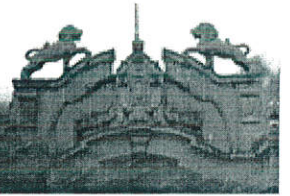


Addis Ababa  
University  
(Since 1950)



**COMMUNICATION PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES TO PUBLIC RELATIONS OF ETHIOPIAN  
REVENUES AND CUSTOMS AUTHORITY**

**BY  
SHIMELIS DESALEGN**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM  
AND COMMUNICATION, ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS IN JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**



**Addis Ababa University  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
November, 2016**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Shimelis Desalegn, entitled communication practices and strategies to public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. And submitted in partial fulfillment of the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with the respect to originality and quality.

**Signed by Examining Committee**

Examiner Anteneh Tegegn (PhD) Signature Anteneh Date Nov 2016

Examiner Leerebe Berene (PhD) Signature Leerebe Date Nov. 2016

Advisor Aymeredeh Temanch (PhD) Signature Aymeredeh Date November 2016

Negew Lencho (PhD) for [Signature]

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Coordinator

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and most I would like to thank my God for the marvelous care and help He has been offering me, one who never deserves, all the time through. And also this thesis could not have been done without the help and support of many people. And I would like to extend a special word of thanks to my advisor, Dr, Agaredech Jemaneh, for her tireless and diligent monitoring and advice. I am grateful for this intellectual guidance and supervision which has been a source of inspiration to me throughout the whole thesis work.

Secondly, this dedication is for my father who passed away near past. Dad you are always in my deepest heart, I always missed you. May God bless your soul in heaven? And this work is entirely devoted to you.

Thirdly, I would like to thank my intimate friends, Biniam Kebede, Dr.Ashenafi Bekele, and Engineer Kibru Bekele, for their frequent support and advice throughout my entire educational career. And also I will never ever forget my supporting group Tigist Abebe, and Samuel Abebe.

Finally, My gratitude also goes to my friends Engineer Wondimu Tadese, Benyam Mesgina, Dereje Girma, Sora Solomon, Birhan Demissie, and others, They have been a friend in need during the period of working on this thesis.

## Abstract

The Fundamental role of public relations is to promote the activities of the organization. The media on the other hand are expected to use diverse sources in order to present different sides of the story. This typically leads to a good relationship between the media person and public relation officers. Public relation need the media as a channel to broadcast its message, while the media need public relations to get access to source material.

The main purpose of this study is to explore the communication practices and strategies to public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. Research questions were raised in the study. In order to meet the objective of this research, the researcher has customized the qualitative method to explore the appropriate communication practices and data to be collected in the organization.

There are models and theories relating to communication practices and strategies were widely discussed in the literature review part. The researcher used the Grunig and Todd Hunt models, the fundamental theories employed in the study were public relation theory and persuasion theory.

Data were collected through Qualitative type of research methods designed. By means of data analysis, individual in-depth interviews, participant observation as well as database material analysis, which helps for the appropriateness of contents of the messages intended to reach the target audiences.

The practices and strategies of communication to public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority, in depth interviews were administered on three groups of information respondents; heads of public relation, public relation officers / communication experts and selected tax payers. The responses were presented and analyzed using relevant tools. The study was based in Addis Ababa main office, and four medium tax payers' branch offices.

The study has also forwarded recommendations that have a common understanding between the public and organizations, symmetrical communication is very important. This helps to minimize misunderstanding between people and the organization. Because development is unthinkable without the participation of the public.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	page
Acknowledgements .....	ii
Abstracts.....	iii

### CHAPTER ONE

1.1. Introduction .....	1
1.2. Back ground of the study.....	1
1.3. Statement of the problem.....	3
1.4. Objectives of the study .....	4
1.3.1. General objective .....	4
1.3.2. Specific objectives .....	4
1.5. Research questions .....	4
1.6. Scope of the study .....	5
1.7. Significance of the study .....	5
1.8. Limitations of the study .....	5
1.9. Organization of the study.....	5

### CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2. Introduction.....	7
2.1. History of public relation .....	7
2.2. Public relations' definition and its function .....	9
2.3. The Grunig and Todd Hunt models of public relations .....	13
2.3.1. The press agent/ publicity model .....	13
2.3.2. Public information model .....	14

2.3.3. Two -way asymmetric model .....	14
2.3.4. Two- way symmetric model theory.....	14
2.4. Persuasion theory .....	16
2.4.1. Persuasion as process of communication .....	17
2.4.2. . Persuasion intends to influence people .....	18
2.4.3. Persuasion uses ethical means .....	18
2.4.4. Persuasion enhances democratic society .....	18
2.5. Theory of public relation .....	19
2.5.1. Public relation activities.....	19
2.5.2. PR and the World of Business.....	20
2.5.3. PR Tools and Techniques.....	21
2.5.4. PR and Propaganda.....	21
2.5.5. PR Services and its usual clients .....	21
2.5.6. Benefits of Using PR Services and how to utilize it.....	22
2.6. Communication channels.....	22
2.7. Corporate communication.....	23
2.8. The role of effective communication.....	27
2.9. The content analysis .....	28
2.10. The research conducted under communication strategies.....	28

### **CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1. Research Methods .....	32
3.2. Data Gathering Instruments .....	33
3.2.1 In depth interview .....	33
3.2.2. Participant observations.....	34
3.3. Sampling techniques.....	35
3.4. Data analysis technique.....	36

## CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION .....	38
4.2.0. Gender .....	38
4.2.1. Age of respondents .....	39
4.2.2:- Level of education .....	40
4.2.3. Area of specialization .....	40
4.2.4. Experience as communication / public relation officer.....	41
4.3. Communication channels.....	41
4.4. The content analysis of “Gebi Lelimat” newspaper news.....	45
4.4.1. Presentation and interpretation of sourced messages.....	45
4.4.2. Types of news items covered.....	46
4.4.3. Purpose of the messages.....	46
4.4.4. Sources of the messages.....	47
4.5. Activities of communication officers of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.....	47
4.6. The communication activities of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority .....	49
4.7. Public relations campaign in Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.....	52
4.8. The publics and their opinion in Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority .....	53

## CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Conclusions and recommendations .....	55
5.1. Conclusions .....	55

5.2. Recommendations .....56

References.....58

Appendix I - Interview with tax payers .....61

Appendix II - In-Depth Interview Questions for Expert Category .....62

Appendix III - Interview with tax payers .....63

Appendix IV - Interview with tax payers in Amharic .....64

Appendix VI- List of informants .....65

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, an attempt is made to highlight all matters related to the study. It points out the background of the study and the rationale behind it. Besides, it also discusses statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the paper.

### 1.2 . BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority (ERCA) is the body responsible for collecting revenue from customs duties and domestic taxes. In addition to raising revenue, the ERCA is responsible to protect the society from adverse effects of smuggling. It seizes and takes legal action on the people and vehicles involved in the act of smuggling while it facilitates the legitimate movement of goods and people across the border.

According to article 3 of the proclamation No .587/2008, the Authority is looked upon as "an autonomous federal agency having its own legal entity". The Authority came into existence on 14 July 2008, by the merger of the Ministry of Revenue, Ethiopian Customs Authority and The Federal Inland Revenue Authority who formerly were responsible to raise revenue for the Federal government and to prevent contraband. Reasons for the merger of the foregoing administrations into a single autonomous Authority are varied and complex.

The Authority put some of those reasons include: To provide the basis for modern tax and customs administrations; to be much more effective and efficient in keeping and utilizing information, promoting law and order, resource utilization and service delivery to transform the efficiency of the revenue sector to a high level.

In many developing countries including Ethiopia taxpayers are reluctant and fail to pay taxes properly and regularly. One of the major reasons is assumed to be lack of effective communication between the organization and the customers and also lack of sufficient or adequate information and proper education about the purpose of collecting taxes. Here, the Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority (ERCA) should take the responsibility for collecting taxes. Hence educating and informing as well as communicating taxpayers and the community as a whole is the responsibility of the organization. In order to reach the large audiences of the organization, therefore to study public relation on communication practices of

Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority is very essential for both the institution and Customers.

Public relations are strategic communication processes that build mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics, according to the PR society of America. Organizations can use public relations tools and techniques to communicate effectively with customers, suppliers, employees, investors and the community. Public relations techniques help organizations market their products and services and they influence attitudes toward the organization. The channels of communications are Newspapers, magazines, radio and television, internet, social Medias are important channels for communicating with customers, investors and the community. Participating in social media gives an organization the opportunity to monitor attitudes toward the organization and fine-tune its public relations strategy. One monitors references to the organization or products on social media, such as face book, twitter or product review sites, and negative comments.

By engaging in dialogue, helping to build positive attitudes and manage organization's reputation. Furthermore; Communication with employees is important, even in small organizations keeping them informed about new products, customer wins, important appointments or new business opportunities builds positive attitudes and commitment.

The importance of communication with the public and maintenance of positive public image as known as early as in the ancient times but the beginnings of modern public relations are traditionally dated in the 18th century London. One of the first public relations Netherlands was Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire who heavily campaigned for Charles James Fox and his Whig Party. Public relations in the real meaning of the word, however dates only to the early 20th century. The first real public relations specialist was according to some is Ivy Lee (1877-1934), while the others see Edward Bernays (1891-1995) as "the father of public relations". (Newsom et al., 2004: 22).

Individuals and organizations use public relations to gain public favor or enhance reputation. Public relations rely on mass media and other communication tools to understand public sentiment and to disseminate information to the public successful public relations communication covers the five w's, who, what, when, where & why. Organizations often use the company website as a tool for communicating with the public, disseminating information about events, new services or other topics of public interest. In some cases, an area of the

website is specifically designated for PR communication and may include press releases, online press kits and other traditional PR tools in digital format.

### **1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The organization's manual clearly shows that the majority of the tax payer's society has insufficient awareness of their duty to pay taxes. They have no adequate knowledge about tax laws, directives and policies. This must be changed otherwise; lack of awareness will harm the revenue severely by increasing tax evasion and contraband activities.

To overcome this institutional problem by creating awareness or sharing knowledge achieved through communication, co-operation with each other to do things which we cannot do alone.

In this regard, has never done any research on communication practices or public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority and also it is not in the position to know the status of its target audience.

Today, PR is less about conveying information but it is about establishing and promoting partnerships within the community. Effective public relations ask for and receive information just as much as they transmit it.

Because today's public demands accountability, institutions have to provide ever more detailed information about their operations, policies and functions. Institutions must seek input stakeholders' when formulating their policies. Similarly, institutions must gain the support of the community and decision makers. Education is not the show in town and competition for adequate financing comes from numerous sectors of society. Effective communication and PR is critical in these undertakings.

In an educational environment PR has been defined as: A planned and systematic two-way process of communication intended to encourage public involvement and to earn public understanding and support for the institution. (Jefikins, 1988:1) Yet, PR is more than communications in that it is more about relationships with students, staff, parents, community, stakeholders, suppliers, Government, NGO's, that it is about provision of information. Therefore this study aims at evaluating effective communication as a public relations tool are very important for service rendering institutions for timely service delivery.

In designing communication strategy for taxpayers and institution together help for collecting the potential economy or revenues of the country. In the case of less or no participation or lack of communication of the customers and the organization both fails to meet their objectives. Lest this study examine the communication practices and strategies employed by Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.

#### **1.4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

##### **1.4.1. General objective**

The main purpose of this study is to explore the communication practices and strategies to public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.

##### **1.4.2. Specific objectives**

The study has the following specific objectives:

- A. To explore the communication practices and strategies employed by Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.
- B. To identify how the barriers of communication that influence on the department of public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.
- C. To identify to what extent the implementation of communication strategies of ERCA.
- D. To analyze the nature of the messages that reach to the target audiences.

#### **1.5. Research Questions**

- A) What communication strategies ERCA is currently exploiting in its organization?
- B) What are the communication barriers that hinder effective communication as a public relation tool?
- C) How far the communication approaches and content of messages employed are appropriate to the target population?
- D) What types of message are communicated and what is the nature of the messages?

## **1.6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of this study will be carried out at Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority at the Department of public relation. In addition, the researcher met the selected tax payers by the help of the managers of the four medium taxpayer's branch offices. The taxpayers of medium branch offices whose transferred from small tax payers' offices. The researcher studied "the Gebi Lelimat" newspaper's news and covers the contents of it.

## **1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The major importance of this paper is to identify the strengths and weakness of the public relations department of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. It helps to deliver a clear picture of the PR activities of the institution. This can be used as an input for public relations practitioners. The Information acquired from this thesis can be used by other researchers as a reference in the future. The findings of this study may help the top management and staff members of the Institution.

## **1.8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

It was a challenge for the researcher to make contact with some key informants for various reasons such as time inconvenience for interview, the taxpayers being skeptical on the part of the interviewee, while the researcher went through the investigation. But the researcher tried to convince them to speak to the topic of the study by letting them know that the research was for good reason and mutual benefit.

## **1.9. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The study has five chapters. The first chapter deals with introductory concepts such as, the background of the study, the problem and objectives of the study, its main significance and the scope, limitation of the research and organization of the study.

In chapter two of the thesis presents a brief theoretical framework in relation to the study. Theories and the views of different scholars, which are pertinent to the study, are explained in this chapter. Related studies have been made. Chapter three is entirely dedicated to the discussion of methods of data collection and analysis. Data presentation

and discussion follows this chapter under the heading of chapter four. The last chapter, chapter five is for the summary and conclusion of the findings of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This part attempts to present a brief theoretical framework in relation to the study. Theories and the views of different scholars, which are pertinent to the study, are explained in this chapter.

#### 2.1. HISTORY OF PUBLIC RELATION

The importance of this part of the literature review is to give background information to public relations, a profession and its practice that have great influence on the work of collecting, writing and publishing news stories and articles in newspapers and magazines or broadcasting them on the radio and television since its establishment. "Authors in who gives attention to the history of public relations (Bates, 2002; Newsom, 2004), says there is no adequate literature produced on the history of public relations. They said the literature is scattered and unorganized."

The profession of public relations lacks a serious, comprehensive history (Bates, 2002: 2).

As we have seen in the definition of public relations, the profession is involved in persuasion to promote the activities of its organization. Therefore, some scholars argue that persuasion, which most of public relations activity is based on is a very old practice. Therefore, they said there is no conceptual founder of public relations since persuasion is dating back to several thousands of years. Doug Newsom, Judy Vanslyke Turk and Dean Kruckeberg said in their book this is PR,

Public relations as a concept has no central, identifying founder, national origin or founding date because it focuses on efforts to influence-not only opinions but behavior. (Newsom et al., 2004: 22)

According to Newsom et al., persuasion is still the driving force of public relations, and modern public relations people use many of the tactics that have been used by the leaders of society for thousands of years to persuade.

Public relations are a planned persuasion to change public mind for future use. But public relations are not all persuasion.

Public relations probably has no single "founder," but many public relations practitioners in the United States see Ivy Lee as the first practitioner of a modern-style public relations practice (Newsom et al., 2004: 22).

On the other hand, the same writers said even though many Americans think that public relations evolved in the USA, and it is true that the United States has contributed greatly to public relations theory and practice, other regions have a long tradition of public relations practice with different forms or with different tactics. Newsom et al. say, Van Ruler and Vercic report that European public relations has existed for more than a century, with the Krups Company establishing a press relations department in 1870; the beginning of the practice in England was in the, 1920s, and the first departments appeared in the Netherlands at the beginning of the, 1920s, and the first departments appeared in the Netherlands at the beginning of the 20th century. (Newsom et al., 2004: 24)

The beginning of public relations is arguable as different countries compete for being the first practitioners though with different features. Citing Betteke Van Ruler and Dejan Vercic's work *The Bled Manifesto*, Newsom et al. (2004) say the Dutch have the oldest public relations professional association in the world, established in 1946. This is two years earlier than public relations Society of America (PRSA), founded in 1948. More of a curiosity, Chun-Ju Flora Hung, in his paper "public relations in China" presented at the pre-conference workshop of the conference of the International Communication Association cited in Newsom et al. says that public relations in China started thousands of years ago.

This shows that it is difficult to conclude where and when public relations started. The supporters of the notion that public relations started in the USA say the century turn around 1900 was the start of public relations.

In the, 1900s, public relations evolved from individual press agents and publicists to counseling firms that offered their services as experts in the field. The nation's first publicity firm, The Publicity Bureau, was founded in Boston in, 1900 by George V. S. Michaelis, Herbert Small, and Thomas O. Marvin. (Bate, 2002: 9) Cutlip (1994) also says the role of the Muckraking (crusading journalists of the early, 1900s in the US that promoting social justice by investigating wrongdoings of companies and government) was also great in promoting public relations. He indicates that the investigative works that the muckrakers did and their expose` were also the threat of organizations.

Due to this, various organizations started to show interest to hire professionals to win the public's trust and goodwill. As competition among different organization throughout the 1900s was fierce, the need for public relations practitioners became stronger.

There is term comparable with public relations in some foreign languages. Accordingly, many foreign practitioners have difficulty explaining the function of their compatriots. Nevertheless, public relation is being adopted abroad, and its value is slowly being recognized as an essential function of business, the profession, and government.

The center European - relations publics is the European federation of the national public relations associations of Belgium, France, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, and West Germany. The center has approved a code of ethics for public relations practitioners in Europe. (Frasier, 1985, p.138).

Public relations in Africa, the public relations society of South Africa were organized in 1957 in Port Elizabeth, Cape of Good Hope, with 22 members. An educational program was established in cooperation with the University Of Africa to train practitioners in public relations.

The South Africa public relations institute, Cape Town, a member of the international public relations association, is composed of public relations directors of government and private organizations in the republic of South Africa. The institute is seeking the recognition of public relations a profession by an act of parliament. Membership in the institute will eventually be granted only to those passing professional examinations of the British institute of public relations.

The first public relations course in East Africa was instituted by a public relations counsel firm in Nairobi Kenya in 1966, for representatives of business firms and government agencies of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania. (Frasier Moore, 1985, p.145).

But in Ethiopia the field of public relations is not well known and understood and the profession is not well treated. It is forced to be limited to works like protocol and publicity. Because of importance of public relations work research has been conducted.

## **2.2. PUBLIC RELATIONS' DEFINITION AND ITS FUNCTION**

Many people are confused about the meaning of public relations, and no uniform definition exists even among public relations practitioners. Meanwhile, some people are critical of what they presume public relations to be about. Nevertheless, some commonly held characteristics of public relations include two-way communication, research and strategic

planning, accuracy and honesty, and mutual benefits for both an organization and its public. (Smith, 2003 P.7).

As a profession, public relations is misunderstood or only partially understood. Scholars like Olufemi Onabajo (2006) and authors like Philip J. Kitchen (2004) contend that many people understand only parts of public relations. They claim the negative attitude towards the profession emanates from this half or part knowledge. In Phillip J. Kitchen's words,

For many clients and publics, PR is confused with the activities of publicity agents and celebrity party organizers. To others, it is nothing more than a by-word for media relations, an execution service rather than strategic consultancy. 'Frankly, most of us find the words public relations unhelpful,' said countrywide communications chairman Peter Hehir. One can debate it endlessly but it no longer means what it should mean. (Kitchen, 2004 p. 1)

This argument has also some truth in Ethiopian context. The first connotation that comes with the word 'public relations' to a layman and even to journalists and public relation officers themselves is the activity of publicity.

The major reason that writers attribute for this misunderstanding and confusion is that public relations is engaged in several activities. Olufemi Onabajo (2006 p.119) argues in his article 'Proactive corporate management and the dynamics of public relations':

The term public relations are widely misunderstood, and misused. Part of the confusion is due to the fact that public relations cover a very broad area. Depending on the context and one's point of view, it can be a concept, a profession, a management function, or a practice. (Onabajo, 2006, p.119).

Similarly, Phillip J. Kitchen (2004, p. 31) adds that there is a degree of confusion as to the activities and the parts that make up public relations. According to him, public relations have several activities that include publicity (press agency), advertising, public affairs, lobbying, issues management, financial PR and sponsorship.

As indicated above, public relations are not only engaged in publicity. In order to promote their organization's product or activities, public relations is also engaged in

managerial functions. As a management function, public relations involve responsibility and responsiveness in policy and information to the best interests of the organization and its publics (Newsom et al., 2004 p. 2).

In many organizations, the public relations office is arranged close to the management. The management informs the public relations office about new decisions reached, difficulties raised and solutions to curb problems. Similarly, the public relations office informs the management about the attitudes of their target publics. Scott M. Cutlip, Allen H. Center and Geln M. Broom maintain in their book *Effective public relations*:

As those in top management act and speak, so go the interpretations and echoes created by the public relations function. Thus, public is inescapable tied, by nature and by necessity, to top management, with public relations staff providing counsel and communication support. (Cutlip, 2006 p. 56).

The persuasion role of public relations is found in several definitions. In many occasions organizations need public relations to convince their target audience about their activities or products. This means that the information that public relations try to communicate has an objective and is directed to a specific goal. In her book *Public relations in business*, Jacquelyn Peake states,

Public relations are the planned persuasion to change adverse public opinion or to reinforce public opinion, and the evaluation of results for future use. (Peake, 1980p. 1)

Jacquelyn Peake indicates that the profession is a planned task that aims at persuading adverse public opinion. The definition shows that the works of public relations also focuses on changing the public's unfavorable opinion towards their organization. This includes when their organization faces various criticisms that negatively affects their activity, trust or good image. Thus the public relations practitioners have the responsibility to give information - and in many cases protecting their organization.

Other definitions of public relations raise an ethical dimension. Cutlip and Center state, *Public relations is the planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance, based upon mutually satisfactory two-way communication.* (Cutlip and Center, 1978).

This definition gives another insight of public relations, namely that the communication is not one-way. Public relations practitioners will not only communicate to the public, but must also listen to the feedback from the public.

Also, public relation departments are sometimes required to communicate internally with the organization. However, the focus of this research is external communication, and will not deal with internal communication within the organization.

In order to understand the media relation of public relations, it is helpful to see the major role of public relations. This leads us to what objectives public relations have. In general terms, the role of public relations is to change or reinforce the attitudes of the public positively towards its client. Whatever the term, the basic activity consists of communicating information about an organization or an individual in the best light (Mencher, 1996 p. 386).

In addition to put the organization or individual in the best light, public relations should build the reputation of the client in a sustainable manner. This is because image building is a long-term activity. The task is made more difficult because of competition with similar institutions and personalities.

The primary role of public relations is to manage a company's reputation and help build public consent for its enterprises. Today's business environment has become so competitive that public consent can no longer be assumed; it must be earned continuously. (Onabajo, 2006 p.119).

As already mentioned, public relations appears in different forms with different objectives. The most common kinds of public relations activities are performed for business and industry; government and public affairs; as well as non-profit, trade organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Because the main objective of this research is to explore how ERCA treats public relations information, and since the major public relations information used by the organization is governmental public relations, we will look closer at this type of public relations.

Government public relations are a critical link between the government bodies and the citizens. Scott M. Cutlip et al. state,

The diversity of technical skills, organizational goals, and specialized public activities of the function of government public affairs is far greater than of and/or traditional public relations practices. And the paramount difference is the public advocacy role played by government communicators to government decision makers. (Cutlip 2006p. 410)

The government has different bodies with different tasks. The public relations working on this organization is supposed to inform the public at large about the activities of the organization.

As we have seen, the role of public relations is to communicate the message of the client to the public. The purpose of public relations is to inform, shape opinion and attitudes, and motivate.

### **2.3. The Grunig and Todd Hunt models of public relations**

The four different models of public relations that Grunig and Hunt (1984) proposed are that the different models indicate how the different characteristics and purposes contribute to the kinds of public relations. Grunig and Hunt explained they chose the term 'models' to describe four types of public relations that have evolved through history. The models should be seen as abstractions.

Grunig and Hunt categorized public relations in four different models: Press Agent/publicity, Public information, Two-Way Asymmetric and Two-Way Symmetric models. They said although public relations developed as a persuasive communication function, not all of these modes use public relations for that purpose.

#### **2.3.1. The press agent/publicity model:**

Public relations serve a propaganda function in this model. In this model practitioners spread the faith of the organization involved, often through incomplete, distorted, or half-true information. Grunig and Hunt (1984) argue that not all public relations are persuasive.

### **2.3.2. Public-information model:**

Purpose here is the dissemination of information, and not with a persuasive intent. The public relations person functions essentially as a journalist in residence, whose job it is to report objectively information about his/her organization to the public.

### **2.3.3. Two-way asymmetric model:**

Practitioners of public relations have a function more like that of the press agent/publicist, although their purpose can best be described as scientific persuasion. They use what is known from social science theory and research about attitudes and behavior to persuade publics to accept the organization's point of view and to behave in a way that supports the organization. The press agent/ publicist's attempt at persuasion, in contrast, are more intuitive, seat-of-the-pants rather than scientific.

### **2.3.4. Two-way symmetric model:**

In this model practitioners serve as mediators between organizations and their publics. Their goal is mutual understanding between organizations and their publics. These practitioners, too, may use social science theory and methods, but they usually use theories of communication rather than theories of public relations.

It also shows where these models are practiced in today's public relations. Research is also fundamental to several groundbreaking models of public relations practice, including the open systems model and the two-way symmetrical model. The role of public relations should not be simply to deliver the organization's messages, at times referred to as an "inside-out" approach to communication (Gronstedt, 1997, p. 39). In the open systems model, public relations also takes an "outside-in" approach by communicating the beliefs, feelings, and concerns of key publics back to the organization (Gronstedt, 1997, p. 39). In the open systems model, organizations and their publics exchange information, and are influenced by each other. Research is critical for facilitating this exchange. It provides a means for the organization to scan the environment to identify key publics and issues early. Research uncovers potential areas of concern so that the organization can build relationships, develop programs and take corrective action to prevent small problems from becoming major issues (Broom & Dozier, 1990; Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2000).

The two-way symmetrical model of communication, first proposed by James E. Grunig, emphasizes that the organization and its publics should be engaged in an ongoing dialog to build mutually beneficial relationships. Part of that dialog includes the use of research. "With the two-way symmetrical model, practitioners use research and dialog to bring about symbiotic changes in the ideas, attitudes and behaviors of both the organization and its publics" (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 308). Further research is being done to measure relationships themselves and identify reliable indicators of good organization-public relationships. The following table shows that how these models differs the kinds of public relations as the purpose and nature of communication differs.

Model	Types of communication	Characteristics
1. Press agent or publicity	One-way communication	Uses persuasion and manipulation to influence audiences to behave as the organization desires.
2. Public information model	One-way communication	Uses press releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute organizational information. The public relations practitioner is often referred to as the in-house journalist.
3. Two-way asymmetrical model	Two-way communication (imbalanced)	Uses persuasion and manipulation to influence audiences to behave as the organization desires. Does not use research to find out how stakeholders feel about the organization.
4. Two-way symmetrical	Two-way communication	Uses communication to

model		negotiate with the public, resolve conflict and promote mutual understanding and respect between the organization and its stakeholders
-------	--	--

Table 1: James Grunig and Todd Hunt's Four Models of Public Relations (1984,p.28).

The press agent/publicity model came first, in the period from 1850-1900, immediately following the historical examples that we described as public relations-like activities. The public-information model came next, beginning about, 1900 and continuing as the major model of public relations until the, 1920s.

The two-way asymmetric model developed in the, 1920s. The two-way symmetric model came much later, in the, 1960s and 70s, and even today practitioners are only beginning to adopt it (Grunig and Hunt, 1984: 25).

#### 2.4. PERSUASION THEORY

Persuasion means different things to people. A lot of conflicting connotations revolve around the notion of persuasion, with subtle differences in how people interpret it. Various perspectives about persuasion exist, but for public relations writers, let's claim the following understanding: Persuasion is a process of communication that intends to influence people using ethical means that enhance a democratic society. (Smith 2003, p.46)

The other cognitive theory which has strong application to entertainment education strategy is persuasion theory. The focus of persuasion theory is the psychological characteristics that a person's perception of and response to messages. These include:

- Knowledge and skills;
- Attitudes towards behavioral and social issues;
- Predisposition or preferences;
- Beliefs and concerns about the behavior and its consequences; and
- Attitudes towards the source of the message.

There are two important concepts/factors that need attention in persuasion theory concerning influencing the audience - message factors and the source factors. Message factors are the characteristics of a message that make it appropriate and effective for a particular audience: how long or complex it should be, what language or vocabulary is best, in what order the messages should be presented, whether one side or both sides of an issue should be presented, how much repetition is needed to get the message across, and whether the message should use fear, humor, or logic to make its point (Fossard, 1996. xiii).

The message factors recall the differences of audience preferences for message style. This is to mean that there will not be a single choice for message style among the audience. Different audiences will have different preferences.

The other factor is the source factors which explain the type and characteristics of the source of messages. The characteristics of the message source can make messages interesting, relevant and persuasive for a particular audience. In drama, the character is the source who delivers the message. The following are the most influential source factors:

- Credibility - Is the character believable as the bearer of the message?
- Attractiveness- Is the character attractive or appealing?
- Similarity- Does the character have anything in common with the listeners?
- Authority and expertise- Does the character have the authority or expertise to be spokesperson for the promoted behavior? (Smith, 2003, p.46)

#### **2.4.1. Persuasion is a process of communication**

Public relations writers focus on communication, so the role of messages and feedback is important to us. Further, understanding communication as a process helps us look at persuasion as an ongoing series of messages and responses, part of the cycle of interaction between an organization and its many public. (Smith, 2003 p.46).

#### **2.4.2. Persuasion intends to influence people**

If the organization needs to profit by a deeper understanding of persuasion, we need to see it as being linked with people, our strategic public. In public relations, we are trying to provide information that will influence our public in some way or enhance our relationship with them. (Smith, 2003 p.46).

#### **2.4.3. Persuasion uses ethical means**

For the public relations writer, any attempt at persuasion must be based on solid professional standards. If communication becomes misleading, deceptive or manipulative – by intention or through negligence – it has moved beyond the boundaries of persuasion. For some people, persuasion has a tarnished image because subversive communication techniques occasionally have been used to manipulate an unknowing or gullible public. (Smith, 2003, p.46)

#### **2.4.4. Persuasion enhances a democratic society**

Philosophically and legally, organizations may try to persuade. In a democratic society, individuals and organizations enjoy the right of free speech that allows them to espouse a point of view, share it in the marketplace of ideas and attempt to influence others to adopt that point of view.

One of the basic roles of public relations people is to help organizations exercise this right. But people who receive an organization's messages have the freedom not to be persuaded. Public relations practitioners must uphold a person's right to ignore or reject our messages. (Smith 2003, p.46).

Communication that doesn't meet these criteria should not be called persuasion. If communication makes no attempt to influence, by definition it is not trying to persuade. If communication is unethical or immoral, it instead should be called propaganda, not persuasive communication. And if the goal of communication is not to enhance relationships within an open society, then it is self-serving, nonresponsive and involved in something other than persuasion. (Smith, 2003 p.46).

## 2.5. THEORY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations (PR) are the way organizations, companies and individuals communicate with the public and media. A PR specialist communicates with the target audience directly or indirectly through media with an aim to create and maintain a positive image and create a strong relationship with the audience. Examples include press releases, newsletters, and public appearances. (Grunig, 2002, P.309).

### 2.5.1. Public relation activities

Public relations practitioners concerned with reaching the minds of people, they must define specific audiences and address these groups in so far support is needed and can be won.

A public relations department work in close cooperation with all departments, effective public relations is impossible. These departments are mutually interested, in developing good relations: the public relations departments should maintain continuous relationships.

Public relations staff provides the communicating skills for effective stock holder communication (Moore, 1985, p.145).

Public relations management should carry out so many activities in order to accomplish its responsibilities and achievements. According to Jefkins public relations staff should participate in writing and distributing news release, photographs, interviewing management, and feature articles to the press.

Public relations staff is expected to edit and produce staff magazine or newspapers as well as external journals. Public relations works, monitor, administers, public opinion, and analyze an organizations relationship with public. In general, the main concern of public relations departments is to have a good relationship with the people inside and outside of an organization. (Moore, 1985 p.145).

Of all the sources public relations, by the very nature of their profession provide information that its organization need to impart. The public relations practitioner's job is to carry out the agreed PR programs, the aim being to gain maximum knowledge and understanding of the clients' or employee organization, products or services (Jenkins, 2006p. 48).

As we have seen, several scholars are criticizing the information of public relations as one sided and self-serving. They argue that this is because of their professional role and loyalty to their organization they represent. While a reporter is supposedly enslaved to the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, public relations must be enslaved to the client, the whole client and nothing but the client (Jenkins, 2006p. 48).

The claim is not only that public relations give information benefiting their organization. They also argue that public relations will manipulate the information to get the set goal by biasing the information.

Public relations, by its very nature, are intended to benefit those creating the message, whether the source is public or private. In the information marketplace, public relations manipulate the news by packaging information of the media with specific clients' interests in mind. There have been laudable uses of public relations, but on the whole the practice serves to flood the media biased news. (Dennis and Merrill, 2002: 174-175).

Because of public relations motive, the possibility that the information that they offer to the media might be biased or one sided would be higher. In some cases, the critics said they give another appearance to the reality. Some of the critics of public relations contend that the whitewashing by the public relations expert covers truths that often are better opened to the public (Mencher,1996p. 395).

### **2.5.2. PR and the World of Business**

The world of business is characterized by fierce competition and in order to win new customers and retain the existing ones, the firms have to distinguish themselves from the competition. But they also need to create and maintain a positive public image. A PR specialist or firm helps them both create and maintain a good reputation among both the media and the customers by communicating in their behalf and presenting their products, services and the overall operation in the best light possible. A positive public image helps create a strong relationship with the customers which in turn increase the sales. . (Grunig, 2002, P.311).

### **2.5.3. PR Tools and Techniques**

PR specialists and firms use a number of tools and techniques to boost their clients' public image and help them form a meaningful relationship with the target audience. To achieve that, they use tools such as news releases and statements for media, newsletters, organization and participation at public events conferences, conventions, awards, etc. PR specialists of course also utilize the Internet tools such as social media networks and blogs. Through the mentioned tools, PR specialists give the target audience a better insight into their clients' activities and products/services as well as increase publicity (Grunig, 2002, P.313)

### **2.5.4. PR and Propaganda**

Although Lee, Bernays and other PR pioneers such as Carl Byoir and John W. Hill played an important role in modern PR, they were also responsible for the profession's close association with propaganda by the public. As a result, their successors did not have an easy job in changing the profession's "bad" reputation and even today, PR is sometimes equated with propaganda (Grunig, 2002, P.320).

### **2.5.5. PR Services and its usual clients**

PR services are sought after by many organizations, companies and prominent individuals. A PR specialist communicates with the public and media in their behalf in order to present them in the best light. This helps their clients create and maintain a good reputation. But it also helps them stand out from the crowd and attract attention of both the public and media as well as create a two-way communication.

PR services are utilized by many organizations and individuals who want to create a better image of themselves in public. The most frequent clients of PR firms include:

Businesses; they utilize PR services to present their products/services and the way their firms work and of course, create a strong relationship with the customers and reach more potential buyers

Non-profit organizations; examples include charity organizations, schools, hospitals, etc. who use PR services as a part of fund-raising events and promotion campaigns

notable individuals; examples include celebrities who use PR services to communicate in their behalf with the media and their fans but PR specialists are also highly sought after by politicians who can succeed only if they have a good public reputation. (Grunig, 2002, P.321).

#### **2.5.6. Benefits of Using PR Services and how to utilize it**

PR specialists are professionals who have the knowledge and skills to communicate with the public and media. Many come from the lines of journalists and know exactly what it takes to attract public attention which is the key to success in the increasingly competitive business world. But they also know how to respond in critical situations and protect their clients' public image and reputation.

By helping create and maintain a good reputation in the public, PR specialists and firms play an important role in the overall success of their clients. For example, an effective presentation of the products/service significantly increases the sales by presenting them in a consumer-attractive way. Politicians, on the other hand, can count on support of their voters only if they have a good reputation.

Most organizations and individuals who decide to use PR services hire a PR firm or specialist only for specific tasks. Examples include presentations of a new product/service, communication with the public and media during political campaigns or fund-raising events, management of unpleasant situations and controversies, etc. But many also work with PR firms on a regular basis, while a growing number of companies and organizations have their own PR department (Grunig, 2002, P.321).

### **2.6. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS**

Communication is the process of exchanging information and ideas. In order to communicate it has to be clear and precise in ideas so that it is understood by others, and at the same time it should be able to understand others.

Since communication has to be two way, the practitioners find out what the public thinks or says about the organization.

There should be good image. According to Greener public relations practitioners have to plan their communication strategy and there are three strategies to follow such as: "First you

must define what to say, second, say it clearly and concisely, and then you must ensure that it has been understood by those whom it has been communicated. (Greener, 1991.p.25) “

It would be impossible to practice institutional public relations without the presence of systems of communication. It is extremely to achieve the kind of positive image of the public that adds up to positive successful public relations. Media is vital to the public relation activity. In general, the media can be used for two way communications by using media relation public relations can be establish good working relationships with the media professionals that lead them to a bright future.

## **2.7. CORPORATE COMMUNICATION**

Corporate communication has been defined by different authors and organizations in different ways emphasizing its different characteristics, features and aspects. For the purpose of this study, corporate communication is a planned and organized flow of information between the organization and its internal and external stakeholders to create and sustain awareness, interest, decision, action and feelings to enable the organization achieve its objectives and satisfy the stakeholders' need to know about the organization and its objectives and services. According to (R.K. Mahudar, 2005p.87) It has three major parts:

- Marketing communication which targets at the organization's communication with its existing and potential customers regarding the products and services of the organization.
- Public relations and publicity which aims at the general public, communities, various interest groups, government bodies, etc. to create favorable corporate image to ensure their support to and favorable relationship with the organization. Overall corporate image building is the expected end result, and
- Internal communication which mainly occurs among the organization's top management and its internal constituencies including units, groups and individual employees focuses on communicating the organization's plans, intentions, actions, changes, developments, etc. in the organization to facilitate understanding, motivation, unity, and maximum contribution from each and all.

It should be noted that corporate communication aims not only at communicating what the company wants its stakeholders to know and favorably influence but also satisfying the audiences' need to know about the different aspects of the organization.

Corporate communication is not an end in its own. It is derived from the strategic objective(s) of the organization in order to promote or help achieve it. The business objective, thus, gives rise to communication objectives which in turn determine the audience, the message and the channel(s) of communication. The objective, the audience, the message and the channels constitute the four pillars of communication the compatibility of which determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the corporate communication effort. The four pillars which constitute major part in the strategy formulation are briefly described as follows.

**i. The objectives**

The objectives of corporate communication is to favorably build positive image, influence the thinking, belief, attitude, behavior, relationship, action and reaction of the audience or stakeholders to whom the message is addressed or targeted.

While this is true for every communication effort, the specific objective of each communication activity varies. The objective of communication activity emanates from the company's specific business need(s) to communicate. It is clear that individuals, groups, or units in a company do not communicate for the sake of communication. There should always be an objective to communicate.

The objective of communication determines the: Audience, content, timing and channel (mix) of communication. For successful communication, the originator needs to have clarity of the communication objective(s). The communication objective needs to be clearly defined to serve as a reference in the preparation and process of communication and evaluation of results during and at the end of the communication process. The objective can be put on paper with clear outcome stated in measurable or quantifiable form. Routine informal communication activities may not require formal documentation of definition of objectives. Clarity of the objective(s) of communication in the minds of the originator of communication may suffice. However in both internal and external official business communication documentation of clearly defined objective is mostly necessary.

The first logical step in corporate communication is therefore defining the objective(s), and corporate communication objectives should be SMART, that is: Specific, Measurable, and Attainable, Result-oriented, and Time-limited

## **ii. The audience**

The audience is the person, group, unit, or people to whom the message is destined. The preparation of content and form of any message seriously takes the audience into account. Message should be prepared in such a way it would be understood as intended by the communicator by the audience which is an important prerequisite to achieve the intended objective (s).

For the communicator, knowing/understanding the audience is fundamentally important. There may be several different types of audiences each with their own likes, needs and abilities. The more the communicator knows its audience and what they need to understand its purpose of communication – the better are its chances to influence them. If the communicator doesn't see, appreciate and listen to its audience, the message will never reach them and influence their behavior. There could be primary and secondary audiences to a message. The communicator needs to take this into account in developing the communication strategy.

The audience in communication is what is otherwise called the stakeholders or specifically the target of the communication effort. The audience (stakeholders) with whom a company communicates (two-way) includes: Customers, Employees, shareholders, Management (all levels), Board of Directors, The public at large, Specific communities, Interest groups, Business partners, The media, Suppliers, Service providers (contractors), Relevant government, institutions and so on. (Golden Africa Capacity center PLC, CBE, 2013.p.7).

### **iii. The Message**

Defining the content and form of the message to be communicated is critically important for success in communication. Defining the content and form of the message, takes the audience and the channel options available into consideration.

Everyday tens of thousands of discrete communication activities are estimated to be performed and messages sent within a company or with stakeholders outside itself and vice versa. Such messages could be:

Between two or more individuals, or groups, or processes, or sub-processes, or branches, districts, etc. within the company. It could be downward, upward, lateral or diagonal along the company structure.

Between one unit of the organization and its employees, between an organ of the company and an external specific party (parties), between an organ of the company and the general public, Live and interactive (two way) or passive and one way, Long or short, Formal vs. informal and so on.

The content of the message emanates from the objective of communication. The audience's knowledge, background, the number, and geographic concentration of the audience and channel alternatives available also influence the form of the message. A message, depending on the objective, could aim at informing or creating awareness, educating, influencing action, decision, or change or maintaining perception (image), etc. Defining the content of the message is the role of the communicator. But the communicator should ensure that it surely serves the objective for which the communication was necessitated in the first place. (Golden Africa Capacity center PLC, CBE, 2013.p.7).

### **Iv. The channels of communication**

Channels of communication are the modes through which message reaches from the sender to the receiver. There are various alternative channels of communication. Depending on the effectiveness of the channel in reaching and persuading the audience, companies mostly use two or more channels of communication (mix) to communicate a specific message. The channel mix selection is a function of the objective, audience and the message,

Corporate communication is a specific type of communication that takes place among the different parts of an organization (individuals, groups and units) and between the organization and its external environment. It is known that organizations operate in an environment with which they have to constantly interact and communicate. The elements with which an organization communicates and is communicated include customers, shareholders, employees, suppliers, regulatory bodies, the community, specific interest groups, and the general public, etc. In order to succeed in achieving its objectives, it is not enough for the organization to communicate. As communication has become one critical success factor, organizations whether they are business, government or not for profit have to communicate effectively and efficiently. Nowadays, more than ever before, the world and each task environment are seeing how communication determines the fate of organizations. (Golden Africa Capacity center PLC, CBE, 2013.p.7).

## **2.8. THE ROLE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Communication strategies are plans for communicating information related to a specific issue, event, situation or audience. They serve as the blueprints for communicating with the public stakeholders, or even colleagues.

These communication strategies should outline the objective/goals of the communication, identify stakeholders, define key messages, pinpoint potential communication methods and vehicles for communicating information for a specific purpose and specify the mechanism that will be used to obtain feedback on strategy.

Communication strategy can help organize the information that needs to be communicated, identify concerns that may be raised, and ensure proper audiences are reached. The Purpose of the communication is the first step towards developing a communication strategy is to determine the reason why the communication is necessary and defining the desired objectives like providing information, increasing awareness and encouraging action. Once the reason for communicating is determined you can focus on defining the audiences you need to reach and how to reach them. One should ask, who is involved, is there an obvious audience, what information does each stakeholder need.

There is the identification of key messages, after identifying; there is need to determine the vehicles for delivering the messages. We have different stakeholder's needs so it's upon you to choose different options like, open days, electronic media, face to face meetings, focus group, public meetings, social media to workshop. The Communication methods are one should indicate the most appropriate channels for communicating with the audience which might include an e-bulletin, conferences, workshop, leaflets, press release, event or broader methods such as media and website.

Clampitt suggests The circuit approach where communication is seen as a two-way approach and which stresses 'feedback over response, relationship over content, connotations over denotations, and understanding over compliance'. The fundamental belief is that 'Understanding = Effective Communication' (as utilization of [www.http://the role of effective communication](http://www.http://the role of effective communication))

## 2.9. THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis provides a means to measure qualitative data quantitatively (Stacks, 2002, p.30). It systematically analyzes the content of communication to determine whether key messages are being communicated to key audiences. It can be used to analyze documents, news articles and television pieces, speeches, interviews, and focus group results. Possible measurements for content analysis include number of clips, total circulation of the publications, and number of inches or minutes, positive versus negative stories, audience type (key audience or general audience), product mentions, whether key messages appear, key media or general media, quality of the publication or program, and prominence of the company in the story (Gronstedt, 1997; Williams, 2003, p.19).

## 2.10. THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED UNDER COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

There are number of M.A theses which are conducted in similar field of study i.e. On Communication Strategies in different organizations. Among them the researcher tried to assess or review three theses, the first paper the researcher tried to review was **Temesgen Woyessa** (2007, p.70-71). His title was "Communication Strategies in Child Feeding with reference to essential service for health in Ethiopia (ESHE) operation areas: the case of Haramaya Woreda. "

The study primarily focused on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) System EHSE-Oromia was employing to create awareness of the community on child feeding. The major issues raised in the study were socio-cultural barriers that hinder particularly exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding, communication strategies employed to promote child feeding, appropriateness of contents of the messages intended to reach the target groups and lesson that could be learned from the project.

Data were collected through Qualitative type of research methods designed. Using semi-structured guiding questions for Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), individual in depth interview and participants' observation, the data were collected.

In rare cases informal discussions were also held to seal the gaps where the needs arisen. The study was based in Haramaya Woreda, East Hararghe Zone in Oromia Regional State. The qualitative data gathered from the two villages - Finkille and Tinike Peasant Associations (PAs) of Haramaya woreda were qualitatively analyzed and discussed based on the fundamental theories employed in the study: participatory, development and the two-step flow of communications and the research questions raised in the study.

Accordingly, the study indicates that the major communication strategies exploited by ESHE-Oromo and most favored by the community was interpersonal communication. In this study the communication strategies employed by an international NGO, ESHE-Oromia to promote child feeding. The study particularly paid attention to the Communication approaches that ESHE-Oromia used to promote child feedings.

To explore the communication strategies, the study entirely employed a qualitative research method. Accordingly, the major instruments used for data collection were semi-structured focus group discussions, in-depth interviewees with key informants and participants' observation. Informal discussions were also at some points exploited to seal the possible gaps.

Though three theories were raised in the theoretical part, the study primarily exploited participatory communication approach; development communication theories and the two-step flow hypothesis in their order of relevance to the context of the study areas form the theoretical framework.

The research work is similar with Temesgen Woyesa, in which the type of research methods designed both is qualitative, individual in depth interview and participant observation, Temesgen used semi- structured for focus group discussion, I didn't use semi-structured form but individual in-depth interview are the same.

Different in theoretical frame work, I used in my paper two theories were raised in the theoretical part; the study primarily exploited persuasion theory; public relation theory to the context of the study areas form the theoretical framework.

**Tinbit Amare**, (2010p.32) the title of the study was an assessment of the communication strategies used by faith based organizations on the use of anti-retro viral treatment (art): the case of Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

The study used qualitative method which includes in-depth interview, focus group discussion and Document review. In general both document review and the qualitative approach were applied to generate primary and secondary information related to the subject area. The document review mainly focused on literatures at global, regional and national levels on the use of ART, traditional medicine and communication methods.

The data is collected from two holy water site: Entoto Mariam church and Urael church. The data is collected from four target groups which include: - Religious leaders, People Living with HIV (Who are taking ART with tsebel and who stopped taking ART after they started tsebel), Community leaders and Actors (Organizations who are working on HIV and related issues). The theoretical frame work she used the social Influence theory, the diffusion of innovation theory.

The data collection method of this paper and Tinbit's paper used were qualitative method which includes in depth interview.

Another research conducted under communication strategies was (**Getachew Tilahun Wakenie's** paper on June, (2009,) his title of study was Communication Strategies to Influence Audience Behavior.

This study examined the effect of road traffic safety radio programs on road use behavior of audiences and the communication strategies being employed to achieve this purpose. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were chosen as methods of inquiring for this study.

To collect data through a questionnaire for the quantitative survey, a total sample of 180 respondents from two Kebeles of Kirkos Sub-city in Addis Ababa, the study area, were contacted mainly through multi-stage sampling that combines random sampling and stratified sampling. The qualitative approach employed in-depth interviews with 13 audiences and road safety experts, text analysis of six months' road traffic safety radio programs, and observation of commuters' actual road use behavior focusing on whether pedestrians use zebra markings when they cross streets.

The analysis of data collected revealed that the majority of the respondents are aware of the prevalence and preventability of road traffic injuries. As to the Medias' role in awareness raising and causing behavior change among the public, there is a significant effort of coverage, but because they do not base their efforts on theoretically and practically recommended BCC theories, and due to the fact that the mediated efforts are not backed up by interpersonal communication, it is revealed that actual road use behavior has not yet met expectations or what it is claimed to have been. The theoretical framework that Getachew Tilahun used were Social marketing theory, advocacy Communication, media effects theories.

Generally, it has been found essential to review others theses; the researcher has learnt more from the qualities of others work. The researcher found, it is common to use in-depth individual interview method in studying communication strategies.

The qualitative research paradigm has been used as a method of study. Accordingly, in-depth interviews were conducted to explore audience reactions to local programs. The in-depth interviews were equally or even more important as they helped the researcher understand how the interviewees make sense of the study. It has been discussed elsewhere in this thesis; in-depth interviews are an appropriate tool in giving the human face to research problems.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. REASERCH METHODS

The researcher uses qualitative research method. The qualitative method comprising an assessment of communication practices and strategies to public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority and it can be accustomed to social change, sequence of events and behavior.

Qualitative researches are more appropriate for exploring the variation and diversity in any aspect of social life. In studying values, beliefs, understandings, perceptions, meanings and the like, qualitative study designs are more appropriate as they provide immense flexibility. Qualitative research is suitable for this study as it involves with the diversify community and dig out the understanding, beliefs and values of them (Kumar, 2011 p.47).

Therefore, as qualitative research methods are a powerful means of gaining an in-depth, holistic understanding of the relationship between international culture and communication from the perspective of those inside a society. Moreover, they state that most qualitative investigations are carried out in people's natural environments, such as where they socialize, in their offices, at public meetings and events, or even in people's homes.

In order to meet the objective of this research, the researcher has customized this approach to explore the appropriate communication practices and data to be collected in the organization. In addition to that the researcher opt a qualitative approach using in depth interviews conducted with key informants to find out the required information in details that help to understand the behavior prevailing in ERCA.

Furthermore, in designing this research priority was given to qualitative method because the study is an explanatory. In support of this ( Holland and Campbell2005, p.5) state, "While quantitative research prioritizes descriptive, analytical breadth of coverage, qualitative research is noted, above all for its explanatory power and for the richness and depth of information it generates. Rather than standardizing to describe the norm, qualitative research

seeks to explain differences." Moreover, since this study entirely employed qualitative research method.

### **3.2. DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS**

The researcher used two methods to collect data: In-depth interviews and the ERCA database. The major data collection is in-depth interviews, in order to get adequate information about how ERCA processes public relations information and its practices of communication. It also used ERCA's news of "Gebi Lelimat "Newspapers "news" database, a one year period for the printed news of "Gebi Lelimat "newspaper. It was very necessary to read the entire news of Gebi Lelimat newspaper over the one year period. The public relations officers that produced the news were copied and documented. The researcher then divided the thirty four public relations readymade produced news was in different folders for further analysis.

#### **3.2.1. IN DEPTH INTERVIEW**

Another Research technique employed in this research was in-depth individual interview. As previously indicated, the aim of this study is to find out the extent to which ERCA's communication practices and strategy to public relation. Interviewing directors and communication experts/public relation officers, tax payers was found to be the best method to achieve it.

The interviewees (the director, deputy director and public relation officers), are the ones who meet public relations job on daily bases. Directors have a decisive role in editing newspaper, radio and television program articles and news, while public relation officers produce radio and television programs and news. Since directors and public relation officers might have different experiences, they need to be interviewed and asked follow-up questions independently.

The tax payers are the target audiences of the organization. For the sake of this study, they are selected by the managers of the branch offices. The procedures of selecting the tax payers were for having better articulation during discussions and with the assumption of having depth knowledge of the issues under discussion. Therefore, the researcher prefers in-depth interviews with ERCA heads of public relations department, public relation officers and

selected tax payers. The major reason behind employing these levels was due to the fact that ERCA works closely with taxpayers.

Intensive and well performed in-depth interviews provide detailed background about the reasons why respondents give specific answers. It elaborates data concerning respondents' opinions, values, motivations, recollections, experiences, and feelings (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003 p. 127).

In-depth interviews are more detailed; and as (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003 p. 127) argue, when compared to traditional survey methods, intensive in-depth interviews provide more accurate responses on sensitive issues.

Generalization is sometimes considered as contrary to the nature of in-depth interviews, but the researcher in this study has increased the sample size to get a broader picture of the situation.

### **3.2.2. PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS**

A systematic observation was intentionally conducted to get the inner feelings of the subjects or units of the study. "Observation is not simply a question of looking at something and then noting down 'the facts'. Observation is a complex combination of sensation (Sight, sound, touch, smell and even taste) and perception" (Gray, 2004p. 238).

Even if I am an employee of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority, the research conducted about the Public relation of ERCA was objective and it is free of bias, in this research it is also an attempt was made to establish a rapport for participant observation by openly telling them the objectives of the research and the beneficiaries of the final research outcomes.

Because of they are my work mates, friendly gatherings and entertainments in local refreshment centers such as cafes and tearooms were found to be convenient and safe settings for the data collection through participant observations.

The researcher observes that there is information gap between ERCA and tax payers. Even if the organization has its own tools like "Gebi lelimat "radio program, television program, "gebi lelimat "Newspaper, brochures, fliers, bill boards to reach the large audiences.

Gray (2004) also further states that observation involves the systematic viewing of people's actions and the recording, analyzing and interpreting of their behavior. There are two opposing views regarding observation. Some scholars support overt type of observation and others are against it.

However, (Gray, 2004p.239) says there can be no hard and fast rules about how rapport is established since this is very much depend on the interactions between the researcher and those in the field setting. But being honest, friendly and open is probably the best place to start.

### **3.3. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

Even if ERCA has more than thirty branch offices in Ethiopia; most of the interviewees (heads of public relations and experts) were selected from the main office found in Addis Ababa. The tax payers are selected from four branch offices, western Addis Ababa medium tax payers branch office, eastern Addis Ababa medium tax payers branch office, Addis Ababa medium tax payers no.1 branch office, and Addis Ababa medium tax payers branch 2 office that are highly operational. This is mainly because of time limitation, and is not thought to have any significance influence on the data collected.

In depth interviews were administered on three groups of information respondents; Among communication experts in the head office the researcher selected, 1 head of public relation department, 1 deputy head of public relation, 3 public relation officers / communication experts, 3 team coordinators and 5 selected tax payers were interviewed individual in depth interview category.

Purposive sampling was used that individuals are handpicked to be participants because they have certain characteristics that are believed to make them especially good sources of information Orcher, (2005 p.100).

The purposive sampling (judgmental sampling) tried to be representative of all actors who engage in the information gathering and writing process. This includes heads of public relation of the organization (director/deputy director, public relation officers/communication experts, both women and men, selected tax payers. Stratified purposive sampling was used for each of the above categories. Orcher (2005, p. 103) states

that in order to stratify, subgroups of interest in the population must first be identified. Then participants from each subgroup must be selected so that all subgroups are represented in the sample. In other words, stratification is used to ensure that all important subgroups are included in the sample.

### **3.4. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE**

Communication processes can be managed (they are independent variables), and processes that facilitate dialogue among managers and publics also can contribute to managing organizational behaviors –although public relations people cannot manage organizational behaviors by themselves. Dialogue among managers and publics, in turn, can produce long-term relationships characterized as communal relationships that result in higher levels of the indicators of the quality of a relationship ( Grunig & Huang, 2000; Grunig & Hung, 2002p.7) have identified and defined –trust, mutuality of control, commitment, and satisfaction. Relationships also are affected much more by the behavior of management than by one-way messages sent out by public relations or advertising people.

The independent variables, therefore, are communication activities conducted by public relations departments and management behaviors that result from strategic decisions. The key dependent variable is relationships.

Relationships do influence dependent variables farther down the causal chain, such as reputations, images, attitudes, and brands. But these variables also are affected by other variables outside the control of public relations –such as financial markets, the state of the economy, or corporate behaviors over which public relations has little influence. (Grunig & Huang, 2000; Grunig & Hung, 2002p.7)

Data analysis in qualitative studies is done early in the collection process and continues throughout the project (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003: 111). Qualitative researchers use an inductive method: Data are collected relevant to some topic and are grouped into appropriate and meaningful categories; explanations emerge from the data themselves (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003: 111).

The coding of the messages to create categories of analysis follows the common system used in content analysis studies. The coding considers the theme, sources, nature, and forms of the messages. Under each category, the data gathered through participant observations and interviews were systematically presented and analyzed to yield justifiable generalization of the study. The key categories are:

The nature of relationship among ERCA public relations practitioners is one of the three major thematic categories that this study would discuss. Public relations the only way to information in government offices and its impact on program production; as well as media discussion with public relations are the sub-categories of this thematic category.

The second thematic category concerns how ERCA communication experts process the public relations information. The sub group in this category is internal problems. The internal problems consist of lack of professionalism.

The third major thematic category concerns, the findings will be presented, illustrated and to add proof or certainty to an account by questions arising from the in-depth interviews with the director and deputy director of public relation of ERCA, communication experts/public relation officers and selected tax payers. The interpretation and discussion will be guided by the objectives of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter a big effort is made to present and analyze the data collected relating to the theories discussed in the review of related literature in connection with research questions and the objective of the research.

The discussion with all parts focused on communication practices and strategies employed by Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. As clearly stated in chapter one the objective of the study is to explore the communication practices and strategies of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.

The researcher findings' in the study are presented and resulted from the following methodological approaches, i.e. in depth interview, ERCA's data base and participant's observation.

What follows is the analysis of responses given by the public relation officers/communication experts of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. General information about respondents obtained from the interviews indicates that the total numbers of the communication experts /public relation officers in the department are 35; but the exact response rate was 30 and the numbers of women are 13 and the numbers of males are 17. Five respondents did not participate effectively. Among 30 PR officers 8 of them were selected for in-depth interviews. The selection was made by the heads of the department that the experts having better articulation during discussions and with the assumption of having depth knowledge of the issues under discussion.

Table 1:- 4.2.0:- Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	56.6
Female	13	43.3
Total	30	99.9

The issue of gender was important in the study as it would indicate whether there was gender balance in the responses given. On gender the analyses of the findings were as follows:-

According to table 1 the total number of males who responded were 56.6 % while female were 43.3% from the study it can be concluded that the number of men exceeds the number of female experts.

**Table 2: - 4.2.1. Age of the respondents**

Age category	Frequency	Male	Female	Percentage
16 – 25 years	2	0	2	6.6
26 – 35 years	14	9	5	46.6
36 – 45 years	4	3	1	13.3
46 – 55 years	9	5	4	30
Above 55 years	1	0	1	3.3
Total	30	17	13	99.83

The analysis of the age was as follows: -

Table 2. Shows that 2 public relation officers, their age category was from 16 – 25 years, were comprise of 6.6 % were females. Their age categories from 26 – 35 years of age were 9 males and 5 females they are 14 and the percentages was 46.6 %. The numbers of age groups from 36-45 years of age were 3 males and 1 female they are 4 public relation officers the percentage was 13.3. Another age category from 46-55 years was 5 males and 4 females they are 9 and the percentage was 30%.Above 55 years 1 female and the percentage was 3.3. Therefore, the study can be concluded that who responded the question from the age group was (26 – 35) years were the majority group.

Table 3:- 4.2.2. Level of Education

Level of education	Frequency	Male	Female	percentage
Primary	0	0	0	0
Secondary	1	1	-	3.3
College	4	2	2	13.3
University	25	19	6	83.3
Others	0	-	-	0
Total	30	22	8	99.9

From the analysis of the educational level of respondents the findings were as follows:-

Table 3 shows that the level of education of the communication officers of public relation department of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. According to the analysis, it was clear that most of the public relation officers were university graduates with a percentage of 83.3%, 19 communication experts are males, while 6 communication experts are females. 2 males and 2 females College graduates were 13.3%. Secondary school graduate was only 1 male with 3.3%. This implies that there is high level of literacy.

Table 4:- 4.2.3. Area of specialization

Area of specialization	Frequency	male	Female	percentage
Language and Literature	9	8	1	30
Journalism and Communication	6	5	1	20
Social sciences	12	5	7	40
Others	3	2	1	10
Total	30	20	10	100

This data tells us that the majority of PR Officers (PROs) are qualified (first degree level) the respondents (30%) studied language and literature, 8 of them are males and 1 female. While 12 of them (40 %) majored in social sciences, 5 of them are males and 7 of them are females. Only 6 of the PR officers (20%) have studied journalism and Communications, 5 of them are

males and 1 female. 3 communication experts (10%) majored in other areas of study like computer science, natural sciences, and also none of them has B.A. in public relation, therefore, the data tells us that only few of the Public Relations officers studied journalism and communications. The majority of public relation officers' area of specialization is in social sciences.

Table 5:- 4.2.4. Experience as communication /public relation officer

Experience as public relation officer	Frequency	male	Female	percentage
1- 2 years	11	5	6	36.6
3-6 years	8	4	4	26.6
7- 10 years	3	2	1	10
More than 10 years	8	7	1	26.6
Total	30	18	12	99.8

As regards the experience of PROs, 11 in number, (36.6%) have 1-2 years of Experience as a PRO, while 8 of them (26.6%) have worked 3-6 years. Three (3) PR officers (10%) have 7-10 years of experience 8 PR officers (26.6%) worked for more than 10 years in the field of public relation. This data tells us that most of the PROs haven't good experience in the area of public information in Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.

### 4.3. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The ERCA believes that the public should be made to have a greater knowledge and understanding to the adverse effects of the evasion of tax and contraband. Education is necessary to infuse in the hearts and minds of the citizens the necessity for proper respect of customs law and to let them stand against evasion of tax and contraband.

To meet this objective the ERCA established the education and communication services dealing with collection, organization and dissemination of information through different electronic and print media.

Randolph indicates that how public relations need media to transmit its message. This is because Media has the potential to reach millions of people in very short period of time.

In addition to that, media has the potential to carry the message of public relations information regardless of space and infrastructure impediments that it is hard and costly for public relations. Dennis L. Wilcox (2005) states the role of media in communicating message as a cost effective method.

The media, in all their variety, are cost-effective channels of communication in an information society. They are the multipliers that enable millions of people to receive a message at the same time. Through the miracle of satellite communication and the Internet, the world is a global metropolis of shared information. (Wilcox, 2005: 306).

Therefore one could easily understand how the work of public relations would be negatively affected if its relationship with media is bad. This means that if their relationship with the media is poor, public relations face problems in reaching the public at large. As a result of that amount of news coverage about their organization would be lessen. Good working relationships with media personnel are always important for smooth functioning, but they are particularly crucial when they can facilitate, impede or even destroy a public relations program (Newsom et al., 2004: 276).

The claim is not only that public relations give information benefiting their organization. They also argue that public relations will manipulate the information to get the set goal by biasing the information.

Public relations, by its very nature, are intended to benefit those creating the message, whether the source is public or private. In the information marketplace, public relations manipulate the news by packaging information of the media with specific clients' interests in mind. There have been laudable uses of public relations, but on the whole the practice serves to flood the media biased news. (Dennis and Merrill, 2002: 174-175).

Because of public relations motive, the possibility that the information that they offer to the media might be biased or one sided would be higher. In some cases, the critics said they give another appearance to the reality. Some of the critics of public relations contend that the

whitewashing by the public relations expert covers truths that often are better opened to the public (Mencher, 1996: 395).

### **Electronics media**

Electronic media is different from print media. Nowadays it has become a very effective way of reaching the public. It is the fastest way of communication. By using electronic media one can reach the world. Generally, the mass can be reached by means of electronic media that convey public relation content the major purpose which is to influence public opinion. Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority use electronic media to reach its target audience. Such as outsourced radio and television program.

### **Radio broadcasting**

Radio is a primary medium in the country that has a better outreach in rural areas. There are radio stations with different coverage capacities established at federal and regional levels. They produce and disseminate programs in local languages, focusing on development and socio economic and political issues. Radio station at federal level are National radio Ethiopia, radio Fana, Fana F.M 98.1, F.M 97.1 etc.

### **Radio Ethiopia**

Radio Ethiopia broadcasts Gebi lelimat radio program in Amharic languages 30:00 minutes Wednesday every week from 7:30 -8:00 morning and as well as in F.M 97.1 Friday morning from 8:30 - 9:00. Radio Ethiopia and Fana F.M relay stations in different regions that transmits program in different languages like Amharic, oromiffa, Afarigna, Somali, etc.

### **Radio Fana**

Radio Fana is a nationwide broadcasting service. It transmits program in different languages by different regions.

## **Ethiopian broadcasting corporation (EBC)**

From research conducted by EBC professionals EBC covers about 47 percent of the country. It transmits program in different languages. Gebi Lelimat T.V.program disseminated in prime hour time every Sunday from 1:30 – 8:00 afternoon

As above mentioned ERCA had different communication tools or devices to reach the target audiences by electronic and print media.

### **Print media**

It has also prepared a number of magazines and brochures on various topics and distributing them in the public is the other media that the department is using. The organization publication magazine also called “Gebi Lelimat “it is published twice a year. And the Newspaper also entitled “Gebi Lelimat “published every month, because of Customs is an international organization. The magazine is published by using two languages (It is bilingual): it is written in Amharic and English languages and it contains news and articles that elaborate the authority’s activity and some slogans of the organization.

- Tax for national development
- Tax is a key for development
- Timely and proper declaration of tax is a sign of civility
- Pay your taxes today for a better tomorrow.

In addition, the publications offer an opportunity as the source of information to the top management and its consultants to promulgate new tax laws such as, income tax, value added tax, excise tax, and turn over tax in detail and for further elaborations of policies and explanations why they were adopted. The brochures are also used for placement of mission statements, objectives and duties of the organization respectively.

#### **4.4. THE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF “GEBI LELIMAT” NEWSPAPER’S NEWS**

Among the tools of media to reach the target audiences of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority, Newspaper is the one it plays significant role. The researcher tried to analyze the messages of ERCA’s one year “Gebi Lelimat” Newspapers’ news from July 2015 – June 2016 to show the nature of the messages that reach to the target audiences.

Among more than 34 stories collected for this study, samples believed to be adequate enough to serve the purpose of the study were selected and interpreted, so as to maintain readability of the report. Representative stories were selected for each category according to their ratio and relevance to the issues raised.

##### **4.4.1. Presentation and interpretation of Sourced messages**

The presentation and interpretation of “Gebi Lelimat Newspapers News may be of paramount importance for the organization. The organizations messages that circulated to the head office, the regions and branch offices play a pivotal role to educate the taxpayers. However, it is difficult to incorporate all duties/tax messages conveyed in these media in a study of limited space, making selection and analysis of representative samples may be inevitable. For the purpose of this study, therefore, only sample texts of taxes, contraband and other messages that are performed in Amharic were selected and analyzed.

The examination focuses on the major tax issues raised in the print media and on how people communicate them. For ease of understanding, messages contained in the source media are categorized into different themes. Moreover, the types of news items covered, purpose of the the messages, sources of the messages, of the communication are evaluated under each subsection of the study.

This section contains presentation and analysis (discussions) of the findings of qualitative data, based on the objective of the study. Then, the results of the study were discussed, analyzed and interpreted.

#### **4.4.2. Types of news items covered**

As indicated the types of news items which were covered during the given sample period. As these finding shows, from the total of 34 on printed news items, 3 service delivery, 2 Revenue collection, 4 customs issues, 12 domestic taxes/duties, 6 contraband, 3 good governance, 1 corruption issues were covered.

As this finding also indicates, the news covered concerning domestic taxes/duties is high and it is out of the whole printed in "Gebi Lelimat" newspaper in the mentioned sample. It indicates that the corruption issues were covered in a minimal rate.

Interviewed team leader 1 and communication officer 3 didn't deny the significance of the taxes. All of them gave similar responses with this regard. They argued that taxes and duties are crucial to the development of the country and its coverage given to it was good.

As the two respondents (communication officer 1 and 2) also said, as the media is the institutional media giving emphasis to every policy of the institution is unquestionable. Thus, the media have a responsibility to cover and disseminate to the public following every activity which is done by the institution.

However, as one of interviewee (communication officer 5) stated, there were the public relation officer performs his or her professional duty determines to a significant extent the quality of the information the public gets from the press.

Team leader 5 and communication officer 4 additionally described that, there was no deep attention given to the taxes issues comparing to others issues before. These issues were used to be reported as any simple issues rather than as a major national agenda. But as they added, currently this issue has been given due attention by the media than other issues.

#### **4.4.3. Purpose of the messages**

Basically, in reporting news, media have their own goals to select different issues. Therefore, what were the major ideas behind the reported news? Was it to inform? To educate? Or to entertain? The purpose or central message of media can be massive by nature. Media can inform and raise awareness in the society. It is aimed to increase people's participation and

community mobilization. Media also support the public exposing the wrong doings in the community through investigation.

Besides, media can entertain the audiences and through this it can motivate and encourage the community to decision making and action. All of these are among the aim or central goal of media while reporting several issues.

From the total collected taxes /duties, and customs stories, nearly half of the taken sample were emphasized on providing information i.e. out of 34 news items, 28 of them had informational goal. Following to informational purpose, 5 news items had educational aim. There is no entertaining news item. From the whole printed news of the sample, all of them didn't show the feature of creating motivation or mobilization and no investigative reporting.

#### **4.4.4. Sources of the messages**

Sources are an integral part of news reporting (Stephen and David, 2000p.12).It is a backbone of media organization. From sources that media can get information to cover different stories. Different sources provide media with different opinions, facts and attitudes.

In gathering information media can get information from various sources and use these sources to maintain the balance and credibility of the information.

At the first level, a large number of stories on taxes/duties issues were accessed from ERCA's higher officials, another source of the organization was experts. Experts became the sources in the level of organizational sources on taxes/duties issues. Different documents like laws, regulations, proclamation, and directives were used as sources in a few numbers. Another sources also obtained from organizations during various workshops, meetings, conferences and while higher officials delivered speeches.

#### **4.5. Activities of communication officers of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority**

Communication should be symmetrical. There must be sender and receiver as well. And symmetrical system allows the feedback. Communication shouldn't be one way. Therefore, ERCA find out the feedback of its customer by doing the survey study. Totally Public relation department of ERCA needs a two way communication channel and communication officers must be a professional officer.

In the basis of personal observation the public relation department performs giving press releases of the Authority sending to the media organization, produces T.V and radio programs, organize with different departments whenever meetings, conferences are held. And also the public relation officers make a contact with concerned body as well as that have a direct relationship with Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority.

In addition, the public relation officer serves as a bridge between the internal and external public of the organizations. Public relations employee should be honesty, for the purpose of getting rid of conflict, antagonism, misconception, lack of comprehension between the organization and the public. This resulted totally removing of the wrong picture of the organization by the public. The employees of public relation of ERCA should solve the problems form an appropriate communication that helps to achieve the objectives of the organization.

### **The public relation profession in ERCA**

H, 1 said that:-

The public relation profession needs skill and education. The public relations officers / communication experts, lacks professionalism. He said most of the working communication experts have no formal journalism education.

H, 1 head of **public relation** added that

ERCA understands this difficulty and that the organization tries to Address Public relation officers face and his organization try to address the problem by sending its experts for training. "We give short-term in service trainings for our communication experts / public relation officers."

### **Target Audiences of the organization**

PRO, 3: states that

The community of an organization widely depends on the size and nature of the business. The customers of the organizations are, importers, exporters, private

limited companies (PLC), individual traders, (business men), employees, investors, transistors, government etc.

The publics of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority are society at large who are supposed to pay taxes.

As the Authority runs complex activities and supervises the revenue collecting offices, it has contacts with many publics with various interests. As it could be observed in the five year strategic plan of the Authority, the public of the organization are divided in to two groups i.e. internal and external.

The internal publics include members of top management, Employees of the Authority and revenue collecting sectors.

External publics, on the other hand comprises taxpayers, chamber of commerce's, the public sector donors and AID organizations, public sector organizations and development enterprises, regional parliaments and prime minister office. The organization has also international public who go in and out through the Ethiopian Customs Authority, which is part of the organization and the Ethiopians Diaspora. Therefore, the public relation department of the Ethiopian Revenue and Customs Authority tries to communicate with all its numerous internal and external publics. The main communication tools that the department has used to reach its publics are "Gebi lelimat "Radio and Television programs. It was collected public opinion on the programs, transmitted through these media with selected tax payers.

#### **4.6. The communication activities of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority**

##### **The communication activities of ERCA**

**H, 1, emphasized that**

The major key works of communication practices of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority is to implement awareness creation programs to promote a culture of voluntary compliance of taxpayers in the discharge of their tax obligations; and to prevent illegal trade and contra band.

To achieve this major activity of the public relation department of ERCA, are planned to be performed in 2000 E.C. time. The communication activities each year are:

- ✚ Producing and editing script for “Gebi Lelimat “radio and T.V. program to educate and to inform the public.
- ✚ Publishing magazines, brochures, Newspaper and other publications.
- ✚ Organizing meetings, conferences and taking minutes on each spot.
- ✚ To make aware of students about tax, contraband or illegal trade and related issue in different high schools in Addis Ababa by establishing question and answer.
- ✚ Producing press release and advertising and sending them to the concerned media organizations.
- ✚ Translating different materials that are used for web page loaded guide books, directives, related activities concerning the institution.
- ✚ Celebrating about duty/tax day.
- ✚ Over all the Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority Education and communication department familiarize the organizations activity by using electronic, print, and internet.

Therefore, the principles of public relation activity would require more work to be done. The mere reason is that the efficient and full public relation work makes control of public easy and major and public relation work is essential in order to bring attitudinal change being aware of the advantage of paying taxes.

### **Developing credibility**

H, 1 said that:

We also work to make tax payers reach common understanding with the organization. We cannot work these common things separately. At least we need information to achieve them. If there is an information gap, we cannot build the image of the institution and make people reach in one point on major institutional issues. This would be done if we inform what is done in the institution. We have to inform failure stories as we do success ones to be credible.

## **The media to reach the target audiences**

H, 2 states that:-

From mass media, radio is a priority medium in the country. This is because, the availability of the infrastructure including radio receivers and its coverage to grass root population is relatively better than television and print media. Therefore, it is appropriate to use intensively the radio networks for educating taxpayers. It is also important to utilize the upcoming radio program in different regions.

TL, 2: added that

Radio and Television and print are very crucial for the successful implementation of taxpayer education strategy because of their reach. The media influence different target audiences particularly in urban areas Taxpayer strategy has to be supported widely by the mass media available to facilitate and speed up the implementation of the tax program in the country.

Audio visual and print materials, including audio and video cassettes, flip charts, posters and leaflets are important educational tools. The impact of print and audio visual materials depends on their quality, quantity and effective distribution.

Therefore, in order to benefit from the advantage of multimedia approach, the strategy focuses on the above mentioned channels to be used selectively in support of mass media, group media and interpersonal communication. To this effect, taxes Authorities at different level of the region are encouraged to use publications and audio visual materials of their institutions for disseminating relevant messages.

## **The major challenging problems in communicating the target audience**

TL, 1:

One of the external difficulties mentioned by a Customer support team leader what he said is that it is quite different from Addis Ababa situation the distance and poor infrastructure in regional branch office.

**PRO, 1:-** said,

The regional branch offices provided with different information about regional branch's activities. In order to get the information from their sources, the poor infrastructure and the long distance makes it difficult, he said:

**PRO, 2:** added that

"Transportation, inaccessibility, far distance and low infrastructure are the major impediments to get regional ERCA's branch activities information."

**TL, 3** point out that

The other methods of communication used in the organization to reach the mind of the tax payers is that Conducting meetings / forum for the tax payers on the tax issues and the benefits of respecting tax laws will have tremendous impact particularly in the major cities of the region. This will give the opportunity to discuss the taxpayers' problem and thus increase their compliance rate.

#### **4.7. Public relations campaign in Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority**

A critical issue in evaluation research is determining what to measure. Stacks (2002, p.28) identified three possible objectives of a public relations campaign: informational, motivational, and behavioral. Informational objectives identify what the target audience should know or learn as the result of a campaign. Motivational objectives are those that inspire "a predisposition to act". Most important to organizations are behavioral objectives, where members of the target audience change their behavior or opinion in a way that is aligned with the organization's objectives.

There is a strong relationship among the objectives, (Stacks, 2002, p.29) states that

Informational objectives establish what knowledge should be known or is needed by the publics the campaign or program is intended for...Motivational objectives test whether or not the information is having an effect and whether tactical strategies are having an impact on future behavior. Furthermore, the relationship between informational and motivational objectives is interactive; that is, if motivational

objectives are not being met, informational objectives can be changed to overcome identified blockages. The behavioral objectives are often what 'count,' and they in the end define the success or failure of a campaign.

Measuring intended outcomes of a public relations campaign is more difficult than measuring what (Broom and Dozier, 1990, p.53) call the "many countable and measurable aspects of the communication process". Too often practitioners focus on measuring process rather than outcomes. They count the number of publications produced or press releases issued, rather than whether the publications or press releases contributed to the desired behavioral change in the target publics.

Public relation campaign has great impact on shaping public perceptions. A collection of activities at a time leads the public to share ample knowledge in the area and to improve its relationship with the organization. as a result, the public may change the perception it had for years.

Contrary to this fact, the public relations department of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority has never conducted any kind of public relation campaign in an organized manner to achieve research based goal. The department attempts to create public awareness on the issue through its regular program. Besides the Authority buys time from National radio and radio Fana and lets the public participate directly on radio talks and other related programs on Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.

#### **4.8. The publics and their opinion in Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority**

##### **"Gebi Lelimat "radio and Television program "**

###### **TP, 2**

The customer of Western Addis Ababa medium taxpayers' office, He said that

"Gebi lelimat "radio and television program is so awkward and monotonous. The major reasons are long articles explaining the policies and procedures of the organizations have dominated the whole program. Moreover, these articles are accompanied with in appropriate pictures and absence of voice variations.

**TP, 1**

The customer at Addis Ababa taxpayers' medium branch office 1 added that:-

The program doesn't target all age groups. Moreover the language that is used to express about the revenue sector and taxes is so complex and full of jargons. Also the program inclines to present complaints and blame some groups.

In addition to that the tax payer I interviewed at Eastern branch medium tax payers office is added that:-

**TP, 5**

The other problem relevant to the programs is the fact that the same issue is presented repeatedly for a week. Although the air time is short, it couldn't present varieties of issues.

**TP, 4**

From western Addis Ababa medium tax payers branch office in his side said that:-

Meeting and interviewing get full coverage in the program. In most cases the interviewer and interviewee are similar even the topic that is held under discussion also revolved around the same topic. These make the program less interesting.

According to the respondents, taxpayer's sides the majority of the business communities are aware of the responsibilities and obligation of paying taxes. However, they are not familiar with the operational tax laws and regulations. Therefore, educational program should continue in a consolidated manner. Since the survival of most organization depends up on the existence of its publics.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study an attempt was made to study on the practices and strategies of communication in Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. To explore the communication practices that the study entirely employed qualitative approach method.

To present a brief theoretical framework and models in relation to the study. I.e. Persuasion theory, theory of public relation, and The Grunig and Todd Hunt models of public relations.

Accordingly, in-depth interview were designed and administered for heads of public relations, public relation officers/communication experts and selected tax payers. The data were analyzed and interpreted based on the findings. Interviews were also conducted with some of the respondents on issues that require more clarifications and presented and analyzed together with interviews.

Therefore, the conclusions drawn and recommendations made based on the findings obtained from the qualitative analysis of in depth interviews.

#### 5.1. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, an attempt has been made to discuss the communication practices and strategies to public relation of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority. The need to have public relation practice in a country is unquestionable. As the interaction of groups of people become more important, and so that it is very essential for the need of harmonious relations.

In order to minimize misunderstanding people need to be informed of what is taking place in the organizations. To do this, the purpose of public relation must always be set before hand in a clear way. Its practice has to be realized by the public and the concerned stakeholders. In doing so the areas of misunderstanding may be minimized or eliminated.

The world is changing every time. New technological advancement appears from time to time. The ultimate objective of public relation is to provide or help public opinion reach conclusion by providing them with facts and ideas. Only with the understanding and help of the public that development can be enhanced in the country.

The citizens of Ethiopia need to be informed of the things that are going on in their country or in the world, therefore public relation is an essential element in the communication system.

It is believed that public relation campaign has great impact on shaping public perceptions; lack of awareness will harm the revenue severely by increasing tax evasion and contraband activity.

The study also revealed that though informing, educating and entertaining are the major aims of the media, most of the taxes issues transmitted in the study were purely informative.

Mostly, the news was just reported from positive tone which is something favored toward government policies directly or indirectly.

## 5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

To have a common understanding between the public and organizations, symmetrical communication is very important. This helps to minimize misunderstanding between people and the organization. Because development is unthinkable without the support and the participation of public at large.

In view of the above and other points are suggestive as helpful to facilitate the activities of the public relation of ERCA. Public relation work is limited only at head office level.

It is recommended that public relation officers employ a variety of public information instruments to improve public access to information. These include the production and distribution of regular press releases and publications, organizing press conferences, the use of regularly updated websites as well as managing leased radio /TV air time to provide direct information to the target audience.

Even if publications are the most common means of communication, the department publishes brochures. Which are inadequate for the biggest organization like Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority? The absence of leaflets, pamphlets, newsletters and other print media affects effectiveness of their communication. The public relation department must enforce the publications of its own in large. Because the institution is the only organ in the country that collects the potential economy of the country.

The communication experts of the institution should exchange experiences with other governmental institution.

The public relation department should conduct PR campaign in addition to its regular PR activity, which will help to attain the desired objectives. In the area, at least audience assessments should be embarked to see the result. So that the communication strategy should be revisited.

The top level management should conduct evaluation periodically and own the program.

As international best practices show the communication should be run by professionals not by party cadres.

Constant on the job training should be given to the employees.

The incentive mechanisms for contributing professionals should be upgraded.

Without good communication public relation never serve as a bridge between institution and the public at large and also it cannot come to the point of understanding between them. First, creating a good mood among communication experts is very essential. Some what it has influenced internal and external customers.

## References

- Bates, Don. 2002. Mini-me History to inform and persuade public relations from the Dawn of Civilization, [Http: //www.instituteforpr.com/history.phtml;article](http://www.instituteforpr.com/history.phtml;article). Retrieved on March 26, 2006.
- Black, S. (2004). *practical public relations*. 4th ed, 5 Ansari Road, New Delhi: India.
- Center, H.Allen and Jackson,p.(2003). *Public relation practices*. 6th ed prentice- Hall. Cutlip, Cut lip, S.M (2006), *Effective public relations*, 8th ed, prentice - Hall.inc.
- Flick, Uwe. (2002). *an introduction to qualitative research* (2nd ed). London: sage.
- Frey, L.R., Botan, C.H., Friedman, P.G., and Kreps, G.L. (1991) .*Investigating communication: An introduction to research methods*.NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Greener, Tony (1991), *the secrets of successful public relations and image making*: London, Billing and Son Worcester.
- Griffin, E. (2003). *Communication: A first look at communication theory* (5th Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Grunig E. James and Hunt, Todd. 1984. *Managing public relations*. Wadsworth Thomson. USA
- Guerrero, J. (2004). *A Preview on International Communication from the Asia Pacific Perspective*.
- Gunter, B. (2002). *The quantitative research process*. In Klaus Bruhn Jensen (ed), *A Handbook of media and communication research: Qualitative and quantitative methodologies*. London: Routledge.
- Jefkins, (1992). *Public relation*. 3rd ed, Great Britain Richard clay Ltd.Binglay, suffolk
- Kendall, (1996).*public relation campaign strategies, planning for implementation* 2nd ed, Harper Collins cllins college publisher.

Kitchen, Researcher, how do you explain the Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority channels of communication they use?

Moore, (1985), Public relations, cases and problems, 9th ed, ab Mariana community centre, New delhi.

J. Phillip. 2004. Public relations Principles and Practice. Thomson Business Press. Croatia.

McBean, B.2005. What Matters in the Communication Strategy Maastricht: ECDPM.

McQuail, D and Windhal, S. 1983. Communication Models for the Study of Mass Communication. London: Longman.

Miller, K. (2005). Communication theories: Perspectives, processes and contexts. New York: McGraw Hill

Negarit Gazeta of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. No, 44. Addis Ababa 14th July, 2008 proclamation No587/ 2008.

Newsom, Doug and Wollert A. James. 1985. Media writing: news for the media. Wadsworth Publishing Company. California.

Onabajo, Olufemi. 2006. Proactive Corporate Management and the Dynamics of public relations. J. Soc. Sci. 12(2): 119-124 (2006).

Orcher, T. Lawrence. 2005. Conducting research: social and behavioral science methods. Pyrczak publishing. USA.

Peake, Jacquelyn, 1980. Public relations in business: Harper &Row. New York.

R.K Mahudar, Business Communication, Vilas Publishing House, New Delhi, 2005

Smith, 2003. Becoming a public relations writer. A Writing Process Workbook for the Profession, Second Edition. Buffalo State College.

Scott, 1994. The Unseen Power: A History of public relations. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates New Jersey.

Thomas, (1979; 514), Public relations, Colin Coulsen, Wisconsin, district Rail way roads.

Webster's new world dictionary (1960), Third new international dictionary of English language spring field: G and Merriam.

Wimmer, D. Roger and Dominick, R. Joseph. 2003. Mass media research: and introduction. 7th edition. Thomson Wadsworth. USA.

([www.study.com/academy/lesson/channel-of-communication-types-definition](http://www.study.com/academy/lesson/channel-of-communication-types-definition))

## Appendix I

In depth interview with Public relation directors.

2. What is your responsibility in your organization?
3. How do you explain the Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority public relations department activity?
4. Which media is more reachable to your target audience?
5. Do you think people in your department have been provided with adequate knowledge in communication?
6. How far ERCA's Communication strategies go with your understanding and practices of communication in your department?
7. Did your communication officers involve in the identification of major challenges of communication and seeking their solutions with communication directorate?
8. What recommendations can you give to improve the Communication practices of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority?

## Appendix II

### In-Depth Interview Questions for Expert Category

1. Your current responsibility
2. How long have you worked on communication department?
3. How do you describe the public relation department of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority?
4. What is the most difficult communication practices of Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority?
5. What channels do you use to disseminate information to your target audiences?
6. How far your communication approaches were appropriate?
7. Do you think communication is entirely the problem of knowledge?
8. Who are your target audiences on your messages?
9. What were the key messages you used to promote your institution?
10. Who were responsible for designing the messages that was disseminated?
11. What were the major challenging problems in communicating the target audience?
12. How do you get feedbacks from the audience on your performance?
13. What do you recommend to improve communication practices of the organization?

### Appendix III

#### Interview with tax payers

1. What do you know about communication department of ERCA?
2. What can you say about the appropriateness of the communication practices and consideration of your interest? Or do you think the program is appropriate for you?
3. How informative and educative do you think the program is to the taxpayers?
4. Do you think the communication practices improve your relationship with the organization?
5. What is your outlook about the communication practices of ERCA?
6. Have you ever made discussion with the top management of the institution?
7. What do you suggest to improve the quality of communication?

## Appendix IV

ለግብር ክፋይ የቀረቡ ጥያቄዎች

- 1) ስለ ኢትዮጵያ ገቢዎችና ጉምሩክ ባለስልጣን ትምህርትና ኮሚዩኒኬሽን የስራ ክፍል ምን ያህል ያወቃሉ?
2. ተቋሙ እየሰራበት ያለው የግንኙነት አግባብ ምን ያህል ትክክለኛ እና አግባብነት ያለው ነው ፤ እየተዘጋጀ የሚቀርበው ትምህርታዊ ዝግጅቶች ለርስዎ ትክክለኛ እና አግባብነት ያለው ነው ይላሉ?
3. እየተዘጋጀ የሚቀርበው ትምህርታዊ ዝግጅት ምን ያህል አስተማሪ እና መረጃ ሰጪ ነው ?
4. የግንኙነት አግባቡ የእርሶንና የመስሪያቤቱን ግኝቶች ያሻሽላል ብለው ያስባሉ?
5. ስለመስሪያ ቤቱ ትምህርትና ግንኙነት ስራ ያልዎት አስተሳሰብ ምንድነው?
6. ከመስሪያቤቱ የበላይ ኃላፊዎች ጋር ተወያይተው ያወቃሉ ?
7. የግንኙነት ስራውን በጥራት እንዲሰራ እና በቀጣይ ለማሻሻል ምን መደረግ አለበት ይላሉ ?

## Appendix VI

### List of informants

No.	Name	sex	age	code	organization	position
1	Ato Ephrem Mekonnen	M	55	H,1	ERCA	Head of Public relation
2	Ato Fasika Belay	M	46	H,2	ERCA	Deputy Head of Public relation
3	Ato Party Nigussie	M	37	TL,1	ERCA	Tax payers education team leader
4	Ato Getachew Shiferaw	M	57	TL,2	ERCA	Communication team leader
5	Ato Ayifokiru Hailu	M	48	TL,3	ERCA	Library and documentation team leader
6	Ato Niku shewa	M	36	PRO,1	ERCA	Senior communication officer
7	Ato Adane G/egziabher	M	34	PRO,2	ERCA	Senior communication officer
8	w/t Genet tesfaye	F	30	PRO,3	ERCA	Senior communication officer
9	w/ro Momina Adem	F	28	TP,1	Taxpayer	Addis Ababa 1
10	Ato Asefa Temesgen	M	44	TP,2	Taxpayer	Addis Ababa 2
11	Ato Sintayehu Jima	M	38	TP,3	Taxpayer	Western branch
12	Ato G/egzabiher Araya	M	34	TP,4	Taxpayer	Eastern branch
13	w/ro Masresh kifle	F	35	TP,5	Taxpayer	Western branch