The research shows that the public relations teams in both companies are included in the top management. The other concept of excellence theory dictates that In order to advise on topics involving publics, values, and ethical decision making, the public relations function must be allowed to report directly to the CEO. The practice in coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia completely matches this concept. The public affairs, communication and sustainability department directly reports to the CEO. On the other hand, the public relation and communication department of multi-choice reports to the public affairs and regulatory.

The excellence theory dictates that, to be a successful organization, the public relations department should always be led by a professional public relations manager, rather than someone who is just good at writing. The practice in coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA) is aligned with this principle. The director has a managerial role of managing the department's

staff, conducting of research to identify opportunities and challenges and advising the management regularly. The phenomenon in multi-choice is a bit deferent. Both the public relations managerial and technical roles are performed by one senior practitioner and one recently hired practitioner. As shown in the review a strong and effective corporate communications team must be able to Identify and engage key stakeholders, secure powerful and impactful media coverage, Develop thought leadership opportunities (research, speeches, and events) to promote and enhance executive visibility and Promote the corporate brand and enhance reputation by creating and leveraging CSR initiatives (Page, 2019, P. 618). The practitioners in this multinational companies listed almost similar roles. Ethics is also important enough to constitute a stand-alone principle of excellence. Answers from both the respondents show that these companies have ethical guidelines to be considered.

It is critical that public relations be treated as a separate management function inside the organization. In the case of multi-choice Ethiopia the budget of the department is under marketing department. The department in coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia is independently structured and works with integration with other functions. Organizations that use open systems public relations keep their relationships going by shifting and adapting themselves and their audiences to ever-changing social, political, and economic settings and this has a great impact on company success. Both the public relations departments express they made continuous effort to adjust and adopt their public relations practice to the dynamic environment. It is critical for an excellent public relations department to employ the two-way symmetrical public relations model.

Respondent from multi-choice argued that it is difficult to say their practice is fully two-way symmetrical. The respondent from coca cola beverage Africa- Ethiopia sates that they always try to mediate the management and stakeholders for a win win agreements.

The other point discussed was the relationship between their public relations department and the head quarter, the headquarters role in public relations practice was also discussed. The result shows that both companies have close relation with the headquarters. The role of the headquarters revolves around making grand strategies and the room for localization in to Ethiopia's context is available for public relations departments in both companies.

The second research question discussed was the major challenges public relations practice in the multinational companies under study. The main factor affecting multi-choice Ethiopia was the sector in which they operate. The company introduced a new concept of pay TV access. This raises a challenge for public relations practitioners informing and persuading customers with the new practice. The new it needs the public relations team to be well equipped with qualified personals in all roles. Respondent from multi-choice states that lack of human resource as second challenge for the team. Level of economic development of a country that brings the shortage of hard currency was claimed as a challenge in coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia. The public relations practitioners then expected to engage officials for favorable response. The research also investigates another government related challenge of frequently changed business related policies this needs extensive effort of public relations to build smooth relationship with legislators and once a policy or regulation is formulated “being resilience and adapting oneself” with the new policy is the assignment of the department. The political stability in Ethiopia was also mentioned as a challenge here as a security problems. To resolve the issues the public relations expected to engage all stakeholders to create a sense of ownership.

The third research objective was to find ways of improvement for the public relations departments in these two multinational companies.

Working more on internal communication and engaging the employees was pointed as the first way of improvement for multi-choice Ethiopia public relations department. Shortage of human power of the public relations team (at present only two employees) is reported to have mitigated the efficiency of the departments function and adding public relations practitioners as a very critical assignment. The budget of multi-choices public relations team is under marketing department and recommended that having budget independence is job must be done for a better practice.

To improve the public relations practice and help the organization to achieve its goals working what they are practicing now with full capacity and commitment was mentioned as one way. Strengthening the departments“ effort of executing corporate social responsibility practices was also commented as an important area for a better practice. For excellent public relations practice the third thing the mentioned was the need for public relation practitioners equipped with knowledge of Ethiopian context and practice.

5.2.Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are suggested by the researcher.

- The public relations departments of multi-choice Ethiopia should hire additional manpower to its team. This will ensure efficient practice to achieve objectives and goals set by the organization.
- The public relations department of multi- choice Ethiopia should implement fine strategies to well aware customers and potential customers the new trend of paying for television service.
- The public relations departments of multi-choice Ethiopia should be structured as independent management function including budget independence.
- The public relations departments of multi-choice Ethiopia should directly report to the CEO for a better decision making.
- The public relations departments of multi- choice Ethiopia must invest more on its corporate social responsibilities in addition to investing only on film creators since the challenges in developing countries are enormous.
- The public relations department of coca cola beverage Africa should invest more in its government relations efforts for favorable policies and hard currency issues
- The public relations department of coca cola beverage Africa must invest more on its corporate social responsibilities to mitigate the security problems.
- The public relations departments in both companies should strengthen their efforts of localizing contents forwarded from their respective head quarters for better understanding.

5.3.Future Research

In general as the international and global presence of companies increase the need for future research into differences and similarities in PR on an international level will become more sought after. Based on the theoretical knowledge the authors have acquired there seems to be a need for more research across the fields in order to strengthen the integration and cooperation between company departments. Based on the answers of different structuring of PR departments in this study it seems the area of PR structures within companies is another interesting topic. In doing this research the researcher also understand that the public relation education given in the university verses the context in Ethiopia as a search for a practitioners that equipped the localized content is an interesting point to research further.

Reference

- Alan, R. and Ashli, S. (2009). *Global public relations: spanning borders, spanning cultures* (1stEd.). Taylor & Francis
- Argenti, A. (2009). *Corporate communication* (5th Ed.). McGraw-Hill
- Bowen, s. (2014). *expansion of ethics as tenth generic the principles of public relations excellence: a Kantian theory and model for managing ethical issues. Journal of public relationsresearch*,16(1), 65-92
- Carr, F. (2019) *Defining Public Relations in the 21st Century, Landing Page OptimizationBook*, April 14, www.landingpageoptimizationbook.com
- Carroll, A. B. (1979). *A three-dimensional conceptual model of corporate performance*. *Academy of Management Review*, 4, 497–505.
- Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach* (3rd Ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Cutlip and Center. (2013). *Effective Public Relations* (11th Ed.). Edwards Brothers
- Daymon C. and Holloway I. (2001). *Qualitative research methods in public relations and marketing communications* (2nd Ed.). Rutledge.
- Eberechukwu P. & Evelina H. (2014). *Public Relations Management in Large & Innovative Multinational Corporations – A qualitative & comparative study of Shell, Coloplast and Company A*. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:732291/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Fisher, C. (2007). *Researching and Writing a Dissertation: A Guidebook for Business Students* (2nd Ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Fisher, C. (2010). *Researching and writing a dissertation: An essential guide for business students* (3rd Ed.). Harlow: Pearson education LTD.
- Gay, L. R. (1992). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Merrill/Macmillan.
- Grining, j. (1992) *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (1st Ed.). Rutledge
- Grunig, J. (2006) *Excellence Theory in Public Relations. Encyclopedia-of-communication* 9781405131995_chapter_399. https://kdpaine.blogs.com/files/encylopedia-of-communication-9781405131995_chapter_399.pdf

- Gruning, j. and hunt, t. (1984). *Managing public relations* (1st ed.) cbs collage
- Hon, L. C., & Brunner, B. (2000). *Diversity issues and Public Relations. Public Relations Research*, 12:4,309-340.
- Johnston, K. (2019) *Challenges of Public Relations in the 21st Century*, Chron, March 05,www.smallbusiness.chron.com
- Lattimore, baskin,heimen and toth (2012). *Public relations: the profession and the practice* (4thEd.). McGraw-Hill
- Marshall, M. N. (1996). *Sampling for qualitative research. Institute of General Practice,University of Exeter*. Exeter: Family Practice.
- Page, J. (2019) *Introduction to strategic public relations: digital, global, and sociallyresponsible communication* (1st Ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Rensburg, R.S. 2002. *The bled manifesto on public relations: An African perspective and vision.Paper presented at the 9th International public relations research symposium, Lake Bled, Slovenia, 4-9 July 2002*
- Seitel, P. (2017). *The Practice of Public Relations* (1st Ed.). Pearson Education Limited
- Sekaran, U. (2003). *Research Methods For Business: A Skill Building Approach* (4th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Solomon A. (2000). *Public Relations in Ethiopia: Problems and Tendencies*. Ministry ofTourism and Culture
- Sriramesh, K. Vercic, D. (2003). *The global public relations handbooks: theory, research, andpractice* (1st Ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Tench, R. and Yeomans, L. (2006). *Exploring Public Relations* (1ST Ed.). Pearson Education Limited
- Tesfaye Bezabih Gezihagne“*The Practice and Challenges of Public Relations in Ethiopia: The Case of Government Universities*”. *Journal of Advertising and Public Relations*, 1(2), 2018, pp. 27-37.
- Theaker, A. (2004). *The public relations handbook* (2nd Ed.). Taylor & Francis
- Tom, K.(2021). *Public relations* (2nd Ed.). Oxford University Press
- Wenluo Huang(2019). *The localization strategy of multinational corporations*.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336603036_The_localization_strategy_of_Multi_natio_nal_Corporations
- Wilcox, Cameron and Reber. (2015). *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics* (11th

ed.).Pearson

- Wilcox, Cameron, Reber and Shin (2014). *THINK Public Relations* (2nd Ed.). Pearson Education Limited
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case Study Research Design and Methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks,CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Appendix A– Consent Form – for Participation in public relations Research

Title of the Study: Public relations practice and challenges in multinational Company's in Ethiopia: the case of multi-choice Ethiopia and coca cola beverage Africa, Ethiopia.

Researcher: Yosef Shumye, Master of Arts (public relations and strategic communication) Candidate, Addis Ababa University

Research advisor: Tadesse Zinaye, Assistance Professor, school of journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University

Invitation to Participate: As part of yosef shumye's master's thesis, I am invited to engage in the above-mentioned research study, which is being done by yosef shumye and advised by Assistant Professor Tadesse Zinaye.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to examine the Public relations practice and challenges in multinational Company's in Ethiopia.

Participation: My involvement will consist of an hour-long audio-recorded interview. The interview will take place at a time and location that is convenient for me as the participant. If I feel it is necessary, I will be given the option to clarify my responses and participation in the days following the interview.

Risks: My participation in this study will necessitate the disclosure of some personal information, including my name, position, background, employer, and contact information. By participating in this investigation, I consent to the publication of this research study revealing my identity and the identity of the organization for which I work.

Benefits: My involvement in this study will assist multinational corporations in better addressing their communication difficulties.

Confidentiality: I have been assured by the researcher that the information I will share will only be used for this research, and that only my name, relevant job experience background, and the identification of the organization and its procedures will be disclosed within the research. The researcher has assured me that any contact information I provide would be kept secret and stored on the researcher's password-protected computer. Only he and his research supervisor will have access to a hard copy of this document, which will be maintained in a secured cabinet at the department of communication.

Compensation: This study does not appear to be compensated, as far as I am aware. To

participate in the study, the researcher has guaranteed me that I will not be asked to pay any money (personal or organizational).

Voluntary Participation: I understand that I will not be penalized if I choose to withdraw from the study at any point and/or decline to answer any questions concerning my organization. If I opt to withdraw, all data collected up to that point will be destroyed and disposed of according to my wishes.

Acceptance: I accept to take part in Yosef Shumye's above-mentioned research project. I can contact the researcher or his supervisor if I have any questions about the study.

The consent form has two copies: one for the participant and one for the researcher.

Participant's signature: Date:

Researcher's signature: Date

Appendix B – Interview questions Qualitative interview questions

- 1) Where is the structural location of public relations team in your?
- 2) Do your public relations department involve in the strategic management function?
- 3) For whom in your organization the public relations department report to?
- 4) What is the status of your public relations team? Is it integral, isolated or subsumed by marketing or other functions?
- 5) What is the status of the public relations head? Are they manager or technician level?
- 6) Which model of public relations your public relations mostly apply?
- 7) How do you consider ethics and integrity while practicing public relations in your organizations?
- 8) How your public relations departments adopt and adjust to changes in the political, economic, and social settings the organization operate?
- 9) Which system better express your organization? Closed /open? How?
- 10) What are the major challenges in the public relations practice of your organization?
- 11) How the above factors influence your public relations practice?
- 12) How do you describe the major role of public relations of your department/Directorate?
- 13) How public relations experts are assigned in your institution?
- 14) What is the perception of the top management of your organization regarding public relations?
- 15) How do you express the relationship between Head quarter and Subsidiaries and the Communication Flow at your Company?
- 16) What is the role of the headquarters in the process public relations practice?
- 17) How do pr department communicate with key publics like employee, customers, investors, media and government?
- 18) What should be done for improving public relations practices of your institution?

Appendix C – Coding Reference Sheet

Theme One: The Public Relations practice

This theme represents responses that demonstrated the public relations practice.

- **Sub-theme:** empowerment of public relations function:-This sub-theme represents the effort that these organizations made to empower public relations department as a critical management function.
- **Sub-theme:** communicator role: - This sub-theme focused on addressing the public relations department role.
- **Sub-theme:** Organization of communication function:- Under this theme, the public relations of this multinational companies public relations communication function are discussed.
- **Sub-theme:** Public relations models: - Under this sub-theme, the system and models that the public relations department applies are discussed.

Theme two: relationship to head quarter

The relationship between the department and the head quarter with the headquarters role in public relations practice was discussed here.

Theme three: public relations challenges

The main public relations challenges are entertained under these them.

- **Sub-theme:** Public relations challenges at multi-choice Ethiopia :-
- **Sub-theme:** Public relations challenges at Coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA):-

Theme four: ways of improvement

The focus area under this theme was to find the ways of improvement for better public relations practice in the selected multinational companies.

- **Sub-theme:** ways of improvement for multi-choice Ethiopia PR
- **Sub-theme:** ways of improvement for coca cola beverage Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA)