

*Addis Ababa
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**CRITICAL ANALYSES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES IN
KOTBE METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

**ARESEARCH SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION**

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION ADDISABABA
UNIVERSITY**

BY TEFAYE BOGALE

June, 2020

ADDIS ABABA

**ADDISABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
COMMUNICATION**

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KOTOBE METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

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A thesis Submitted to the School of Journalism and Communication in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for an MA Degree in Public Relations and
Strategic Communication

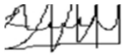
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Acknowledgment

I would like to provide my heartfelt thanks to God, for giving me his blessing and endurance to finish my study.

My next heartfelt gratitude addresses my advisor Dr. AgaredetchJemanehi who has closely followed up my work with helpful and constructive feedback to enrich my work. This study has been completed and reached here because of my advisers help and great patience.

My great thanks also goes to my family, Belaynesh Balema my wife, Helina Tesfaye and Meklit Tesfaye my children for your dedication to help me in any of your cost.

Then, I would also like to thank all the staff member of AAHAPCO for their encouraging me to have energy and motivation to complete my work.

Lastly, I am indebted to all KMPU corporate communication staffs, student council committees and department heads who took parts in this research sharing their opinions and knowledge unreservedly without which the completion of this thesis work would have been impossible.

Abstract

The fields of public relations have dramatically grown to build the relationships between an organization and its key publics through effective communication. The study is conducted to assess the practice and challenge of Public Relations in Kotebe Metropolitan University. The research used mixed approaches which enable the researchers to use both qualitative and quantitative data and analysis. The main subject of the study was PR practitioners, students and department heads. The researcher used interview, FGD and questionnaire as data collecting tool from the above subjects. The findings of the study described that Public Relations practice in the study area is in a difficult condition. The directorate is not professionally and structurally organized, lack of skilled and professional human power. The PR practitioners have not well understood and practiced the PR strategy. Even the PR tools have not been used properly only focused on leaflet and notice board. The role of PR is misunderstood; it is considered stage facilitator and meeting organizer. Lack of attention from concerned bodies, lack of trust from stakeholders, lack of PR strategic framework and focused on routine works took the first line as challenges for the public relations practice. Therefore the researcher has recommended that PR department should be well organized and strengthened, the department should be headed by a public relations professional, PR department should have clear & defined roles, set clear and well defined strategic framework. Establish and maintain good relationship with domestic and international media so as to reach internal public as well as stakeholders. It is also recommended that PR department should be empowered through engaging in decision making.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAHAPCO	Addis Ababa HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office
AAU	Addis Ababa University
BSC	Balanced Score Card
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EFDR	Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HSIU	Haile Selassie I University
KMU	Kotebe Metropolitan University
PR	Public Relations
RACE	Research Action Communication and Evaluation

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Back ground of the Study

Public relations is the primary communications tool used by many institutions to promote the university brand. Many researches had been conducted on public relations practices in higher education. Research has been conducted on “the practice and challenges of PR in Ethiopia: The Case of Government Universities” (Tesfaye, 2018).

Public Relations practices ensure their efforts support and contribute to overall organizational goals and objectives engage in an ongoing communication effort with all the constituencies that matter to the organization. Internally that could include employees, members, students, volunteers.

In public organizations have reliable information, accurate and timely, considering the purpose and structure is an organization's greatest asset and survival of an organization depends on having relationship between the organization and stakeholders.

However, the researcher was interested conducting the study on KMU since the study area has expanded its mission and vision. So how are the practices of PR in the university?

Kotebe Metropolitan University (KMU), the former Kotebe College of Teacher Education, was set up within the Haile Selassie I University (HSIU) in 1959 under the name College. In 1969, the College left HSIU and went to the present Addis Ababa technical and Vocational College where it came to be known as Teacher Training College. Later, the name was changed to Addis Ababa College of Teacher Education. It was in 1976 that the College transferred to the present site and got its name, Kotebe College of Teacher Education. Upon the approval of the

Commission of Higher Education, the college launched degree program in six areas of study: English Language and Literature, Ethiopian Languages and Literature, Geography, History, Health and Physical Education and Mathematics in 1989.

In 1997, the Addis Ababa City Administration took over the responsibility of running the college from the Ministry of Education. Following the transfer of the college to Addis Ababa City Administration, degree programs except the Department of Health & Physical Education were discontinued. After 9 years of relentless effort made by the college management, the college community, former graduates of the college and other stakeholders, the degree program was re-launched in 2007 in affiliation with Bahr Dar University. Degree program students were assigned in 10 departments namely Biology, Chemistry, Civics and Ethical Education, English Language and Literature, Ethiopian Languages and Literature, Sport Science, History, Geography, Mathematics and Physics. It also ran a diploma program in linear and cluster modalities.

In addition to these, the college ran a one year certificate program in preschool Teacher Education. The year 2014 ushered a major landmark in the history of Kotebe College of Teacher Education when Addis Ababa City Government granted it the status of a University College by the decree Addis Ababa City Government Regulation Number 56/2013. Another milestone in the history of the institution occurred on December 15, 2016 when Kotebe University College is upgraded to a full-fledged Metropolitan University by the Addis Ababa City Government. Following this, KMU is restructured into 8 units. These are: College of Education and Behavioral Studies, College of Natural and Computational Sciences, Faculty of Languages and Humanities, Faculty of Urban Development Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Business and Economics, Sport Academy and Science and Technology innovation Center. At present, the University is running certificate, diploma, undergraduate and graduate studies in its

regular, evening , extension and summer programs. The number of KMU staff accounts about 660 of which 272 represents the academic staff. The University envisions to be a widely recognized Metropolitan University in Africa that works for sustainable urban development. The mission of KMU is to contribute to the sustainable development of Addis Ababa City in particular and the country in general by producing competent and responsible citizens at all levels through need based curricula; conducting problem solving research; adapting and transferring technology; and providing demand driven community service.

Currently, the only Metropolitan University in Ethiopia, which is making efforts in order to pace with all rounded teaching and learning programs tuned to the demand of the City per se. In the fast changing global economic environment, Kotebe Metropolitan University has plans to strive to bring urban per se. With deep commitment to and leadership in community engagement should make a difference in the lives of people in Addis Ababa City in particular and the country in general. The motto “Committed to Sustainable Urban Development” represents our collective aim to achieve world-class results in all our pursuits. Therefore PR practice in KMU should be coincide with the current status , vision and mission of the University.

1.2. Statement of Problems

Public relations practice and position in organizations can greatly enhance the overall effectiveness of an organization. In Excellence study, that public relations can provide the value to an organization by identifying the strategic stake holders. In spite of this, public relations practitioners have continued to struggle to define the role and place of PR in organizations and its contribution to the organizational performance (Grunig, 2002).

Public Relations required professional training, ethics and its own discipline, it is not considered as any profession in some Government office. On the other hand PR practices limited on

organizing meeting, writing minutes and looking after traveling process of officials (Zeruhn, 2014).

In general understanding the practices focused on internal public. Therefore key stakeholders are neglected

also stated lack of transparency and poor understanding of PR roles and non-recognition of PR as management function are challenges of PR practice to achieve organizational goals (Shimelis,2017). Whereas internal and external communication are crucial for having well organized service delivery and developing sense of ownership among customers (Teshome,2017).

Globally, the vital roles public relations play in educational institutions has-been underscored. Many universities have set up PR units for the purpose of enhancing communication with their public. Universities generally look to public relations units to manage crises, boost rankings, increase donations, create sustainable relationship, enhance involvement of stake holders. However, the practice of public relations at most universities has been limited to a single office concerned primarily with managing institutional reputation and focus on internal communication(Grillis,1997) .

Sustainable PRs practices will be reflected in the quality of the relationships that companies establish with their key stakeholders. However, weak relationship of key stake holders is the result of poor external PR practices (Fombrun,1999).

Mutual understanding of both the service deliver and its receiver indicated that there was low mutual understanding with their corporation. The corporate communications officer indicated that the practice of the corporation in implementing two-way communications was not efficient.

This implies the effort of the PRs department in developing relationship between two parties was not effective(Minas,2009).

PR practices limited on organizing meeting, writing minutes and looking after traveling process of officials.This study therefore, attempts to critically assess the practices of PR in the study area.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The overall objective of this study is to critically analyses tools, strategies , challenges and opportunities of Public Relations practice in Kotebe Metropolitan University.

1.3. 1. Specific Objectifies

1. To explore the public relations tools and practices in Kotebe metropolitan university.
2. To identify the challenges and opportunities of public relations practices in Kotebe Metropolitan University
3. To identify the public relations strategies used by Kotebe Metropolitan University.

1.4. Research Questions

Based on the above specific objectives, the following research questions are formulated.

1. What are the public relations tools used in Kotebe Metropolitan University?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities of public relations practice in Kotebe Metropolitan University?
3. What are the public relations strategies used by Kotebe Metropolitan University?

1.5. Significance of the study

This study analyses the practice of public relations. The study benefits the university to find out effective strategies and channels of public relations to enhance stake holder involvement and develop sustainable relationship.

The study will contribute to academicians for future research and theory building. It also provides clues to strengthen Public Relations practices and also offers input for researchers. It is significant for the society to have platforms enhancing involvement in the University.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is on Kotebe Metropolitan University. It is the only University works for Sustainable Urban Development of Addis Ababa City and the country at large. One must also mention the fact that by choosing one single location the researcher may have the opportunity of a detailed analysis.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

The issue of study needs to address from various perspectives. To come up with more comprehensive outlook and wide application it needs to conduct in many places and contexts. But due to time and resource constraints, the research was limited to collect data from only PR practitioners, student's council committee and department heads.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter covers background of the study, statement of the problem, objective, significance and scope of the study. Chapter two focused on related literature review and theoretical frameworks. Relevant books, publications, articles, researches and other related literatures are reviewed. The third chapter covers the theoretical framework and method used in the study. Besides data analyses and interpretation are conducted under chapter four. Research findings, recommendation and conclusion of the study are also presented under chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

RELEATED LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

2.1. Introduction

The literature review forms the foundation of research project to establish a rationale for study and show why research question is important. This means that the need to tell the reader about the current state of knowledge in the field, pointing out where existing knowledge is incomplete or inadequate and how the research might either fill the gap or offer an alternative perspective that will improve understanding of the topic (Daymon, 2011).

2.2. History of public relations

2.2.1. Global public relations

The history of public relations may go back to the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, but the concept of public relations as we know it today is different across the world. A2007 stated by Mckie and Munshi PR is now a global occupation and implemented in many corners of the world in different ways. However, written histories of PR reflect the dominance of the United States on the academic field of public relations and tend to focus on its origins in the United States and Britain rather than in other countries (as cited in Yeomans, 2009).

Public relations is commonly considered to be a 'young profession' a type of communications byproduct of twentieth-century capitalism. However, the techniques of organized and persuasive communication are in fact as old as human societies (Stock, 2007).

Public Relations practice has been widely recognized as an essential part of modern life, and has made significant contribution in various sectors including government agencies globally. On the other hand, there is very little empirical evidence on the practice of PRs in the world (Vercic, 2009). This shows us how PRs body of knowledge is young so far. Even though PRs is considered as a young discipline in the world the practices of public relations related to a day to

day activities of human being and its environment. In addition to that the global public relations practices depends on the key factors of political system of the nation, level of economic development of the country, cultural diversity, activism and media industry (Vercic,2009). These are the infrastructure inter related with public relations practices. Therefore, however PRs is young or old in its history the practice in global regions vary because of the infrastructure .Despite the cultural, economic, and historical differences, public relations has evolved in remarkably similar ways in many countries. The profession began in both countries when journalists began to conduct media relations on behalf of organizations.

2.2.2. Public relations in Ethiopia

Public relations is crucial for country like Ethiopia which entertains diversified culture, tourism and investment, that focus on the practice of PRs. According to the World Economy Forum the higher the ACI, the easier it is to plan, manage and deliver PR and corporate communications in that country, and the more effective the disciplines can be in delivering specific messages to specific target audiences. The higher the ACI, the higher the potential “Return on Investment” in communications activity. This report stated that Ethiopia is the least country. Egypt and Kenya are the highest respectively.

According to EFDR government communication affairs office establishment regulation ensuring the responsiveness of the government to the need of public through maintaining an efficient and effective communication and information system to serve the public sectors(2009,No. 13) .

A2006 Ethiopia Federal Government Office Public Relation Instruction and Structural Manual stated the role of public relations in Ethiopia to create and maintain mutual understanding among the nation nationality and people of the country and building image to attract tourism and investment (as cited in Hayman, 2018).

Even though public relation association in Ethiopia is very recent and in mature, public relation activities in Ethiopian context is established on legal framework and followed by strategic and guiding manual.

2.2.3. Public relations in organization

Public relations is practiced in many different organizational contexts, from in-house government or public affairs roles to corporate communications roles in small, medium, large, listed, and not-for-profit organizations. Through their communication planning and management, public relations practitioners build and enhance organizational reputation and build and maintain relationships that are important to the organization and its goals. Most public relations departments are responsible for monitoring and responding to changes in the external environment, including issues, expectations, relationships, and reputation, and at the same time, also contribute to maintaining effective working environments within the organization through employee communication. Effective employee communication explains organizational priorities and shares organizational information about what is happening so that employees understand and accept the need for change and commit their efforts and ideas to helping the organization achieve its mission and goals.

In some organizations, the public relations department is also known as the corporate communication department. Corporate communication offers a framework and vocabulary for the effective coordination of all means of communications with the overall purpose of establishing and maintaining favorable reputations with stakeholder groups upon which the organization is dependent (Cornelissen, 2004).

2.3. Conceptual and professional definitions of Public Relations

Public Relations has still not universally agreed definitions. Academicians, practitioners and PR associations have stated PR definitions in some context differently.

2.3.1. Academic definitions of public relations

"Public Relations are a management function which tabulates public attitudes, defines the policies, procedures and interest of an organization followed by executing a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance." It is one of the earliest definitions which was coined by (Bernays, 1923).

Public relations was defined by Harlow a 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 opinions; 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 ethical communication techniques as its principal tools (as cited in Tench, 2009). This definition contains overall goals, processes and practices of PR, and positions the profession firmly within the organization, as a management role.

Grunig and Hunt defined public relations is the management of communication between an organization and its publics. On the other hand public relations was defined as a tool to influence the behavior of groups of people in relation to each other. It also defined as public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends (as cited in Tench, 2009).

2.3.2. Practitioners definitions of public relations

The field of public relations has developed from a practice-orientation to a scientific field. Practitioners define Public Relations based on the reality on the ground as well as the day to day interaction of business and social relation. Therefore, the definition of PR has evolved from merely generating publicity, building images and focusing on good relationships.

Regarding to purpose of PR in the organization reflects from the definition of it, from the definition of academician, PR practitioners and PR association. Therefore, according to one of the practitioner the purpose of PR is to understand society and influence top management's decisions regarding organizational behaviour and decisions in order to become a trustworthy corporate citizen in the eyes of society (Heerden, 2004).

On the other hand, the other PR practitioner stated that public relations is establishing and maintaining favorable reputations with stakeholders upon which the organization is dependent (Cornelissen, 2004).

2.3.3. Public relations Associations definitions of PR

The First World Assembly of Public Relations Associations in Mexico Public relations is defined as the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizational leaders, and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organization and the public interest (as cited in Tench , 2009). In the same source Public Relations Society of America also defined as public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other.

Public relations was defined as the discipline which looks after reputation, with the aim of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behavior. It is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics (as cited in Tench,2009).

All these definitions, stated by academician, practitioners and PR association commonly highlight the fact that PR is about building good relationships and mutual understanding between an organization and its most important publics. When these definitions have been deconstructed, the core points that are recognized, public relations are a communication activity. Organizations expect us to help them effectively communicate with relevant publics based on sound strategy.

The definition offered here sees communication not as a technique but as being strategic as well. The communication specialist arrives at sound public relations strategies by conducting environmental scanning to understand the needs, values, and expectations of the organization's relevant publics. Wise organizations use such data to establish overall strategies that seek to understand the cultures and values of their publics and address their needs and expectations as well. The term *strategic* here also implies that communication is a managerial function that contributing to organizational strategy and policy not merely a technical function.

2.4. Ethical principles of PR practices

What is ethics? Ethics is an important concept in people's lives. The American Heritage Dictionary offers that "ethics is the study of the general nature of morals and specific moral choices; moral philosophy; and the rules of standards governing the conduct of the members of a profession" (cited in Coskum, 2007).

Organizations' today because of economic, social situations operate in a competitive environment. Therefore, they constantly need the services of their public relations department to be effective. Public relations practitioners have an important role to communicate between various sectors in business and public communities.

Public relations is not just representing the organization to the public, they must also represent the public to the organization. For this reason, public relations practitioners should help employees to understand how the public perceives their organization's actions. If the profession of public relations is seen as ethical, then the public will be more likely to accept the actions of public relations practitioners. For this reason, professional public relations practitioners today are extremely sensitive about ethics (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Therefore, depending on these values we can say that public relations is frequently seen as the ethical heart of an organization because they are making ethical decisions essential to establish relationships between the organization and its public. As a result, we can say that, ethics is an indispensable part of the organization. Therefore, public relations practitioners must be honest and trustworthy, acting at all times in the public interest (Seitel, 1998).

Public relations ethics is about how we communicate. Issues managers must identify potential problems, research must be conducted, both problems and potential solutions must be defined in an ethical manner. Therefore ethical principles be defined for public relations as how should decide, manage and communicate.

Ethics and professionalism of PR characterized by trust, public relation is about building and maintaining of relationship. Therefore trust is the key to successful relationship. Ethical principle and professionalism is core to have a good reputation. Responsibility for communicating policy and activity in the PR is also the issue of ethics. Community building and conflict resolution, social responsibility also about ethics and professionalism (Tench 2009).

On the other hand, Universal Accreditation Board (2010) elaborated the application of ethics to the practice of PR is critical to PR profession. Ethical principles of PR help the researcher to evaluate an ethical dilemma. According to this source the common ethical principles of PR practice are: act in the public interest, which find the greater good for the majority of the people, use honesty and integrity as guiding ensure accuracy and truth which means do not disseminate misleading information, if make error correct it immediately and deal fairly with all publics.

2.5. The Public Relations Process—RACE

Public relations works best when it is a strategic management function. Strategic public relations are focused on achieving goals and objectives that contribute to the overall purpose and mission of an organization. To be strategic public relations practitioners need accurate information about the situation they face, the audiences they communicate with, effectiveness of their communication efforts, and the overall impact the program has on building and maintaining relationships with critical stake holders without whom the organization could not fulfill its purpose. Therefore the public relations practices go through clearly defined process. Conducting research, who do we want to reach, what to do and what message communicated. Action plan is also given attention in the process to attain the goals, address audience, objectives, strategies and tools are included. Implementing and Communicating is also considered in the process of PR, message sent, channels, target audience and monitoring tools should be discussed here. Evaluation is the final part of PR process.

A 1988 written by Hazelton and Long on public relations theory stated the Four-Step Public Relations Process provides a proven approach for effectively communicating organizational commitment to ethics. This PRs process can be used for routine public relations activities as well as for strategic communication. The process is based on the premise that all successful communication programs are information-driven and knowledge-based. The purpose of public relations is to effectively and honestly communicate. This four-step public relations process offers a sound approach for facilitating organizational change through strategic communication (as cited in Tsega, 2009). Therefore the public relations process, which provides an open systems theory approach to understand public relations?

2.5.Public relations strategies

Public Relations Strategy could be seen as the thinking, the logic behind the actions (Robert, 1997).

Organization's positioning for the future, deciding what should be done rather than how it should be done. Strategy requires choices—deciding what particular kind of value an organization wants to deliver to whom (Gibson 1997).

Strategy is a plan that can be used by both governmental and nongovernmental organizations to build and maintain mutual understanding with the Publics. It is a tool which can be used to facilitate development in any country or organization that is desperate for social, economic, political and technological development.

Strategies are ways in which the organization objectives are to be achieved. The contemporary definition of strategic communication in the light of public relations theories has been offered. PR Strategies is about informational, persuasive as well as relational communication when used in context of the achievement of an organization's mission (Sriranesh, 2009). There for PR strategies means synchronize and integrate stakeholders' efforts to accomplish the strategic objectives of the organization.

On the other hand effective public relations strategies must be integrated in to all aspects of the organization's strategic objectives. It is integral to the strategy as well as essential to communication of that strategy. Effective public relations strategy informs and educates stake holders at all levels in the organization's strategy, and it also motivates and positions stakeholders to support the strategy and the performance goals. Even though strategies should be designed based on the nature of the organization's mission and objectives, public relations strategies

focus on the Strategic objectives to reinforce the organization's strategic objectives. There should be a one-to-one correlation between what the organization has established as its strategic objectives and what is listed as the objectives for the PR. Supportive management is also PR strategy. Top-level and mid-level management must be directly involved in and assume responsibility for effectiveness of PR practice in the organization. Targeted messages are PR strategy to address proper message for target audience. Targeted messages are simply information tailored to the audience that the information is relevant and meaningful, at the same time that it is consistent. Thus, PR must tailor the important messages to their employees, and if necessary, convert the overall message of the corporate actionable messages the employees can understand and act upon. Besides well-positioned staff is also PR strategy to achieve the intended goal. The communication staff needs to be close to the most important business issues, involved in the strategic and business planning processes. They must have a 'seat at the table'. PR staff should be a member of the senior management team which allows the senior PR officer to understand the company's strategy and to participate in the decision making. In addition, the PR staff should be seen as facilitators of change not just as producers of publications. Ongoing assessment is also PR strategy. The effectiveness of the company's PR practice needs to be measured company-wide formally and frequently against clearly defined goals on an ongoing basis and throughout the key stages of any major change. In addition, PR effectiveness needs to be evaluated as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal with the appropriate recognition for excellence (M.Oliver ,2005).

The PR strategy demonstrates the linking relations PR activity to consequent result of the organization it works. Besides to the above pointed PR strategies mainly focused on analyzing the problem; establishing objectives; building the creative theme; segmenting target publics; positioning the organization; evaluating the results (Watson, 2007).

Therefore from the above listed strategies of PR the commonly stated are establishing objectives, segmenting target public, positioning the staff, monitoring and evaluating the result.

2.6. Public relations tools/techniques

Public relations is the business, organizational, philanthropic, or social function of managing communication between an organization and its audiences. There are many goals to be achieved by the practice of public relations, including education, correcting a mistruth, or building or improving an image. PR serves a wide variety of institutions in society such as business, trade unions, government agencies, voluntary agencies, foundations, religious institutions, hospitals. To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or 'publics' such as employees, members, consumers, local communities, other institutions and with society at large.

Public relations tools can be used build and maintain relationship between the organization and its publics (Skinner, 2007). In order to manage the public image and stakeholder relationships of companies and organizations, public relations practitioners employ a variety of public relation tools/ tactics, including media interviews, news conferences, speeches, radio, television, web, social media, news release, media alert, special events, backgrounders, fact sheets, flyers, pamphlets, annual reports, newsletters. Senior practitioners are responsible for planning the

details of 'what, how and why their organizations communicate with strategic publics' (Mahoney, 2013).

According to <http://WWW.foxitsoftware.com>, when we talk of PR tools, these are nothing but the means, media, and practices PR persons use to communicate with public. Public relations departments consider the appropriate PR tools coincide with PR strategies. Public relations tools implemented by the PRs department serve as to have two way communications with the target audiences or customers. Based on the very nature of activities and different target group, various tools can be used as follows:

2.6.1. Tools for Communicating with the employees: audio-video program me, Meetings, briefing, Circular the most conventional communication channel for employee to provide instructions, which have some urgency. Posters, Notice Boards, Periodicals: newsletters, newspapers, magazines, or several other types of different periodical publications House Journal, it is always a complementary to the efforts of the public relations department. A house journal reflects professionalism of a PR department and mirrors the entire philosophy of the organization. House journal is a publication of the organization for internal circulation and is made a platform for its employees to ventilate the views of the employees, Highlight their suggestions, facilitate two way communication among the authority and the employees, Introduce columns which demands lot of participation from its audiences employees are the common tools for Communicating with the employees to keep them informed about the developments and to keep the communication effective so that the employees develop a sense of belongingness.

2.6.2. Tools for communication with Investors: Investors are very important public. The primary job of the PR department is to communicate effectively with its investor's explaining the

background in order to attract understanding and maintain the organization's credibility. It is also important that this understanding should extend to ensuring that the audience appreciates what is being done and why.

2.6.3. Tools for Communicating with the Media: Communication with the media is very important. It is the media through which people form an opinion about a company. Again most of the public gets information about the company through media. The most common tools are Research and planning: media relations begin with research. Press Release, is also document issued to the media, financial community, trade and industry analysts, investors, and consumers to announce a product, partnership, acquisition, event, personnel announcement, or other newsworthy item. Public companies issue press releases to interview: When the subject matter is important enough, when questions that must be answered by an authority, or when publicity for an individual is the goal, interviews are necessary. Press conference: It is in the press conferences, that a number of media representatives cover an event or an announcement as it is reserved for especially newsworthy events.

Public relations practitioners in many organizations and public relations firms view issues management and crisis communication as specialized public relations programs, rather than as integral parts of the overall role of public relations in strategic management. Typical practitioners conduct normal public relations programs such as media relations and product publicity using tailored tools of PR. In the general speaking well planned PR tools are important for advise and anticipate, engage employees and build trust using internal communication, develop public trust and support through media and community relation (Gruning, 2001).

2.7.Modals of PR

2.7.1. The models (purpose) of the practice of PR

The Grunig and Hunt four models (press a gentry, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical) are used to describe the variation of PR practice (Grunig, 1992). These models are viewed as a set of values and patterns in order to describe the behaviour that characterizes the approach taken by a PR department or individual. These models therefore provide an understanding of the dominant world-view followed by PR departments as well as PR practitioners. The models can also provide an understanding of the conditions that influence the practice of a particular model within a particular context.

2.7.2. The roles (activities) of the practice of PR

On a day to day basis the public relations practices are based on a variety of activities in an organization. Grunig conceptualized the role of public relations practices at different level of seniority, consists of a broad range of activities that in its scope and variety comprised in to four theoretical roles, namely, the communication technician role , the expert prescriber role , the communication facilitator role and the problem-solving process facilitator role (as cited in Cornelissen,2004). The four roles of public relations should be elaborated as follows:

1. The communication technician role : In this role the public practitioner provides the specialized skills needed to carry out communications programs. Rather than being parte of the management team, technicians are concerned with preparing and producing communication materials for the communications effort of the organization.
2. The expert prescriber role ;in this role the practitioner operates as the authority on both communications problems and their solutions . The clients or the management is often

content to leave communications in the hands of the expert and to assume a relatively passive role.

3. The communication facilitator role: this role casts the practitioners as sensitive go between or information broker, the practitioner serves as a liaison, interpreter and mediator between the organization and its stakeholders.
4. The problem-solving process facilitator role: In this role practitioners collaborate with other managers to define and solve communication and stakeholders problems for the organization. Unlike the expert prescriber role here practitioners work with manager and are more likely to play an active part in strategic decision making. However, the two predominant roles are identified and further operationalized for the purpose of the empirical phase of this study.

2.9. Theoretical Frame work

There is considerable debate as to whether there is a broad base to public relations theory.

Theory is a term loosely applied by many commentators on public relations issues to a wide range of professional. The overall aim of the theoretical frame work is to make research findings more meaning full, acceptable to the theoretical in the research and ensures generalizability. It provides the structure in showing how a researcher defines the study. It serves as the foundation up on which a research is constructed. There is no one perfect theory for any study. The selection of the theoretical frame work must reflect the understanding of the researcher regarding the study, the problem, objective, research question and significant of the study (Watson and Noble, 2007).

All who attempt to solve problems make recommendations and predict the future need theories. Therefore this study has been mainly informed by two theories: The Excellency theory and The Systems theory.

2.9.1. The Excellence Theory

Gruning and Dozier stated that excellence theory of public relations specifies how public relations makes the organizations more effective, how it is organized and managed when it contributes most to organizational effectiveness, the conditions in organizations and their environments that make organizations more effective ,and how the monetary value of public relations can be determined. The theory includes the four classic models of public relations (as cited in Universal Accreditation Board, 2017). According to this source, if an organization makes public relations a destinies senior management function, lets the PR executive fill both the management and administrative roles, considers public relations out comes in policy making, foster an open corporate culture, generally practices two-way symmetrical communication the organization meets standards of excellence. This value is based on the quality of relationships an organization has with its stakeholder. Organizational effectiveness involves the entire organization, not just the communication function. However, the management of communication is an important part of helping the organization as a whole achieves greater organizational effectiveness. The most important variables for public relations in making contributions to overall organizational effectiveness. The common generic principles of excellence are here briefly revised why each of them generic principles of public relations is important to organizational effectiveness:

1. The involvement of public relations in the strategic management function allows for more inclusive decision making, better organizational policy from the perspectives of publics and more enduring decisions. Higher levels of satisfaction with the relationship are reported by publics who were considered by an organization in its strategic management process.

2. The public relations function must be empowered to report directly to the CEO in order to advise on matters involving publics, values, and ethical decision making. Although the researchers posited that a direct reporting relationship to the dominant coalition would also enhance excellence in public relations, later research found that public relations is the most excellent when reporting directly to the CEO.
3. An integrated public relations function has access to and authority in all levels and functions of the organization. It is not isolated or pigeonholed, and it is not encroached upon or subsumed by marketing or other functions, but has its own degree of autonomy.
4. It is important for public relations to be a separate management function in the organization in order to prevent encroachment by marketing or legal departments into the role and responsibilities of communication management. It is common for smaller or less strategic publics to be ignored in organizational decision making.
5. The public relations unit should always be headed by a professional public relations manager, rather than someone who is simply adept in the technical skill of writing. Managers have the research knowledge necessary to collect information, to facilitate conflict resolution, to engage in issues management, to create budgets, to resolve ethical dilemmas, and to manage the staff of the public relations department. Technicians are normally specialists in writing or other technical aspects of production, but are not normally trained in management. Without a manager in charge of the public relations function, it is likely to be pigeonholed as media relations rather than as a true management function.
6. It is important for an excellent public relations department to use the two-way symmetrical model of public relations because a dialogue-based approach has been shown more effective than

any other inresolving conflicts, preventing problems, and to building andmaintaining relationships with publics.

7. An excellent public relations department has the knowledge necessaryto manage public relations symmetrically in that it can conductsophisticated research to understand publics, and it can also engage innegotiation and collaborative problem solving.

8. Dialogue-based systems of internal communication are important forbuiding teamwork, increasing employee morale and job satisfactionlevels, and decreasing employee turnover.

9. It is important for public relations departments to have diverseprofessionals in all roles of the function so that decisions andcommunications will be inclusive of varying viewpoints.

10. The excellence researchers added ethics and integrity as important considerations.

The excellence study has shown that these generic principles of excellencapply to any type of organization, size of pursuit and across cultures. Therefore this research has gone through these principles of excellence.

2.9.2.The Systems Theory and public relations

Systems theory provides a framework through which to view organizations and their relationships with the environment. It is used to establish as one of the guiding theories for public relations theory and practice. It is used to explain how public relations helps understand and manage the relationships an organization has with its stakeholders and public who make up its environment. frame work of explain how public relations helps understand and manage the relationships an organization has with its stakeholders and publics who make up its environment. Organization and its environment were separated by a boundary through which information flowed. Spanning this boundary was seen as a critical role for public relations professionals, who provides information to the environment about the organization and bring information about the environment back to the organizational decision makers (Bertalanffy, 1968).

Systems theory is useful in public relations because it gives us a way to think about relationships. Generally, systems theory looks at organizations as made up of interrelated parts, adapting and adjusting to changes in the political, economic, and social environments in which they operate.

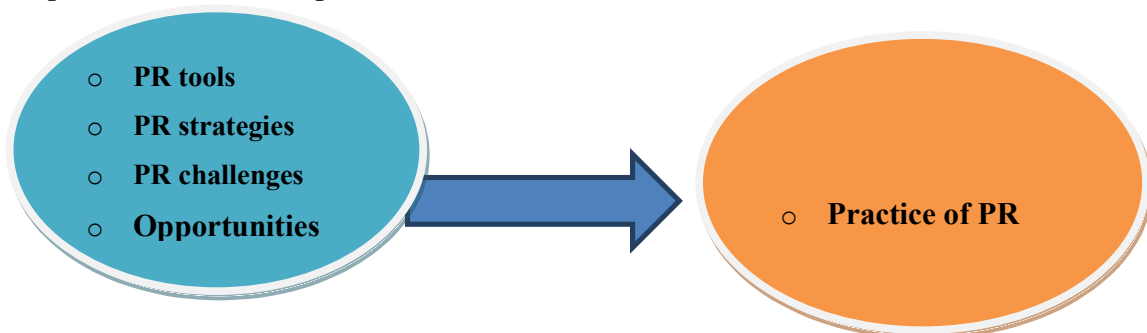
2.9.2.1. Open and Closed System

Open systems are systems that take their environment into account and change their business activities. Closed systems do not adapt to external conditions. Cutlip et al (2000) suggest that PR should view itself as part of an open system. It should help the organization to monitor relevant environmental influences and adapt its activities accordingly, as well as encouraging changes in the external environment that help the organization (as cited in Tench, 2009).

Therefore Systems theory provides a useful theoretical underpinning for thinking about the role of public relations because it stipulates that an organization's well-being is dependent on establishing and maintaining relationships both within itself and with its environment. It has to adjust and adapt as both it and its environment change. The role of public relations is to develop and maintain relationships with publics and stake holders in order for the organization to meet its goals. Therefore the study area is also expected to apply this system.

2.10 Conceptual Frame Work

Independent Variable Dependent Variable



Source: Researcher of this Thesis

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCUDGER

3.1. Research methodology

This chapter illustrated research methods and procedure in order to answer research questions and attain the intended objectives of the study. Therefore the study attempts to apply appropriate research method for exploring PR practices in the organization. According to D.Wimmer and R.Dominick (2011) Public Relations research, like all research, can be qualitative or quantitative. While the root of Qualitative research are grounded in an interpretive world view ,Qualitative research involves several methods of data collection, such as focus groups, field observation, in-depth interviews, and case studies. In all of these methods, the questioning approach is varied. In other words, although the researcher enters the project with a specific set of questions, follow-up questions are developed as needed. The variables in qualitative research may or may not be measured or quantified. In some cases, qualitative research has certain advantages. The methods allow a researcher to view behavior in a natural setting without the artificiality that sometimes surrounds experimental or survey research. In addition, qualitative techniques can increase a researcher's depth of understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This is especially true when the phenomenon has not been investigated previously. Finally, qualitative methods are flexible and allow the researcher to pursue new areas of interest. A questionnaire is unlikely to provide data about questions that were not asked, but a person conducting a field observation or focus group might discover facets of a subject that were not considered before the study began. However, some disadvantages are associated with qualitative methods. First, sample sizes are sometimes too small (some times as small as one) to allow the researcher to generalize the data beyond the sample selected for the particular study. For this reason, qualitative research is often the preliminary step to further investigation rather than the final phase of a project. The

information collected from qualitative methods is often used to prepare a more elaborate quantitative analysis, although the qualitative data may in fact be all the information needed for a particular study.

Qualitative research method involves data collection of personal experiences, introspection, stories about life ,interviews ,interactions ,observations and documents are significant to people's life (Peshkin,1993). More over the purpose of qualitative research method is described here in detail:

Description –reveal nature of certain situation settings, process and relationships.

Interpretation –enable researchers to gain new insight about particular phenomena and develop concepts or theoretical background about the research issue.

Verification – allow research to test the validity of certain assumption ,theories and claims with real world contexts .

Evaluation --provide a means which a researcher can evaluate effectiveness of certain findings.

Public relations practices are inseparable from social and organizational interaction. Which means that practices and role of public relations are in the society? Research in public relations interests in the voices and perspectives of stakeholders and practitioners engaged in public relations practice at different levels. Researchers with this context employ qualitative methods to examine communication as experienced by people not as something linear and logical but as typically open, complex and human. For this reason in this study qualitative as well as quantitative research approaches were applied. Qualitative research is associated with an interpretive worldview. It is interested in exploring meaning and communication relationships, and how social reality is constructed from the point of view of the people being studied (Daymon and Hollowan, 2011).

3.2. Sample selection and population size

In order to collect data from relevant bodies sampling was done. The sampling is non probability / purposive sampling. The researcher attempted to focus on particular characteristics of a population which were bestenable to answer research questions.

Non-probability sampling/ purposive sampling is that sampling procedure which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sample. In this type of sampling, items for the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher (Kothari, 1990).

Therefore in order to answer the research questions the researcher should be able to collect data from all cases. Thus there is a need to select a sample. For my study purposive sampling was applied.

Population Frame work ---- Source : researcher

Category	No
Public Relations directorate head	1
Public Relations Practitioners	3
Student Council Committee	7
Department heads	17
Total	28
Respondents	

Public Relations heads and practitioners had been selected because they are the one that actually perform the practice and therefore have detail information on practice of public relations in their institution. The department heads and the student council committee are targeted to give views from stakeholders and public perspectives to highlight how public relations has been practiced and serve the Institution.

3.3. Method of data collection

In conducting this study, both primary and secondary sources of data will be used. Regarding the primary data source, the researcher will try to obtain information through direct personal interview with concerned officials, public relations practitioners, Managements and deans. Interviews also allowed follow-up questions and clarifications to better understand the information. Focus Group Discussion also conducted with Student Council Committee. Questioners are applied for department heads. While secondary data is collected from reports, published as well as unpublished materials. Besides, different books, journals, research papers written on the issues and the internet are also considered for the study.

In dealing with any real life problem it is often found that data at hand are inadequate, and hence, it becomes necessary to collect data that are appropriate. There are several ways of collecting the appropriate data which differ considerably in context of money costs, time and other resources at the disposal of the researcher (Kothari,1990). Therefore interviewing, focus group discussion, questioner and document review are used for data collection for this study .

3.3.1. Interviewing

Interviewing is one of the most widely used data collection methods in Public Relations and communication research. Qualitative interviewing differs from quantitative interviewing in that it is relatively non-directive and less structured (Daymon and Holloway,2011).

Particularly in-depth interviewing, with its affinities to conversation, may be well suited to tap social agents' perspective on the media, since spoken language remains a primary and familiar mode of social interaction, and one that people habitually relate to the technological media. The difficulty, of course, is that people do not always say what they think, or mean what they say. In research as in other social practice, communication has its purposes and contexts, which must be teased out by researchers, as by other communicators (Jensen,2002). So the

researcher apply semi structured interview to explore individual's experience, perceptions and practices in rich details. It helps to explore depth of information from relatively few people by asking open ended questions.

The respondents of this study are community of the study area; therefor the interview is conducted face to face. It helps to synchronous communication in time and place.

The use of semi structured interviews which is the major tool applied. They have been planned and conducted as one-to-one interviews. They were arranged as face to face and been made in time frames of 30 to 60 minutes. All interview partners have been personally consulted by the researcher and have just in a few cases been accompanied by another colleague.

3.3.2. Focus Group discussion

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research technique consisting of a structured discussion and used to obtain in-depth information from a group of people about particular topic. The purpose of the discussion is to use the social dynamics of the group, with the help of a moderator to stimulate participants to reveal essential information about people's opinions, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes. Focus groups are often conducted among homogenous target populations, who usually share a common characteristic such as age, sex or socio economic status, which encourages a group to speak more freely about the subject without fear of being judged by others. Generate insights into shared experiences and social norms through group discussion. Focus group discussing technics advantageous to Widens the range of responses (different perspectives and views on common experience) .Therefore, for this study students counseling committee is the group of focus group discussion.

3.3.3. Document Analysis

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by researcher to give meaning around an assessment topics.

Document review related to research questions, the researcher reviewed Faculty journals, Magazine, news paper, Strategic plan , Annual report, Websites .

The recording of documents and visual materials can be based on the researcher's structure for taking notes. Typically, notes reflect information about the document or other material as well as key ideas in the documents. It is helpful to note whether the information represents primary material (i.e., information directly from the people or situation under study) or secondary material (i.e., secondhand accounts of the people or situation written by others). It is also helpful to comment on the reliability and value of the data source. These documentary sources have been used to supplement the gathered information out of interviews. Secondary analysis means that the researcher re-analyses other researchers' data or research reports within the view of the research question (Daymon and Holloway 2002).

Hodder said: "Documents which have been produced by other people can be a rich source of supplementary or primary evidence in research, indicating the way an organization or industry views its past and present actions, achievements and people.

They are important in qualitative research because, on the whole, access to them is low cost and often easy, the information provided in them may differ from or may not be available in spoken form, and because documents endure over time, therefore providing historical insights" (Hodder cited in Daymon and Holloway 2002).

3.5. Data Analysis

Qualitative data is a pool of data obtained from interviews, focus group discussions and analysis of documents. This collected information must be organized and interpreted properly to extract the key findings for research work. As a rule of thumb, there is no single way for qualitative data analysis. Different researchers have proposed different methods for qualitative data analysis. However, there are some common procedures in the analysis of qualitative data. A researcher began with a large body of knowledge and information and must deploy inductive reasoning, sorting and categorization and make it precise with key themes.

Creswell (1998) came up with data analysis spiral that is applicable to most qualitative methods.

There are several steps for this analysis. These steps are:

- (a) Data organization into several forms (i.e. database, sentences or individual words);
- (b) Peruse the data sets several times to gain a complete picture or overview of what it contains as a whole. During the process, a researcher should jot down short notes or summarization of the key points that suggest possible categories or interpretations;
- (c) Identify of general categories or themes and classify them accordingly. This will help a researcher to see a pattern or meaning of the data obtained; and
- (d) Finally, integrate and summaries the data for the audience. This step also may include hypotheses that state the relationships among those categories defined by the researcher (P.184).

3.6. Reliability and Validity

3.6.1. Reliability

The reliability can be tested by finding out such things about the said data:

- (a) Who collected the data? (b) What were the sources of data? (c) Were they collected by using proper methods (d) At what time were they collected?(e) Was there any bias of the compiler?
- (f) What level of accuracy was desired? Was it achieved?

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated results. Reliability in research is influenced by random error. As random error increases, reliability decreases. Random error is the deviation from a true measurement due to factors that have not effectively been addressed by the researcher. Errors may arise from inaccurate coding, ambiguous instructions to the subjects, interviewer's fatigue, interviewee's fatigue, interviewer bias, (Kothari, 1990).

In this research therefore, random error was minimized through giving clear instructions objectives of the research to the respondents, having fewer questions to avoid interviewer's and interviewee's fatigue and pursuing objectivity. The respondents' response were recorded and transcribed. In order to minimize misunderstanding and insure consistence of the data interview and focus group discussion conducted by Amharic Language. Which was translated in to English by professional.

3.6.2. Validity

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results. In other words, validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represent the phenomenon under study. Validity, therefore, has to do with how accurately the data obtained in the study represents the variables of the study. Who provide the data is a key question under validity; therefore the data was collected from relevant and concerned bodies on the practices of PR to ensure the validity of the research process. The data was collected from respondents who are relatively long experience and familiar with work culture in the study areas.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured confidentiality and privacy through measures such as keeping data in a safe place and making sure that no unauthorized person handled the data. The researcher also ensured that respondents participated in the study through voluntary consent. This was achieved by disclosing the true purpose of the study.

3.8. Theoretical frame work

This research tries to look at public relations practices at study area using the generic principles of excellence theory, how public relations makes organizations more effective, how it contributes to organizational effectiveness, the conditions in organizations and their environments that make organizations more effective. On the other hand when applied to communication, the systems theory paradigm seeks to understand the interconnectedness of human communication rather than looking at just one part. The inter-dependencies and inter-relations between the various parts of the organization and helps to get a holistic view to be effective.

The frame of this research focus on the views of generic principle of excellence theory, the inter relations of stake holders through open system theory and two way communication model.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATATION

4.1. Introduction

This part of the study aims to demonstrate results to attain the objective of the study.

Qualitative data was analyzed by employing descriptive and explanatory data whereas quantitative data was also analyzed using statistics such as measures of frequencies, and percentages to organize and summarize numerical data.

The analysis and presentation included the practice, roles, strategies, tools as well as challenges affecting the PR. The research attempted to relate the analysis with the related literature review and theoretical framework, which is explained on chapter two of this study.

4.2. Practice of PR

As elaborated in detail in chapter two PR practice comprises writing, media relations, planning, counseling, researching, publicity, marketing communications, community relations, consumer relations, employee relations, government affairs, investor relations, public affairs and issue management and website development (Seitel, 2007, p.6).

Based on the literature argument the PR practice is one of the main points that was discussed during the in-depth interview. According to data obtained from the interview, most PR professionals practiced the PR mainly as a voice of government. They imply that there is fewer PR activity in connecting the public and government. The interviewees have said the following:

Respondent one: Tasks done by the public relations are making known what the institute has done. News was made in order to inform the public about the tasks that the Institute has accomplished, publishing materials, and the movement of the campus (Respondent 1, June, 2019).

Respondent two: Even though there are many things that the public relations does, but as a Metropolitan University, it reports things done in the university, through announcements on a notice board, website and Facebook, and making sure that information has reached or has been accessed well. In addition to this, it works on making microphones, chairs and some related things available whenever there is training in the University. Making printed materials ready and working on the availability of materials for the printed things are some of the other tasks (Respondent 2, June, 2019).

Respondent three and four: The major task we accomplish as a PR is strengthening a relation in different structure in the university. But we lack accomplishing things up to the parts concerning communication (Respondent, 3&4, June 2019).

On the other hand findings from focus group discussion are also listed below. Among seven members of FGD, five of them were present and participated on the discussion. Therefore, Participant one : Public relations works for connecting University community with government. It provided information through a variety of publications and events (Participant 1, May, 2019) .Participant two : As far as I understand the PR practice focused on organizing meetings , facilitating events and handling guests (Participant 2, May, 2019). Participant three: PR practice of our campus is just as spoken person for the government (Participant 3, May, 2019). Participant four and five agreed on the same ideas which is the practice of PR in their university focused on meeting organization , most of the time practiced on event based activities and ceremonial issues (Participant 4&5, May, 2019).

Besides to findings from key informant interview and FGD 17 participants respond regarding the issues .Therefore, among 17 respondents 64.7 % of the respondents were agreed that Public

relations activities are more of preparing newsletters / newspapers /magazines. That means the activities of PR limited to preparing and disseminating to print materials.

Table 1.

Question	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public relations activities are more of preparing newsletters / newspapers /magazines	Neutral	3	17.6	17.6	17.6
	Agree	11	64.7	64.7	82.4
	Strongly agree	3	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

On the question, the main purpose of public relations is, simply, to get publicity for the University 41.2 % of the respondents were strongly agree on the activities of PR is preparing publicity materials and 17.6% of the respondents could be neutral . This showed that how far the activities of PR in the university is focusing on routine tasks

Table 2.

Question	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
The main purpose of public relations is, simply, to get publicity for the University	Disagree	4	23.5	23.5	23.5
	Neutral	3	17.6	17.6	41.2
	Agree	3	17.6	17.6	82.4
	Strongly agree	7	41.2	41.2	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

Regarding to Public relations must be major function in the University, 23.5% of the respondents were strongly dis agree where as 41.2 % of them were dis agree on PR must be major function in the University. On the other hand 23.5 % of the respondents were neutral

Table 3.

Question	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public relations must be major function in the University	Strongly disagree	2	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Dis Agree	4	23.5	23.5	35.3
	Nutral	7	41.2	41.2	76.5
	Total	4	23.5	23.5	100.0
		17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

However, literature argued that PR is a major function in the organization to build and maintain mutual benefit between the organization and its public, the facts that on the ground reflected that PR is not considered as major function in the university. The study conducted by other researcher supported this conclusion as the practice of PR is not considered as major function. The public relation department within the Ethiopian airline established in tending to communicate both the internal and external public to resolve conflict of interest and create maximum common understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information, but on the actual the practices have weakness on planning and implementing programs which readily enable them to create common understanding the overall public who had relation with the Ethiopian airline (Rahel, 2013).

In order to realize the actual practices of PR in the KMU the researcher reviewed the related documents. As a result of this Photo exhibition during different events like sport club and graduation day have been displayed collectively as resource center. This practice of PR helped to build good relationship between the University and its public. Besides news release written on elderly people and citizens displaced from Burayu were supported by the University also realized that practice of PR in the University engaged on social corporate responsibility.

As related literature and empirical review stated PR practices should be focused on building image, creating and maintaining mutual understanding between the organization and its public, enhance organizational brand, facilitate communication platforms, organize community involvement camping, conduct experience sharing, facilitate scholarship etc. However according to the data from interview and FGD the practice of PR in KMPU focused on routine tasks like facilitating meeting , writing news, making interview and soon. Data from questioners also reflected, activities of PR are preparing news, publicity and even PR is not considered as major function.

4.3. Role of public relations

PR role is directly related with PR activities. Therefore question on PR role was raised during interview on follow up question. As the result of this the respondents stated their views as follows: Respondent one: PR is working on building image in the view of external and internal publics (Respondent 1, June, 2019). Respondent two: Mainly our task is to make known things getting accomplished in the compound through advertising boards and social Media making by using Facebook. Since the university's structure is new, we have to inform the new things to the institute's society (Respondent 2, June, 2019). Respondent three: The main role of the directorate is making known what the university does. In addition, it reports everything to the society and makes information available to all (Respondent 3, June 2019).

Respondent four: The basic role of PR is to work as a spokesperson for the University as well as the city government. Because the PR directorate is accountable for the city government communication Bureau . The role of the spokesperson also depends on government strategy and policies (Respondent 4, June 2019).

The roles of PR are depended on its activities. According to the findings from interview the role of PR in the study area is limited to publicity and act as spoken person. On the other hand the data which was collected from questioner also supported the above findings.

On the question that Public relations is a bridge between management and publics 5.9 % of the respondents strongly dis agree that public relation is a bridge between management and publics. Whereas 35.3% of the respondents were dis agree on the issue. 29% of them were neutral. On the other hand 5.9% and 11.8% of the respondents were agree and strongly agree respectively. Therefore the researcher realized that the role of PR to build good relationship between management and public is under question in the study area.

Table 4.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public relations is a bridge between management and publics		2	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Strongly disagree	1	5.9	5.9	17.6
	Disagree	6	35.3	35.3	88.2
	Neutral	5	29.4	29.4	52.9
	Agree	1	5.9	5.9	23.5
	Strongly agree	2	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

At the university, public relations are more of a neutral disseminator of information than an advocate for the University. Regarding this question this table explicated that 29.4 % of respondents weredis agree,17.6 of them were neutral. Whereas 29.4 % of the respondents were agree and 28.5 % of the respondents were strongly agree that public relations is more of neutral information disseminator than advocator. This data realized that PR is considered as an

advocator of the University. This affects mutual understanding between the university and its public. If no trust between the communication become one way.

Table 5.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
At the university, public relations are more of a neutral disseminator of information than an advocate for the University.	Disagree	5	29.4	29.4	29.4
	Neutral				
	Agree	3	17.6	17.6	47.1
	Strongly agree				
	Total	5	29.4	29.4	76.5
		4	23.5	23.5	100.0
		17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

On the table below 5.9% of the respondents strongly disagree and 11.8 % of the respondents disagree and 17 % of them were neutral. Whereas 47% of the respondents agree and 17.6 % of them were strongly agree that the purpose of PR is to develop mutual understanding between the management and publics. This data reflected that the purpose of PR is clearly understood by respondents. However the practice could not show that.

Table 6.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
The purpose of public relations is to develop mutual understanding between the management of the University and publics the University affects.	Strongly disagree	1	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Disagree	2	11.8	11.8	17.6
	Neutral	3	17.6	17.6	35.3
	Agree	8	47.1	47.1	82.4
	Strongly agree	3	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

The common element among the definition of PR is image building, therefore regarding this issue 5.6 % of the respondents strongly disagree and 23 % of them were disagree that Public relation is very useful for image building of the university. Whereas the majority of the respondents which are 47.1 % of them were neutral. 23% Of the respondents were agree that Public relations is very useful for image building of the University. Therefore PR in the study area is considered as routine task delivery.

Table 7.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public relations is very useful for image building of the University	Strongly disagree	1	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Dis agree	4	23.5	23.5	29.4
	Neutral	8	47.1	47.1	76.5
	Agree	4	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

Creating and maintaining mutual understanding is the corner stone of PR goal. Therefore on this issue 5.9% and 17.6 % of the respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively. Whereas 17.6 % of the respondents were neutral. The majority of the respondents 47% of them were agree and 17.6 of the respondents were also strongly agree that the purpose of public relations is to develop mutual understanding between the management of the University and public the University affects. In this context the respondents understood how far the purpose of PR is useful to develop mutual understanding between management and the publics. The actual practice and the purpose of PR in the study area is not aligned.

Table 8.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
The purpose of public relations is to develop mutual understanding between the management of the University and publics the University affects	Strongly disagree	1	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Disagree	2	11.8	11.8	17.6
	Neutral	3	17.6	17.6	35.3
	Agree	8	47.1	47.1	82.4
	Strongly agree	3	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

Among the respondents 11.8 % of them strongly disagree, 5.8 % were disagree. Whereas 11.8% of the respondents were neutral and 41.2 % them were agree 29.4 % of the respondents strongly agree on the purpose of public relations is to change the attitudes and behavior of publics. Almost the majority of the respondents agree and strongly agree that the purpose of PR in the university is to change the attitude. Whereas the practice and the attention given for the PR in the study area is less.

Table 9.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
The purpose of public relations is to change the attitudes and behavior of publics.	Strongly disagree	2	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Disagree	1	5.9	5.9	17.6
	Neutral	2	11.8	11.8	29.4
	Agree	7	41.2	41.2	70.6
	Strongly agree	5	29.4	29.4	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

According to public relations definition Public relations plays management and advisory role in the organizations. Regarding this issue 35.3% of the respondents were strongly disagree and 17.6% of the respondents were also disagree. On the other hand 23.5 % of the respondents were neutral. Whereas 17.6% and 5.9% of the respondents were agree and strongly agree respectively. According to the findings stated above the role of PR is more of information dissemination and publicity. On the other hand the respondents strongly agree that the role should be beyond this. Like building image acting as communication management and advisory role.

Table 10.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public relations plays management and advisory roles in your University.	Strongly disagree	6	35.3	35.3	82.4
	Disagree	3	17.6	17.6	23.5
	Neutral	4	23.5	23.5	47.1
	Agree	3	17.6	17.6	23.5
	Strongly agree	1	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

4.4. Strategies of public relations

The PR specialists are always expected to develop a strategies to achieve the intended result.

PR strategy is determined on the nature of the organization, the mission and the goal set.

Research, action plan, communication tool and evaluation are scientific strategy in local and international activity (Sisay, 2018). Therefore in considering the literaturereview discussed in chapter two and empirical researches the findings were presented below.

Respondent one :We share experiences with some other universities out of Addis Ababa is what we are taking as strategy(Respondent 1, June 2019).

Respondent two: Everything comes from our leaders, and things are get done based on the orders come down to us (Respondent 2, June,2019).

Respondent three : We make ourselves ready before things happen based a head plans and when problems occur, we discuss in a table in order to see them solved. The systems that the directorate uses are in aciqugment with the institute's systems (Respondent 3, June, 2019).

Respondent four: This university was established by proclamation. All the experts have detailed job description and activities are measured BSC. Particularly, the quality of PR activity is measured by delivery of government policy and strategies to the public. Not only for the university but contributed for the city government through Addis Ababa CommunicationBureau . In general speaking the PR department has no PR strategy(Respondent 4,2019).

PR is more than simply producing publicity material. An organization is only as strong as its reputation. The PR function is to manage that reputation. Regarding to PR strategy discussed under chapter two , to end up *A strategy* is a statement of the communication themes or vehicles that will be used to accomplish a specific objective. It represents an overall plan of action that will tie together each action taken to implement the objectives (Pinkleton, 2006).

Conducting research before and after PR program is one of the public relations strategy. There fore on this issue the above table illustrated that 35.3% andthe same 35.3% of the respondents were strongly dis agree and dis agree respectively that the university conducting research before a public relations program.

Table 11.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Before beginning a program, conducting research to determine public attitudes toward the University and how they might change.	Strongly disagree	6	35.3	35.3	82.4
	Disagree	6	35.3	35.3	64.7
	Neutral	2	11.8	11.8	29.4
	Agree	2	11.8	11.8	29.4
	Strongly agree	1	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

The table below attempted to reflect that conducting research after completing PR program to determine how effective the program has been in changing people's attitudes towards the intended objectives .There fore 35.3% of the respondents were strongly disagree and 11.8% of them were also disagree that conducting research after the PR program was completed. on the other hand 35.3% of the respondents were neutral . Whereas 11.8% and 5.9% of the respondents were agree and strongly agree respectively.

Table 12.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
After completing a public relations program, conduct research to determine how effective the program has been in changing people's attitudes	Strongly disagree	6	35.3	35.3	82.4
	Disagree	2	11.8	11.8	17.6
	Neutral	6	35.3	35.3	64.7
	Agree	2	11.8	11.8	29.4
	Strongly agree	1	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

According to the data collected from the respondents the University lack PR strategies. The researcher realized that the reasons for lack of communication strategies included lack of policy framework, lack of financial support, inadequate staff, pressure of work and lack of support from management.

4.5. Tools of public relations

As a public relations department , you can use many different PR tools to provide information for particular publics, depending on the various needs and resources of your organization. You also should understand what public relations tools to use to achieve a particular objective and to address the circumstances facing the organization (Smith, 2003). Based on this concepts key informant interviewees provided their response as the following:

Respondent one :There are magazines, brochures, newsletters and other production materials . In the different events, like graduation day, the mobilization of the community usually carried out as CSR (Respondent 1,2019).

Respondent two : The print media and electronic media are mainly mentioned as PR tool. Notice board ,exhibition and sharing experience among the other universities taken as a PR tools(Respondent 2,2019).

Respondent three:The university had good media relations, particularly with Addis TV and FM 96.3. News release, magazine, and public opinion are also frequently used as PRtool(Respondent3,2019). Respondent four could say that letters, report things which are done in the departments, making scholarships available through Facebook, website and mainly used social medias, and announcement boards and through website send information to presidents. In order to make the teaching and learning process more peaceful and effective, printing medias and social medias are widely used as PR tools. The university doesn't have its own radio and

TV, so it uses the city administration's radio and TV in order to transmit information through audio visual medias (Respondent 4, 2019).

Among focus group discussion participants, participant one said that It is information website, so we obtain information from students and sometimes from notice board even the information is not up to date (Participant 1, May, 2019). The second participant explicated that getting information by their own means and from the students union (Participant 2, May, 2019).

Participant three: Social media is one of the major public relations tools. However, network connection is not as such available (Participant 3, May, 2019).

Participant four : Much of the PR work is giving opportunity to access information to the university community . As a result, the PR department provided information using print materials. Participant five did say nothing regarding this question.

The table below is about the question that the university provided different types of PR tools in order to address segmented audience in the university. Therefore the table illustrated 47.1% of the respondents disagree on this point. Whereas 23.5 of them were neutral. On the other hand 11.8% and 17.8% of the respondents agree and strongly agree respectively on the raised issue. This explicated that different types of PR tools provided various form of information and address segmented target group. Whereas this research identified that the University used similar PR tools which are reputedly applied.

Table 13.

Question	Response	Frequen cy	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Your University provides different types of PR tools to address PR activities.	disagree	8	47.1	47.1	82.4
	nutral	4	23.5	23.5	35.3
	agree	2	11.8	11.8	11.8
	strongly agree	3	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Source: prepared by the researcher

The respondents clearly stated that PR tools used in the university are social media which is enable public to provide feedback. Print materials are widely used as PR tool. How ever for large number of public electronics media are appropriate tools.

4.6. Challenges and how to strengthen public relations

To examine how public relations can be strengthened in achieving organizational goals in the study area, two questions were asked. These are (1) what are the challenges the public relations department faces? and (2) how can public relations be strengthened in this institution?

When asked, “What are some of the challenges that public relations faces?”

Among the interviewees , one respondent said that there are problems observed in going ahead, there is no enough support, politicizing all things, they are not free to discuss some public issues, they are afraid of us just be considering that PR officers are from the politics side and etc.

The other four respondents of the interview provided almost similar concepts regarding to PR challenges as follows : Our major challenges is finance, so we have scarcity of useful materials that are helpful for the present situation. The works are not done as it needs due attention and the work of PR is very huge. But we are not going as it is needed. If it is a must to work on the relation between staff members and administrative parties, in addition to this working on the

relation of students also needs much care. The main focus is on reporting what the administrative parties say. We are held only on what these person are required us to engage on-on the other hand, the office requires 40 members but we have 10 members only. Even when we announce for job positions, no one appears. The problem is, because it offers very little amount of salary. The main task of the PR is to make the institute very unique. But we are not working on this because of having less members in our office. It is impossible to expect the jobs get done with these few members of human resources. According to the response from other respondents the major challenges that faced the PR here have todo with insufficient funds to meet their budget(Respondent 1,June 2019).

One of the respondents confirmed that, there is no mainstream public relations training for the PR staff. Since the University is not into proper public relations practice (Respondent 2,June,2019). Another two respondents indicated that the other challenges PR faced is lack of necessary logistics and staff to carry out all the activities that they have planned (Respondent 3&4,June,2019).

Focus group discussion participants stated that the challenges of PR is summarized as the following : Poor man power, lack of communication plat forms, tailored message is also one of challenges .And also less availability of social media network , no available PR plat forms which are friendly for students. Specifically the participants stated as follows: Participant one : Asserted that Students are unable to obtain information, the PR principal relation is with the staff members. There are some scholarship opportunities from koria, but no one had information to accesses the opportunity. Weak information management systems, poor use of social media, inefficient manpower (Participant 1, May,2019).

Participant two : University community, specially students do not know anything about public relations and the importance of public relations(Participant 2,May,2019).Participant three : PR activity is always taken as stage facilitator. This may undermine the role of PR (Participant 3,2019).

Participant four : The PR officers are expected as politicaldelegation rather than professional(Participant 4,May,2019).

While document review, the challenges of PR in KMU was stated in the 5 year strategic plan of the University as follows: Lack of advanced PR structure and establishment and lack of implementing capacity are challenges of PR in KMU. Lack of skill and knowledge at the internal publics side and attitude on the stake holder sideand Less attention for the PR activities also major challenges. Besides insufficient PR tools to address the intended objectives using various means. In accessibility of public as well as privet media usage and lack of resource center to avail any relevant source of information to publics are listed as challenges

The challenges facing PR practice in the study area, according to findings of the study, are varied. These include low staffing levels, financial constraints, inadequate equipment like cameras, computers, and standbyvehicles.PR practice in the University is also challenged by the lack of a national PR policy framework, and lack support of and poor understanding of the role of PR by top management. That is why PR department head is not management committee member. That means PR directorate is not part of decision making . The other part of the Challenge associate public relation with the political system of ruling party. This affected trust among them. Low awareness on public relations, less attention for PR, lack of professionalism almost all of the PR practitioners are from teaching profession language department not directly from communication or PR. This , therefore according to the generic principle of excellence

theory it is important for public relations departments to have diverse professionals. So PR directorate at KMU does not meet the standard of excellence.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCULISION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

The study has shown that public relations is very relevant in achieving the organizational goals especially for public sectors. It was revealed that public relations contribute a lot to the institutions in the sense that public relations ensure effective Communication between the internal and external publics of the organization. Public relations also ensure effective messaging to achieve objectives and goals set by the Organization. Public relations practice makes sure when and how messages should be given out and the messages themselves are framed in order to communicate and achieve certain goals and objectives of the organization.

The study discovered that the organization has a public relations department. It was suggested in the theory that the most effective public relations practice requires excellence in practice. Therefore, there should be a public relations department which operates and fits in with other departments and the organization as a whole. Public relations activities with other administrative functions which undermine effective public relations practice. This is perceived to be improper, considering the nature of public relations practice in the sense that public relations involves a deliberate ,systematic, planned and sustained programmers' of action. Public relations are also aimed at winning, securing, retaining and maintaining the mutual understanding and cooperation of the University and its publics. Also, public relations are a top management activity that involves planning, organizing, directing and controlling the resources of an organization to achieve corporate objectives.

This research concluded that Public Relations practice in the study area is in a difficult condition as the office is not professionally and structurally organized despite its key role is well recognized. The PR practitioners have not well understood and practiced the PR strategy.

PR tools have not been used properly only focused on leaflet and notice board. The role of PR is misunderstood; it is considered stage facilitator and meeting organizer. Lack of trust from stakeholders, lack of PR strategic framework and focused on routine works are challenges for the public relations practice. Therefore, considering these functions of public relations there is the need for this university to have well organized and structured public relations department. Public relations are also aimed at establishing and maintaining the mutual Understanding and cooperation of the university and its publics. Also, public relations are a top management activity that involves planning, organizing, directing and controlling the resources of an organization to achieve corporate objectives.

Therefore, considering these functions of a public relations there is the need for this university to have well organized and structured public relations department.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, the researcher has recommended the following to ensure effective public relations practice in the University.

- The public relations departments should be organized and hire skilled manpower who will be responsible for carrying out public relations activities. The public relations department will ensure effective communication between the internal and external publics of the organization and will enhance efficient messaging to achieve objectives and goals set by the organization.

- It is also advised that the public relations department should be headed by a Public relations officer. These people should have an academic qualification in public relations and communication studies.
- The study recommends that the public relations department should have clear & defined roles to perform that can contribute the achievement of organizational goals. This will ensure effectiveness in public relations practice.
- The public relations department should provide the necessary Operational equipment and the needed logistics to ensure effective operation.
- The public Relations department shall clearly identify the target audience and craft proper message to communicate so as to maintain mutual understanding among them in various issues.
- The public relations practitioner should set clear and well defied goals for doing its activities through Organizational frameworks.
- Establish, Organize and implement media strategies (internal and external media) programs and also mentioning mutually beneficial relationship with public and privet Organizations
- Compiling, Classifying and preparing documents intended for internal and external stakeholders.
- Conducting studies and investigative reports on the public opinion and trends to identify the benefits and interests of the Organization and the target audience.
- Preparing and Organizing workshops, meetings, special events, ceremonies, related to promotion and advertising to insure trust in the heart and minds of the public. And then

creating awareness to the customers, the organizations, the community and the stakeholders about the practice of the public relations.

- The public relations practitioner shall implement intensive communication strategies so as to attain organizational goals.
- The public relations department shall clearly set the activities of the practitioner according to the principles functioning in global arena.
- Maintain good relationship with domestic and international media so as to reach the organizational stakeholders and customers. And clearly notify that public relations practitioner is not propagandist rather its researcher and councilor.
- It is also recommended that PR department should be empowered through engaging in decision making. This is essential because the public relations practitioner provide inexpert advice on how to formulate and communicate the decisions to the relevant public in order to achieve the desired goals. The organization should provide strategic communication and corporate communication trainings to upgrade the skills and knowledge of the practitioners

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Key informant Interview Question

1. What are the major activities of PR played by your department/Directorate ?
2. Describe your relationships with your publics and stakeholders. What types of issues get importance in your Public Relations Practices?
3. How do you describe the major role of public relations of your department/Directorate ?
4. What type of tools are practically used in public relations department/Directorate of your institution?
5. What are the PR strategies that your department/ directorate is using?
6. How public relations experts are assigned in your institution?
7. What are the major challenges and opportunities of public relations department in your institution?
8. What should be done for improving public relations practices of your institution?

Appendix--2

Focus Group Discussion Questions for student council Committee

1. How do you see the practices of PR department in your Institution?
2. How do you see the contribution/role of public relations activities to the mission of the institution?
3. Where do you get relevant information in your institution?
4. What are the weakness/Challenges and strengths of public relations department in your institution?
5. What should be done for improving public relations practices of your institution?

Appendix –3

Questionnaires for Department heads

Dear Respondents,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for the research to be carried out by M.A Student from the School of Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University. I would like to state that your genuine and accurate responses will have greater contribution to the dependability of the research findings. Therefore, I kindly request you to provide your genuine answers to the questions that appear below. I would like to remind you that the answers you will provide is solely used for research purpose and kept confidential. I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Part I- Personal information- Please encircle your responses for the following personal information based on the type of questions provided here.

1. Sex A, Male B, Female
2. Age A. 20-30 B. 31-40 C. 41-50 Dd. 51 and above
3. Educational level A, BA/BSc/Bed B, MA/MSc C, PhD

Part II- Major Questions

Your answers in this part are to be given by making a tick (✓) mark on your choice that is provided in front of each question.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1	Public relations activities are more of preparing newsletters / newspapers /magazines				
2	Public relations must be major function in the University				
3	Public relations is a bridge between management and publics				
4	The main purpose of public relations is, simply, to get publicity for the University				
5	At the university, public relations are more of a neutral disseminator of information than an advocate for the University.				
6	After completing a public relations program, conduct research to determine how effective the program has been in changing people's attitudes.				
7	The goal of PRs is to persuade publics to behave as the University wants them to behave.				
8	Public relations is very useful for image building of the University				
9	Before beginning a program, conducting research to determine public attitudes toward the University and how they might change.				
10	The purpose of public relations is to develop mutual understanding between the management of the University and publics the University affects.				
11	The purpose of public relations is to change the attitudes and behavior of publics.				
12	Your University provides different types of PR tools to address PR activities				
13	Public relations plays management and advisory roles in your university				

Appendix –4

List of Interviewees

No	Name	Sex	Level of Education	Profession	Position
1	YosefBeko	M	PhD		Corporate communication executive director
2	GenanewKetema	M	MA	Folklore	Print Media team leader
3	BehayluAyele	M	BA	Teaching in Amharic Language	PR Officer
4	SintayehuTsegaye	F	BA	Teaching in Amharic Language	Print Media Officer

Appendix –5

List of FGD participants

No	Name	Sex	Level of Education	Profession	Position in Council
1	HaymanotMoges	M	3 rd year	Urban Management	Ethics and anti-corruptionclub leader
2	JilaluKedir	M	4 th year	Computer science	Student police club chair person
3	YetagesTeseema	M	3 rd year	Foreign Language	Student police club member
4	BamlakuDinku	M	2 nd year	Maths	Male and Female students dormitory chair person
5	LamesginGashu	M	3 rd year	Maths	Student police club member
6	TamratAyel	M	4 th year	Computer science	Male and Female students dormitory club member
7	YitayFikadu	M	4 th year	Urban management	Ethics and anti-corruption club member