

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
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**INTERNAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES OF**  
**PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ETHIOPIAN SUGAR CORPORATION**

**By**

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**ADDIS ABABA**

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**By**

**GETENET TEKLEWOLD**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND  
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## **DECLARATION**

I, Getenet Teklewold, declare that this thesis entitled “Internal Communication Strategies and Practices of Public Relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation” is my own original work. I have carried it out independently with the guidance and suggestions of my research advisor professor Ton Veen. And it has not been presented in Addis Ababa University or any other Universities. And all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Getenet Teklewold \_\_\_\_\_  
(The Researcher)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

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## **LETTER OF CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that Getenet Teklewold has carried out his thesis on the topic “Internal Communication Strategies and Practices of Public Relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation” under my supervision. This work is original in its nature and is suitable for submission in partial fulfillment of the requirement to earn Master Degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communication.

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Ton Veen (Prof.)

(Advisor)

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Getenet Teklewold

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEO	Chief executive officer
DEO	Deputy executive officer
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
E.C	Ethiopian Calendar
EO	Executive officer
ESC	Ethiopian Sugar Corporation
GM	General Manager
HR	Human resource
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IT	Information technology
MOI	Ministry of information
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PM	Prime Minister
PRs	Public Relations
SPSS	Statistical package for social science

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This research examines internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. It also identifies various channels of communication being used in ESC for internal communication purposes. Literatures on strategic communication and practices of public relations are discussed wisely in relation to the research objectives. Grunig two-way symmetry of public relations theoretical framework was employed under the study. Thus, this research is carried out using mixed approaches: and primary and secondary data were part of the study. Under the qualitative method, data gathering tools such as document analysis: strategic communication of ESC, crisis communication, channels of communication and in-depth interview with all (4) purposely selected public relations practitioners were included. In quantitative method questionnaires were distributed to 20% conveniently selected Ethiopian Sugar Corporation employees. In regard to communication, interpersonal communication is found to be more convenient than group and others; this is because of the communication strategy and practices of public relations. The internal communication strategy more of has limitation in in research and elaboration of key functions: due to its independence of the practitioners. The crisis communication is not convenient to perform proactively: due to budget deficit and limitation of trainings. The overall finding of the study shows that there is partially independent public relations practice and less practical communication strategy in ESC, i.e. the communication hierarchy, type and level needs improvement & training for the success of the internal communication strategies and practices of public relations. Based on the findings, a few important recommendations that would contribute for improving the strategic communication and practices of public relations especially, in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation, were made.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

The present "Ethiopian Sugar Corporation" with a vision of executing sugar corporation development activities at a large scale came in to existence on October, 2010 by the council of Ministers Regulation No.192/2010. Now there are 8 sugar factories under operation and 5 other projects under construction. Some of them are entered in to regular production in few years' time (Corporate Communication EO, 2019). The corporation has more than 350,000 citizens of job opportunities which 62,000 are regular and 350 are in the head office (Ethiopian Sugar Industry Profile, 2017) and HR of the corporation. To satisfy the internal and external public, to achieve the corporation core values, to create transparent work atmosphere, effective communication strategy and researchable public relations practice is unquestionable.

Strategic public relation is a modern blueprint to build truly effective PRs communications in the organization. Strategic communication is a term used to denote the higher-level concerns behind communicative efforts by organizations to advance organizational mission. Most of the experts on management, leadership, communication and organizations believe that for any type of organization effective communication is the key to growth, effectiveness and success (Krishan, 2011). According to Krishan internal communication is often overlooked at organizations, and yet it is crucial for all type of organizations. Working towards sustainability is not the sole responsibility of top management rather it requires collective efforts of each member of an organization: and that is possible only through effective internal communication: "effective internal communication is the first frontier in the battle for the customer" (Aarti and Aakanksha, 2013).

Internal communication has been defined in several ways. Looking at the definition by Kalla (2005), internal communication is described as an integrated internal communication activity including all types of communications, both formal and informal, that are taking place within all levels in an organization. However, Welch and Jackson (2007) define internal communication as a strategic management style in which interactions and relationships between an organization and

its stakeholders are taken into account. To validate this strategy and the practice of PRs practitioners heavily plays great role.

The crucial concern when internal communication is being implemented in organizations relates with the channel and content of the communication that is targeted towards the organizations internal stakeholders (Krishan,2011&Verghese, 2017). The appropriateness of the communication tools/channels and times of release or heard matters the information credibility of the source. The public relations practitioners have to practice updating of information from the credible source to void rumors and gossip. Either traditional or modern communication tools have to be implemented in the organization to validate the communication process. This interchange of information naturally requires channels to go through in order to be delivered from one person to another. These channels are called communication channels. There are various types of communication channels that people use when exchanging information. Some common channels are e-mails, telephone calls, meetings (Tenhiälä & Salvador, 2014), face-to-face conversations, video conferencing, web-based tools, bulletins, documents and memos (The Role of Formal Internal Communication in Organizational Identification, 2016).

The types of communication which are interpersonal, verbal, nonverbal and written communication obviously have to be implemented according to the issue strategically and wisely to communicate and understand mutually. According to Nawafino (2016) the level of communication which are intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication, mass communication or public communication needs to be strategic to become effective in the work environment. The direction of communication: upward, down ward, diagonal, lateral and grapevine in the other side have values for the effectiveness and formality of the communication and public relation practices. Robbins and Coulter (2012) stated formal and informal communication in an organization in the following ways, ‘formal communication refers to communication that takes place within prescribed organizational work arrangements and hierarchy, whereas, informal communication is a communication which is not defined by the organization structural hierarchy’. Sometimes the formality or informality of the communication doesn’t matter rather the way of understanding each other matters a lot (Lazenby, 2005).

Public relations education has been given in Ethiopia since 2016 by Addis Ababa University. It is an open chance for Ethiopians to take international courses of public relations and fields. Public

relations practitioners have also got chance to update and upgrade their profession horizontally and vertically. However, as the government PRs are not professionals as Zemedkun (2014) stated, different stakeholders including public relations practitioners, seriously complain about the problems in the practice of public relations in ESC (Corporate Communication EO, 2017). Hence, according to them in the past consecutive years the government couldn't give more attention to PRs. Consequently, it is clear that most of the government PRs is not lead by professional communication strategy and without strategy public relation practice couldn't be effective. That's why PRs found below the profession it requires for decades. The professional public relations have to qualify experience, relationship building ,attitude, proactively and passion, performance, knowledge of the field, communication, technology, organizational, and management skills, ethics, positive outlook and advocacy (Seitel 2011: Baines et al, 2004:325). Being professional in public relations helps PRs practitioners to be proactive in the whole activities of the organization. Communication strategy in the other side solves communication problems strategically with the help of public relation practitioners.

This study to this end focused on examining the internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. A two-way symmetry of public relations theoretical framework used to inform the study. Mixed approaches are employed in the study with purposive and convenience samplings.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Interactive communication of the organization public relations and employees is vital: to be active in proactivity, professional communication strategy and practices of public relations plays a great role. Though, two-way symmetric communication of stake holders and public relations practitioners creates mutual understanding to go far. However, communication barrier and limitation of interactive communication in the organization creates ineffectiveness of internal communication strategy and practices of public relations. Internal communication occurs at any levels within organizations. It may be formal or informal. The use of appropriate channels and content of communication especially is determined by public relations practitioners and budget of public relations. Though, giving apparent and immediate response sometimes pays a wage and it relies on the effort of the public relations practitioners practice, knowledge and skills (Pearson, 2012).

Hence, the role of internal communication is to improve organization value by communicating effectively with employees being ‘an important asset to the firm’ and instilling a sense of belonging by using effective communication strategy. Effective and strategic internal communication can reduce uncertainty and rumors, serve as a catalyst of change and the internal audience is the most important for the communicator. Communicating effectively with employees can build organizational commitment, achieve superior business outcomes, influence corporate reputation, share knowledge, gain trust, instill a sense of belonging, create awareness and engage employees. Practicing professional public relations here ultimately enhances the organization internal communication. Without effective and professional internal communication strategy and public relations practice, in a country like Ethiopia where the government is the major factor in information and communication efforts in ESC access to information and practicing professionally matters a lot. Effective internal communication leads to improved outcomes, and committed employees are more productive. Though, communication is understood to be strategic in nature. Hence, success of the organization is constructed by its internal communication within the organization; the strength in love or hate of the employees towards the organization is also implicated in its success.

The independence of the public relations practitioner from any external bodies in addition to professional qualification directly affects the communication strategy and practitioners practices. Based on the above listed statements, the study aimed to examine the internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Accordingly, the researcher undertakes this particular study to fill the knowledge and skill gap in the aforementioned area.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1. General Objectives**

The general objective of this study is to examine internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives are:-

1. To assess components of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation communication strategy.
2. To examine how public relations practices are being practiced in ESC.
3. To examine how ESC employees view the significance of internal communication strategies and practices of PR in their organization.
4. To analyze tools/channels of communication being used in ESC for internal communication purposes.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

- 1 What are the components of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation communication strategy?
2. What are the practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation in relation to the professional standards?
3. How ESC employees view the significance of internal communication (strategies) and practices of PRs in their organization?
4. What are the communication tools/channels used in ESC for internal communication purposes?

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The results of this study are expected to enable PRs practitioners of ESC to understand communication strategies so it helps to achieve the corporation vision easily. It also will try to find out lists of PRs practices to aware the responsibilities and duties in ESC & identify the best communication strategies and practices of PRs that helps to create a charismatic work environment in the corporation. Finally, it indicates problems in practices of PRs and communication gaps between the public/employees and ESC: It will also serve as a reference for other researchers who conduct their study in related cases.

#### **1.6. Scope of the study**

The study carried out in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation which is found in Addis Ababa near Kasanchis. This study mainly focused on examining Internal Communication Strategies and Practices of Public Relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Concerning sampling, the data was gathered from 100% of public relations practitioners of the corporation and 20% of employees

from in-depth interview and questionnaire respectively. Apparently, the respondents were selected and organized by purposive and convenience sampling techniques.

### **1.7. Limitation of the Study**

In this study, the study had faced various problems. Among these, financial, and bureaucratic constraints, inability to get nearby public Library, inconsistency of network and electric power, shortage of resources etc. Especially, it was difficult to get enough data and other guarantee information of the past decades of public relations practices in Ethiopia. The other limitation is lack of similar studies conducted in Ethiopian government organizations about the topic though this is the first study which carried out. Some respondents were also unenthusiastic to express their views blatantly.

### **1.8. Organization of the Study**

The study contains five chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction: background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope, limitation of the study and organization of the study. The second chapter reviews literature related to the study. The third chapter entertains the methodology of the study. The fourth chapter discusses the findings. And the fifth chapter concludes and gives recommendations based on the findings. At the end of this study Bibliography and Appendices are also included

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter deals with review of related literature that explains the meaning and definitions of public relations, public relations in Ethiopia, challenges facing public relations practices in Ethiopia, qualifying factors of professional public relations, concepts and types of communication, channels of communication, organizational communication and directions of communication, and practices of public relations. It also discusses formal and informal communications and its channels. Moreover, it attempts to entail two-way symmetrical theoretical frame work of Grunig and Hunt that are related to strategies and practices of public relations. It is not possible to come across so many academic research works and references that are related to the internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopia especially in government private organizations, some efforts were exerted to highlight somehow the available relevant literatures on the topic.

#### **2.1 Meaning and Definition of Public Relations**

One of the difficulties in public relations is getting an agreeable definition among scholars (Tench and Yeoman, 2009: 35). Different scholars and practitioners give different definitions in different times. Public relation is commonly considered to be a ‘young profession’ a type of communications byproduct of twentieth century capitalism (Chalkley, p.3). According to Seitel (2011: 36), the most ambitious effort to come up with universally acceptable definition of public relations was commissioned in 1975 by the foundation for Public Relations Research and Education. At that forum more than sixty public relations leaders were participated and about 472 (some says 500) different definitions were forwarded for analyses. Based on it the American academic Harlow produced the first all-inclusive definition of PRs.

Public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest;

helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change; serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools (Harlow 1976: 36).

The definition of Harlow covers most aspects of PR and it's too long; other researchers like Grunig and Hunt separated the tasks and defined in a single sentence. Grunig and Hunt (1984: 6) defined PR 'the management of communication between an organization and its publics', which Grunig later refined as 'an organization's managed communications behavior'. The practical PRs Banik (2004:5) defined as the establishment of two-way communication to resolve conflicts of interest and the establishment of understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information: from this perspective PRs requires execution of communication program designed to bring public acceptance and common understanding. Public relation is abroad set of communication efforts used to create and maintain favorable relationship between an organization and its stakeholders. Similarly Schmitz (2012:10) said public relation is a 'strategic conversation'. As you might imagine, it is an ephemeral and wide-ranging field, often misperceived, and because of lack of message control inherent in public relations, it is difficult to master. The concept of mutuality in Schmitz and Banik definition makes PRs practitioners an intermediary between the organization and its publics. It helps to work hard for the sustainability of mutual advantage. Bahil (1994:6) added PRs is a systematic approach to solve problems. It is creating an understanding between the organization and the target audience, with the objective of building good will and good image. Since PRs is an investment towards good communications and good relationship. Public relations efforts must ensure that not only does the organization understand its publics; the publics must equally understand the organization. It must understand its reasons for whatever actions it takes. According to Banik, Schmitz and Bahil communication should be two way (symmetrical) and there must be mutual understanding among each other for the development of the organization and to fit the public interest.

Another definition given by Cutlip, Center and Broom, in their book of Effective Public Relations which is considered as the bible of public relations in America: A public relations is the "management function that identifies, establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics upon whom its success depends." Now, watch out the last phrase of the definition, '*upon whom its success depends*,' this is the fact that many organizations

have not realized. A company's success or failure depends considerably on its relationship with its various publics. The elements of public relations just described in the above definitions are part of the process that defines today's public relations: knowing the definition of the profession helps the practitioners to practice the profession wisely.

## **2.2. Public Relations in Ethiopia**

Finding the starting time of public relation in Ethiopia faced me difficult. But some researcher said the practice of public relations in Ethiopia is a recent phenomenon. According to MoI (2003) cited in Zemedkun (2014:19) "the beginning of newspapers since 1900's that provided advertisement space for business organizations together with the introduction of printing press, telecommunication and the rail way by Emperor Minilik II in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century paved the way for the development of mass media and communications in all aspects including the emergence of modern public relations". However, during the previous regimes, public relations were conducted in a traditional manner in various government organizations. Accordingly, there were a number of public relations resembling practices during those times. Preparing and distributing newspapers entitled "Bandirachen" (Our flag) in order to arise patriotism among Ethiopian guerrillas during the fascist Italy occupation (1936-1941), and Amharic language paper entitled "Yetor Wore" (War news) that was distributed by the allied forces during world war II can be mentioned (Solomon, 1998:20-21 cited in Zemedkun, 2014:19).

Zeray (2016) estimated PR is emerged in the late 19 century. However, it has begun to be taken seriously as one instrument of success by different organizations lately in the 1970s. Similarly, Solomon (2000), modern public relations practice is believed to have been started in 1960's in Ethiopia. The emergence of the practice of modern public relations came as a result of the establishment of the Ministry of Pen in 1940's. Ministry of Pen helped to create more PR in government organizations (MoI, 2004 cited in Zemedkun, 2014). Then media organizations such as Radio, News Agency and Television services were organized and administered under the ministry of Pen. Some years later the ministry was replaced by the Ministry of Information and tourism in 1950's with similar task of administering the media organizations in addition to carrying out the responsibility of culture and tourism. Then, 1960's when the Ministry of Information replaced it; the responsibility of leading the media organizations was also transferred to the new ministry. The practice of public relations that started to take shape during the 1960's

continued for years without any change in form and content. The major purpose of the public relations was merely serving the interest of the ruling class/group. As the public relations at those times were so unprofessional, it was unable to respond to the situations arising in those times. The foundation of different international and national organizations and institutions in Ethiopia created significant change in the history of public relation practice. The establishment of the UN Economic Commission for Africa in 1958 and African Union in 1963 as its head quarter in Addis Ababa was among the significant dynamics that were worth mentioning (Solomon, 1998). While such huge developments were taking shape in the country, the public relations practice in the country remained without any remarkable progress. The head of public relations at the final years of Emperor Haile Selassie in an interview, said the following about the public relations overall situation:

The notion and practice of PR was developed during the 1960's ... until around 1974, a minimal consideration was given to PR. A study was made in the ministry where by the public relations Bureau was promoted to a public relations and information department ... the activities were routine reception, protocol, running the printing etc. System and strategy as to how to promote Ethiopia's real needs were unthinkable. There, of course, have been some publications... But they reflected the interest of the ruling feudal autocracy than that of the public at large (Solomon, 1998: 22).

According to Solomon (1998) the 1974 devastating famine was one incident that can be mentioned to substantiate the failure of PR in the government organizations. Nothing was known to the nation as well as the whole world about the fatal famine. Previously, the country's image was that of the king's himself, rich, the bread basket of Africa. However, the famine was telling another story, the country wasn't rich as it was depicted by the image of the Emperor (Zemedkun, 2014:21). It seems that the system was convinced the story would remain untold forever; so it opted to focus on working how to hide instead of trying to manage the crisis. However, The British Journalist, Jonathan Dimbleby not only exposed "the hidden hunger" to the world, but also the ignorance and weakness of the government public relations (Solomon, 1998: 22). These and other economic, social and political causes lead Ethiopia to a great revolution against the down fall of the emperor. This clearly shows the weakness of the PR practice and professionalism in Ethiopia. The end of 1960s and beginning of 1970s different private and governmental

organizations for example the Shoa Sugar Factory, Metehara Sugar Factory etc. come in to existence. These helped writer Sibhat Gebreigziabher and Dereje Deressa to establish Alem Public Relations Consultancy Firm which was the first public relations consultancy firm in the history of Ethiopia (Solomon, 1998: 23). After the down fall of the emperor from 1974-1991, it is remembered as a dictatorship era. Zemedkun (2014) stated that “the soviet model of socialism adopted by the military government led the public relations and the media practice to the full-fledged propaganda. The media and the few government public relations units fell under a strict control and guidance of assigned military officers” (p.22)

To accomplish the special mission of the government, Ministry of Information and National Guidance came to existence. The entire PR was assigned by the military government and work for it. During this time creating conducive environment without professionalism seems irrationality. Even though the communication models employed in the PR activities during this time were press a gentry, propaganda and persuasion models, devoid of democratic substances (Solomon, 1998: 24). After the down fall of Dergu regime EPRDF come to power and created some modifications on media rules and government offices. In this fast global world hiding information is impossible to this new generation/millennial. Now a day, public relation activities are mainly considered as hub of developmental activities; thus, in each government offices, there is public relation office. Among these offices, the state (government) universities in the country have opened offices for public relations practices which aimed to promote and report the day-to-day teaching learning, research, community services and technology transfer issues to the internal and external publics. According to Zeray, recently political parties, government, business organizations and others establish public relations department and work tirelessly to introduce their programs and receive opinions from public. The criticisms and opinions they receive from the public help them to identify what to improve and what to do next to maintain good working relations with the public. Thus, public relations serve as mirror and **bridge** between the organizations and the public.

It seems that it is very hard nowadays for organizations to survive without successfully conducting public relations activities. Particularly, governments who faced serious challenges to survive and indulged themselves in serious crisis leave no stone unturned to come out of their catastrophe through conducive massive public relations. And political parties who aspire to hold state power should undertake

successful public relations activities just because it is unthinkable for them to win elections without introducing and working on their programs to be accepted by the public. Political parties who won election also need to work hard on public relations activities to maintain their stay in power and sustain their voters intact. To be more precise, having successful public relations is not a matter of choice but a matter of survival (Zeray, 2016).

From the government point of view till PM Abiy Ahmed comes to power, public relation has two fundamental missions: creating national consensus locally and building Ethiopia's internationally. The national policy was established to create awareness locally about the benefits of unity in diversity and tolerance. The national policy gives more emphasis on rapid economic growth, prevent disintegration and civil war, and promote the country's image internationally to facilitate the development of investment, trade, and tourism sectors and to aspire the country to have its rightful place international politics. However, it is failed to successfully introduce the basic concepts. The government introduces developmental journalism. Investigate journalism are not introduced to expose corruption and bad governance which makes the public satisfactory. This makes the public annoyed of government journalists and PRs.

In 2002 the government established ministry of information to realize the effective dissemination of government information then some efforts were made to ensure effective government communication system. This ministry created a team and share experience from different African countries like South Africa. In 2003 Ato Berket Simon presented a paper titled on "the future of the private press in Ethiopia and the government perspective," by the Minister of Information and he clearly indicated the government had failed to disseminate information properly. The government PR officers lack profession and code of ethics this creates barriers with media to reach the public relevant and timely information. Ultimately, the purpose of practicing public relations in Ethiopia especially in government private organizations was to teach the importance of tolerance, unity based on diversity and create good image of Ethiopia externally to collectively beat the acute poverty and strengthen the democratic principles which are the pillars of the nation to survive and continue politically stable.

### **2.2.1 Challenges facing public relations practice in Ethiopia**

According to Fuller (2017) there is no African country where public relation is in proper practice like South Africa. This is practically true that most of the world's disciplines originated from the developed countries. Public relations in Ethiopia/government private organizations recently show a little progress even though they have various challenges and factors. The challenges need serious attention and follow up for its independent professional development. Among these challenges Fuller (2017) listed poor understanding of public relation concept, lack of specialization in the profession, language barriers, lack of technological know-how, infrastructural limitations, lack of ethics by the existing professionals and organizations, negative cultural habits, attitudes and taboos. According to Kok (2000:7) "the governments seek to provide citizens with information about its intentions and activities: this is a legal obligation that enables people to exercise their constitutional rights to express their opinions freely." Dissemination of information is crucial to know about the where of the organization and to get feedbacks from the publics and vice versa. However, PR was not free to release information about the organization due to government involvement of politics: frustration. Though, even the public, journalists were not getting information of the organization freely. Dahl (1998) writes the following about availability of independent source of information held by the government organization:

How can citizens acquire the information they need in order to understand the issues if the government controls all the important sources of information? Or, for that matter, if any single group enjoys a monopoly in providing information? Citizens must have access, then, to alternative sources of information that are not under the control of the government or dominated by any other group or point of view.... Citizens will not be able to participate effectively in political life if all the information they could acquire was provided by a single source (Dahl, 1998:9, cited in Getahun, 2005:33).

Media relations, planning, writing, research, counseling, stakeholders' relation, media monitoring, crisis management, public affair and lobbying are some of the PR practices and or responsibilities. The media and other stakeholders as Gregory (2003: 14) put it, the media works 24 hours a day all the week and highly facilitated by enabling technologies. The PR has to use the media to aware the public about the product and service of the organization or any news about the organization.

Accordingly, all the stakeholders should get information via different media outlets. The PR should research to get the type of media people use in different areas. The limitation of information creates a misunderstanding between the organization and the public.

Public relation Professionals and professional associations are another factor that faced public relations practice in Ethiopia. Warner (2000:248-49) listed the importance of education, short and long term courses and training for the PRs practitioners. The development of different organizations in different levels in public relations apparently increases the number of professionals and reputation practice. The professional associations also helped universities and students to use their journals, newspapers, magazines and materials as references (Warner, 2000:249). It also increases the strength of the profession/association and the reputation of the practices and its independence. Ethiopia, since today, has not professional associations of public relations. In the other side the development of professionals and professional associations clearly paved the way to be ethical in the profession and accountable for each action. For example, most people questioned the ethics of lobbying in Ethiopian government organizations (Zemedkun, 2014:17). Being professional in public relation makes active in crisis management. "Good crisis management presupposes good communication management both internally and externally" (Duin, 2000:203). This is managed by delivering the accurate information through the mass media to the public and it's done only if the PRs is free from external involvement. The perception of the profession by different bodies in the organization is also another problem that faces PRs. The common perception of spinning with public relations is one critical problem in relation to the reputation of the practice (Thurlow, 2009: 249-250). So, without effective public relation practice achieving the organization vision matters a lot. Recently, the challenges of PR gets due attention and universities opened departments of PRs/strategic communication since 2016 in Ethiopia.

### **2.3 Qualifying factors of Professional Public Relations**

Even though public relations profession experienced significant growth over the last 100 years or so, it is still infant in Ethiopia. Government organization PRs officers are not graduated and or specialized by the field. PR as a profession has started to be given in Ethiopian Universities since 2016. The profession like other professions has to qualify some basic knowledge and skills. (Heerden, 2004:89). The professional public relations have to qualify diversity of experience,

relationship building, attitude, proactivity and passion, performance, knowledge of the field, communication skill, organizational and management skills/knowledge, technical skills, ethics, positive outlook and advocacy (Seitel 2011:43-45, Baines et al, 2004:325). This helps the PRs to be confidential in the whole activities of the organization, to effectively use PRs tools /channels and create smooth relationships with the organization and its publics.

Laskin (2006) observed that depending on educational and professional backgrounds PRs officers practice PR differently professionals with communication background perform different tasks and value different outcomes in their day-to-day activities in comparison with practitioners with background in other field of study. As a result, the overall practice of PR depends on who is performing it. Professional PRs experienced the qualitative growth of expanding far beyond traditional media relations to a strategic management function which notably contributes to the organization's value creation as boundary spanners and counselors (Grunig, 2006; Mahoney, 2011). Unless PR and media work together with the profession, barrier of information will be ok.

Professionalism empowers public relations managers to negotiate with clients to change organizational behavior, to consider the interests of publics as well as their own interests (Grunig, 2000). An awareness of the extent to which public relation is a profession and the areas where professional standards are low will help in taking the necessary steps for adopting high professional standards. More or less different professional associations and licensing are in Ethiopia. However, PRs has not association till now. This hurts the profession to crawl again. "Licensing of public relations has been an issue of keen debate since years. Public relations should be defined by law, with licensing and registration of practitioners, as is the case with lawyers, medical doctors and other professions" (Seem, 2006:13). Edward Bernarys also dedicated his career to licensing PR "licensing would protect the profession and the public from incompetent individuals who have no knowledge, talent or ethics required by this profession". This identifies PRs from other profession. PRs associations include only a portion of those working in the PRs field; these associations exert considerable influence through their advocacy for the professionalization of this practice. PR has predominantly been a practice based field but owing to attempt to create a scientific base, PR is developing into a profession. Striving for the professionalization of PR institutionalizes the best practices and establishes standards of quality that serve the public interest. Grunig & Hunt (1984) stated PR profession and association "a set of

professional values, strong professional organizations that socialize practitioners into these values, professional norms such as those provided by a code of ethics that can be used to enforce values, technical skills acquired through professional training, and an intellectual tradition and an established body of knowledge”.

## **2.4 Concepts and Types of Communication**

Communication, the life blood of every organization, is a process that links the individual, the groups and the organization, (Shibeshi, 2014: 157) is defined differently in different times and by different scholars. Among these James Gruing, Berlo and Van Ruler are some of them. According to Berlo (1960) and Grunig (1992:559) “Communication is a two- way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning.” Communication is a two-way street (Robbins and Coulter, 2012) that means both the person communicating and the person being communicated has to be participated equally; it is an interactive communication. Interactive communication can takes place through meetings, teleconferencing, multimedia presentations, group discussions and other such as two-way exchanges. When many speakers are involved, there may be a need for a mediator who will facilitate effective flow of communication from different speakers. Berlo also states that communication is a means of connecting people and it is a key function of management an organization cannot operate without communication between levels, departments and employees.

The definition in Wikipedia stated “Communication is strategic when it is completely consistent with the organization mission, vision, values and when it is able to enhance the strategic positioning and competitiveness between their competitors” (retrieved on 20/03/2019). Hallahan also stated ‘Strategic Communication is being purposeful, in order to advance an organization’s mission through communicating’ (Hallahan et al. 2007:3). One part of the strategic communication is internal communication. According to Zajkowska:

Internal communication takes place within the organization or group among people, among different groups of employees and between employers and employees. It could be oral or written, visual or audio visual, formal or informal, and upward or down ward. Internal communication serves to inform, instruct, educate, develop, motivate,

persuade, entertain, direct, control and caution people in the organization (Zajkowska, 2011).

Kalla (2005) described internal communication as an integrated internal communication activity including all types of communications, both formal and informal, that are taking place within all levels in an organization. An organization, which wants to take seriously the area of internal communication, should first demonstrate how the actions taken in the area of communication support the implementation of its strategy (Allyson, 2004 cited in Zajkowska, 2011). It is a necessary condition to measure the effects of the strategy by conducting surveys concerning communication which allow providing a proof that the actions are effective and simultaneously enable accurate identification of the needs of the employees. Showing the managing staff whose internal communication has a positive impact and that it contributes to achieving the goals of the organization increases the importance of the corporate communication in a real manner. Though, to be successful in communication, the process of the communication is determinant. The communication process involves the exchange of information between a sender and receiver. The main components of this model are the sender, the receiver, the message and the channel. The communication process includes the sequential steps of encoding, transmitting and decoding (Shibeshi, 2014).

In the other side communication theorists stated 'Communication is transferring thoughts, information, emotion and ideas through gesture, voice, symbols, signs and expressions from one person to another. Three things are most important and essential in any communication process they are sender, receiver and the channel (medium)' (Van Ruler, 2018). So, communication is a very important part of any organization. It takes place among business entities, within markets, various groups of employees, buyers and sellers, service providers and clients, sales person and prospective buyers, and within the organization and with the press.

Internal communication strikes a balance between extreme; communicating too little creates a vacuum that causes distrust and speculation. However, too much information can result in information overload or the paradox of plenty in which an overabundance of information is ignored. Bartoo and Sias (2004) noted that receiving a large amount of information is not necessarily the same as getting the right amount of information. The right amount, however, is hard to determine. Effective internal communication strives for information adequacy, which is a

measure of the relationship between information needed and information received. When a personal letter is written at an official address, beside writing the name of the addresses, the envelope is super scribed ‘ private’ or ‘confidential’ to convey the nature of communication. Sharing of knowledge and skills, corporate concerning, reviewing monitoring, performance appraisal, counseling and training are among the issue that internal communication addresses.

### **2.4.1. Types of Communication**

There are different types of communication according to its purpose and channel. The public relation communication strategy has to consider this during planning and before implementing in the organization. Intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, mass or public, formal or informal are listed below to discuss.

#### **2.4.1.1. Intrapersonal Communication**

Intrapersonal communication can be defined as communication with one’s self, and that may include self-talk, acts of imagination and visualization, and even recall and memory (As cited in McLean (2005). Ehondor also stated that it is a simple process of mental communication; however, complex because it embodies all the elements of a standard communication model and simple because the process of communication can be controlled by significantly self. Similarly, communications expert Leonard Shedletsky examines intrapersonal communication through the eight basic components of the communication process (i.e., source, receiver, message, channel, feedback, environment, context, and interference) as transactional, but all the interaction occurs within the individual. From planning to problem solving, internal conflict resolution, and evaluations and judgments of self and others, we communicate with ourselves through intrapersonal communication. Because Intrapersonal communication is a mental exchange of message with one self. All this interaction takes place in the mind without externalization, and all of it relies on previous interaction with the external world. (Communication for business professionals, May 2018)So, intrapersonal communication is the fight and or communication of one self without any external involvement.

#### **2.4.1.2. Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication in recent years has been consistently placed high as an important requirement for conducting successful job performance in the organizations. It looks reasonable to

determine that one of the most impeding forces to organizational effectiveness is a privation of effective communication. Moreover, good interpersonal communication skills are very important to employees for making a successful organization. Singh (2014) argued that interpersonal communication is the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another, which is very essential for the success of any organization. Therefore, it must be effectively handled to ensure the attainment of the organization's goals.

Interpersonal communication, essentially, breaks down barriers which people put up to protect themselves (Amodeo and Wentworth, 1995) because, you allow yourself to become vulnerable by putting yourself out there. Interpersonal communication provides a way of reaching others with facts, ideas, thoughts and values. It is a connection of meaning among employees so that they can share what they know and feel. Interpersonal skills, which are applicable for every employee, consist of information exchange, communication, diplomacy, conflict resolution, problem-solving, the motivation of others, teamwork and influences are vital for the organization goal achievement (Aldag & Kuzuhara, 2002). Additional skills include planning, goal setting, change management, stress management, time management and delegation (Subrahmanyam, 2018) Moreover, good interpersonal communication skills are very important to employees for making a successful organization (Brun, 2010). And organizations must be both interpersonally and intellectually competent in order to be maximally effective (Jossey, 1998).

Interpersonal Communication can be an effective tool for motivating employees of the organization involved in various activities (Singh, 2014). Appropriate communications provide employees with feedback and reinforcement during the effective organizational change. This increases organizational affectivity, enables employees to make better decisions and prepares them for the advantages and disadvantages of change.

In the other hand managers who engage in interpersonal communication with their subordinates demonstrate that they not only care about the organization, especially one that uses teams, but also care about their employees. Taking the time to get to know who your employees are will make them feel valued. This is not to say that every employee will want to get to know you on a more personal level but it at least tells them that you would like to. The more valued the employee feels, the fewer barriers they feel they need to build around them and the more easily information flows. As barriers come down, relationships are formed that create value within the organization,

job satisfaction increases, and the workplace becomes a place where everybody likes to be (Karmos, 2005). It is equally important for a manager to communicate interpersonally with upper management, as well. Since managers serve as a gatekeeper of information between upper management and subordinates, an effective manager understands their role in keeping the lines of communication open. When organizational information fails to reach its intended recipient, the entire organization can suffer.

### **2.4.1.3. Group Communication**

A group may be defined as three or more individuals who affiliate, interact, or cooperate in a familial, social, or work context (Schmitz, 2012). Group communication may be defined as the exchange of information with those who are alike culturally, linguistically, and/or geographically. Nandini (2012) & McLean (2005) defined, ‘group communication is an extension of interpersonal communication where more than two individual are involved in exchange of ideas, skills and interest: a group is a number of people with a common goal who interact with one another to accomplish their goals, recognize one another’s existence and see themselves as part of the group.’ According to Employee Assistance Program (EPA, January 23, 2014) good communication practices are at the heart of every successful organization. Communication serves two essential functions in every organization. It disseminates the information needed by employees to get things done and builds relationships of trust and commitment. Here, group members may be known by their symbols, such as patches and insignia. They may be known by their use of specialized language or jargon (Schmitz, 2012). Group members may also be known by their proximity, as in gated communities.

Groups Communication helps to provide an opportunity for people to come together to discuss and exchange views of common interest of the organization (Nandini, 2012:8) the communication might be formal or informal, horizontal or oblique, verbal, non-verbal or written (Zoltan, 2018) Similarly Mehmet et. al. (2015:12) stated “groups are created formally and informally within the organization at different times and for different goals. Those groups have the negative and positive influences on the organization structure and function”. The communication channel structure and flow highly determiners the internal communication of the organization. Thus, organizations should private appropriate communication channels/tools for it (Zoltan, 2018). There are different types of groups in an organization that has different missions of formation and

interest. These are formal, informal, task and control group types, and interest and friendship groups, primary and secondary groups (Judge & Stephen, 2013 as cited in Mehmet et al, 2015).

#### **2.4.1.4. Mass Communication**

Mass communication is the most important process for every kind of organization (Rasel, 2013). It is distinctive in view of its scale. Essentially, it addresses a large scale of people. Public speaking, newsletters and journals, radio, television, dotcoms etc. are channels of mass communication. By its nature, mass communication addresses a vast, well spread out and heterogeneous group of people and such as, special efforts will have to be made to sustain their interest and achieve the desired response. At government level, there is often a separate department of mass communication to deal with this functional area (Fang, 1997). Mass communication has been used or can be used to promote beneficial changes in behavior among members of populations (Maibach, 2008).

#### **2.4.1.5. Public Communication**

Public communication happens when individuals and groups engage in dialogue in public sphere in order to deliver a message to a specific audience. Public speaking events, newspaper editorials and billboard advertisements are few forms of public communication (Nawafino, 2016). According to Nawafino the speeches fall in to three general categories: i.e. to persuade, to inform and to entertain. Though, sometimes it helps to share information and create a clear understanding with an audience: other times it helps to change their attitude and or follow a different course of action.

### **2.5. Organizational Communication**

Effective communication is essential for the functioning of any organization. Managers need to transmit orders and policies, build cooperation and team spirit, and identify problems and their solutions. Employees need to clarify directives, provide feedback, and make their problems known. Team members need to share feelings and perceptions to solve problems and resolve conflicts (Shibeshi, 2014:157-158)

The most important role of organizational communications is relationship building. Relationship building will provide strong basis in case of crisis management and help in facing the changes in

organization. This will raise moral of employees and make contribution to strategic goals of the organization (Spaho, 2015). As organizations increased in size, formal top-down communication became the main concern of organizational managers. Organizational communication in today's organizations has not only become far more complex and varied but more important to overall organizational functioning and success. Communication in organizations serves three major purposes. It allows members to coordinate actions, share information, and satisfy social needs (Spaho, 2015). When employees are happy with how their supervisors communicate with them, their job satisfaction and work output increase and they are more committed to the organization.

### **2.5.1. Formal and Informal Communication**

Informal and formal communications are used in an organization. Formal communication follows well defined hierarchical pattern and periodicity and it reduces personal biases (Gómez, 2017). Communications flowing through formal channel are downward, horizontal and upward (Lunenburg, 2010) whereas communications through informal channels are generally termed as grapevine (Robert et.al., 2002:7). Memos, circulars, instructions, guidelines, clarifications, agreements and reports are some of the channels that facilitate the flow of formal communication in an organization (Lunenburg, 2010). Towards ensuring communication on an on-going basis, organizations develop formal communication systems. Staff meeting, union management meetings, manager conferences, periodical review meetings and employee meetings are examples of formal communication.

Informal communication takes place in unstructured manner and outside the formal forms. There is an element of spontaneity in this communication. Informal communication works in smaller, loosely knit organization. It is used more often in situations where there are no rigid hierarchical ties (Robert et. al., 2002:5). It takes place through chats, conversations, informal talks and etc. Informal communication, generally associated with interpersonal, horizontal communication, was primarily seen as a potential hindrance to effective organizational performance. This is no longer the case. Informal communication has become more important to ensuring the effective conduct of work in modern organizations.

### **2.5.2. Communication Channels**

Now a days communication process within organizations are rapidly changing. Communication channels are the term given to the way in which we communicate. It is therefore the methods used to transmit our message to recipient, or to receive a message from someone else. Public relations channels implemented by the public relations departments serve as a two-way communications with the public. There are multiple communication channels (as I have listed above) available us todays. Selection of the particular medium for transmitting the message can be critical, because there are many choices. The medium can be verbal, nonverbal, written, computer-aided or electronic. According to Shibeshi (2014: 158-59) face-to-face, telephone, and written communications, voice mail, electronic mail, video conferencing, faxing, and personal computers make a vast magnitude of complex information immediately available for problem solving and decision-making. Knowing how to obtain, transmit, and process information through the multitude of existing communication channels is essential for any manager and most organization members. To do so effectively through any medium, however, requires that managers understand the basic communication process.

According to Daft and Lengel (1986), rich communication channels are ones that “can overcome different frames of reference or clarify ambiguous issues to change understanding in a timely manner”(p. 560). In order of decreasing richness, they consider face-to-face communication, telephone, personal documents such as letters, impersonal documents, and numeric documents. Written communication is useful as a way of recording what has been said by every member, for example taking minutes in a meeting. Each communication channels has its weakness and strength. For example, broadcasting news of an upcoming event via a written letter might convey the message clearly to one or two individuals. It will not, however, be a time- or cost-effective way to broadcast the message to a large number of people. On the other hand, conveying complex, technical information is easier via a printed document a spoken message. The recipients are able to assimilate the information at their own pace and revisit anything that they do not fully understand (Lazenby, 2005).

### **2.5.3. Direction of Communication**

The purpose of organization communication is to provide the means for transmitting information essential to goal achievement. Shibeshi (2014) stated that much of the communication flow is

carried in four distinct directions: downward, upward, horizontally and diagonally. The other major communication flow is the grapevine (p.163). An organization's structure influences the communication patterns within the organization. The structure of an organization should provide for communication in three distinct directions: downward, upward, and horizontal (Lunenburg, 2010). These three directions establish the framework within which communication in an organization takes place. According to Scott downward and upward communications are formal communication and lateral, diagonal; grapevine communications are informal communication (p.11).

### **2.5.3.1 Downward Communication**

Top-down approach: this is also known as downward communication. This approach is used by the top level management to communicate to the lower levels. One of its major functions is to achieve influence through information. This is used to implement policies, guidelines, strategies, objectives, etc. In this type of organizational communication, distortion of the actual information occurs. This could be made effective by feedbacks (Lunenburg, 2010). In this case sharing of information helps to minimize the spread of rumors/gossips and inaccuracies regarding higher-level intentions, and create a sense of security.

Likewise, Scott also stated downward communication moves from top to bottom i.e. from the CEO downwards. It travels through senior executives to junior functionaries, from the head of the division to the head of the units (p. 8). Corporate goals, business priorities; motivational letters, work-related instructions, newsletters, letters from the CEO/GM are examples of downward communication. There may be some communication, which would move from both upward to downward. For example, budgeting, which is a two way process, it is a top to bottom as well as bottom to top communication/exercise (Lunenburg, 2010).

### **2.5.3.2 Upward Communication**

Organizations have different hierarchical levels or tiers of communications. Upward communication is the one which moves upward i.e. from bottom to top levels in its hierarchy (Lunenburg, 2010). Any communication that moves from employees to supervisors, supervisors to managers, managers to executives ...are categorized under upward communication. Employee

suggestions, performance reports, feedbacks on the organization and requests for facilities or instructions are examples of upward communication in the organization (Scott, p. 9).

Upward communication is primarily nondirective and is usually found in participative and democratic organizational environments. Typical means for upward communication besides the chain of command are suggestion systems, reports, appeal and grievance procedures, complaint systems counseling sessions, joint setting of objectives, the grapevine group meetings, the practice of open door policy, morals questionnaire etc. Managers should encourage upward communication because it provides feedback on how well employees understand the downward communication. It can encourage employees to submit valuable ideas (Shibeshi, 2014: 163-64). Though, through this communication, subordinates convey their opinions, suggestions, complaints etc. to their superiors. The lower level employees initiate up-ward communication and the message ultimately reaches to the upper-level management.

#### **2.5.3.3 Lateral Communication**

Lateral/horizontal communication occurs between workers at generally equal levels in an organization. Under this communication information flows between persons of equal status in organization. Communication between departments or people on the same level in the managerial hierarchy of an organization can be defined as horizontal or lateral communication (Rasel, 2013). Lateral communication generally takes place in an organization and it is neither upward nor downward. It proceeds in a horizontal manner and takes place among equals and at peer level. It may also be described as peer level communication. Any communication that takes place , orally or written , from one division head to the other, from one group head to the other , may be described as lateral communication. An important point in any such lateral communication is that there is not much difference in terms of the hierarchical levels or positions of the senders and the receivers. Most effective form of communication Barrier of subordinates or boss is not present here (Scott, p. 12-13)

#### **2.5.3.4 Diagonal Communication**

It is the sharing of information among different structural levels within an organization. For example, diagonal communication could involve higher level management communicating to lower level management a shift in organizational objectives, as well as the ensuring dialog about

how best to achieve the new goals (Scott, p. 14). Diagonal communication flows with persons at different levels who have no direct reporting relationships. This kind of communication is used to speed up information flow, to improve understanding, and to coordinate efforts for the achievement of organizational objectives. A great deal of communication does not follow the organizational hierarchy but each occur the chain of command (Shibeshi, 2014:165)

### 2.5.3.5 Grapevine

Grapevine is a random, unofficial means of informal communication that prevails in organizations. Grapevines flourish because communication is a natural human tendency. People who know each other in the organization talk together informally. One thing they have in common is the organization they work for, so they talk about the happenings in the organization. The source of such communication may not be clear and it spreads through an organization with access to individual interpretation as gossip, rumors, and single-strand messages. Grapevine communication is quick and usually more direct than formal communication/message (Scott, p. 15). Sometimes, it gets more powerful and becomes more respective than formal communication. The prevalence of this type of communication in an organization has to be recognized and accepted. A skilled communicator can derive benefits from it and may always be possible to control grapevine. But, an able communicator knows how to influence it like any other types of communication because it has its own merits and demerits. Grapevine can include destructive miscommunication, but it can also be beneficial from allowing feelings to be expressed, and increased productivity of employees (Spaho, 2015). Miscommunication has often been the cause of hurt feelings, incomplete tasks, and relationship frustration.

Grapevines carry two types of information: **work related** and **people related**. As I said earlier, employees want to know what is going on in the organization. When they are not kept informed through formal channels, they seek information from the grapevine. Likewise, they are curious about the people they work with. Grapevines carry the type of personal information not generally communicated through formal channels. Some employees consider the grapevine their main source of information. It is fast-they get information quickly and more information is given than is normally included in face and with people they know. Thus, the grapevine often has a strongest impact on them than formal downward communications, which are often written and may originate from someone that they do not know personally (Shibeshi, 2014: 165-66).

#### **2.5.4. Ethical Communication in an Organization**

Communication is one of the basic needs of life. Similarly ethics are thought to be basics of life. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs security and social needs also includes ethics. Communication without ethics can bring disasters to personal life or to an organization (Adeel, 2012: 12). So, ethics and respect are basic parts of communication. Communication without ethics not only leads to disaster a society but also an organization. Communication without ethics commonly takes place in an organization for communication between different levels in an organization however, it has to be managed by different organization managers, communication departments (by giving training and advice), and experienced ones. It is important to practices ethical communication for resolving conflicts, as well as everyday interactions. A person who practices ethical communication advocates truthfulness, accuracy, and honesty; as these foster and maintain the integrity of ethical communication. Being un-honest will only lead to more lies which can really do damage. Lies are hard to keep straight unlike the truth because the truth doesn't change.

According to Adeel (2012) person who wants to communicate ethically needs to strive to understand and respect others before evaluating and responding to their messages (P.14-15). Think before you speak! Another aspect of ethical communication is promoting communication that consists of caring and mutual understanding that respects the unique needs and characteristics of individuals. Respect is very important in everyday interactions. Everyone deserves to be respected regardless of their job, socioeconomic status, gender, and or race or anything of the organization. People who practice ethical communication will support individuals sharing information, opinions; and feelings when facing significant choices while also respecting the privacy, and confidentiality of individuals (Robbins and Coulter, 2012:420) In order to really practice ethical communication a person must believe that unethical communications threaten the integrity of all communication. Unethical communication also compromises the wellbeing others (Adeel, 2012).

#### **2.6 Practices of Public Relations**

Public relations functions are designed to build trust and credibility with groups that are important to the organization. PRs develops and implements program to meet organization's objectives: sustainable image, brings customer loyalty, and other relevant public including employees,

suppliers, stockholders, governments, labor groups, citizens, action groups and the general public (Belch and Belch, 2004:95) Effective public relations functions can also promote the organization, help communicate during a crisis or defend its reputation from attacks that people make on it in the media.

Different writers and scholars have listed numbers of functions that might be considered as public relations practices. Some would prefer to split relatively huge tasks into smaller pieces and the others opt to enumerate in a very summarized and inclusive way. By this reason I have used the following sources. According to (Seitel 2011: 44, Jethwaney et.al. 2000:56-60, CIPR, PRSA, & BIPR) the following are the major practices of public relations:

**Media relations:** creating and dissemination of news worthy information to the media to attract and gain attention of the organization products, or services. It also involves setting up and maintaining a professional and mutually beneficial working relationship with news gatherers and gatekeepers, in part by becoming known as a credible source and as a provider of factual, expert information whether or not that information results in media coverage.

**Preparing different events:** having events in organizations fully encourages and develops the communications of Employees in different levels. It also helps to boost new ideas, possibilities, and knowledge and ...

**Corporate communication:** promote the understanding of the organizations and its products and services; they undertake external and internal communication.

**Special event:** attract media attention by arranging newsworthy organizations. Special events are backbones of service marketers

**Research:** the public relations practice desperately needs research. The strategic plan itself cannot be prepared without research. It helps to understand the organization overall activities.

**Strategic Planning:** Public relations practitioners, who operate at the top level, participate in the formulation of organizational missions, policies and goals by doing effective plan. It must be done before the beginning of a new budget year.

**Writing and Editing:** Writing is a very vital skill in public relations. Therefore you must learn not only to appreciate good writing but must also be able to write well. The beauty about writing is that it is a skill that can be learned. Good writers are in high demand in most organizations.

**Mass Production:** Practitioners of public relations engage in the writing of various messages for the purpose of communicating with the publics. This is why the skill of writing is vital to public relations. Some of the messages that PR practitioners write are packaged as magazines and other forms of publications, which require editing and production.

**Management:** Public relations practitioners engage in management work. Public relation is a distinctive management function which helps to maintain mutual lines of communication between an organization and its publics. PR practitioners manage people, communication, and, media, events etc.

**Corporate Counseling:** Public relations practitioners advise management on matters concerning their organizations' relationships with their various publics.

**Speaking:** To represent their organizations, PR practitioners do engage in speaking assignments of different kinds for different publics.

**Coaching:** PR practitioners also engage in training, advising and coaching top management staff on public speaking and press interviews.

### **Crisis Communication and management:**

Crisis communication is used by an organization following a major crisis that threatens their image and financial performance. Different crisis might occur because of different causes it can be internal or external in origin. Even though crisis management and communication is essential for all organizations, the natures of crises differ according to political and other views. The nature of the crisis matters the way of solving. The contingency plan helps during such times. To practice defensive public relations ,the PR officers are expected to manage it essentially the flowing of information between the organization and the public, through different media out lets by broadcasting the important information, advising management on what to do and how to do it; try to be proactive before crises happened on their strategic plan. So the crisis could not aggravate. According to Solomon S. (2015:8-9) and Olusegun (2006:125) during and before a

crisis a PR officer is required to perform the following eight stapes: the PR officer has to create awareness about the crisis, do assessment, team building, positioning and Strategy, readiness, action, evaluation, follow-up to closure sequentially and professionally.

In general, according Burnett (1998: 477), crisis may produce gains as well as losses. For example, crisis in Ethiopia during the last years in factories produces losses (burning of ESC by protesters caused by the leading of the government). Organizational crises may also be turned into opportunities (Smith et al., 1996).

## **2.7. Theoretical Framework**

The most difficulties in thesis doing is getting a unified theory or model. According to (Willacy, 2016) there is no one unifying ‘public relations theory or model’ because theorists see from different angles (Van Ruler, 2018: 3) Different scholars/theorists use different models and theories; among them Van Ruler, J. Grunig and Hunt, Taylor and Every, Hallahan ... are the pioneers. For example Van Ruler argued that in communication theory, there are at least three different lenses with which to view how this process works: ‘communication as a one-way process of meaning construction, in which the sender attempts to construct or reconstruct the meaning developed by the receiver; communication as a two-way process of meaning construction, in which two or more people construct new meanings **together**; and communication as a omnidirectional diachronic process of meaning construction, in which the focus is on the continuous development of meaning itself’ (Van Ruler, 2018: 4). Whereas Willacy (2016) described communication theory as one-way or two-way:

Grunig and Hunt’s four models of public relations practice provide a picture of a set of methods and approaches that are used by practitioners, firms, institutions, colleges, universities, governments and etc. in managing and sustaining good working relationships with their publics. To provide public relation practices, Grunig and Hunt (1984) argued that these models are conceptual representations of reality that provide a good insight into the nature of public relations practices commonly found in public relationship management, it would be naive to think that these models are capable and exhaustive enough to capture the diverse nature of public relations practices used by practitioners, governments, businesses and non-governmental organizations all over the world. Nevertheless, Grunig and Hunt (1984) contend that some of the varieties of

methods and approaches adopted in the management of this discipline in general is likely to fit into one of the these models. The models are:-

### **2.7.1 Press A-gentry (Publicity)**

It is relatively an ancient form of communication model. In this model, the focus of public relations effort is on getting favorable coverage or publicity from the media (Seitel, 2011: 81). It is essentially a one-way communication where messages will be sent from a source to a receiver. It is marked by manipulation, exaggeration and deception (one-sided argument) as its purpose (Solomon, 1998: 9). Accuracy, ethics and truth are not seen as an essential factor in this model only shameful deception was related to the assertion public relation to achieve its goal (Solomon, 1998:10). Under this model, there is little or no concern for research.

### **2.7.2 Public Information Model**

It is an early form of one way communication designed not necessarily to persuade the public but rather to inform them. However, unlike the press a gentry/publicity model, it disseminates truthful and accurate information. Both this and the press a gentry's model have been linked to the common notion of public relations as propaganda (Seitel, 2011: 81). Messages send from the sender to the receivers with no regard for response or feedback from the receiver. AS Ojomo W., (2006:41-42) stated, in this model" the public relations professional acts much like a typical journalist or news reporter 'in residence' in the organization and the information he or she disseminates is relatively objective. Indeed, the purpose of public information here is the dissemination of truthful information." When we compared to the Press a-gentry model, the public information model got a huge acceptance, as a result it became the dominant form of public relations in many organizations (Solomon, 1998: 11). There was a slight change that came up with public information model that change from deliberate deception to openness and reason. As it is indicated by Solomon (1998: 10), this stage was identified as public relations practice having a significant influence on public opinion that may have its own contribution to prevent policy changes of social significance. During this time the principle of Lee which promotes telling the truth is the best way to effective public relations was a widely accepted way of doing public relations business. It was also a time when the first "public Bureau" was opened in Boston and Washington in 1902 then followed by Lee's office of publicity (Solomon, 1998:10-11). Government public relations are restricted to providing "information" rather than "publicity" and

to avoid practicing “Public relations”. Thus, even today, government agencies are essentially limited to practicing the public information model (Grunig & Hunt, 1992: 37).

### **2.7.3 Two -way Asymmetric**

Unlike the press a gentry and public information model, which promotes a one-way communication system, the asymmetric model recognizes that communication is a two-way approach between the sender and receiver. The trust of this model is scientific persuasion. It uses research to establish the nature of the publics’ attitude in order to develop a more effective public relations campaign to reveal how best persuade the public towards the organization’s point of view (Otubanjo, Amujo, and Melewar, 2010:3) Here, the idea of two ways communication was introduced as a result of looking for a feedback, the purpose of seeking feedback wasn’t to change position that has been seized by an organization, and instead the feedback was to be used to introduce another form of persuasion so that the audience would accept the interest of the organization (Seitel, 2011: 81-82). This third model of public relation is a period when some social science research such as opinion polling, random sampling and organized feedbacks and the likes were introduced to the public relations practice. It was also a period when an overseas mission of public relations was begun. The PR uses slogans which is catchy by the official public relations that would persuade the public (Solomon, 1998: 13). During this period, public relation scholar such as Barany’s was advocating public relations practitioners should strive for satisfying the public interest. He contributed valuable works such as crystallizing public opinion (1923), the engineering of consent (1955) and propaganda, (1955). Those materials have helped as references for the public relations practitioners in the areas such as ethical values, attitudes and key interests of the people (Solomon, 1998: 13).

### **2.7.4 Two- way Symmetric**

The two-way symmetrical model of public relations as described in Grunig’s Excellence Theory is focused primarily in making sure that decisions made by an organization are mutually beneficial between itself and its audiences. The goal of Grunig’s symmetrical communication model is one that embraces negotiation between the organization and its publics, and one that also fosters mutual understanding. The symmetrical model of communication is a democratic framework for the PR practitioner to follow, and one that can both be effective or detrimental, depending on the situation (Van Ruler, 2018 & Willacy, 2016). According to Willacy (2016)

“two-way symmetric model provides an organization with the tools and path needed to create a strong company reputation built upon solid, long-lasting relationships, because both the organization and its audiences are provided with a voice in processes and developing issues or problems” (p.22). The two-way symmetrical model for communication maintains both the organization’s best interests and its audiences’ best interests at the forefront in the most fair and balanced way possible. Through the use of this model, both the organization and its audiences can collaborate together to both grow and strengthen an overall organization, leading it to greater success.

In this model, public relations practitioners serve as mediators between organizations and their publics. Their goal is to achieve mutual understanding between organizations and their publics (Charles, 2006& Singh p.5). According to Seitel (2011:82) the symmetric model advocates for free and equal information flow between an organization and its publics based on mutual understanding. Here the PR is a mediator between the organization and its publics striving always at achieving mutual understanding rather than an adversarial relationship. The major advocate and founder of this model James E. Grunig mentioned that it would be difficult to exactly identify when this model came into being. However, he noted that those men who are considered to be the founders of modern public relations Lee and Bernarys used to council their clients in a way both the organization and the public mutually benefit from each other’s interaction (Grunig, 1992: 286, Solomon, 1998: 15). According to Solomon, it is very important model to resolve conflict or disagreement within the organization and/or between an organization and its publics.

Following the Second World War professionalism in public relations has begun to take shape as public relations offices flourished almost everywhere. The emergence of professionalism, the demand for further refinement and expansion of professionalism together with consolidation of research work in quality and quantity as well as public relations education, created conducive environment for the popularization of the symmetric model of public relations (Grunig, 1992: 289, Seitel, 2011: 85). According to Solomon (1998) “public relations is the communication and interpretation of information to the publics of an institution; the communication and interpretation of the information, ideas and opinion from those publics to the institution in an effect to bring the two into harmonious adjustment” (p.15).

According to Grunig it has proved that the symmetric model can benefit the target audience as much as the organization. Although research supports the idea that the two ways symmetrical model makes public relations more ethical, senior managers of organizations who are oriented to the bottom-line also want to know whether it pays for their organizations to be ethical. Several studies have shown the ineffectiveness of the press a gentry, public information, and two- way asymmetrical models (Grunig, 1992: 308). This research is conducted based on two way symmetric public relations model, where public relations departments give equal chance to the interest of the public as that of the organization/corporation. The two-way symmetry model of public relations is the most progressive and ideally the one that might serve the interest of publics, an organization.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Chapter three is about research methodology which includes research design, source of data, sampling techniques and procedure, data collection procedures and tools, methods of data analysis and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The application of appropriate methodology is crucial to achieve the overall objectives of a particular study thereby addressing the research questions raised by the research. This study aimed at examining the internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Accordingly, mixed methods are appropriate for assessing the internal communication strategies and practices of PRs in ESC Study. Here, Creswell (2003) listed the importance of mixed methods below.

Mixed methods model has much strength. A researcher is able to collect the two types of data simultaneously, during a single data collection phase. It provides a study with the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative data. In addition, by using the two different methods in this fashion, a researcher can gain perspectives from the different types of data or from different levels within the study (p. 25).

Thus, it employed a questionnaire, interview and PRs document analysis pertinent to Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. It is conducted based on two- way symmetric public relations model, where public relation communication department gives equal emphasis to the interest of the public as that of the corporation (Grunig, 1984, Charles, 2006& Singh, 2014:5).

As Wimmer and Dominick (2006) put it qualitative techniques can increase a research's depth of understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Berg (2001) believes that utilizing qualitative technique enables researchers to search for how people structure and give meaning to their daily lives by sharing in their understandings and perceptions. He further notes that researchers using qualitative techniques examine how people learn about and make sense of them.

Document analysis employed as a major research design for this research. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2010) document analysis is an efficient way to investigate the content of a certain PRs levels and others. The ESC communication crisis communication, communication strategies, communication channels , daily, weekly, monthly, yearly ... documents were used for this study. 'Document analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation 'the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon' (Denzin, 1970, p. 291 as cited in Bowen, 2009: 28). By triangulating data, the researcher attempts to provide 'a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility' (Eisner, 1991: 110). By examining information collected through different methods, the researcher can corroborate findings across data sets and thus reduce the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study.

Interview is conducted to get their insight on the issue at hand. In depth-interviews are aiming at exploring a respondent's point of view, experiences, feelings, values and perspectives. Thus, the corporation communication PRs practitioners were part of this interview. According to Dawson (2002) semi structured interviews are very common and important to compare and contrast with information gained in other interviews (p.28-29). The researcher also remains flexible to raise important information with clear elaborations.

According to Creswell (2003), questionnaire provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. From sample results, I generalize or make claims about the population. Among the two types of survey which are cross sectional and longitudinal survey the researchers used cross sectional one. Cross-sectional study is aimed at determining the frequency (or level) of a particular attribute, such as a specific exposure, satisfaction or any other service-related event, in a defined population at a particular point in time. Independent and dependent variables are measured at the same point in time using a single questionnaire. Thus, Questionnaires were distributed to selected ESC employees so that they can give their reflections on how public relation is practiced in their respective corporation. The information that obtained through questionnaires had also helped to find out what internal communication strategies, and challenges existed in the practice of public relations and also in practicing it as a practitioner.

Peshkin (as cited in Leedy and Ormrod, 2005) pointed out that qualitative research serves one or more of the following purposes: reveal the nature of certain situations, settings, processes,

relationships, systems, or people-description; test validity of certain assumptions, claims theories or generalizations with in a real world contexts- verification; judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices or innovations-evaluation; and gain new insights about particular phenomenon, develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about a phenomenon or/and discover the problems in the phenomenon- interpretation. Quantitative research deals with data in the form of numbers and uses mathematical operations to investigate their properties (Walliman, 2011). The levels of measurement used in the collection of the data i.e. nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio are an important factor in choosing the type of analysis that is applicable, as is the numbers of cases involved. In most quantitative studies, we want to see how many cases of a population fall into various categories of interest (Neuman, 2014).

Many researchers tend to use mixed-method approaches to achieve broader and often better results a method referred to as “Triangulation” (Dawson, 2002: 20). Discussing the necessity of triangulation, and said that the “weaknesses in each single method will be compensated by counter-balancing strengths of another”. This clearly shows how the use of mixed methods helps this research to make a credible conclusion (Creswell, p.237-239). Though, mixing quantitative and qualitative data in a single study (or a program of study), with the inclusion of multiple methods of data and multiple forms of analysis, the complexity of these design calls for more explicit procedures. These procedures also developed in part to meet the need to help researchers create understandable designs out of complex data and analyses (Creswell, 2003:23-24).

### **3.2 Sources of Data**

Both primary and secondary sources of data are used for this study. Ajayi (2017:3) distinguished and listed primary and secondary data and its effect. Based on this, Primary data was collected using semi-structured interview questions and questionnaire which contained a mixture of closed ended and open-ended questions based on public relations literatures. And secondary data was collected from different documents of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation, different books, journals, articles, previous studies and Internet. The corporate communication executive officer and PRs practitioners were part of the interview. The actual data collection was made by using a self-administered questionnaire. The researchers distributed at the working time and collected questionnaires the following days. By considering that all of the respondents are educated, the entire questionnaires were prepared in English. Moreover, participants of the study were informed

about the objective of the study and they were also be notified of about the confidentiality of their response.

### **3.3 Sampling Techniques and Procedures**

Based on the information collected from Ethiopian Sugar Corporation/HR there are 350 employees and 4 PRs practitioners till this paper has done which were target population of my study. The study uses non-probability sampling techniques which are purposive & convenience that are used to select the respondents from Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Participating and giving experienced employees gives fruit full information. Basically the researchers consider it is better of getting information from experienced individuals in the corporation than the early emerged ones in order to have more reliable and rational data. Because of large number of the total population, convenience-sampling technique was used to select the sample respondents. Although, non-probability sampling has problems related to selection bias, in small inquiries and researches by individuals, the sampling technique can be adopted and can be done wisely (Kothari, 2004).

The data source came from Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Thus, documents that were written in public relation with in this year were purposely selected and analyzed. Corporate public relation communication director and public relation practitioners were interviewed with the aim of finding out their reflection on matters related to this research topic. As stated in the above section, for my questionnaire, I used convenience sampling method to select sampled respondents from the total population. Therefore, out of the total population I took sample size of 20% individuals that have a better experience in the organization and also who were willing to participate in my study. In the case of non-probability sampling, the choice of sample size is determined by the insight, judgment, experience or financial resource of the researchers (Kothari, 2004). Thus, the researcher considered available fund and time, sample size and own judgment to determine the sample size.

#### **3.3.1 Purposive sampling**

Singh (2006) stated that “purposive sampling is selected by some arbitrary method because it is known to be representative of the total population, or it is known that it will produce well matched groups. The idea is to pick out the sample in relation to some criterion, which is

considered important for the particular study” (p.100) Purposive sampling helps to use best available knowledge and better control of significant variables. Purposive sampling gives a researcher an advantage to create smooth relationship between the information seeker and provider. Maxwell (1996) also stated purposive sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices. It is where the researcher includes cases or participants in the sample because they believe that they warrant inclusion (Taherdoost, 2016). Based on this, in depth interview was targeted to obtain relevant information about the internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopia Sugar Corporation. It was freely discussed on the PRs tools/channels, practices of PRs in the corporation, internal communication strategies, and professionalization: educational level and field of study. The information was gathered strategically & the documents were selected purposely to triangulate the interview, documents and the questionnaire.

### **3.4. Data Collection Procedure and Tools**

#### **3.4.1 Data Collection Procedures**

My study data source came from the Ethiopia sugar corporation employees, PRs practitioners and documents. Thus, documents that were written in public relations were analyzed and corporate public relations communication director and PRs practitioners were interviewed. Similarly, questionnaires were distributed to the ESC selected employees.

#### **3.4.2 Data Collection Tools**

##### **3.4.2.1 Document Analysis**

One of the objectives of this study is to examine internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Based on the research objectives, documents that are subjects of analysis were collected from already identified Ethiopia Sugar Corporation communication offices. Looking the documents helps to see the type of internal communication tools/channels and internal communication strategies, the practice of public relations, directions and types of communication. In this regard brochures, communication strategic plans, photos, crisis communication, press kits, e-mails, banners, event data etc. were purposely selected and clearly scrutinized.

### **3.4.2.2 Questionnaire**

Dawson (2002) listed the three types of questionnaire and its uses. In this research I used combined questionnaire: closed –ended questionnaire with boxes or tables to tick, scale or rank, and open ended questions for more detailed responses (p.30-32). This clearly helps to gather factual and relevant data from the respondents. The closed ended questions were designed to get definite answers and were used for simplicity. Open ended questions were aimed to get organizational objective, mission and vision, the major practices of PRs practitioners, the internal communication channels, the best internal communication strategies of PRs, and suggested recommendations of employees to enhance internal communications and practices of public relations.

The scale of measurement for the study is interval scale. An interval scale of measurement is based on ordered interval that are of equal length and the zero value is arbitrary. Five points Likert scale are used which include weights for Agreement: 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= Neutral 4= disagree 5= strongly disagree.

### **3.4.2.3 Interview**

One of the techniques used in this research is in-depth individual interview. “Semi-structured in-depth-interview is the most common type of interview in qualitative research” (Dawson,2002: 28-29). Few prelisted questions were used as a guide of interview to the pertinent points and not to forget important information about the research questions. Semi structured interview is pretty much effective in reading the interviewee face, gestures and to get original information through hints. Though, open ended interview questions allow large amount of discussion and dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee. According to Deacon et. al. (1999) Semi-structured interview questions guide helps to guarantee consistency between the research objectives and the data gathered.

Semi-structured interviewing abandons concerns with standardization and control seeks to promote an active open-ended dialogue... The interviewer controls the discussion by referring to an interview guide that sets out the issues to be covered during the exchange (p.65).

Thus, the interview data were recorded (in audio) in order to avoid interruption of the discussion and to preserve the discussions more perfectly; basic notes were also taken in the meantime. In addition Bryman (2004) also makes the following statement while discussing the advantages of semi-structured interview.

Semi-structured interview covers a wide range of types. It typically refers to a context in which the interviewer has a series of questions that are in the general form of interview guide but is able to vary the sequence of questions. The questions are frequently somewhat more general in their frame of reference from that typically found in a structured interview schedule (p.543).

### **3.5 Methods of Data Analysis**

The documents and interview results were analyzed qualitatively with simple sentence structures. It also compiled the same data together to understand easily. The data that were gained from the questionnaires were analyzed and interpreted using statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 24. As a result, descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted by employing different methods.

### **3.6. Ethical Consideration**

The study is ethically clear from Addis Ababa University School of Journalism: Department of Public Relations and Strategic Communication. The researcher used the data from Ethiopian Sugar Corporation Communication department head, team leaders and practitioners, and employees which were collected through document analysis, interviews and questionnaire; permission was obtained from each. To maintain the confidentiality of the information provided by the respondents, the respondents were instructed not to write their names on the questionnaire and assured of that the responses were used only for academic purpose and kept confidential. Finally, respondents were included in the study based on their free will.

## CHAPTER FOUR

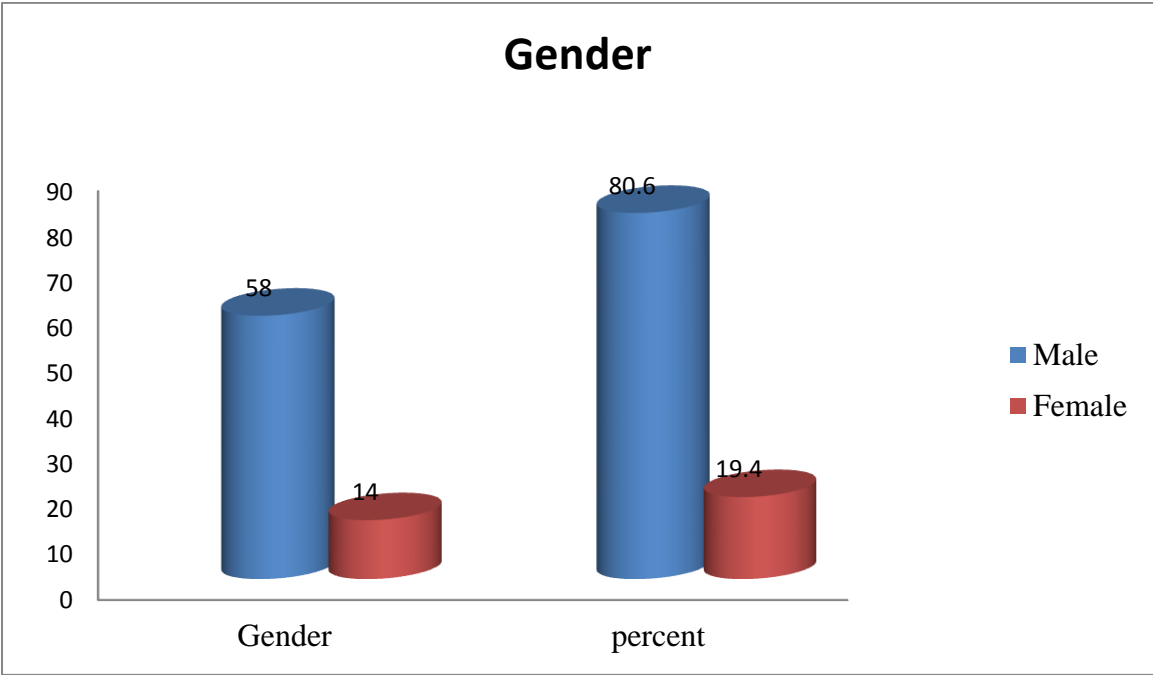
### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF FINDINGS

#### **Introduction**

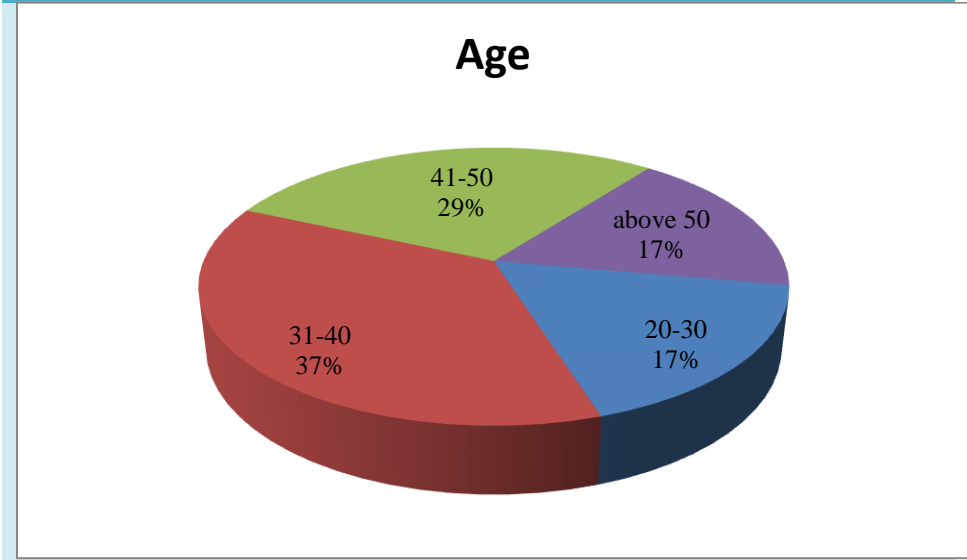
This chapter of the study concerned on the analysis and interpretation of data collected through interview, document analysis and questionnaires. The interview was made with the public relations practitioners of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Document analysis was one of the data collection tool used during my research. The communication strategy, crisis communication, internal communication channels which are printed/aired by the corporate communication (PRs) were part of the finding. The document includes the corporation and projects new activities, up dated data, the corporation communication structure, new strategic plans, communication policy, duties and responsibilities, accountability and transparency of the practitioners and employees. In general these different documents published/aired in different times and distributed for the public, stakeholders, and employees. The communication PRs practitioners informed me their experiences in data collection unreturned; though, to minimize unreturned, 130 questionnaires were distributed and the target 72 were collected from experts, officers, and different position employees of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation.

As I have stated in chapter three, in this chapter I analyzed and interpreted the documents, interviews and questionnaires i.e. the communication strategies, practices of public relations, communication channels, types of communication they used and the direction of communications based on the research questions and objectives. The response from the respondent analyzed and interpreted based on the research questions and review of related literature by the researcher in mixed approaches and discussed below briefly. Please consider that gender, age, work position, educational level and work experience are not part of the study.

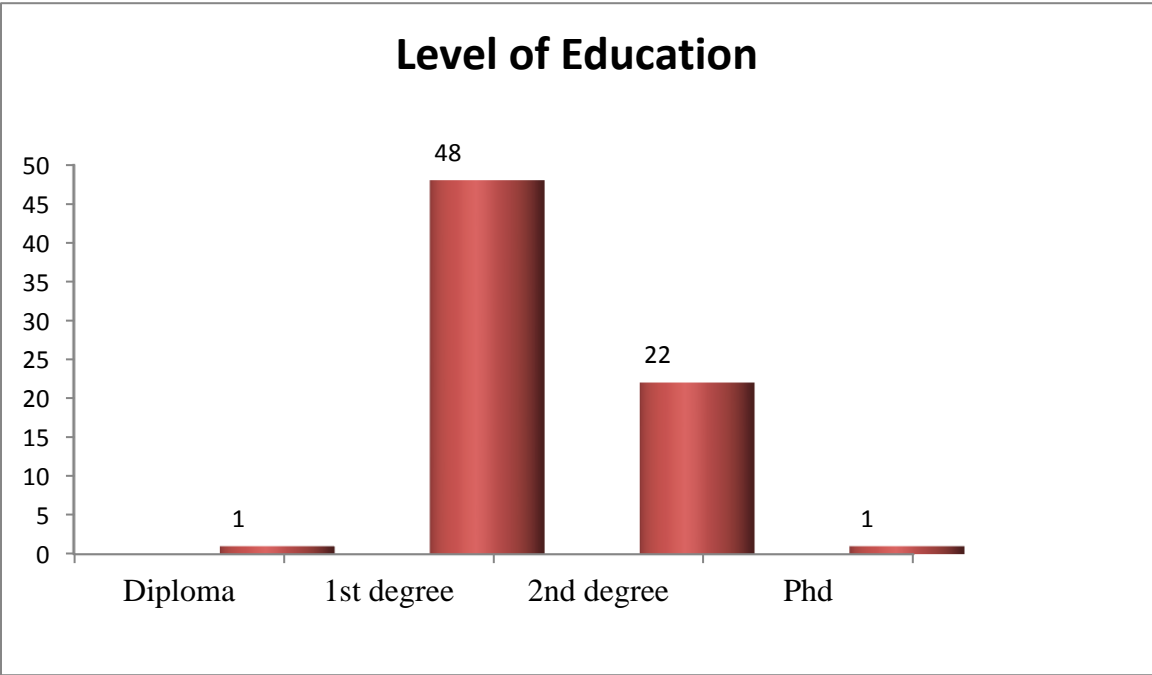
**Demographic Condition of Respondents**



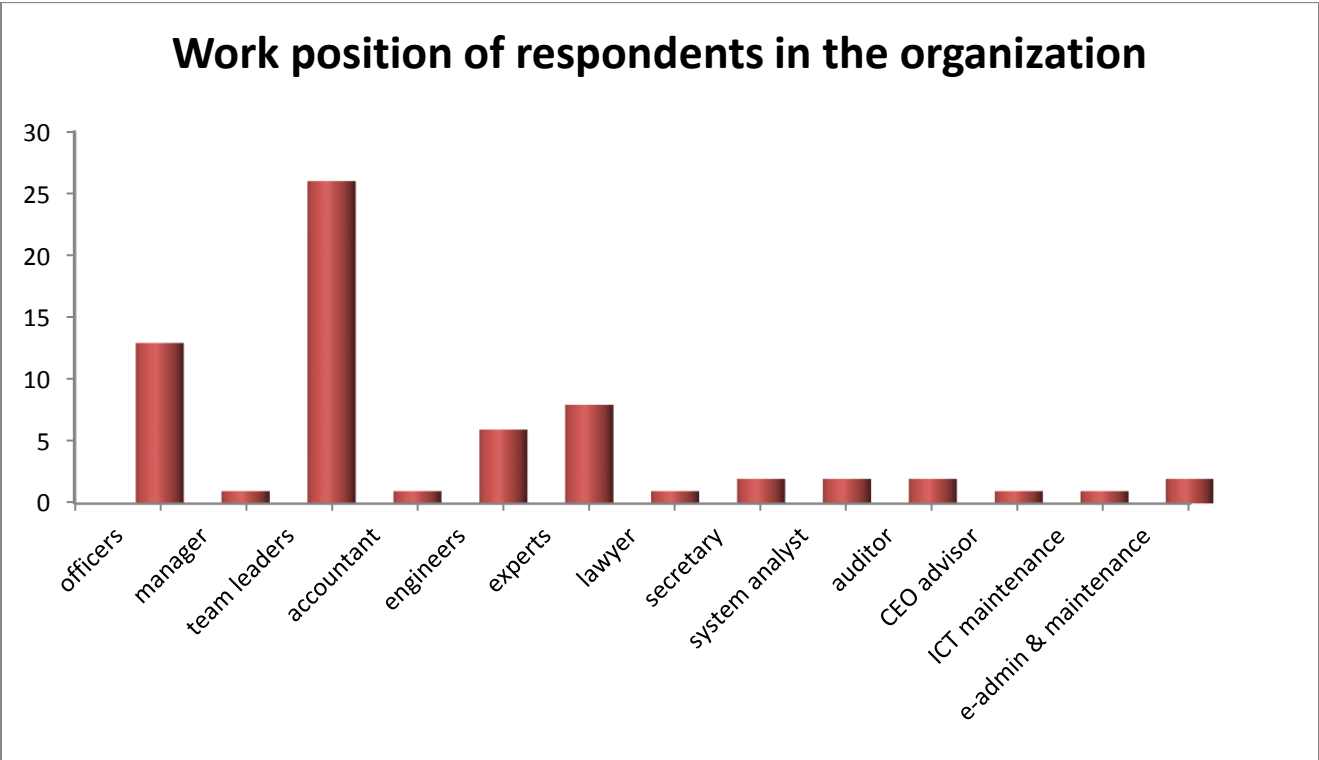
**Graph I:** gender of employees



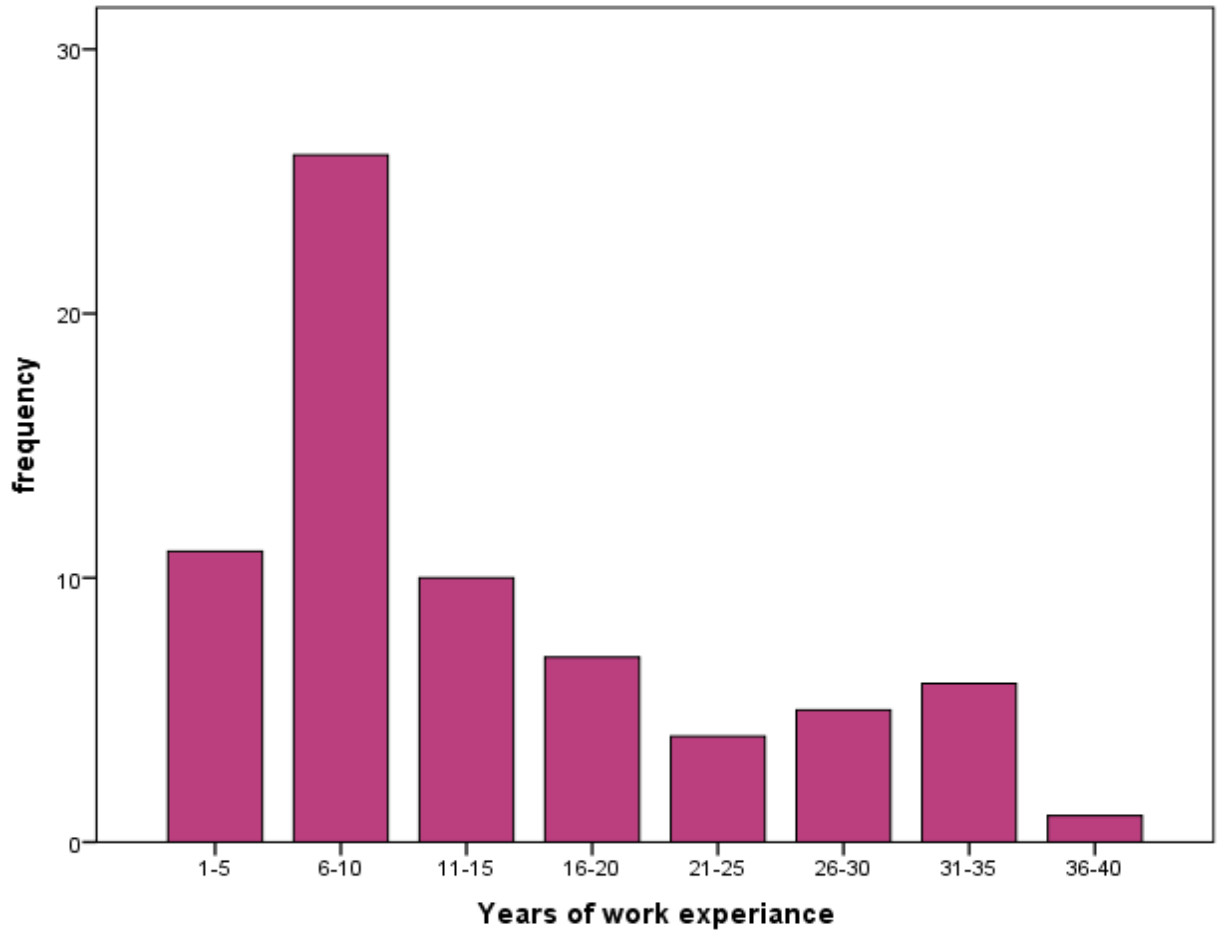
**Graph II:** age of employees



**Graph III:** educational level of employees



**Graph IV:** work position of employees in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation



**Graph V:** years of work experience of employees

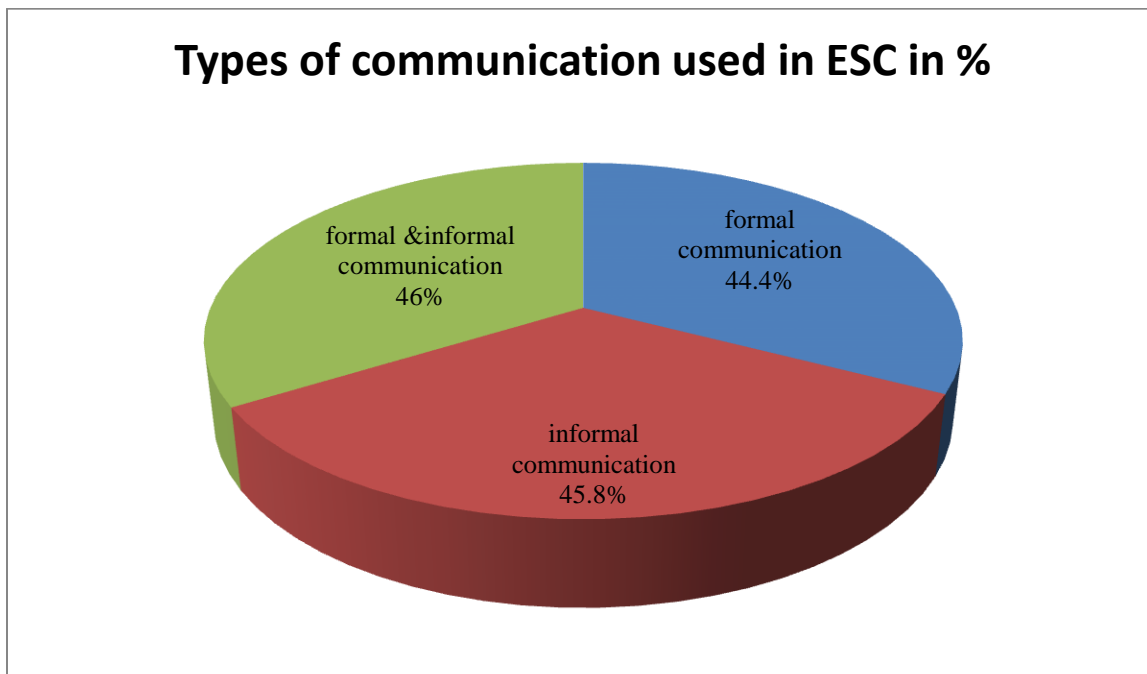
#### **4.1. Communication Strategies of PRs in ESC**

The main objective of this study, as previously stated, is to examine the internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. Therefore, the researcher conducted an interview with four (all) public relation practitioners who have different work experiences under public relations: collected available documents and questionnaires from different work position of employees. The following analysis and interpretations are based on the research questions and reviews of literature.

The first public relations communication strategy and profile of the corporation was prepared by Public relation practitioner Ato Reta in 2012 (PRs deputy executive officer, 2019) and it was served for some years. As he noted, at that time he prepared it in Amharic and English versions. The new public relations communication strategy of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation (2009-2012

E.C) published in April 2009 e.c, listed five main points of the strategies (p1-2). It includes the internal and external communication strategies, media relations, communication channels, public relation practices and budgets; it was prepared by the communication department and discussed by different managerial levels (PRs executive officer, 2019). However, the employees response showed that they were not discussed the communication strategy with the public relations practitioners. The document shows that the corporate communication has its own mission and vision statement in the first pages. According to the questionnaire result 97.2% of the employees understand the mission and vision of the corporation communication and only 2.8% employees couldn't understand it properly.

Based on the interview and questionnaire result Ethiopian Sugar Corporation employees have both formal and informal communications with the employees, experts, officers, board members and committees.

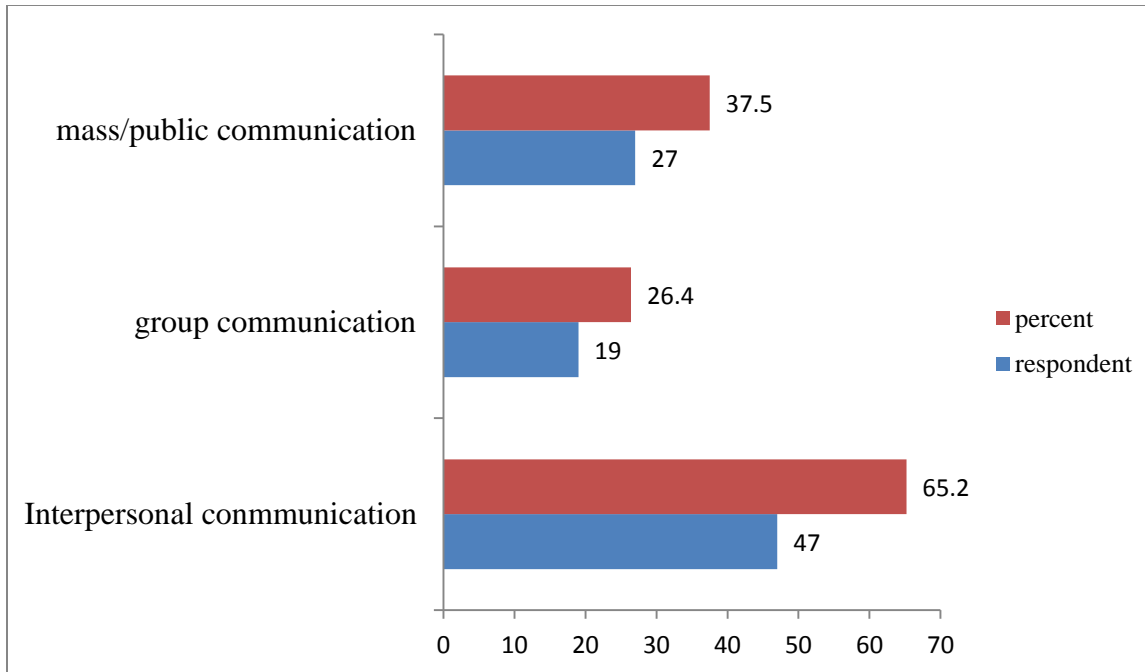


**Graph VI:** Types of communication used in ESC

The corporation employees used formal communication like formal letters with reference numbers, minutes and formal discussions etc. However, they also used informal communication channels according to the strength and weight of the information/work (PRs team leader, 2019 and documents). He, as example, noted that” when my signature is very important and if I were in

field, we can discuss in phone and the work continues then I will sign after I come back to office.” Different minutes with different issues of information are available in the document. For example, April 23-25 meeting minutes of employees about privatization of industries and their consensus with the top managers and public relations are available in the communication department. Even though, 46% of employees agreed on both formal and informal communications of the corporation, sometimes informal communication has its own disadvantages. For example, in the past some years grapevine created crisis of the corporation in burning of the sugarcane fields and death of employees (PRs deputy executive officer, 2019). According to the employee response, among many grapevine crisis PRs proactively solved only 33.4% and the rest 29.1% PRs reacts on. The PRs executive officer said that” even though we are communicating each other in different levels, we are not always following formal procedures, according to the information weight we might discuss informally and changed in to formal stages.” PRs Deputy executive officer, and team leader also agreed with the executive officer’s idea. They convinced me that if we follow procedures emergencies may not get weight and it might hurt the organization, so we are working proactively friendly and effectively (PRs media relation team leader, 2019). The PRs team leader also believed the wisely uses of both formal and informal procedures of communication with employees to create interactive work environment that helps to share the responsibility fully.

The employee response in below graph shows that, Ethiopian Sugar Corporation employees have best interpersonal communication, better public communication and good group communication of each other’s. This data show that group communication of the employees needs due attention and revised strategic communication channels.



**Graph VII: ESC employee communication**

The organizational communication of the corporation, according to the respondents' response, is hierarchical and well mannered. 45.8% of them believed the effectiveness of the communication hierarchy whether it is formal or informal communication: in addition, 40.2% of the employees, and all public relations practitioners stated that the hierarchy of communication is wisely used and managed. The research data show that this is due to the attractive and interactive communication of the managers, experts, officers and public relations practitioners to the employees and the smooth interpersonal relationship of each other's. However, 26.3% of the employees believed the corporation communication is not hierarchical and 33.3% of the employees don't understand even the communication style of the corporation and its effectiveness. These 33.3% employees are looking the corporation communication hierarchy neutrally. This clearly indicates that there is 'AH' moment of 33.3% employees to decide about their organization communication hierarchy and this is positive to decide rationally after their looking.

**Table 1:** Communication hierarchy of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation

Communication of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation is hierarchical					
	frequency	percent		frequency	percent
yes	33	45.8	Agree	29	40.2
no	15	20.8	neutral	24	33.3
I have no idea	24	33.3	disagree	19	26.3

## 4.2 Practices of Public Relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation

The corporate PRs executive officer of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation explained that PRs is member of the management since 2012. Recently, the management and the CEO have positive attitude towards public relations, and employees are very co-operative (PRs DEO, 2019). The documents result of different event photo graphs, mini-media documented files, minutes, outlooks, e-videos and letters showed that public relations practitioners aggressively aware of communication/PRs practices in different times to the employees. This indicated that employees and ESC officials understand the significance of public relations in their organization and have mutual understanding and two-way symmetric communications. According to (PRs team leader, 2019) after the new manager of the corporation and PM Abiy Ahmed comes to power, they all in all accepted and agreed in internal communication hierarchies in different discussions and meetings in the corporation.

In contrary, according to PRs EO (2019), even if the Corporate Communication is the member of the management, due to the corporation deficit, public relations and communication department couldn't influence the management in different issues. For example the Corporate Communication Department of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation couldn't influence the management to allocate budget for relevant equipment (machine), for advanced trainings, for updating and upgrading professionals. Because, professional continuous horizontal and vertical training helps to develop skills, know ledges, attitudes, performance and different aspects that help practitioners to achieve their mission. In the other side the communication DEO stated that'' sometimes we are

the mouth piece of the management, we are not allowed to work investigative communications even in the corporations and industrial sites.” Apparently, as he stated the management needs only the positives of the corporation to be told for the employees.

According to all interviewee all the employees have positive attitude towards public relations and communication department. However, the questionnaires result shows that 37.5% of the employees help public relation practitioners by giving immediate response of PRs questions (i.e. data, information, minute), sharing experiences and 27.8% respondents don't support the PRs practitioners. The other 34.7% of the respondents are neither supporting nor discouraging the practice of public relations, they are neutral. This shows that further training has to be given for the employees to be part of public relation practitioners practice. Public relation practitioners also have to research why these employees are not supporting them.

It's very real that public relation is profession and it is a professional practice. All 83.3% of the employees and all of the interviewees of public relation practitioners believed on it. Regarding practicing professional public relations in the organization, the interviewee's response is more or less similar; all of them stated that they haven't qualified public relations and strategic communications profession/education from well-known institutions. However, they have related field of studies like Journalism and **Communication**, and Foreign Language in BA/MA qualifications. But they have work experiences of journalism and public relations in various government organizations and institutions. Regarding this, the communication EO said, “I have nine years of experiences in media and six years' experience in public relations and I have been working in ESC since 2017. So, I think that I am professional in the field because my qualification is Journalism and Communication with experiences.” The communication DEO also added that” even though I haven't learned PRs, I have 26 years of experience in journalism, and public relation practices. This helped me to be professional public relation practitioner of the corporation. I have got experience in different years with different PRs staffs starting from 2010 after I became ESC PRs practitioner.” The above statements show that all of the public relation practitioners are practicing public relations through experience. Though, this is an opportunity to ESC PRs practitioners to support their practices by formal professional training and education to enhance their knowledge and skill to achieve the objective expected from PRs practitioners.

Even though, public relations have its own professional practices in the assigned organization, 50% of the corporation employees agreed that ESC communication department don't have qualified knowledge and skill of the profession. The research also showed the degree of emphasis given to public relations practice and practicing in relation to strategic communications is medium, 52.8% and 47.2% respectively. The employees understanding towards the profession relation to strategic communication and two-way symmetric communication clearly shows the acceptance of public relations practice in the corporation. Based on the documents, interviews and questionnaires result advisory and counseling role of the management, giving training (i.e. about using the new media, giving information to media outlets, solving communication gaps among each other ...), preparing different events and exhibitions, research, strategic planning, giving directions for the regional PRs, giving answers on website questions, writing different information and editing, translation, crisis communication and corporate counseling are the major practices listed especially by the interviewee and employees. According to the interview result, all of the PRs practitioners have their own practices in the corporation and finally they decide together to implement and announce for the public.

**Table 2:** research and independence of public relation practitioners

PRs practitioners carry out research for the smooth relationship of communication in the organization				Public relation practitioners are independent from influence		
	No. of respondents	Percent		No. of respondent	percent	
Strongly agree	1	1.4	19.5	1	1.4	12.5%
Agree	13	18.1		8	11.1	
Neutral	28	38.9		41	56.9	
Disagree	22	30.6	41.7	18	25	30.6%
Strongly disagree	8	11.1		4	5.6	

In relation to research, the communication EO stated that “research is one of our practices and once it was done by the PRs department to assess the best internal communication strategies and channels and based on our finding we left print channels and use outlooks and electronics.” Afterwards, as he stated they use outlooks as best communication channels of employees and PRs practitioners. But I haven’t seen enough research documents done by PRs practitioners in their documents and websites: 41.7% employees also agreed with few/no research is done by the PRs practitioners. The documents and questionnaires result shows that PRs practitioners had limitations in conducting research as a tool of problem solving and smooth relationships of communication in the organization.

#### **4.2.1 Crisis Communication**

Ethiopian Sugar Corporation Communication has crisis communication; however, it is not proactively applied as they replied. DEO of the corporate communication listed the burning of sugar cane fields as examples and death of employees in different years in different factories.

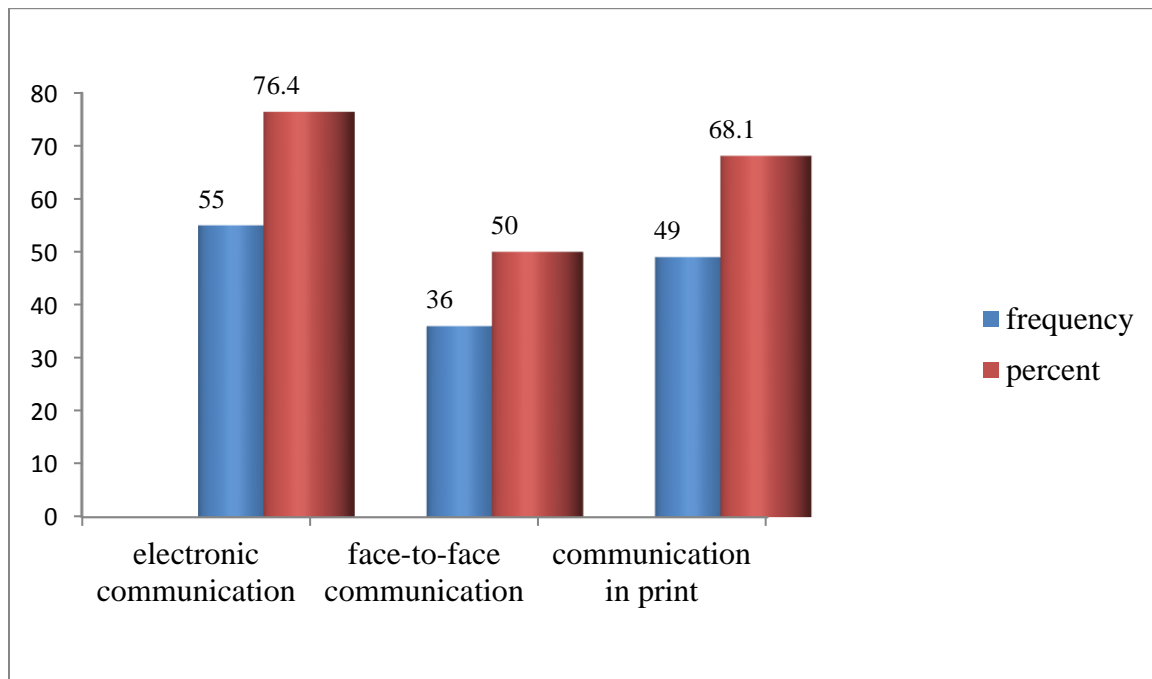
According to the ESC PRs practitioners’ interview, evidence documents and questionnaire results, they have two-way symmetric communication strategies among employees. According to the interviewee the strategic communication listed the communication channels and its use in detail. It shows that these channels helped them to solve communication problems and crisis among each other. “We aggressively use outlook for each of the employees except drivers, and we give phone calls for them: because drivers are always in ride and couldn’t see outlooks and respond immediately” (Communication team leader, 2019). The corporate communication EO and DEO shared me their experience of problem solving in the organization with a threat of privatization of the organization. Investment opportunities in Ethiopian Sugar Industries, April 2019 stated all the information of the sugar industries in Ethiopia with its details. It also stated about privatization of the industries to the employees (p9). As soon as they heard the rumors of the employees towards privatization, the managers and PRs practitioners called for a meeting of employees. They said, “we called the employees for a half day meeting and aware the issue in detail and discussed until we come up with agreement. This helped employees to work freely without threat in the corporation in their work position.” Hence, 44.5% of the respondents have interactive communication with the public relations practitioners, and 48.6% have positive strong interaction. Similarly, 59.8% respondents have interactive communication with managerial. This interactive

communication shows mutual understanding of employees and trust among one other that helped highly for the achievement of the organization mission.

Among practices of public relations, training and experience sharing is one of them. Regarding training and experience sharing, all of the respondents have similar answers. The communication media relation team leader said “I haven’t got any training prepared by ESC, but only once I participated one month training by the Ethiopian Communication invitation. However, obviously we share experiences from different PRs practitioners in different organizations informally.” Their cause is budget allocation of the corporation to the public relations department due to the corporation deficit. Nevertheless, the Communication EO stated” twice in a year we share experiences with all public relation practitioners of the corporation in different industry zones but sometimes it might be once in a year due to many reasons.” Apparently, public relation is a profession and professional practice: however; the practitioners are working with experiences and even couldn’t get professional training. In addition, 65.3% of the employees aggressively stated that PRs practitioners couldn’t get training and they aren’t train us in various issues. This clearly hurts the organization internal communication and practices public relations.

One of the problems now a day is the new media. However, it is not the problem in ESC. According to the corporate communication media relation team leader the corporation has its official media out lets and they use it effectively and genuinely by updating all necessary information ultimately. The official face book and e-mail website are full of information and also they add phone numbers for further information. The Communication DEO said that “we work together with the IT department to manage the new media: now we have 12,000 likes in our face book and we can communicate easily with our followers. However, if issue, topic or crisis happens we have crisis communication to solve the problem with the help of the government rule and regulations.” 41.7% of the employees believed the effective strategy of public relations practitioners towards using and managing the new media especially face book. This indicates effective communication and mutual understanding of public relations practitioners and employees with the new media out lets.

## 4.2.2 Communication Channels



**Graph VIII:** Communication channels

As we have seen above, the internal communication channel of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation has electronic, face to face and print availabilities. Similar to the above employees' response, the result of public relations practitioners' interview also showed similar figures. PRs practitioners said that "We effectively use internal communication channels: especially; outlook is our first hand communication channel that we daily used accordingly". According to the interviewee, they exchange information in outlook with all employees except drivers effectively. However, they also use face to face communication, mini media, billboard, notice board, articles, telephone calls, personal e-mails, notice boards, journals, brochures, fliers, different events, letters, face book, exhibitions and different meetings according to the issue. The communication strategy of ESC (2009-2012 E.C) listed the channels in table with its detail descriptions of two-way symmetric communication and public relation practices (p22-23). Near the main gate next to the cafe they use mini media that have audio and video to inform the corporation information; it works with the available information in all working days. The information is uploaded Friday and Monday, however, if there is immediate information they upload any time and open for the employees (Communication EO, 2019).

The documents indicated that they update information in their official face book web sites [www.ethiopiansugar.com](http://www.ethiopiansugar.com) and e-mail: [info@ethiopiansugar.com](mailto:info@ethiopiansugar.com). In each of the department including the guards and drivers they do have telephones/mobiles that they use for communication of information accordingly. 01155227475 is their major communication line of the corporate communication department from anywhere (Communication media relation team leader, 2019). Journals also used as a communication and information channel but they don't have e-journals. Different event and exhibition photo graphs are also posted in the billboard. Various e-videos are documented in the media room with its year, month, and date. Brochures, fliers, communication strategies, photos and news letters are found in the corporation library openly to the employees to read and comment every time. The Communication DEO and media relation team leader also stated that "soon in the coming year we plan to have special events of employees especially surprising like when they get married, graduated from university, birth days of elders and thank you programs for retired ones. They added that we will prepare a gift cards signed by the CEO and special employees and will give for our workaholic employee". The research finding shows that these channels clearly increase the employee's intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, mass and public communication/interaction of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation employees. According to the interviewee, by using these listed channels they update the corporation information to the employees and 37.5% employees immediately see the information and gives feedback. It's clear that practitioners get support from employees that enhance their practice and interaction. In other words the smooth relationship of employees and public relations practitioners strengthens the public relation practices and increases the achievement of the organization objectives.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter tries to deal with brief conclusions and recommendations of the research topic. As a result, the first issue to be discussed here would be the conclusions of the interviews, content analysis and response of employees. Possible recommendations are also recommended based on the research findings that could help to minimize the problems and sustain the strengths of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation internal communication strategies and practices of public relations.

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

The whole attempt of this research is to examine internal communication strategies and practices of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. In order to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives, the study employed qualitative and quantitative research approaches. In this regard, relevant Ethiopian Sugar Corporation public relations documents were analyzed, questionnaires with employees were collected and interviews with public relation practitioners was conducted. Based on the findings obtained from the research, the following conclusions are drawn:

The research shows that Ethiopian Sugar Corporation Communication has its own public relations communication strategy with 25 pages, and crisis communication. It was prepared in April 2017. The strategic communication was prepared by Public Relations and Communication Practitioners of the corporation and discussed by different managerial levels. It included the communication strategies, media relations, communication channels and interaction with the internal and external publics, follow up and feedback strategies, training and experience sharing programs, research activities and the total interactions with different stakeholders. Even though public relations have a strategic communication, it is not prepared by the right public relations professional practitioner. Regarding crisis communication, ESC public relations practitioners sometimes couldn't proactively solve the corporation employee's problems due to budget deficits: the burning of the sugar cane fields and death of employees are listed as examples.

The practitioners have BA and or MA qualifications with related fields. They have learned English as a foreign language and Journalism & Communication which are not the right public

relations and strategic communication education. As the interview and employees response shows, ESC public relation practitioners are working by experience. However, supporting practitioners by different professional training, sharing of experience, giving horizontal and vertical education of public relations, doubles the practitioners' skill and knowledge towards their profession. Though, professionalizing public relations practitioners (as 4.2 para4) is an important matter in order to achieve the objective expected out of public relations practitioners.

The Ethiopian Sugar Corporation, NGOs, universities, colleges, institutions, government and concerned bodies couldn't give the PRs practitioners training to update and upgrade themselves. According to the interview result, they themselves share experience with other co-workers and formal horizontal or vertical training was not given for the practitioners due to the corporation deficit. It shows the attention of concerned bodies towards public relation profession. In the other hand, there is no public relation association in the country that additionally pains the practice of public relations profession and guarantees the practitioners.

According to the research finding, employees have formal and informal communications with different managerial levels, experts, officers, practitioners and among themselves: it shows the wisely interaction and communication of each other. They have effective internal communication and: as graph VII shows employees and PRs practitioners have best interpersonal communication and interaction among one another. The electronic-internal communication channels are pretty much effective & interactive than others. I conclude that outlook is their best communication channel.

According to the finding a relatively attention and emphasis is given to public relations practice after the new manager comes to power, and employees believe in the practice of public relations practitioners. The interview result shows, ESC public relation is member of the management since 2012. Recently, the management and the CEO have positive attitude towards public relations and its practice. Based on the finding, even though employees positively view the significance of public relations practices, they don't fully support them (4.2 para3).

According to the interview and employees response, PRs practice is not fully independent from external bodies and it affects its practice (table 2). The current available documents on public relations practice are more of organized and well balanced with the employee's responses except

doing research. Independent and effective public relations demands research work. Even if, the communication strategy listed research and its importance, the interview conducted with public relations practitioners, contents and the response of employees clearly indicated the fact that the practice of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation has limitations of proper public relations research. Research is one of the most important items in the practice of public relations to do activities proactively. However, as ESC public relations practitioners are not fully independent, it limited their practice in research and investigative communication activities.

In general, I can say that they have communication strategy and crisis communication with limited elaborations, the internal electronic communication channels are pretty much effective than prints and face-to-face communications, employees have best interpersonal communication with PRs practitioners : the practitioners couldn't get horizontal and vertical professional training that helps their profession, practitioners are not fully independent, no professional association is found in Ethiopia that guarantees PRs practitioners, they have budget shortages and these all affect public relations practices to practice effectively.

## **5. 2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. Communication strategy is the back bone or the where of public relations practices. It also includes all the practices of public relations, media relations, audiences, communication channels/tools, training programs, research ...as I have listed above. I suggest, the communication strategy should be prepared by public relations professionals and or experts. Communication Strategies ought to prepare based on the vision and mission of the organization with elaborations to be understood by other un participated employees.
2. Strategic communication guides, manages and advises the types and directions of communication of employees. The types and directions of communication should be wisely used and managed by practitioners and employees. Especially, group communication and lateral communication needs due attention and improvement.
3. Employees have good habits to communicate with out looks. However, due to electric power and language barriers they may miss timely information, response or feedbacks. Though, Communication channel of the corporation shouldn't dependent on outlooks and electronics.

4. ESC public relations practitioners sometimes couldn't proactively solve the corporation employee's problems due to budget deficits: however, recently, public relations practitioners solve the rumors of employees about privatization threats of sugar industries proactively. Though, it is better to revise the crisis communication & it should be prepared strategically and wisely to solve crisis proactively with sufficient budget allocations.
5. Ethiopian Sugar Corporation public relations practitioners have learned foreign language, and Journalism and Communications. They have experiences in practicing public relations in different institutions. However, they couldn't get professional training and experience sharing in public relations profession. Thus, the development of professional practitioner in the practice of public relations should be given due attention by the corporation, government and or concerned bodies.
6. Transforming the practice of public relations more than anything demands strengthening the value of organizations. To increase the value of the profession & professionals, various public relations programs in higher learning institutions at different levels should be open, give scholars for those budget shortage organizations with/without cost sharing.
7. Till the completion of this paper there is no public relations professional association in Ethiopia. Public relations professional association must be found in Ethiopia and help the strength and guarantee of the profession and practitioners.
8. Developing the practice of public relations in Ethiopian Sugar Corporation requires research. Even though, the communication strategy signifies the power of research, the corporate communication has limitations. The Corporate Communication should give emphasis to conduct applicable research.
9. Even though, the corporation employees view the significance of public relations, they don't fully support the practitioners practice. It is due to shortage of training and experience sharing among employees and public relations practitioners. Though, the corporate communication practitioners should give dimensional training and share experiences to aware the practice of public relations with employees. The corporation has to prepare various celebrations like events (Well coming and departing of employees, surprising of employees because of their great job for the corporation...) that increase their communication and intimacy.

10. Public relation practitioners are not fully independent in their practices in ESC. They offend to do investigative communications with various stake holders. External bodies must give freedom of public relations practitioners.

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Investment Opportunities in Ethiopian Sugar Industry April 2019

Ethiopian sugar industry profile (2017, January) Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The role of formal internal communication in organizational identification, case no.15 (International Management May 23, 2016)

# Appendix One

Addis Ababa University

Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

Department of Public Relations and Strategic Communication

## Questionnaires for Employees

**Dear Respondents,**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for the research to fulfill M.A requirement in Addis Ababa University, Graduate School of Journalism and Communication, Department of Public Relations and Strategic Communications.

I would like to state your genuine, honest and accurate response will have greater input to the dependability of the research findings. Therefore, I kindly request you to provide your genuine answers to the questions that appear below. I would like to remind you that the answers you will provide me is solely used for research purpose and kept *confidential*. **Thank you in advance for your cooperation!**

**Part I- Personal information-** Please **circle** or **write** your responses for the following personal information based on the type of questions.

**A) Please circle** your responses for the following personal information

1. Gender            A. Male            B. Female
2. Age                \_\_\_\_\_
3. Educational level  
A. Diploma            B. 1<sup>st</sup> degree            C. 2<sup>nd</sup> degree            D. PhD            E. other

**B) Please write** your responses for the following personal information

4. Your work position in the organization \_\_\_\_\_
5. Years of Experiences \_\_\_\_\_
6. Field of Education \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II- Basic Questions**

7. Do you understand your organization vision and mission?  
A) Yes                            B) No                            C) I have no idea

8. Do you get the corporation information freely?  
 A. yes                                      B. No                                      C. I have no idea
9. Do you think the PRs practitioners are positive to well-come feedbacks from the employees/publics?  
 A. yes    B. No    C. I have no idea
10. Do you think public relation is a professional activity?  
 A. Yes    B. No    C. I have no idea
11. Do you know the practice of PRs in your organization?  
 A. Yes    B. No    C. I have no idea
12. Do you think the internal communication tools; channels are effective in your organization?  
 A. Yes    B. No    C. I have no idea
13. Is the communication of the organization hierarchical?  
 A. yes    B. No    C. I have no idea
14. Do you think public relations practitioners are assigned based on appropriate knowledge and skills?  
 A) Yes    B) No    C) Difficult to say
15. Does your organization PRs practitioner help to update you about the corporation information?  
 A. yes    B. No

How \_\_\_\_\_

16. What is the degree of emphasis given for public relations practice of your organization?  
 A) Very high                      B) High                      C) medium                      D) low                      E) very low
17. How do you see the practice of public relation practice in relation to strategic communication?  
 A) Very high                      B) High                      C) medium                      D) low                      E) very low

**Part III- Major Questions**

Please make a tick (√) mark on your choice that is provided in front of each question.

1=Strongly Agree 2=Agree 3=Neutral 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
I	<b>Internal Communication Strategies</b>					
1	ESC organization communication strategy is developed and run professionally.					
2	Internal communication helps the PRs practice significantly					
3	Formal communication is highly dominated in our organization					
4	Informal communication is highly dominated in our organization					
5	Employees have effective interpersonal communication					
6	We have effective group communication /interaction in the organization					
7	Public/mass communication is held strategically in our organization					
8	Communications tools, channels are effectively used in the organization					
9	Electronic communication(e-mail, phone calls) is commonly used in ESC					
10	Face –to-face communication is common in ESC					
11	Memos and documents are used as communication channels in ESC					
12	communication in our organization doesn't follow its hierarchy					
13	Communication gaps/problems are always solved by communication in the organization					
14	PRs (the organization)gives us training about different organizational issues like communication and interaction					
15	Managers have good communication interactions with us					
16	PRs have smooth relationship with employees					
17	Public relations practitioners carry out research for the smooth relationship of the communication in the organization					

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
<b>II</b>	<b>Practice of Public Relations</b>					
1	PRs practitioners are assigned professionally					
2	PRs has given better job structures in the organization					
3	The practice of PRs is open to the employees					
4	PRs do activities based on the vision and mission of the organization.					
5	PRs decide an appropriate time to deliver information					
6	Less budget is assigned to PRs department that obstacles their practice					
7	Public relations practice is necessary in our organization					
8	Organizational managers and employees believe in the importance of PRs and its practice					
9	PRs have a very good relationship with internal publics					
10	PRs works strategically to each activities					
11	PRs builds a positive relationship between the public and the organization via strategic communication					
12	PRs creates goodwill by managing a two-way communication process					
13	PRs solves grapevine and change in to opportunities					
14	PRs select and use the right PR tools					
15	PRs prepares Print and emailed information to the internal publics					
16	PR effectively manages and uses the new media for the publics (face book, twitter, ...)					
17	The PRs websites are full of updated information					
18	PRs initiate us to work strategically towards the organization vision					
19	We think that PRs have the necessary knowledge & skills					
20	PRs in ESC is done under professional principles, standards & ethics					
21	We aggressively help public relations department in any need to develop its practice					
22	PRs is independent from any other influence in our organization					
23	PRs have professional training in different times & levels					
24	PRs share experience with different internal and external publics					

**Part IV: please give short and brief answer for the following explanation questions.**

1. What are your organizational objective, mission and vision?

Objective\_\_\_\_\_

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Mission\_\_\_\_\_

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Vission\_\_\_\_\_

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2. Please list the practices of PRs in your organization?

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3. To what extent do you think the public relations practice is independent from any external involvement?

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4. What type of internal communication strategies does your organization employ? Which do you prefer more?

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5. Which communication type is used frequently? Formal or informal? Why?

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5. What is your perspective towards internal communication channels and public relations practices of ESC?

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6. What should be done for improving

A. Internal communication and

B. Public relations practices of Ethiopian Sugar Corporation?

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Thanks again for your genuine response!

## **Appendix Two**

### **Interview guide for the Semi-Structured Interview**

(For public relation practitioners)

- A. The researcher introduced himself and told the interviewee the aim of the interview.
  - B. Let the interviewee to introduce his name, education level, year of experience, position
  - C. The researcher explained the purpose of the interview; about what is the interview, and thanks the interviewee's cooperation for the interview
- 
- 1. Are the PR practitioners professional in the organization?
  - 2. Does the corporation prepare in and out trainings and experience sharing that helps internal communication and practice of public relations?
  - 3. What type of internal communication strategies do you use to communicate with your employees? (In relation to two-way symmetric communication)
  - 4. In what way PRs is practiced in ESC?
  - 5. How do you solve communication problems in your organization? E.g. Grapevine /Gossips?
  - 6. In what way do you use and manage the new media?
  - 7. What tools, channels of PRs do you use in the corporation to communicate (each other)?
  - 8. How do you update employees about news of the Corporation? Formally or informally? Why?
  - 9. What are the major practices of PRs in your organization?
  - 10. How do you explain the interaction between the employees and PRs?
  - 11. How do you fill the communication gap between the employees and ESC?
  - 12. How employees and ESC officials view the significance of internal communication strategies and PRs practices?

Thank you in advance for your co-operation!