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Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

Assessment on practices and challenges of Communicationin the FederalHousing Corporation.

By: DANIEL MEKURIA DIGA

June, 2020

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Addis Ababa University

Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

Specialized in Public Relations and Strategic Communication

Assessment on practices and challenges of Communication in the Federal Housing Corporation of Ethiopia.

Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Journalism and Communication in the Partial fulfillment of Master's Degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communications

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DECLARATION

I, DANIEL MEKURIA, declare that the thesis entitled "Practice and Challenges of Communication by the Federal Housing Corporation of Ethiopia" is my original work under the guidance and suggestion of the Research Advisor. It is offered for the partial fulfillment of the Degree of Masters of Arts in public relation and strategic communication. This study has not been done before and all sources of material used for the study have been appropriately acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that student Daniel Mekuria has carried out his research work on the topic titled "Practices and Challenges of Communication in the Federal Housing Corporation of Ethiopia". This work is original in nature and it is appropriate for submission for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for Masters of public relation and strategic communication.

Abdulaziz Dino (PhD)

Signature: ____________________

Date: _______________________

ABSTRACT

This study intends to promote the utilization of conceptual aids for public relations activities by assessing activities and challenges of public relations at the Federal Housing Corporation (FHC). Specifically, the study aims to identify the extent to which activities of PR are implementing in relation to PR theoretical concepts, explore practitioners' role, and challenge facing PR activities in FHC.The study employed the two-way symmetrical public relations model as a theoretical framework to inform the study. A qualitative study design was used as the main method of research in order to investigate and clearly explain the practices and challenges of the communication practice of the Corporation. In addition to the qualitative method, a quantitative study design also used in order to describe the amounts of data in number during analysis. Under the qualitative study design, document analysis, interview and observations were used, whereas under the quantitative research design, questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. Questionnaire respondents were selected by purposive and convenience sampling techniques. Questionnaires were distributed among 100 respondents and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analyzed. In addition, interview was conducted to four employees and one team leader. The findings of the study show that activities of PR in FHC have a variety of aspects, but not satisfactory; they have not grounded on PR strategy and objectives; no feedback mechanism for improvement; PR messages are not pretested before reaching the public; almost there is no consistency in PR activities; practitioners are fully engaged on technician role without dealing with the strategic role; poor internal PR activities; lack of proper attention for PR section, capacity and skill gap observed on the side of practitioners, high rate of employee turnover; lack of proper PR structure; not proportioned workload; lack of information management system Lastly, the study has suggested concentrating on awareness formation, reforming PR structure, developing theoretical guidelines, capacity building, establishing interface and information handling system, and committed leadership to improve PR activities in the FederalHousing Corporation.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AARH	Agency for the Administration of Rental Houses
AAU	Addis Ababa University
AGH	Agency for Government Houses
ETB/BIRR	Ethiopian Currency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IHDA	Integrated Housing Development Agency
IHDP	Integrated Housing Development Programmed
MOWUD	Ministry of Works and Urban Development
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NUPI	National Urban Planning Institute
PADCO	Planning and Development Collaborative International
PMAC	Provisional Military Administration Council
PR	Public Relations
PRH	Public Rental House
ESDG	Ethiopian Sustainable Development goal
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
UNESCAP	United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Asian and the Pacific
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlement Program

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

The field of Public relations (PR) has, over time, become more pertinent and its contributions towards achieving organizational goals become paramount (Seitel, 2017). It "continues to be one of the most dynamic disciplines in organizational life throughout the world" (Lattimore, et al., 2012). Demands to deploy such public relations and communication activities in an organization have also been growing in line with the mounting complexity of an organization (Miller, 2012). Since the primary assumption of deploying public relations in an organization is to "promote an entire organization or goods and services" (Seitel, 2017). Cognizance to this fact, this study intended to explore the activities and challenges of public relations with reference to the Federal Housing Corporation (FHC). This introductory part of the study comprises a brief description of background information that provides sufficient context for the study. It also incorporates a statement of the problem that encapsulates questions to be answered, objectives of the study, and research questions. Furthermore, research design, significance, and limitations of the study are addressed in this chapter.

1.1General Background

The expansion of urbanization is a recent phenomenon in human history and urban centers are growing rapidly in the world under different historic, economic and social conditions. This unexpected urban growth is bringing both positive and negative consequences. Urbanization is taking place at a very fast rate in most developing countries of the world. In many cases, rapid urbanization is coupled with an exodus of people to urban areas, and excelled the rate of growth in the supply of housing and other basic services. This has resulted in acute shortage of tenable houses in urban areas in general and in large urban center in particular. The reasons for the obstinate nature of housing problem during nineteenth century were cast in the circumstance of early urbanization. Population expansion and low wages as well as weak effective demand for housing were the two principal demand factors of housing problem (Richard Rodger, 1989).,7

Housing is one of the three basic needs of mankind and it is the most important for the physical survival of man after the provision of food. UN-Habitat (2007) holds that adequate housing contributes to the attainment of physical and moral health of a nation, and stimulates: the social stability, the work efficiency, and the development of the individuals. It is also one of the best indicators of a person's standard of living and of his place in the society. Moreover, housing condition of a nation manifests the country's socio-economic development level. It also bears upon the maintenance of privacy, health and the development of normal family living conditions. On the other hand, it influences fertility by encouraging or discouraging family formation and affects mortality through health problems (Gebeyehu, Marco and Behailu, 2001).

Urban centers in Ethiopia are characterized by massive housing problem around 70-90% of urban population are living in sub-standard housing, low economic activities, growing population, inadequate upgrading, etc(UN -Habitat, 2008). To reduce the problem the government has implemented the project, Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP) where houses are constructed by low cost for medium and low income groups. The goal is to reduce the proportion of slum-dwellers, but still there are inadequate housing provisions (UN-H habitat, 2010).The problem remains large. According to the Integrated Housing Development Agency report to the house of people representatives, The housing deficit of Addis Ababa is between 900,000 and 1,000,000.The city's projected to construct 400,000 condominium units between 2010 and 2015.Although the program has not met its original targets it has built 171,000 housing units (IHDA, 2013).This shows that the housing deficit is not solved by the limited capacity of the IHDA.

The primary instrument for implementing the Derg's housing policy was the proclamation on Government ownership of urban land and extra houses (Proclamation No. 47/1975), which effectively eliminated private sector rental or sale of real estate development. This legislation nationalized all urban land and housing units not occupied by owners. As per this proclamation, 'kebele' were responsible for the administration of urban land and housing; rent collection from tenants paying less than Birr 100 per month; and maintenance of existing housing units. Most of the units outside the kebeles control were placed under the protection of the Agency for the Administration of Rental Houses (AARH).

With low public sector production rates of housing, the Derg organized and supervised housing cooperatives to respond to housing requirements. To encourage the development of the cooperative system, the Derg intervened with a wide range of incentives. This package of incentives for cooperative housing development resulted in a significant increase in both the supply of and demand for housing. From 1986 to 1992, about 2667 cooperatives with a total membership of 69,775 were organized in 26 urban areas. Addis Ababa alone accounted for 85 percent of the total membership. Over the 1975-1992, the cooperative movement produced a total of 40,539 housing units (PADCO, 1998). This means about 2,252 housing units were constructed annually.

In addition, after the socialist government decided to nationalize extra land and houses owned by the private sector and changes them to state ownership, the AARH (now Federal Housing Corporation FHC). Apart from management of the units, this institution was given the power to construct additional rental housing units. FHC achieved the construction of 6656 villas and 66 apartments almost 27 years ago (FHC, 2015). Currently, the Corporation is re-established by Council of Ministers Regulation No. 398/2017 as a public enterprise to participate in construction industry to reduce housing shortage in the cities.source

In Addis Ababa, there is massive demand for public rental housing. This demand stems from both the current housing deficit and the poor management of the existing public housing stock. However, the allocation and rent estimation in public rental houses seems grossly insufficient all over the world. According to UN-Habitat (2003) lack of effective and efficient management system plays great role beside poverty, rapid urbanization and low level of economic development for inadequacy of public rental houses management.

Therefore, for this to happen, communication plays a vital role by building a bridge between an organization and its customers. It is the life line for any service giving or business firms. In essence, communication needs to be strategic to be successful and fulfill its purpose. In order to achieve its goals, communications of any given organization is required to be carefully structured, designed and planned prior to implementation. The communication design should compatible with the company's vision and mission. Because having a carefully designed communications strategy and plan for an organization meant scoring a half way success to the achievement of the organization's mission.

With regard to this, one can be intrigued by asking relevant questions to find out the communication employed by the Corporation throughout the past years. Has the communication been deployed according to its theoretical rules and principles?

Hence, the main aims of this research paper are to pay a closer look at and examine the communication practices of the FHC and find out the challenges encountered. The paper also attempted to find out the major strengths of the communication practice and come up with constructive recommendations.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The fundamental problem facing public rental houses in developing countries were the supply never matched demand. The imbalance between the number of families waiting the accommodation and the relatively limited numbers of public housing units, which are affected by unfair allocation, and rented below market standards which aggravate the overall problems (Mayo,1987).

In Ethiopia, there is a substantial imbalance between demand and supply of housing. Supply of housing has not kept pace with the rapidly growing population and rate of urbanization. That means demand has been growing quite rapidly, mainly driven by rapid urbanization, high population growth and household formation. However, it has to be considered that the market for the housing sector is highly segmented and far from uniform depending on the need and quality.

Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia has faced very rapid population growth due to immigration and natural growth. So it increases the pressure on housing demand. However, the housing development pace is not so fast to contain this huge number of population. Because of this, there is severe housing shortage. Wondwesen (2013) holds that most of the residents of Addis Ababa have low and irregular income. So the available houses both from the government and the private real estate developers are not affordable to the low income group of the population. Because of this a large number of households are forced to live in private rental houses with high monthly payment because getting public rental houses has its own challenges.SoGovernment understand the problem with imbalance housing provision with demands andre-established Federal Housing Corporation (FHC) by Council of Ministers Regulation No. 398/2017 as a public Housing enterprise in order to build additional houses and administer in modern way.

However, the corporation re-established, its image has been still a controversy and another point of discussion since the time of its establishment. Concerning this issue, the perception in connection with the good governance of the Corporation has been among the various issues that have been raised. Hence, image building activities of the Corporation should be assessed if it has been dealt with appropriately.

In this regard, the ability of organizations to formulate and deploy appropriate communicationsstrategyis essential. Thus, communication is an important instrument that can shape public opinion and thereby, reducing its effects to the lowest level.

Some of the issues that need to be examined concerning the communication practice include the timeliness, sustainability and the capability to build a positive organizational image, among others. Moreover, the other important point that should be assessed includes finding out if the communication practice is participatory enough including law formulation and other important issues. Many are also inquisitive enough to find out why the Corporation has not managed to go through, verify, respond and clarify about issues of discussion among the public and the media. In this regard, the private media and even few government-owned media are frequently reporting about the issues which the Corporation is not making clear to the public.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Different theories have been applied for various public relations activities (Lattimore, et al., 2012) and (Tench&Yeomans, 2017). It therefore, needs different but relevant theories to interpret PR practices and practitioners' role. With this incitement, system and excellence theories have used as a framework to deal with thematic area of the study. System theory considered interrelation and effect among organization, its subsystem and environment. In system perspective organization and environment affect each other in that organization collect opinion and need input from its environment to foster relationships (Tench&Yeomans, 2017). 5 System theory then, advocate involvement of management in supporting PR activities towards organizational success.

Excellence theory is an overarching theory that comprises other theories. This theory promotes various characteristics that add values to PR activities, methods for PR activities analysis and roles of PR practitioners for organizational effectiveness (Grunig, et al., 2002). PR activities in particular and organizational effectiveness in general can be achieved by properly applying principles, roles of practitioners and other features of excellence theory.

Examining the extent of current activities of public relations in FHC by linking with the theoretical frameworks of PR is, therefore, would have considerable values to strengthen and improve good Governance in Houses administration.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General objective

The purpose of conducting this research can be seen from broad and particular perspectives. In broad sense, objectives enlighten the aggregate or actual output of the research. Specific objectives prompt to address issues raised under research questions for the subject under study.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study comprise the following points:

1. To identify the extent to which PR activities are implementing in the FHC.
2. To relate activities of public relations in the FHC with theoretical concepts.
3. To identify the practitioners' role in the Corporation.
4. To identify challenges facing public relations practice in the Corporation.

1.5 Research questions

The following four research questions are considered based on the statement of the problem discussed so far.

1. What does the FHC's communication practice look like?
2. What are the strengths and challenges of the communication practice of the Corporation?
3. How do practitioners view the communication practice of the Corporation?
4. How stakeholders view the communication practice of the Corporation?

1.6. Scope /Delimitation of the study

As mentioned earlier, this study has focused on exploring activities of public relations in the Federal Housing Corporation. Practitioners' role at the Corporation has the second focused area of this study. The study had also strived to identify challenges prevalent in the course of planning, organizing, and implementing public relations activities. The study has then delimited to the present activities of public relations in the Corporation; practitioners' role and challenges facing in the course of action. It is also limited to assert relevant public relations and communication concepts. Moreover, the study has comprised the population selected from head office, which is located in Addis Ababa. However, based on natural location/distance, time and available resource, the study wouldn't cover the eastern /DirreDawa/ branches.

1.7Significance of the study

Since the study has relied on exploring activities, roles of practitioner and challenges of public relations with respect to the Federal Housing Corporation, it can have various advantages for the Corporation. Based on this study, the Corporation can have an opportunity to review its current public relations activities, work procedures, departmental structure and communication process, roles of practitioners and set mechanism for the prevailing challenges. The Corporation can also have a chance to implement different public relations concepts (theories, model and message creating approaches and other), communication styles and channels. Thus, the study has significant values for the Corporation to improve existing challenges, define clear public relations activities and support to implement accordingly. The study can have reference values for individuals and an organization, particularly government organizations to improve their public relations practice. It can help the organizations as a mirror image to identify their respective public relations practice and challenges and thinks of a solution. The study may also stimulate other researchers to conduct further research on a similar topic or other research on the area of public relations activities.

1.8. Limitations of the Study

The limitation may be expected in any research and research may have its respective restraint. So as the study didn't include eastern /DirreDawa/ branch, the findings may not apply for eastern /DirreDawa/ branch of the corporation. Thus, other studies should also be conducted on the communication practice of eastern /DirreDawa/ branch of the corporation. The study focused on five employees of the Corporation for the interview and didn't include all of the communication practitioners in the Corporation. Thus, the questionnaire didn't include other stakeholders that carry out the same activity in partnership with the Corporation. Another limitation of the study is inadequacy of physical access to information from questionnaire respondents because of the current pandemic disease (Covid 19).

1.9. Organization of the Thesis

The study has been organized into five chapters. The first chapter has an introductory part. It covers problems, comprehensive explanation and the route to conduct the study. The second chapter has encompassed a review of related literature. In this section, concepts of public relations, models and theoretical framework pertinent to the subject under study have enlightened. Chapter three of this study has compressed the methodology of the study. It has discussed the research design, method and data collection technique to conduct the research. Chapter four has dealt with data presentation and discussion. This chapter has presented and discussed findings from data in light of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks explained in chapter two. The final chapter of the study has included a summery and conclusion of the study based on problems set to be addressed and conclude the study. It had also provided recommendations based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITRATURE REVIEW

The literature review is "central to the research process and can help refine a research question through determining inconsistency in the body of knowledge" (Deribsa, 2018). In this respect, relevant public relations descriptions, models and tools currently used to implement public relations practices and theories have discussed briefly.

2.1. The Basic Concept of Public Rental Housing

According to the conceptualization of (Keith, 1973, p.33),"Public rental housing (PRH) means the policy-based provision of houses with a low rent building that are managed by the agencies and applicable to low-waged families". That is PRH units are allocated to selected target groups which are mainly low-income households that unable to afford private sector rent. As Xi Li, (2011) described the main purposes of providing PRH is to meet the basic needs of low income families, other than enjoyment of high-income families. According to this writer many countries use PRH as a useful tool to address the equity issue.

Therefore, constructing PRH is an outstanding way to solve the problems of these low income households. Friedman (1968) stated that the first step is to provide the affordable public rental housing is a realistic choice for the government to realize maximum welfare advocated by housing welfare, and also, a practical choice for low-wage families to resolve housing problems.

2.2. Problematic Issues in Public Rental Housing

UN-HABITAT (2003) points out that "rental housing in different parts of the world have several weaknesses. These problems include discriminatory (may be based on race and Ethnicity, Age, Sex and Marital Status behavior by landlords), illegality of rental contracts and inner-city decay" (p. 77).

In regard to rent setting, the problem is worldwide. According to UN-Habitat (2003 p. 79) "Landlords and their representatives always argue rents are too low while tenants and their associations argue that they are too high .Both sides are likely to abuse the statistics, making it hard to establish the truth. By western standards reasonable level for rent is 20 -30% of the disposable family income".

Moreover, the Inner-City rental houses have several problems. Zarembka, (1999) stated that most of the rental housing are very expensive and can't be afforded by the poor and when poor tenants do live in the center to afford the rented house by overcrowding. Second, the central accommodations are allowed to deteriorate. It is common in cities with hard rent control regions for landlords to want to sell out. Some allow the property to deteriorate because rising land value offers a higher return than renting. In addition, the clarity of rules and regulation, the absence of effective and efficient management and low production of houses aggravate the shortage of rental houses accessibility.

2.3. Allocating Public Housing

Public housing exists in all countries, because the private sector cannot provide housing that is affordable or appropriate for all households. All agencies providing social housing require some form of allocations system. The nature of an allocations framework is specific to the attributes of each country's social housing system, including its size relative to the entire housing system. AS smith, R. (2000) stated whether public or community based, any housing agency that has more demand for its services than vacancies available has to introduce some form of rationing system..

2.3.1. Rationing by Price

In most situations where commodities are consumed, price is used as the mechanism to allocate them to the many consumers. Housing, whether owned or rented, is allocated according to the price mechanism, just like any other goods. Renters have only limited capacity to negotiate on price. Boelhouwer (1992) states that the major problem with allocation through price is that some people do not have the income to pay for it. This may not be a problem for non-essential goods, but it is a problem if these are goods such as health, housing and education that are essential to people's wellbeing.

If people cannot pay the market price for housing, then homelessness, overcrowding or squalid living conditions are very likely outcomes, and few civilized societies find this tolerable. The solution in most advanced industrial countries is various forms of subsidized social housing allocated on non-price criteria. Thus, administrative rationing mechanisms have been set up where rationing by price does not operate or is undesirable. These aim at distributing a scarce resource, such as public housing or hospital beds, according to need (Oxley and Smith 1996).

2.3.2. Administrative Rationing

Smith, R. (2000) described that administrative rationing is fraught with difficulties for both suppliers and consumers, and comprises both formal and informal mechanisms. Formal rationing is carried out by way of written policies and rules. Policies may be provided either as a set of determinations by a commission or board or as a consolidated policy document. Usually there are procedural manuals, or at least a series of operational instructions, for workers involved in implementing policies. Acts, manuals, directives and the like provide the skeleton of a rationing system. The transparency of formal rationing is not as great in the community sector.

The informal rationing (for example, priority systems that allow discretion in interpretation) is widely used in public housing and is particularly prevalent in community housing. It can lead to sensitive and appropriate allocations at one extreme, and to abuse and corruption at the other. It is affected by the personal views of staff and by unresolved conflicts in the agency's objectives, for example, between meeting the greatest housing need, pressures for efficient property management and community pressures to maintain viable neighborhoods (Oxley, M. and Smith, J. 1996).

In addition, Boelhouwer, P. (1992) holds that one of the issues of debate in implementing allocations is the appropriate balance between formal and informal rationing. If a system allows only minimal discretion, housing managers and workers may be unable to adapt allocations to needs that are unusual or complex, but too much discretion can lead to potential abuse and corruption

2.3.3. Framing Allocation

Oxley, M. and Smith, J. (1996) explained the three distinct stages in alternative designing framework for allocating social housing; these are Strategic planning, primary rationing and secondary rationing. Strategic planning, determining broadly what are the agency's aims or objectives and then creating an allocations system that provide strategic directions. The structure that forms the direction of an allocations system might be simultaneous objectives, while some could actually be conflicting. This is the dilemma in designing an allocations system. It may be expected to meet diverse goals, but cannot do so and therefore will be criticized by tenants, workers and external stakeholders who may not appreciate the fundamental problems. The primary rationing and secondary rationing are stages in terms of both formal and informal rationing processes. Each of these requires a policy decision by a housing agency.

2.4. Rent Fixation in Public Housing

Rent, the price of space, is arguably the most important variable in property economics, the value of space is the present value of current and future rents, and rent is a large component of many household and business budgets. Thomas G, (1992) stated that consumers' demand for housing is determined by their incomes, demographics, and preferences. All of these determinants vary widely across households. As a result, the amount, quality, and location of housing demanded also vary widely. The housing stock supplied is similarly diverse. As demand for housing in different segments changes, the extent and speed of the supply response in those segments determines what happens to prices. Together, shifting demand across market segments and sluggish supply responses because price changes to vary across market segments. According to this author, public rental houses should depend on market price, however, it need price revision in time interval by focusing on its determinants.

2.4.1. Determinants of Rental Price

The public houses rent estimation is complex and challenging in nature. Each piece of property is a unique and multidimensional good differentiated into a bundle of attributes that vary in quantity and quality (Marco, 2008). As such, the mainstream economist's explanation that rent is solely determined by supply and demand seems rather incomplete and sociologically naïve as rents within any particular area are set by landlords whose decisions are shaped by a variety of social as well as economic factors (Gilder bloom, 1985).

Economists and financial analysts have therefore invested a tremendous amount of energy and effort in an attempt to explain what determines residential sale and rental prices. At least, the bundle of factors that determine rent can be broadly classified into economic and non-economic factors. Some of the economic factors are interest rate and income level. Population, as a non-economic factor, is found to have a positive relationship with house prices. That is an increase in population leads to excess demand for accommodation in the short run and eventually pushes the rental price up. Sometimes, the location of an apartment can have a significant impact on the level of rent that a household is likely to pay (Égert and Mihaljek, 2007).

The materials that used during construction and the structural improvement affect the price of houses. In addition, physical factors such as the type, style and quality of floor finishes, roof, and ceilings will influence the utility to be derived from living in a particular property and hence, the rent one may be willing to pay for that property. The structural improvements like the availability of swimming pool, gardens, fence will affect the values of houses.

2.5. Effective and Efficient Management of Public Rental Houses

Public housing although critical and inevitable in facilitating access to decent housing for the low income earners especially in cities and urban areas, should not be unsustainable. If adequately managed, public housing is capable of supplementing the inadequacies of market driven housing delivery systems and delivering a more inclusive society. One way of doing that is to measure management performance level so that the management body can identify where it has performed well and where it has lagged behind and take further action (Onayango, 2013).

The role played by the managers in managing the housing environment is crucial especially in rented housing. Effects of management can be discerned through the way tenant selection was carried out, implementation of the law, methods and times of rent collection, hygiene, maintenance, security and tenant relations (David, 2010). The relationship between the housing management and the tenants pose a large influence on tenants housing satisfaction. Additionally, repair services carried out by the management is said to influence the level of tenant satisfaction towards their dwellings.

An efficient housing delivery system in most developing countries has not been designed and implemented as required. Housing affordability is extremely low. The main reason for poor affordability is an unresponsive supply side. Moreover, luck of efficient management of existing houses has great contribution. As a result of these, the demand for housing is extremely high (PADCO 1998).

2.6. Demand and Supply in Rental Housing

Burns &Grebler (1977) stated that housing is one of the human kind's most essential material needs, yet in no country in the world is the need for housing incomplete equilibrium with its supply. There are four principal forms of disequilibria exists. The first is known as static disequilibrium. This refers to the overall disparity between the number of dwellings in geographical units such as a country and the number of households. The second one is known as dynamic disequilibrium. This quantifies the extents to which shortages or surpluses of supply in relation to need are changing over time. The third form of disequilibrium is spatial disequilibrium. This indicates shortages or surpluses within different parts of a country, region or urban area. The last (Forth) one is qualitative disequilibrium. This form of disequilibrium denotes that some households may be living in accommodation that falls short of a standard that would be acceptable to society at large.

2.6.1. Housing Need and Demand

Housing need and demand factors influence the affordability of rents and prices of housing. According to the conceptualization of Linn, (1983, p.120), "even though the term need and demand are sometimes used interchangeably, scholars attached different explanation for both. Thus, the demand for housing reflects the willingness and ability to pay for a set of attributes or services provided by the physical components of lot and housing structure".

UN-Habitat, (2007) described that housing need arises from two demographic components; - the natural one and the social one. In order to evaluate the increased need due to natural demographic movement, one is supposed to calculate the increase of households due to the formation of new entities net of terminations. The social demographic movement concerns the estimate of migration flows, either international or domestic (rural-urban and urban-urban migration).

In the developing countries, a very high proportion of the urban housing stock is substandard, being built on illegally occupied land with temporary materials, no authorization, and no access to basic infrastructure and services (Gottdiener& Budd, 2005). As a result, for households on limited income, the possibility of owner occupation is diminishing and informal housing including illegal sub division, and sharing becomes an important source of affordable, if not adequate, accommodation .Therefore, illegal sub divisions are the main source of housing supply for the urban poor in many cities of the developing world, along with housing built in squatter settlements. This is because, in the largest cities of the developing countries, the supply of affordable housing has fallen short of the demand for it. This can be possible due to speculation and upwards trends of real estate costs as a consequence of globalization (Ibid).

2.6.2. Housing Supply

Urban space is highly differentiated by the quantitative and qualitative of housing condition such as size, location, extent of provision of basic services and accessibility. Gottdiener and Budd (2005) point out that “Accessibility to adequate housing is a critical issue for the urban poor. In most rapidly growing cities of the developing countries housing is a critical problem precisely because there are too few units” (p.57).

The qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in housing supply in newly-industrializing and developing countries are exacerbated by rapid population growth and rural-urban migration on enormous scale-resulting conditions that stagger the imagination (Balchin, *et.al*. 2000).

Furthermore, there are housing programs in many parts of the developing world-all aimed at providing new housing as well as upgrading existing urban settlements. These programs should provide some solution to the housing problems that are facing city governments, although housing need is escalating at faster rate than supply (Gottdiener and Budd, 2005).

2.7. Factors that Hinder the Production of Public Rental Houses

The experience of some developed countries show that;-governments tried to improve housing condition by reducing rental price for low income households, refined Policy on re-development, to meet the high demand for public housing, the government explores the scope for building more flats through redevelopment of existing public rental houses. Though, it has full of challenges that needs policy intervention.

According to the conceptualization of Belchin, et.al, (2000, p.134), "Land supply is one of the factor that affecting the public rental housing production. To increase land supply for public rental housing, the Government should have to exploring possible sources, such as reclamation, opening up new areas, and site redevelopment. Better utilization of vacant sites and Interim Housing blocks". As if Government is the major source of land supply, it has to explore the better use of its existing land resources and explore the feasibility and expedite the process of putting the vacant sites into beneficial uses.

2.8. Trends of Public Houses in Developed Countries

There is a lot to learn from other countries practices to provide social housing. Pittini&Laino, (2011) described the experience of different countries on how they provide social housing, by defining what social housing in the country is, who provides social housing, how are social housing financed, and who can access social housing. The authors assessed the experiences of Netherlands, Poland and United Kingdom. According to the authors why the countries are chosen is that, they have an interesting approach to providing public housing to the people. The countries practice show that, all have their own mechanism of allocation and financing social houses.

In the case of Netherlands all social housing is provided by private non-profit organizations. The social housing was financed by the Government. The Dutch's use a revolving fund which they can loan from capital markets and rent prices are regulated. There is no restriction to income to who can access the renting units.

In Poland Social housing has no official definition. It is commonly understood that it includes rental dwellings and social rental dwellings owned by municipalities, dwellings with regulated rents provided by non-profit housing associations. Municipalities provide the housing. Municipality can apply for subsidy fund for construction and renovation for social housing for the poor. Also the central state subsidizes for the municipality and NGOs which will be used for construction and renovation of dwellings for the homeless and for people with special needs. Criteria vary depending on different programs. Tenants residing in social housing are families with moderate income, with no legal title on house, who are not able to buy or rent a house in the open market. Sometimes tenants are required to fill part of the gap between the construction cost and the amount of the loan that was given from the bank. The contribution from renters is refunded to them when they leave. During construction of the building, the VAT is lowered for materials services to reduce the overall cost.

In The United Kingdom the low cost housing allocated on the basis of need, with the exception of Northern Ireland, where it is provided only for rent. In the rest of the UK social housing includes the provision of rental dwellings, affordable home ownership, as well as shared ownership schemes. The houses are provided by councils and nonprofit organizations such as housing associations. New housing and land cost are financed through three sources, housing association's reserves, government grants, and private finance which consist of loans or funding rose on the capital market (Pittini&Laino, 2011).

2.9. Housing Problem in Developing Countries

The problem of housing is not a localized phenomenon to any specific area. Rather it is a global challenge which all countries are facing. Even though the problem manifests itself indifferent ways in different societies, it is usually that the poor are more vulnerable to this problem. According to UN-Habitat, (2007) around 20 percent of the world's total population is thought to be lacking decent housing. With regard to the residents of the developing world, it is estimated that over half of the population live in substandard and overcrowded housing.

Moreover, residents who live in slums and squatters are usually unable to afford even the most minimal housing provision by the formal land and housing markets with basic services. People also face vast barriers in accessing legal housing and land because of the difficulty of the bureaucracy (HABITAT & UNESCAP, 2008). In addition to lack of infrastructural services, the main problem experienced by residents of squatter settlements in developing countries is insecurity of land tenure. Because they do not have an authorization to occupy the land they inhabit, they can be evicted by authorities at any time. The constant threat of eviction is a major factor in the reluctance of residents of informal settlements to invest in the improvement of their dwelling. It is also a major factor in the decision of utility companies (like electricity and water) and other service providers (like loan providers) are also reluctant to go into informal settlements.

2.9.1. Urban Housing Problem in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has been experiencing various policy measures that have profoundly influenced the national urban housing development sector, at least as of the first few decades of the 20th century (UN-Habitat, 2007).Housing provision in pre 1974 was predominantly handled by the private sector and it can be said that the government didn't attempt to exert any effort in the provision of housing for low-income people. The housing market during this period can be characterized as operating somehow on a free market principle. Moreover, land lords were leasing urban land and constructing residential houses to tenants, and there was no restriction as regards to the selling and buying of houses. No formal housing policy was adopted during that period and most of the poor people in the city were lived in extremely overcrowded areas.

According to MOWUD (2008:1) housing shortage is one of the major problems that the country faces in almost all urban areas. Recent estimates concluded that, currently the housing shortage is between 900,000-1,000,000 in urban centers of the country. In addition to the shortage, the existing houses are below qualitative standard and lack adequate space. Mehret (1999) point out that "the problem is aggravated due to the country's low investment in the housing sector. The country's investment in housing construction is below 3 per cent of GDP which is in lower condition compared to the 6 percent recommended by the UN for developing countries"(p.8).

As the housing supply remains at low growth rate, housing demand in Addis Ababa has been increasing due to high population growth, migration to the city from all over the country and the deterioration of the existing housing stock subsequent to poor maintenance. In addition, other factors that aggravate the demand for housing include progressively increasing the demand for housing, lack of alternative investment and speculation (World Bank, 2009).

To sum, Ethiopia housing problem could be summarized into four categories; the shortage of housing, the overcrowding and poor quality of housing unit which is especially reflected in the centre where owner of the houses is mostly the government, low neighborhood infrastructure development and limited affordability of the houses mainly due to very low household income. Furthermore, the existing public houses are affected by improper management.

2.9.2. The Current Government Housing Policy Since 1995

In May 1991, with the change of government the transitional administration came with the official housing policy. According to Ethiopian economic policy during transition period (1991.p.42) "the state will retain ownership of urban land but will ensure its equitable distribution for housing construction by enforcing regulation create favorable condition to promote integrated urban development. In addition depending on the availability of the resources government agencies will encourage to construct, rent and sell low cost houses". Then after, the government has issued proclamation no 112/1995 which provide as establishment of the office for the sale of houses owned by the government. In line with this the proclamation gave the right to produce additional houses if necessary. However within few period of time the sale office was dissolved and the agency has no permission to build additional houses (history of the agency unpublished).

One important step in the urban development sector is enactment of the proclamation on urban development policy by the federal government of Ethiopia (Teshome, 2012).The government adopted a land lease policy (proclamation 80/1993), which regulates the right to residential land through lease bases for a maximum of 99 years. This policy gave emphasis to the alleviation of the chronic housing problems in urban areas (Teshome, 2012).The housing development policy directions is mainly focusing to enhance the saving culture, overcoming the Problems of decayed urban areas through urban renewal and upgrading, increasing the density of developed area, developing the construction industry, through the implementation of IHDP (Tameru, 2009).

2.10. Re-establishment of Federal Housing Corporation (FHC)

Federal Housing Corporation is re-established by Council of Ministers Regulation No. 398/2017 as a publicHousingenterprise by having

- construct, cause to contract, rent out, sell or buy up on special decision houses that may be used for different services;
- administer and rent out federal government owned houses and possessions; to carry out necessary maintenance and repair works to preserve and protect government owned houses;
- make sure that the government owned houses and possessions are legally registered and protected;
- devise modern management systems which enables effective administration of federal government houses and implement same;
- prevent illegal action against government owned houses and possessions to ensure the interest of Government and take all necessary lawful measures;
- construct and rent out houses; to study and implement the rental rate of houses and possessions under its control;
- undertake studies on the valuation relating to government houses which the Government has decided to sell and collect proceedings there from;
- transfer houses and possessions which are not convenient for administration, re-development and have least rental incomes, up on government decision;
- pay allowance to former owners of nationalized houses in accordance with the law;

- conduct and implement researches related with house administration and development, up on approval by the government; to make studies and forward proposals to get financial, technological and modern administrative inputs to be competitive and profitable at domestic level based on the directions given by the Supervising Authorities;
- Undertake any other related activities necessary for the attainment of its purposes.

2.6 FHC Corporate Communication Directorate

The 'FHC' Corporate Communication Directorate is accountable to Chief Executive Officer and works on providing updated information to the general public. With the focus on building the image of the corporation among the general public, FHC's communications directorate has the following major roles to play : Coordinate and direct the public relations activities of the corporation and serve as the spokesperson of the institute;Cultivate good relations between the corporation and its customers, and the community; Provide strong communication between the corporation's sections,Coordinates the relationship between stakeholder groups, the media and other bodies.Responds to requests for information concerning the corporation, Prepare consultative discussion forums for giving insights and clarity on the corporation, strategies, directives and various issues,Establishes information, advertisements and related matters to be provided to customers and advertisers on the Corporation's website and others;Organize the good practices of the corporation with others, disseminate it through the mass media, build a good image of the corporation,Direct the circulation of publications about the corporation to the customers and the community by publishing and distributing various electronic and printed works;Protects the institution by regularly updating information about the Corporation in a variety of ways, such as media monitors,Perform activities undertaken on the activities of photography, audio visual recording and printing on activities carried out by the corporation;Prepare a system of information concerning the corporation and mass media concerning the corporation and other stakeholders and follow up the implementation thereof;Coordinates dialogues with clients, facilitates forums;carry out the task of overseeing through the task of monitoring the situation of its employees by monitoring the current issues of the government,Review and evaluate the performance report of the concerned actors in the sector, provide feedback and provide follow up feedback, evaluate the level of performance;

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Two-way symmetrical public relations model is the most appropriate theoretical framework of this study. The model advocates that the public shall be equally allowed to influence and change organizations as much as organizations want to influence and change the public. According to the two-way symmetrical public relations model, the public should be allowed to have equal opportunity to express its views and ideas as much as organizations do. A high level of societal benefit will also be attained through a two-way symmetrical model since it promotes the empowerment of the public to have an equal chance of influence; the two-way symmetrical public relations model the most appropriate model that allows the public to have equal chance of influence. Moreover, in a country where the government advocates its effort to build a democratic system embracing good governance, transparency and accountability, the system cannot be practically attained without empowering the public to have the power to influence organizations.

The following literatures were reviewed to first discuss the different stages of the development of public relations models so as to understand the essence and concept of a two-way symmetrical public relations model which was chosen as the appropriate theoretical framework for the study.

2.7.1 Conceptualization of PR

Different scholars defined public relations in different ways. According to Marston (1979: 3-6), "Public relations is a planned, persuasive communication designed to influence significant publics." He also defined it in another way: "A Public Relations is the skilled communication of ideas to the various publics with the object of producing a desired result." Public relations is sometimes misunderstood and interpreted in a different way than it is. Some people mix it with other activities such as publicity, advertisement, lobbying and the like. Public relations are not only confined to publicity, since publicity itself sometimes leads to negative reactions. Public relations are not merely a lobbying activity although it presents cases for legislation. Moreover, public relations are not only advertising. Advertising has urgent needs to fulfill, while public relation has the objective of getting opinion of the public through a longer period of persuasion. It is not also similar with propaganda. Public relations is useful to clarify policies, create awareness, get attention on specific concern, promote knowledge-based dialogue, shape perception; influence perception, attitude and opinion. Having common frameworks including persuasive and planned communication, public relations practitioners work for different purposes and with different approaches. In public relations activity it is also important to consider the fact that people prefer to give their attention to subjects that matter to them most. Hence, the subject of people's interest should get the focus of public relations and it should be the topic of discussion. In addition, people always have a tendency to 'absorb a great deal' of things that have the capacity to affect their lives (Stone, 1995:1-2; Marston,1979: 15).

Speaking about public relations, the four models of public relations are the most important concepts in the area. As cited by Waddington, the Four Models of Public Relations were published by James Grunig and Todd Hunt in 1984 in a book Managing Public Relations. The models explain about the forms of communication that takes place between an organization and stakeholders (the public). These models of public relations symbolize the values, purposes, and characteristics embraced by institutions (Waddington, 2012:1; Botan&Hazlelton, 1989: 29). The four models of public relations that were developed by Grunig and Hunt are the most known theory in the PR discipline. The four models portray different approaches to public relations in the perspective of 135 year during which the discipline has developed (Sledzik, 2008). These models of PR are known as: Press agentry/publicity, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical. The models go after the advancement of the public relations, and they are not exclusive to each other since the designing of a new model has not ended the implementation of the older one (Dumont, 2005: 18).

2.7.2 Press agentry/publicity

The press agentry model started in the 19th century when the press agents aim was to influence public opinion through news. Relatively it is an old form of communication model where one way traffic is assumed to be productive. It focuses on sending message from the source to the receiver. Press a-gentry model is basically one way communication where messages will be sent from a source to a beneficiary with the express aim of winning great media consideration (Seitel 2011).The press a-gentry/publicity's basic objective is to get media coverage and it has a propaganda role. In addition, since its way of communication is a one-way, there is no attention given for public feedback. Moreover, the Press a-gentry/publicity model exerts all its effort to get the focus of the public by any means (Jo & Jung, 2005: 27). Bardhan and Ramesh (2006:50) stated that "in press a-gentry/publicity, the public relations work is limited to only as an act of ‘liaison’ between the organization and the medi”. Hence, its main goal is to obtain positive publicity and eradicate the negative one.

2.7.3 Public information

Thought the PR practice was shaped to consider truth and accuracy in communicating with the public; it couldn’t go beyond dispatching information in the 20th century. “Acting in the role of “journalist in residence,” a PR person under the public information model will be used no formal research to guide his/her work. The public information model follows a one-way communication and it uses tools such as brochures and static web (Sledzik, 2008). Moreover, the Public-information model is characterized by giving only positive information about the organization leaving the negative ones. Hence, the press a-gentry/publicity and public information models are one-way models that give information to the public but do not search for information from the public by research or other methods (Botan et al 1989: 29). Looking after what is reported on the media is the main point of successes evaluation. The PR acts as a ‘mediator’ between the management and the public; it is only there to dispatch information rather than advocating for the organization (Bardhan et al, 2006: 50).

2.7.4 The 2-way asymmetrical model

During Post World War II, PR had a great contribution for targeted, scientific marketing. “Under the 2-way asymmetrical model, practitioners used research to get inside the heads of consumers to help fashion the sell messages.” Grunig and Hunt named this model as “scientific persuasion”. “While asymmetrical communication is two-way, the goal is anything but balanced. It’s all about persuasion to trigger a transaction, thus its popularity with marketers” (Sledzik, 2008). The two-way asymmetrical model uses research to find out which messages are more effective in getting the support of the public.In the two-way asymmetrical PR, the organization conducts research not only to measure the effectiveness of its activity but also to see how it is managed to change people’s attitudes. The PR broadly targets to persuade the public to behave in a way the organization wants them to (Bardhan et al, 2006: 50).

2.7.5 Two-way symmetrical

In the evolution of the public relations, Grunig and Hunt recognize the best public relations model known as a two-way symmetrical model. The two-way symmetrical model, as the name indicates, benefits not only the organization, but also the public through the methods of bargaining, negotiating, and conflict resolution. Hence, change on behavior, attitude and ideas takes place both on the organization and the public. "Under that model, PR pros listen to the concerns of both clients and key publics and help them adapt to one another" (Botan et al 1989: 29; Sledzik, 2008).

The two-way symmetrical model applies research and negotiation to resolve disputes and develop understanding and relationship. Nowadays, there is a problem in relation to the proper implementation of two-way communication which could allow people to reflect and express their own views. Hence, people are listeners of a great deal of talks without the chance to ask questions or to debate on issues that could give them the relief (Marston, 1979: 15).

Symmetrical PR or a two-way PR is an interaction between those who have an impact on an organization and vice versa. Listening to each other is crucial in a two-way PR and action should be taken based on the information received. "Two-way communication helps the senders express themselves, clarify their thoughts, and bolster their ego by the pleasant process of self-assertion." On the other hand, one way communication is always not motivating to listeners; an effective conversation is the one which involves listeners to participate. "If you wish to be heard, you must listen at least part of the time!" However, "Lack of easily ascertained, immediate response is one of the most serious problems of modern communication through the mass media because, without visible response, a sender cannot know whether he has communicated or what effect his words have had" Stone,(1995:19; Marston,1979: 36).

In organizations where a two-way communication is implemented, there is common and mutual benefit attained; higher contribution to societal benefit and there is more dedication of employees in their jobs. Therefore, effective public relations are identified with the following qualities: it is based on researches, it is based on the active participation of both the organization and stakeholders (symmetrical). Symmetrical communication is also dialogue-based which promotes listening to what stakeholders are saying and respect their ideas. Negotiation is also one aspect of it which creates a "win-win" atmosphere. It also entertains a pluralist viewpoint which involves 'diversity', 'tolerance' and 'collaboration'. Collaboration in a sense, organizations should draw new ideas and outlooks that can be adopted and implemented. 'Accommodation' is also important aspect of a two-way communication and it involves accommodating the concern of each other (the organization and the stakeholders). The other most important thing is empowering the "marginalized; giving voice to the voiceless (thus helping develop social equity; one of the most meaningful and rewarding dimensions of being a public relations professional)" (Pearce, n.d.)

2.8 Important Factors in Public Relations

2.8.1 Timeliness and Sustainability

Timing is one of the core components to discharge effective communication activities. It is a crucial element of communication activities carried out by public relations practitioners. Accordingly, "The value of information and its newsworthiness are based on timing and context. Public relations professionals disseminate information at the time it is highly valued." Thus, it is the duty of public relations practitioners to take a closer look at the standard for the timing of reports by various print and broadcast media activities in order to learn the demand of the media gatekeepers (Wilcox, Ault, & Agee,1986:226; Cutlip& Center, A.H., 1952: 117).

Practitioners can offer television stations with graphs and charts to help clarify an occasion; and radio can be provided with a telephone interview to add more information to their story and give it a sense of immediacy. Therefore, public relations practitioners should have all the information at hand in order to provide to the media on a timely basis and within easy reach. Communicators also should be aware of that interviews which are provided to the media should be well prepared in order to meet the quality. In addition, timing of providing information plays a crucial role in making a campaign effective. For some parts of a campaign, it may be vital to manage message delivery "down to the hour". Media with face to face, small group and telephone programs provide communicators with highest management of the time. However, it should be noted that news release does not give highest control over the time (Newsom &Carrell, 2001: 222,342).

Moreover, timing has also an impact on public opinion. As discussed earlier, "Public opinion may be defined as the decisions of groups of people in connection with identifiable, stated" On the other hand, public attitudes are thoughts or feelings of individuals towards some issues. Attitudes are the early stages before developing in to opinions; it will be difficult to change the situation once attitudes are reached to opinions.Moreover, an organization should have a mechanism to handle matters before they lead to a crisis level. Hence, it should have a secured communication with the media and delicate issues should be handled in a timely manner. Public relations employees should weigh the timing to provide information both in terms of its emergency and availability of coverage space in the media. However, special attention should be given to “catastrophe” and it should have a procedure to communicate a head of time (Walker, 2007:85; Cutlip et al, 1952: 118).

Recklessness towards negative information can affect the organization by not giving the necessary information in the time it is needed. In this case, time would be wasted for the necessary action to be taken. When there is silence from the organization’s side concerning sensitive issue, it creates an exaggerated impression in the public that the condition is worse than the reality (Walker, 2007: 80). Public relations should always influence opinions of the public on a sustainable manner. It can use some programs to influence the publics’ opinions in unceasing way (Marston, 1979: 4).

2.8.2. Image Building

Image is acquired due to organizational actions or behaviors which results from the interaction of every experience, impressions, values, feelings, and knowledge people have about an organization. Peoples’ knowledge about an organization may be good, bad or in different. It cannot be purchased as a commodity since organizational image is acquired from people’s knowledge and experience. In other words, everything an organization does or does not do have a contribution to form an image positively or negatively (Jefkins, 2004: 24; Mersham, 2001: 8).

Wilcox et al puts image building as: “the character projected to the public by someone or something.” He also explained that image building activity includes the promotion of an organization’s efficiency and honesty in its activities. It also demonstrates that an organization is considerate towards the society. Image building activities also include guarding an organization from harmful statements, clarifying controversial issues, making the first move to enlighten organizations objectives and guidelines (Wilcox et al, 1986:20).

Reinforcing a positive identity of an organization in the minds of the public is one part of image building activity and it is also used to fight views that have adverse effects. Organizations should recognize the fact that building a positive image needs a considerable amount of time, while a negative image occurs in a moment. This means that image building is a very delicate issue that needs careful treatment. Thus image building has an important role to play in bringing about durable successes. Even though every staff member has a contribution for building a positive image, public relations practitioner has especially duty-bound to it. Public relations practitioners should understand also that image building should be based on fact. It is the responsibility of public relations practitioners to assist their organization to recognize what image it has among the public. It is also important to understand that building a new organization image requires transforming the in-house traditions (Wilcox et al, 1986:538; Seitel, 1984: 81-85).

Unless public relations practitioners communicate about the organization, the public can not have the real knowledge about it and the responsibility of the PR is to communicate the real situation with the public but not to create a false picture. If an organization doesn't deserve a good image, it shouldn't provide the public false statements for the sake of getting a positive image. An organization should rather deal with it to change the situation rather than creating a fake picture about itself. Since most of the time images are caused by some kinds of incidents and it can also be achieved through experiences, in order to get a good image, the public relations practitioner has to exert a continuing and practical effort as it cannot be gained overtime (Jefkins, 2004: 24-25).

The danger of spoiled reputation needs organizations to focus on the idea of apologia and reputation repair – to re-establish the look of the organization by putting forward a credible explanation of organizational activities in a convincing and genuine manner. However, organizations usually accept human catastrophe apologetically (that do not seem sincere), and utter plan to examine the causes and tackling from happening again. Apology means that wrongdoing must be acknowledged and responsibility accepted even if legal implications may limit this (L'Etang, 2008: 58).

In addition to the aforementioned activities, there should be some assessments made before launching a positive image building campaign. The assessment may include considering signs that could lead to image formation such as public complaints, negative media coverage, and the likes. However, opinion research or image study may be important to provide concrete information concerning the status of organization image (Jefkins, 2004: 26).

2.8.3 Research

In a customary public relations practice, the inception and the activities are done instinctively and guided by the senses rather than by studies and researches. Public relations should be strengthened by the guidance of research findings which brings about a good judgment and provides with "empirical foundation". Research also helps to clarify matters when there is no sufficient information available. It can be concluded that research lies at the center of the plan and implementation of a successful public relations practice. It is also helpful to understand the public that an organization is dealing with since a public relations practitioner having the necessary knowledge about the public based on research will be capable of making messages that result in effective communication. Similarly, a communication that is designed based on researching the public's demands is more effective (Seitel, 1984: 124-125; Mersham, 2001: 31).

Public relations research always focuses on three basic points: client or organization, opportunity or problem to be dealt with and the public. Client or organizational research is the initial activity that includes background data of the client. Public relations activities that start as a result of available opportunities are called proactive programs. However, public relations practitioners have to deal with crises that may arise from the inside or outside of the organization. The third feature of public relations research includes accessing the public incorporated under the public relations campaign. This also consists of recognizing different parts of the public that should be targeted, types of research data that is essential to communicate with such parts of the public, and organizing and processing the data through research procedures (Mersham, 2001: 32).

The objectives of public relations research also include determining the public's basic attitudes, finding the majority's opinion, test marketing themes and media and revealing potential trouble spots. To determine the public's attitudes, an organization should have sufficient knowledge of the structure and composition of its audience. Research is also helpful to find the majority opinion and it is important to know the ideas and attitudes of the majority whose voice is not heard. Research is significant to save money since it prevents wastage of resources on unproductive campaigns. It also helps to realize some areas of concern that create possible impediments to the activities of the organization. Moreover, it supports an organization to identify the dissatisfaction of the public (Seitel, 1984: 124-125).

Public relations writers and practitioners have more or less common research interests. All of them have to know the public's demographics, psychographics, lifestyles, values, attitudes towards the organization; and utilization of the media. They also have to evaluate the outcome of their communications and adopt mechanism to improve their programs. The main distinction is that the public relations writer has particular concern in message content and presentation (Treadwell & Treadwell, 2005:99).

Researches in public relations can be conducted formally and informally. Practitioners can identify problems in their day to day activities through informal way of probing in to the level of public awareness and in areas where there is information deficiency. In the formal way of research, majority of public relations researches focus on fact finding, opinion surveys, or motivational studies. Fact finding includes searching and storing information in connection with the organization. The public relations department collects information such as research conducted in connection with the organization by other bodies. Opinion surveys go further than collecting information and it attempts to find out what is really exists in people's minds and what is the public's perception of the organization. A motivational study probes deeply and tries to find out why people have a particular perception of the organization. Hence, it investigates the causes of a particular perception (Seitel, 1984:125).

2.8.4 Media Relations

Media relations are one of the main tasks that public relations practitioners have the responsibility to carry out. It includes interacting with news media, magazines, freelance writers, and commercial publications with the purpose of having them publish or broadcast news and features with regard to the organization. It may also include responding to media requests for information or spokespersons and preparing for production, reservation, and placement or broadcasting of advertisements used as part of public relations program. There are varieties of important points that should be considered when handling issues in connection with the media. A fast response is important for media requests since the media has its own deadlines set to accomplish a specific work. It is also important to understand journalists when they are very hasty since they might be under the pressure of time and work load. Therefore, public relations practitioners should be cooperative enough to handle situations like this. Otherwise, most news people will agree that the more difficulty they find in their way, the harder they will strive to find the actual story from any source available. They will usually utilize something they have discovered and public relations practitioners have no control over what that might be (Mersham, 2.001: 12).

Understanding the media includes understanding how to work with every channel, prepare the relevant content for every type, fulfill the deadlines of each, abide to particular the conditions for style requirements, and providing desirable information to every medium's audience. These are the main element of many public relations practitioners' activities. Similarly, public relations practitioners have to deal with the media and media gatekeepers. Practitioners should build and sustain relationships of mutual respect and trust since the interaction with the media has advantages for both the organization and the media. However, the relationship between the public relations practitioners and the media has also opposite aspects since journalists and practitioners had different goals and they always have different communication objectives (Cutlip et al, 1978: 299).

As stated above, every media has its own character and need a different treatment than the other. With regard to television, it has the highest capacity to reach largest number of audiences and has the strongest impact than the other types of media. The impression that television brings on the audience will often stay longer in the memory after the content has been gone. Using the right procedure, a television performer can easily be appealing to the public. On the other hand, weak performance which fails to persuade the public has adverse consequences. The public not only develop a negative impression on the performer but it relates the situation with the organization to which the program belongs. Managers of an organization may be summoned to participate in interviews taking place in television stations. Therefore, the appropriate knowledge to deal with interviews is essential for the public image and national reputation of the whole organization. Even if radio is not as powerful as television, it is a more flexible channel, reaches a larger cross-section and often gives the opportunity of speaking directly to the public (Mersham, 2001: 139,141).

Internet has become one of the growing mediums of communications used by public relations practitioners. An immediate transmission of information is among the various uses of the internet. It is also useful to commence new things and publicize a new policy or to dispatch information directly. Therefore, the internet cannot be seen apart from other communication tools used by public relations practitioners. Since it has a significant role to play in the public relations media strategy, it should be incorporated into the whole communication campaign to communicate with the public. Nowadays, journalists make use of different organization web pages as an important source of information. Therefore, it is important that public relations practitioners should always make sure that the website has up-to-date information all the time. The websites should include pages for latest media releases. In addition to facilitating access to the right type of information, an appropriately designed and entirely functional Website ‘press room’ can help an organization save money, given the public has been familiar with the site. Websites constitute merely an element of the digital communications related to the Internet. Email also provides many opportunities for public relations practitioners as a way of communicating media releases and distributing media kits (Mersham, 2001: 132).

Although media effects cannot be predicted always, it is logical to conclude that there are some connections between media trust (or distrust) and public trust. Communicators or public relations practitioners, journalists and the media house act as trust mediators' in the course of public trust formation. Some of the contributing factors to a clean reputation include trust, reliability, sincerity and authenticity. Trustworthiness is vital for communicators and inability to show the value compellingly can endanger the reputation of not only the practitioners but also the organization as a whole. Specially, those who specialize in media relations and crisis management should be more careful on this issue since media's trust of communicator's information would be little, given the expected self-interest of organizational agents. Hence, communicators have to identify organizational behavior and media interpretations; and need to clarify issues like purpose of the organization and the reason behind a specific activity done by the organization (L'Etang, 2008: 48, 50-51).

With regard to communicating anti-corruption messages, different mediums can be used including the media, publications, discussion forums and the like. However, the media plays a major and irreplaceable role to efficiently and effectively communicate the issue with the public.

2.8.5 Influencing public opinion

In the contemporary world, Public opinion is an influential power. Any type of organization should work on and understand public opinion as they build up and sustain relationships with variety of internal and external publics. The general concept of public opinion is simply the collective view of individuals on specific issues. Personal perception may or may not characterize the consensus, or "thinking together," that fully stands for the kinds of opinions that form and are formed by public conversations among those sharing a "sense of commonness." Thus public opinion stands for more than the aggregated outlooks grasped by a particular group of individuals at a specific point in time. Public opinion is not sufficiently defined as simply a condition of personal knowledge. Rather, it indicates a dynamic course in which thoughts are articulated, regulated, and compromised that leads to collective resolution of a course of action. Public relations interactions with the public have a great deal of competitions to deal within the contemporary struggle to get attention. Getting the attention of the public should be included as the first target of the public relations practitioners. The other important activity in influencing public opinion is transmitting a message with a content that is inviting enough to grasp the interest of the public. However, the process of communication to get public attention may not be as easy as it looks (Cutlip et al, 1978: 228; 243)

Public relations practitioners work in a climate of public opinion which can be as extensive as that of the international society in relation to a nation's supposed leadership in an arms race or as narrow as that of security analysts when a company's bonds are rerated downward. Accordingly, public opinion is the common perception of people on a particular subject. It is an aggregate opinion of, such as, what voters or teenagers or senior citizens or politicians think about a specific issue. Public opinion indicates attitudes based not necessarily on facts but on perceptions or evaluations of actions, persons, organizations or organizations' outputs. Public opinion also is not steady. In order to deal with frequently shifting public opinion, practitioners must admit a few fundamental realities. To achieve this, practitioners need to maintain the public that are in support of the organization, triumph at least temporary support from the unclear or indifferent group and neutralize or triumph over the opposition (Newsom et al 2004:106).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

As the topic of the research deals with the practice and challenges of communication at the Federal Housing Corporation (EHC), the study attempted to investigate and explain what the practice looks like and the challenges faced in practicing communication. To this end, a qualitative research design was used as the main research method of the study. In addition to the qualitative method of research, the study also uses quantitative method to strengthen the findings. And for purpose of collecting the data; document, questionnaire, interview and personal observations was used.

Two documents which were used as communication guidelines were analyzed. One of the documents is the Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) which is used as the main guideline of the Corporation's communication practice since 2003 A.E.C.The Corporation's Citizens' Charter, which was also used as a guideline for communication activities since 2008 A.E.C, was also used for document analysis.

Questionnaire respondents were selected by purposive and convenience sampling techniques. Media houses and media associations, which are stakeholders of the Corporation, were selected purposively as questionnaire respondents based on their participation in transmitting Corporation's messages to the public in collaboration with the Corporation. Based on convenience and purposive sampling techniques, media houses and media associations were selected from the rest of the stakeholders as sources of questionnaire data.

The media houses and media associations were selected from other stakeholders since they are more accessible and convenient sources of data to the researcher. Moreover, they are also closer to the profession and have better knowledge of the subject matter compared to the rest of the stakeholders. It is also imperative to focus on a specific stakeholder since it is impossible to use all the stakeholders as they are numerous in their number.

Accordingly, questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents from media houses and media associations, and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analyzed. In addition, interview was conducted with 5 people selected from the Commission employees. The interviewees comprised practitioners as well as supervisors who are responsible for communication activities.

3.1.1 Qualitative method of research

As the purpose of the study is to assess the practices and challenges of communication employed by the Federal Housing Corporation (EHC), a qualitative method was used as the main research method. Speaking about qualitative research, it is a scientific research method that searches for an answer to a research question based on evidence.

Moreover, it searches for an answer to a specific research problem or topic from the view point of the participants it includes. "Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations." Hence, one of the positive sides of a qualitative research is the capacity to give intricate 'textual' explanation about 'how people experience' some research topic.

Accordingly, one of the advantages of qualitative method is the opportunity to use open-ended questions and it provides participants the advantage to respond in their own words rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do (Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest &Namey, 2005: 1-2; Creswell, 2007:38).

It provides information about the "human" side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent. When used along with quantitative methods, qualitative research can help us to interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation and the implications of quantitative data (Mack et al, 2005: 1-2).

3.1.2 Quantitative method

In addition to the qualitative method, quantitative method was used to triangulate and strengthen the findings. Quantitative method of research uses numbers and the analysis is based on statistics. "Quantitative methods are those which are based on numerical information or quantities, and they are typically associated with statistical analyses. Qualitative research, in contrast, is the name given to a range of research paradigms that are primarily concerned with meaning and interpretation" (Stokes, 2003: 2-3).

Quantitative research uses methods such as content analysis, survey research and some types of archive research. Therefore, quantitative analysis is based on numbers while qualitative research relies on words or images as a unit of analysis (Stokes, 2003: 3; Denscombe, 2007: 248).

3.1.3 Mixed method

This study adopts mixed or both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The numerical data will cover with quantitative approach which obtains by questionnaires. The interview on the other hand, made by qualitative approach of the study, which will focuses on personal accounts, observations, and description insights of the respondents. The reason why the researcher decides to use both approaches is to triangulate and complete the information obtained from employees and clients.

3.2 Sampling techniques

3.2.1 Purposive sampling

The study employed purposive sampling technique to select questionnaire samples. As it was briefly discussed at the start of this chapter, purposive samplingwas one of the techniques used to select samples for questionnaire data. The study sample consisted of respondents from different media houses and media associations which work in collaboration with the Corporation as stakeholdersindelivering Corporation's messages to the public. Since they take part in the aforementioned communication activity, they were believed to appropriate evaluate the communication practice.

Moreover, they are more accessible and convenient sources of data to the researcher. The first rational to select media houses and media associations from the rest of the stakeholders was that it would be impossible to use all the stakeholders as a source of data as they were many in their numbers. Hence, the research couldn't be attainable without being selective due to resource constraints. Secondly, they are believed to be closer to the profession and have better knowledge of the subject matter to respond to the questions more appropriately than the rest of the stakeholders. Accordingly, questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents from media houses and media associations and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analyzed.

According to Mack et al, (2005: 6), purposive sampling participants were selected based on some specific standards. "Sample sizes, which may or may not be fixed prior to data collection, depend on the resources and time available, as well as the study's objectives." In purposive sampling, the researcher chooses people based on their better knowledge or experience about specific issues. In addition to availability and willingness to participate is also another criterion to select the sample. Moreover, people's ability to express their knowledge and ideas appropriately is another criterion for selecting the sample (Palinkas et al, 2013).

3.2.2 Convenience sampling

Convenience sampling technique was also employed in addition to purposive sampling technique to select questionnaire respondents from among different stakeholders of the Corporation that take part in transmitting messages to the public. From among different stakeholders, media houses and media associations were specifically selected as data sources. The media houses and media associations were selected as samples of questionnaire since they were more convenient and closer to the profession than the rest of the stakeholders. The following media houses and media associations were selected as samples of questionnaire data: Capital, Reporter, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Ethiopian Press Agency and Fana Broadcasting Corporate.

As variety of literatures show, an available sample or convenience sample is a readily available group of subjects for a study. "A sample of convenience is the terminology used to describe a sample in which elements have been selected from the target population on the basis of their accessibility or convenience to the researcher." Moreover, convenience samples are samples which have more proximity to the researcher (Wimmer& Dominick, 2011: 92)

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

3.3.1 Documents

Documents had been among the data sources used for the analysis of the research. Accordingly, two documents which had been used as communication guidelines were analyzed. Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) was used as one of the documents for the analysis which had been used as the main guideline of the Corporation's communication practice since 2009. Citizens' Charter of the Corporation, which had been used as the communication guideline since 2014, was also analyzed.

According to Denscombe (2007:227-230), there are different kinds of documents that can be used as a source of data. Documents which can be used in researches are not only limited to written materials but also include both visual and audio sources. Denscombe noted that the visual sources used in research document analysis include pictures, artifacts, and the audio such as music. Written documents include government publications and official statistics, newspapers and magazines, records from meetings, letters and memos, diaries, website page and the internet.

3.3.2 Observation

The researcher used observation data collection technique. As the researcher is also a communication practitioner in the Federal Housing Corporation, he will have the opportunity to get an access to the workplace himself and is able to observe people in their normal work. It is believed that observation is also an appropriate data collection tool since it can give the chance to get what actually takes place at the workplace. Therefore, the researcher used observation method of data collection in order to find out how communication has been practiced and the challenges of the practice using personal examination.

Observation gives the chance to document activities, behavior and physical features without having to rely on people's readiness and capability to respond to questions. Observation can be employed when there is a need to know about a physical surrounding. Looking at the place or environment where ongoing processes occur can help enhance the knowledge about the situation under examination. "Seeing" and "listening" are the major components of observation data collection method.

Observation is suitable for different conditions including: When there is a need to have firsthandinformation. When there is an attempt to know a developing process and to describe a condition or event. When written or other data collection procedures appear to be unsuitable. Observation provides several alternatives to choose from: peoples, behaviors, reactions, physical settings, environmental features, record keeping systems, project reports, and the like. There are direct or indirect observations. Direct observation is carried out by looking at interactions, processes, or behaviors while they are taking place. Indirect observations are done when the researcher observe the outcomes of interactions, processes or behaviors (Powell & Steele, 1996:1-2; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008).

3.3.3 In-depth Interview

In-depth interview also used as one of the data collection tools of the study. The interview conducted with 5 communication practitioners selected from the Corporation. The interviewees comprised four subordinates and a team leader who is responsible for communication activities.

In-depth interview is a method of getting a clear insight of the participants view on the subject of the study. In-depth Interview was used to get data on personal histories, perspectives and experiences, especially when "sensitive" subjects are investigated. In-depth interviews are categorized in qualitative method of studies that can help look through what people are thinking, feeling and experiencing and it also helps to find out how people perceive the world. Interviews are also helpful to deal with issues that people are not comfortable to speak out in a group. In-depth interviews are always carried out through in person and that includes the interviewer and the interviewee. In in-depth interview, the person who is interviewed should be seen as the one who knows more than the interviewer. "The researcher's interviewing techniques are motivated by the desire to learn everything the participant can share about the research topic" (Mack et al, 2005: 2930).

Although interview has the same purpose with questionnaires, it is different since it is done face to face. It is useful to gather information based on thoughts, beliefs, opinions, and the like concerning information of the past, present or the future. The types of interviews include experience/behavior, opinion/belief, feeling, knowledge, sensory (what the interviewer see, etc., "used to find out the stimuli the interviewee is subject to"), background and demographic (Blessing L. et al, 2009: 271-272).

3.3.4 Questionnaire

Questionnaire was also the other data collection instrument used for the research. After selecting the sample based on purposive and convenience sampling techniques, 100 questionnaires were distributed to media houses and media associations which are stakeholders of the Corporation. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analyzed.

Blessing&Chakrabarti (2009: 269) stated that "Questionnaires are used to collect thoughts, beliefs, opinions, reasons, etc., from people about past, present or future facts and events, by asking questions." Questionnaires are more useful in situations such as when the respondents are many in their numbers, when the information needed is more clear-cut and uncomplicated. "The information from questionnaires tends to fall into two broad questionnaires the researcher is clear about whether the information being sought is to do with facts or to do with opinions." Hence, questionnaires may include questions in relation to both facts and opinions (Denscombe, 2007:154-155).

CHAPTER FOUR:

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

As the topic of the research deals with the practices and challenges of communication practiced by the Federal Housing Corporation (FHC), the study attempted to find out how the communication had been practiced and the challenges faced while practicing it. To this end, a qualitative research design was used as the main research method of the study to assess the communication practiced and the challenges encountered. In addition to the qualitative method of research, the study also used quantitative method to strengthen the findings.

For the purpose of collecting the data, document analysis, questionnaire, in-depth interview and observation were used. Two documents which had been used as communication guidelines were analyzed. One of the documents used in the analysis was the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) which was used as the main guideline of the Corporation's communication practice since 2009.The second document used for analysis was the Citizens' Charter of the Corporation which was also used as a guideline for communication practice since 2014.

The sample for questionnaire data was selected based on convenience and purposive sampling techniques. The study sample used respondents from different media houses and media associations which work in collaboration with the Corporation in transmitting messages to the public as stakeholders. The stakeholders were selected as samples for questionnaire data since they have been taking part in different activities with the Corporation including the expansion of messages to the public. Their participation in transmitting and expanding messages to the public makes them more appropriate to evaluate the communication practice.

Moreover, media houses and media associations were selected as sources of questionnaire data, since they are the most convenient data sources. Secondly, media professionals are believed to be closer to the profession and have better knowledge of the subject matter to respond to the questions more appropriately than the rest of the stakeholders. Accordingly, questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analyzed.

In addition, interview was conducted with 5 people selected from the Corporation employees. The interviewees comprised four practitioners as well as a directorate's director who are responsible for communication activities.

The study also employed observation data collection technique. As I am (the researcher) a communication practitioner in the Federal Housing Corporation (FHC), I had the opportunity to get an access to the workplace itself and was able to observe people in their normal work. Therefore, it was believed that observation was an appropriate data collection tool since it can give the chance to get what actually takes place. The researcher attempted to examine how the practice has been conducted and what challenges have been faced in the work place.

4.2 Communication Guidelines of Federal Housing Corporation

4.2.1 Introduction

As guidelines are used to direct and lead activities, they have a significant impact on how the practice is carried out. Guidelines are also the foundations of practices and they can contribute to both the success as well as the failure of communication practices. Therefore, communication practices are the demonstrations of communication guidelines. Accordingly, this section deals with the content of the communication guidelines of the Corporation so as to assess how the practice has been done and what challenges may be encountered due to the existing loopholes in the guidelines. The Federal Housing Corporation (FHC) has been using the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and Citizens' Charter as guidelines for communication practice. Thus, this study drew on the two guidelines for the purpose of document analysis.

4.2.2 Demonstration of the practice

The Federal Housing Corporation (FHC) used different tools to channel to transmit messages to public. Among the tools or ways of transmitting messages to customer: Generally, there are three ways to expand to transmit messages to customer. Face to face discussion (customer), publications and the media. Panel discussions are used to provide face to face to different customers. The media which the Corporation used to channel the messages include radio, television, online communication and newspapers. The types of messages that are transmitted through the media include talk show, spot, panel discussions and feature articles. The other type of communication tool is publication which includes posters, brochures, fliers, booklets, newspaper articles, magazines, and the like.

Concerning the phase of communication practice, it can be classified into two periods. The first one was the time before Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) was implemented. This time was the period between 1975 (when the AARH was established) up to 2007.and 2007(when the BPR was first launched)up to now. Although documents prepared before the year 2007 didn't indicate the communication practice clearly, the BPR document gave some backgrounds about the practice during that time. The second period was the time when changes were made on the guidelines and practices of communication after the BPR was implemented in 2007. The second period also witnessed the adoption and implementation of the Corporation's Citizens' Charter in 2014.

During the first period (1975-2007) there had not been a full-fledged document developed to be used as a guideline of the practice of communication. Hence, the record of the communication practice during this time was found being incorporated in the newly designed BPR document. The Corporation has been implementing BPR since April, 2009. However, the new approach didn't stay longer before it was put for revision.

> The Federal Housing Corporation (FHC) is crafting different methods to increase the effectiveness of its activities. Accordingly, the Corporation has revised and implemented the Business Process Reengineering since 2007. However, there is a need to review the practice of BPR (Federal Housing Corporation, 2009: 3). Thus, the Corporation revised the first BPR practice and came up with a new document which has been implemented since 2009.

The goal of the new BPR was to evaluate and design a new work process with the purpose of creating a work system that helps administers and builds houses. The document incorporated the design of the new work process that provides design alternatives, figurative demonstrations, strengths and weakness of the alternatives. It also provides the difference between the new and the old alternatives, lists of activities and structures among other things. It also includes new ideas and new structure of man power.

> It incorporates the design of the new work process. It provides design alternatives, figurative demonstrations, strengths and weakness of the alternatives, the difference

between the new and the old alternatives, lists of activities and structures and other things (Federal Housing Corporation, 2009: 5).

The document shows a new work process designed mainly to address how to administer and allocates Houses. In the newly designed work process, customer satisfaction and research are given high priority. Increased public participation is also stressed as part of the communication practice. It also set goals to increase the number and variety of mediums of communication as well as the message that would be channeled. The document also included the plan to work with other Organization those housing issue is concern. The main objective of the new work process is to bring about good Governance and fair Houses allocation.

The new work process focused on providing Houses based on the demands of the public not by the choice of the Corporation as was it had been done previously. The other important document which has been used as a guideline for communication practice is the Corporation's Citizens' Charter which was produced and implemented in 2014. The objectives of the Corporation's Citizens' Charter (FHC, 2014: 4) are:

- To ensure the rights and responsibilities of citizens on the services delivered by the Corporation..
- To provide citizens with quality, efficient and speedy service.
- To demonstrate transparency and accountability on the Corporation's service delivery.
- To facilitate conditions for citizens to give tip-offs and feedbacks on the services of the Corporation.

The contents of the Corporation's Citizens' Charter are more or less similar with the BPR document. However, some of the contents of the charter are worth mentioning. The general purpose of the Citizens' Charter is to provide quality and standard services to the public. The charter incorporates types and lists of services provided by the Corporation. It also aimed at making clarifications on the rights and duties of service users so as to ensure transparency, justice, effectiveness and accountability. "The charter incorporates types, lists and standards of services provided by the Corporation. It also aimed at making clarifications on the rights and duties of service users to ensure transparency, justice, effectiveness and accountability" (Federal Housing Corporation, 2014: 2).

It also has lists of service users and the services provided by the Corporation. Moreover, it states that "We build the image of the Corporation through our activities and products; we provide accessible and timely information" (Federal Housing Corporation, 2014: 7).

Duties and responsibilities of citizens are also listed in the document (Federal Housing Corporation, 2014: 10): "Citizens have the right to get information except those which are confidential and they have also the right to know the assets of electives, appointees and relevant public servants". With regard to the responsibilities of Citizens it states:

Citizens should report to the Corporation when they have suspicion on unfair allocation of Houses. Citizens also have the duty to witness on corruption offences when they are needed. They should be also present when they are invited for witness on corruption done regards government properties. It also states the duty of the Corporation to conduct surveys on customer satisfaction, and re-correct by depending on the findings. It also provides lists of procedures on how to make complaints. It also provides information on how to access different resources and services provided by the Corporation.

4.2.2.1 Challenges

As it is documented in the BPR paper, the guidelines as well as the practice of communication before the year 2007 had some drawbacks and lacking important qualities. The document stated that "Different sources indicated that the message disseminates through different channels by the Federal Housing Corporation had problems up on their coverage and quality. Both customers and practitioners agreed that there was a quality and coverage problem. Face to face communications as well as publications were not provided sufficiently to the public.

Accordingly the document stated: "The message delivered has been criticized for being too narrowing covering all concerns parts of the society. Also the message has been criticized with its truthfulness. That means the work which is done in fact and message delivered were had lack of relevance. There were no transparency and fair allocation of Houses with in Corporation. The work was not also supported by researches and studies; no improvement on Houses administration and allocation system. The corporation didn't made effort to equalize the difference between House demand and provision. In addition to the aforementioned problems, the message channeled through the media, publications as well as face to face discussion were not effective.

The BPR document was devised to address all the problems which had been prevailing before. According to the document, “Charter stressed to address quality problems that have been a challenge to the communication practices. They couldn’t provide a method or a standard to ensure the quality of the content of every product. Moreover, there are no particular personnel or section assigned to check the quality of the products. Therefore, although the documents stated it has a goal to improve quality, there is no such a particular mechanism to make a difference.

Moreover, both the BPR and the FHC Citizens’ Charter documents emphasis to reduce or avoid lacks of good governance problems in Houses administration and allocation and the like. However, the documents clearly demonstrate and highlight a as the communication was one way communication system. It is true that a system was created to enable the involvement of different bodies in Houses administration and allocation. In fact, all the directions and the contents of the messages generate from the Corporation’s leaders,it didn’t give chance for public involvement in every step of the work. In other words, the public or other bodies didn’t participate in Houses administration and allocation. Therefore, the documents couldn’t appropriately give provision to ensure and address actual public participation.

The other gap which is demonstrated in the document is the issue in connection with the right of the public to have access to information. One of the core activities of public relations is its responsibility to ensure the right of the public to have access to information. Concerning the right of the public to get information, FHC’s Citizens’ Charter states (Federal Housing Corporation, 2014: 7-10): “Citizens have the right to get information except those which are confidential”. However, the document doesn’t define or specify what confidential information is all about. Thus, this creates a loophole for excuses not to provide information to the public. Hence, the lack of clarity on the document creates a chance for personal manipulation and prejudice. Similarly, the documents didn’t provide a mechanism to organize information efficiently so as to be easily accessible to service users. Hence, there is a vague statement in the FHC’s Citizen Charter that didn’t have further clarification of the matter: “we provide accessible and timely information” (Federal Housing Corporation, 2014: 6-7).

The other important issue which is not entertained by the documents is there are no clear directives up on Houses allocation, rent fixation and maintenance. In the Citizen’s Charter, there is a general statement which states (Federal Housing Corporation 2014:7): “Citizens have the right to know the directives of Houses allocation, rent fixation and Houses repair and maintenance. “Even there were no exact figures of Houses number in its categories. The directive of giving back Houses to privates has become the most controversial and subject, there is no clear explanation provided by the documents on how to provide the information to the public. Thus, the documents couldn't resolve the issue by clearly indicating the procedure to disclose the assets of the registrants to the public.

Consequently, the issue has been the most contentious which has been raising questions on the clarity and timeliness of the communication practice of the Corporation. The communication guidelines do not also properly address important public relations activities such as media relation and positive image building. Neither the documents appropriately explain how media relation shall be conducted, nor there a separate guideline available to guide the activity. Only some general statements are made in the documents. For instance, the FHC's Charter stated that (Federal Housing Corporation, 2014: 5): "Public awareness creation shall be done by transmitting different messages through the media." It doesn't indicate the course of action to carry out media relation activities.

In addition to the aforementioned problems, there was also a problem in connection with the statement that states only information that are not confidential would be provided to the public. This statement can also be applied to information that should be given to the media. This statement couldn't specify what type of information is confidential. As it was mentioned earlier, the statement might create a gap and allow personal manipulation to take hold. To sum up, media relation was not included and treated well in the documents, although it is a core activity in public relations.

The same is true with regard to positive image building, which is also another important activity which should be carried out by public relations. The documents didn't address the issue of positive image building sufficiently. Accordingly, it was stated that "We build the image of the Corporation through our activities and products" Although the aforementioned sentence was included in the Citizens' Charter, there were no detail explanation given that clarifies the problem and the mechanism to address it. From the statement, it can be understood that there is no special action plan that is designed to address the issue of positive image building.

Not only the documents lack the right way of dealing with positive image building, but they also fail to enable the evaluation of the status of existing image of the Corporation. As it was discussed in the literature review, trust building is also another important element of public relations activities. With regard to this, the Citizens' Charter states that (FHC, 2014: 6): "Enable citizens to inform how to allocate, fix Houses rent and repair and maintain Houses to build customers trust." However, there is no provision in all the documents that indicates the mechanism to build as well as to evaluate the status of public trust.

4.2.2.2 Strengths

In the newly designed BPR document, customer satisfaction survey and conducting other types of researches were included and given attention although its appropriate implementation needs assessment. The provision to conduct survey on customer satisfaction in the guidelines can be taken as a good quality of the documents. It is important that the documents attempted to bring to attention the importance of conducting researches on customer needs and evaluation of the effectiveness of messages. The targeting to extend communication services and to increase the coverage of service delivery to a larger number of users can be taken as the other strength of the documents.

4.3 Observation

4.3.1 Communication practice: Challenges and opportunities

The Corporate Communication Directorate has been bestowed with the responsibility of delivering different communication activities. Different communication activities have been deployed by the directorate that include preparing different publications, channeling messages through the different medias, administering website and social media, and the like.

Check list of activities observed:

- ❖ Organizational structure
- ❖ Activities plan and reports
- ❖ Face to face discussion
- ❖ Website and social media administration activities
- ❖ Publications
- ❖ Notice boards

4.3.1.1 Organization of communication practice

It was examined that there has been an overlap of duties and responsibilities as all communication activities have not been organized under the same directorate that can enable to handle and deal with the issue efficiently. Although communication activity has been formally given to this particular directorate, there is also another directorate that interrupts communication activity like corporate customer service directorate which has been doing communication activities as well. In this regard, communication activities are disorganized and dispersed to different directorates which show structural problems. The structure of Corporate Communication Directorate is flat. It hasn't team structure according to its work category.

All print media's activities like writing articles to newspapers and for magazines, speeches, brochures and flyers and all electro-media's activities such as Media monitoring, preparing messages for website and managing the website , preparing message for social media, event management are done at directorate level. This also shows not only a structural problem, but also it is an indicator of existence of confusions concerning the essence of communication practices.

4.3.1.2 Way of Communication

From the different communication activities taking place, it can be clearly seen that they are carried out in a way that can persuade the public than facilitating the way for the public to influence the Corporation. Publics/Customers have the right to know and contribute in every Corporation's activity. However, the plans and reports that were prepared by the Corporation's managers stated about what had been planned and carried out with regard to Houses administration and allocation.

Therefore, the plan and report filed show that the aim is not to influence and change the conduct of the Corporation but to report about their activities. Thus, as it was observed from the interaction taking place between the Corporation and the stakeholders through plan and reports, a one-way communication predominantly existed. This shows that the way of interaction doesn't allow the public as well as the stakeholders to have equal chance of influence as the Corporation has. Hence, communication between the Corporation and the public (including the stakeholders) is asymmetrical and aims at influencing the public/stakeholders by the Corporation. It was examined that there are few ways provided to the public that give them the opportunity to express its views and comments.

Also suggestion boxes are available in every floor that have been used to collect the views and comments of the public. However, this cannot be said a public participation fully exercised since the magnitude of influence by the public is so minimal and the purpose is different. There is no mechanism and activity found that enables the Corporation to use public comments and opinions to make changes. It can be concluded that purpose of collecting views and opinions of the public by using suggestion boxes is to only use it for reporting purposes.

Those opinions and views presented during meetings and face to face discussion serve only the purpose of influencing public view and make clarification to questions not for the purpose of being influenced back by the public and help as in put for improvements and changes in the Corporation. According to the two-way symmetrical public relations model, the purpose of entertaining public participation by organizations is to give equal chance so as to be also influenced by the public. Thus, mutual benefit would be attained as change occurs both on the conduct of the organization and the public. As it is stated above, this has not been the case with the communication practice of the Corporation.

4.3.1.3 Communicators, communication materials and resources

Although some unclear situations exist concerning the duties and responsibility of media relation and there is no written statement, there has been consensus that information to the media should be given by the CEO or Deputy CEO or the Director of the Corporate Communication Directorate. However, there were some occasions observed when heads of other directorates give information to the media by them. It was examined that the situation had been creating problems on providing consistent and accurate information based on proper preparation and professional way of communication.

As an administrator of the website and Facebook of the Corporation, the researcher also observed and experienced frequent interruptions of internet connection that had been also creating difficulties to provide consistent information through the website, social media and email. The internet that the Corporation installed had not been interactive enough to upload and to make up dates every time. Moreover, the Corporation’s website and social media do not have full time administrators who are specialized on the area. Since the communicators who are assigned to administer the website and social media have other duties and responsibilities to discharge, the website and social media have not been run with sufficient time and effectively utilized as much as needed.

Additionally, internal communication is not strong enough to create a strong interaction and to enable an efficient information exchange among the different directorates of the Corporation. One such gap is that proceedings organized by other directorates are not appropriately and timely informed to communicators so as to be used for different communication activities. Information is not also organized appropriately to be used by communicators for different purposes. For instance, information with regard to allocating

Houses is not well organized and easily accessible to communicators. It is observed that there are times when contradictory information was presented to communicators concerning the activity reports of other directorates. Corporate Communication Directorate produces an in-house newsletter that is posted on boards and distributed to the employees.

However, only few employees are observed reading the message posted on notice boards. Some employees even state that they do not read the newsletter which has been distributed to their office rooms. It was also frequently observed that people coming to get publications were obliged to take soft copies since the hard copies were out of stock. Generally, Communication activities were not appropriately supported by sufficient amount of materials.

4.4 Practitioners' View

In addition to the documents and questionnaire data discussed above, semi structured was designed to collect data from 5 respondents. The interview was conducted with the intention of having a broader assessment on how the practice of communication is carried out by the Corporation and as well as to find out what challenges have been encountered in the process. It would also help to increase the data sources on the gaps and achievements attained by the Corporation communication practice. Therefore, the researcher has tried to categorize these inquires according to their relevance to research questions or thematic areas of the study. Comments or opinions of respondents have also used as required according to their significances.

4.4.1 Demonstration of communication practice

4.4.1.1Guidelines, tools and way of communication

According to the interviewees, the Corporation uses Business Process Reengineering and Corporation's Citizens' Charter as guidelines of the communication practice. The Corporation uses different communication tools like radio, television and the website. Spot, talk show and panel discussions are among the different types of messages channeled through the media. There are also different types of publications that include magazines, newsletters, posters, brochures, fliers, billboards and the like.

With regard tointerview questions listed in number 1-3 (1. *What are the guidelines of the communication practice of the Federal Housing Corporation (FHC)? 2. What are the communication tools used by the*

Corporation? And 3.What is the main focus areas of the Corporation's communication practice) Intervieweeno.1and interviewee no.5 explained as follow:

With regard to the communication way that the Corporation follows, interviewee no.1, (02/09/2020) who is a director, explained that:

> The main objective of the communication practice of the Corporation is to create mutual understanding between customers and Corporation. The Corporation's communication practice is predominantly one-way, although there have been some attempts to increase the participation of the public. I read different books in the area of public relations and know how to do public relations. However, I do not know a modern public relations model such as the two-way symmetrical model that you mentioned. I understand public relations as a profession that should protect the interest of the institution. Accordingly, the communication is more of a one-way communication which aimed at changing the attitude of the public.

The communication practice cares for the Corporation's agenda more than the ideas and opinions of the public. According to interviewee no. 5, (07/09/2020)

> The Corporation uses different stakeholders which are organized based on their profession among other things. The communication way that takes place between the directorates in the Corporation is a one-way which aimed at simply delivering routine work or other messages to members through meetings. Stakeholders are communicated for the purpose of reaching the public through them. As itis clearly understood from the interviewees, stakeholdershave the responsibility to deliver message to their workers and customers. They provide the messages to the public which is directly provided to them by the Corporation. The way of communication is a one-way by which the messages first come from the Corporation and pass to the directors and workers and finally reaches to the public.

Interviewee no. 5 added that:

> "The Corporation communicates with the directors through meetings, letters, plan and reports, e-mails, telephone and fax. Directorates directors prepare plan and reports and

submit them to the Corporation for the purpose of reporting their plans and activities regarding transmitting messages."

Interviewee no. 1 also noted that:

> "There are weaknesses in using the opinions and ideas from the public for the purpose of taking actions and making changes." Hence, it can be understood from the interviewees that communication between the Corporation and the public (including the directors) is asymmetrical and aims at changing the other party not changing the Corporation itself.

4.4.1.2 Challenges of communication practice

There are varieties of challenges stated by the informants which are faced by the Corporation with regard to media relations. With regard tointerview questions listed in number 4- 9 *(4. What strategies do you use to build the image of the Corporation?,5. How do you see the practice of the Corporation in providing timely and up to the standard information to the public?,6. Do you have a media communication strategy?, 7. What challenges do you have in maintaining the relationship with the media? ,8. What kinds of complaints are made concerning the communication practice of the Corporation? And 9. How do you treat such complaints?)*Theinformants stated their opinion as follow:

According to interviewee no. 1,(02/09/2020),

> "There hasn't been a media guideline or a policy that directs the relationship between the media and the Corporation." Media play a major role in influencing the publics' opinion and making an issue a public agenda. Although the FHC has been exerting efforts to make the correction upon Houses administration and to influence public, there are different problems faced by the Corporation to appropriately utilize the media. It was discussed in the literature review that media relation is one of the core components of communication activity for any institution especially for those which have a responsibility of safeguarding the wellbeing of the society. Therefore, media policy that can guide the activity between an institution and the media is an obligatory task that can clearly show the duties and the responsibilities of the two parties. It also helps to appropriately use the media in a way that can benefit both an institution and the public."

Regarding the problem that had been created in utilizing the media, interviewee no. 2 and 3(14/09/2020) stated that:

> It has been very challenging for us to get sufficient airtime on broadcast media especially on television. Many people tell us that our messages, particularly television spots are good. They frequently tell us that the airtime is insufficient. So far, the messages channeled through the media, especially in the broadcast media, did not match the need in terms of number and frequency. Lack of sufficient budget and the problem that arise from the media themselves are some of the reasons for not getting sufficient air time. We have also skill gaps on how to utilize the media in order to appropriately use the media as much as needed. The difficulty faced by the Corporation to reach audiences by providing sufficient number of messages with the appropriate frequency by using broadcast media might have an impact in being effective to communicate the issue.

In addition, according to the interviewees, there were also other challenges concerning the relationship between the Corporation and the media. Interviewee no. 1 indicated that:

> The private media complain that the Corporation doesn't equally treat them with the government media. The private media have been complaining that the Corporation is partial towards the government media and is more open to the government media than the private ones. The Corporation doesn't prefer to give information to the private media since it has a fear of distortion.
>
> We have experiences of distortions by the private media and this is the reason why we are more reserved to give some information to the private media. The other reason that the Corporation prefers to use some media to others is some media are better to reach larger number of audiences and have more readability. Moreover, some media workers just come and ask for information that they do not have the appropriate way of inquiry. In addition, they do not get ready prior to their appointment and have no knowledge on what they seek to find out. The other problem is that some media wants to get any information they want in an overly hasty way. Some media also uses the information by distorting it and making it sensational. The media are concerned only for selling their newspapers and make highlights of issues inappropriately without weighting them.

In addition, interviewee no. 4 (21/09/2020) indicated that

> "The media do not want to work on Urban Housing issues independently. They do not have self-motivation. Some media are not self-motivated to play their role of aware the public on the issues of mortgages."

Interviewee no. 1 stated that

> "The management also lacks the necessary knowledge on how the media operates. Consequently, whenever problems arise with regard to the activities we carry out with the media, the management blames us."

Interviewee no. 1 also stated that:

> "The other problem is that there is lack of sufficient communication knowledge among the employees to carry out different communication activities." As it was stated under the literature review, empowering the poor and giving voice to the voiceless is another important element of a symmetrical two-way public relations model.

According to, interviewee no. 1:

> "The FHC has no special agenda to empower the poor and give voice to the voiceless and have not yet considered such issue to be part of its communication plan and practice."

With regard to other challenges of the communication practice, interviewee no. 4 21/09/2020), indicated that:

> There are some problems in providing information on time and with clarity. For instance, the Corporation's commercial houses rent fixation, asset valuation and registration, and disclosure activity have not been appropriately and timely communicated with the public. This has made the public to misunderstand the issue. Although the Corporation has already been using the document of rent fixation, asset valuation and registration, and disclosure, it has not clearly expressed the issue to the public. The media also have been complaining that the Corporation doesn't provide information on time.

In addition, interviewee no. 5 stated:

"Image building has been a problem which is not appropriately addressed by the Corporation." On the other hand, interviewee no. 1 stated that: The negative image is decreasing from time to time but some negative images such as the perception that the Corporation is not fair on allocating houses and the managers and even some workers are corrupter, Lack of clarification on Corporation's capital and usages.

Moreover, interviewee no. 4 indicated that

> "There are other negative images attached to the Corporation. The situation with regard to the unclear situation of the Houses administration directives, rent fixation, maintenance and repairing and the like has been creating an additional pressure on the image of the Corporation."

The other challenges of the communication practice, according to interviewee no. 5 additionally, the absence of sufficient budget and resources has been incurring additional burdens on different communication activities. In addition, interviewee no. 4 stated "different communication activities has been scattered to different directorates which shows a structural problem."

4.4.1.3 Achievements and opportunities

With regard to interview questions listed in number 10- 13*(10.What are the main achievements made by the communication practice? ,11. What challenges are faced in practicing communication?,12. What opportunities are there for advancing the communication practice? And 13. What kind of measures should be taken to improve the current communication practice?)*

According to interviewee no. 1,

> "Recently, following the reestablishment of Corporation in business oriented Enterprise, its income becomes increased, the Corporation is making effort to identifying its assets, revaluating assets and being partialindependent political decision is one success that the Corporation achieved. In addition, starting building standard Houses on its occupation land has become a public agenda compared to the time before the establishment of the Corporation.

On the other hand, interviewee no. 4 pointed out that

"The Corporation should work hard to make sure good governance in order to get credibility with public." There are also good opportunities available that were mentioned by the informants to advance the practice of communication to the next level.

Accordingly, interviewee no. 1 underlined that:

> The expansion of the number and types of media houses is the other opportunity to channel the issue to the general public. The recognition given to the issue of Housing by Government increased focuses to better advance the Communication practice. Government and Corporation's CEO become give focus and support by financially, technically and other types of are also good opportunities to better practice communication. A better academic opportunity to advance the discipline of public relations is also an opportunity to do a better job in the future.

4.5 Stakeholders' View

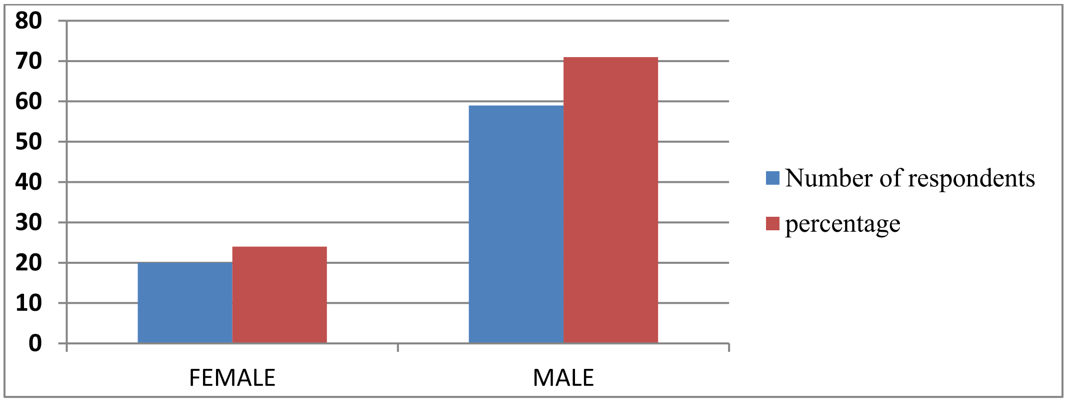
For the purpose of having a wider view of the practices and challenges of the communication practice of the Federal Housing Corporation, the study employed questionnaire as an additional data collection instrument. Respondents from different media houses and media associations which work in collaboration with the Corporation as stakeholders were selected based on purposive and convenience sampling methods. The stakeholders were used as samples for questionnaire data since they have been taking part in different activities with the Corporation including transmittingmessages to the public. Their participation in transmittingmessages to the public makes them more appropriate to evaluate the communication practice. Media houses and media associations were selected as sources of questionnaire data from other stakeholders, since they are the most convenient data sources. Secondly, media professionals are believed to be closer to the profession and have better knowledge of the subject matter to respond to the questions more appropriately than the rest of the stakeholders. Accordingly, questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analyzed as follows.

4.5.1 Demography

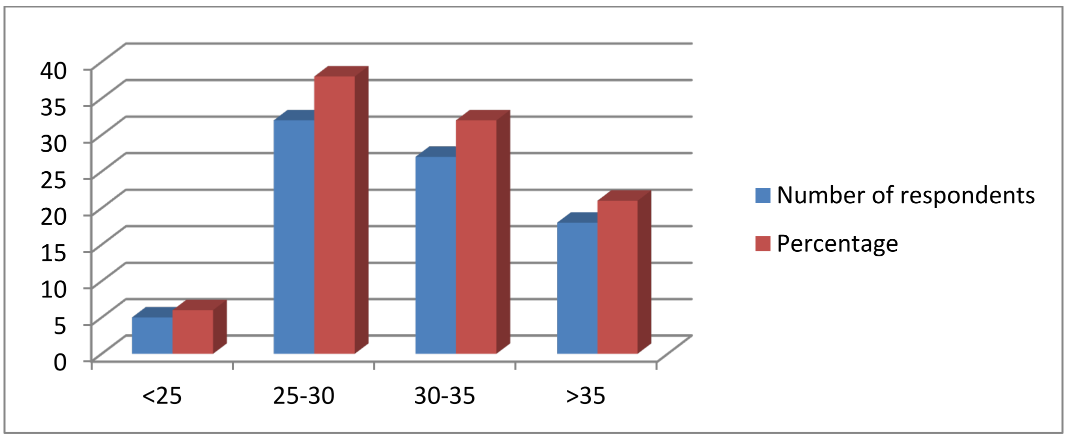
As it is demonstrated by the table below, the demographic data of the respondents indicated that 20(24%) of them were females and 59(71%) were males while the rest (5%) didn't indicate their gender. Large number of respondents was males and the gender of the respondents clearly indicated that the majority of stakeholders of media house and media associations were dominated by male professionals. The gender gap might have some influences on their contribution of transmitting messages equally to both genders. The age groups of the respondents indicated that 5(6%) of them were less than 25 years; 32(38%) of them were between 25 and 30 years; and 27(32%) were 30-35 years while 18(21%) of the respondents were above 35 years. With regard to the respondents level of education, 7(8%) of them were diploma holders, 56(67%) of them were B.A/B.Sc holders, 15(18%) of them were M.A. degree holders, while 1(1%) was a Ph.D holder.

TABLE ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITION OF RESPONDENTS

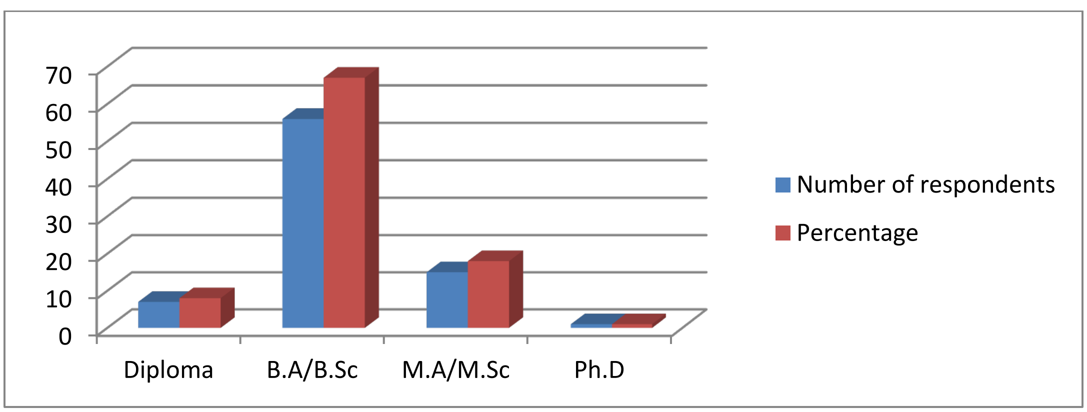
By Sex



By Age group



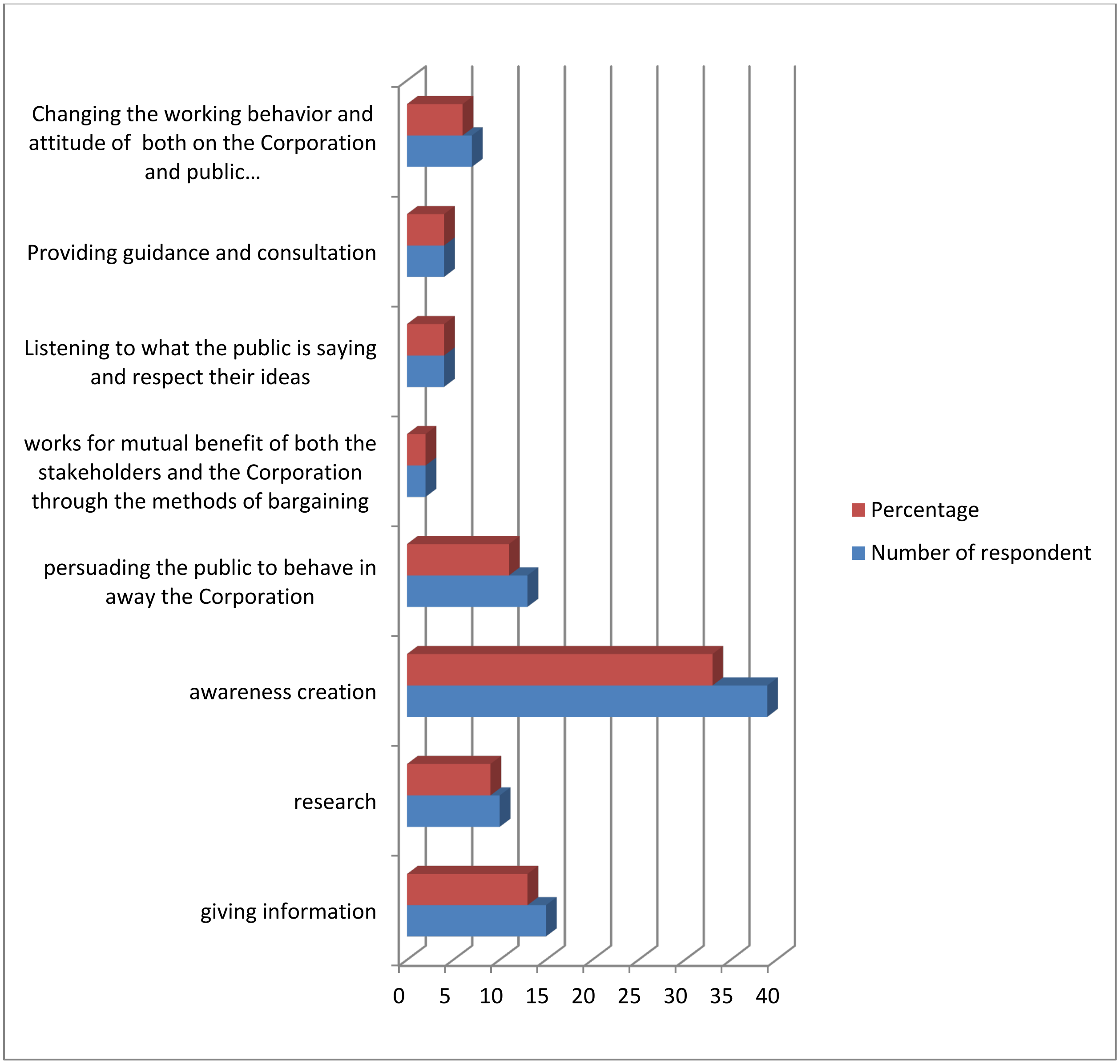
By Level of Education



4.5.2 Priorities of communication practice

TABLE TWO: Priority of Public Relations Activity in Relation to the Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations

Communication priority in relation to the two way symmetrical PR model



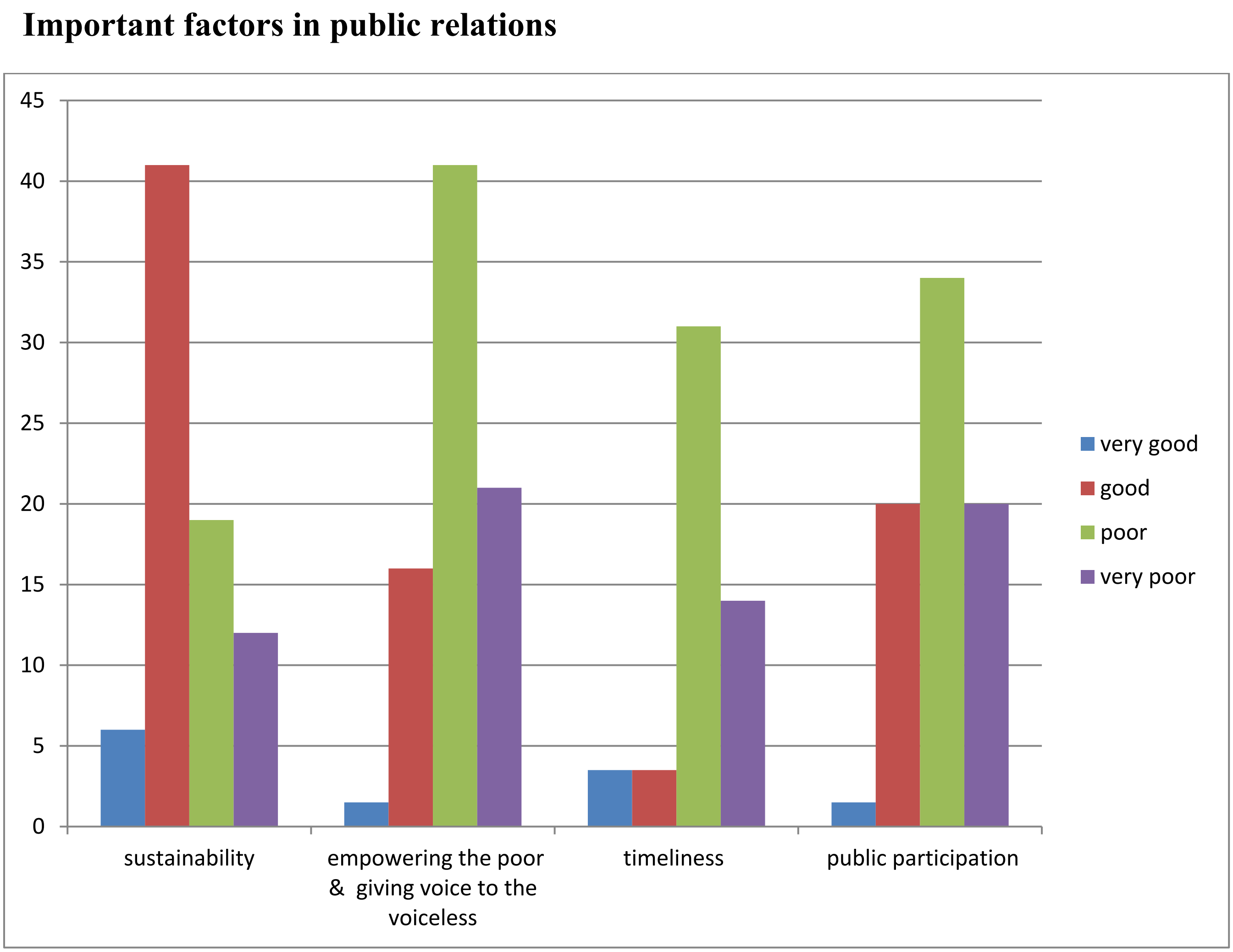
The FHC uses different publications such as a quarterly newsletter, annual magazine, annual report, brochures, fliers, newspaper articles, posters and billboards. It also makes use of broadcast media to channel corporation's messages such as television and radio, spots, announcements and talk shows. The other communication tools include online media such as website and Facebook. According to the questionnaire data, the highest number (39%) of respondents stated that the FHC gives priority to creating awareness on how to allocate Houses. The second priority among different public relations activities, according to 14% of the respondents, was providing information which is also another type of one-way communication practice.

Moreover, only 1% of respondents believed that the FHC's communication practice was a two-way that works for the mutual benefit of the Corporation and the society. The main objective of the communication practice, according to most of the respondents (39%) building good image of Corporation. Hence, the communication is more of a one-way communication which aimed at image building of Corporation. The respondents' evaluation indicated that the communication practice cared for the Corporation's agenda more than the ideas and opinions of the public. The communication way that takes place between the Corporation and the renters of the Houses as well as the messages is one way which aimed at building image through awareness creation.

With regard to the Corporation's way of communication with the media associations, it is the same as the communication way that takes place through other methods, which is also a one way communication. The Corporation communicates with variety of media associations using meetings, plan and reports, letters, e-mails, fax and telephone. The purpose is also to facilitate to build good image by using the media associations. Hence, communication between the Corporation and the public (including the media associations) is asymmetrical and aims at changing the other party not changing the Corporation itself.

4.5.3Important factors in public relations

TABLE THREE: Important factors in public relations



As it was discussed in the theoretical framework section of the literature review, the other important quality of a modern two-way public relations model is that it can be used to empower the poor and give voice to the voiceless. This communication task is highly important and appropriate for institutions such as Housing that have a responsibility to builds, administers and allocates Houses. The other most important point with regard to this is that the hazardous effects of lack of good governances are more severely felt by the poorer section than any other part of a society.

Thus, addressing poorer section of the society through different communication activities should be on top of Housing institution's list of priorities in order to effectively accomplish their mission. However, the questionnaire data indicated that the FHC has no special communication package to empower the poor and give voice to the voiceless. Concerning this issue, the highest number of respondents (49 %) rated the practice of the FHC to be the status of "poor" condition concerning the task of empowering the poor and giving voice to the voiceless. The second largest number of respondents (26%), rated the Corporation's status in this regard to be "very poor". Accordingly, only 1% of the respondents believe that the FHC gives priority to empowering the poor and give voice to the voiceless. Regarding the sustainability of communication practice, the majority of respondents (49%) believed that the sustainability of the Corporation's communication practice was in a "good" level, while 37% believed that it was in a "poor" and "very poor" condition. As it was indicated in the literature review, sustainability is among the core component of public relations activities. Practicing communication in a sustainable manner is necessary to better accomplish an objective.

Therefore, in order to make the issue an agenda of the public sustainable communication practice is crucial. Thus, according to the respondents of the questionnaire, the sustainability condition of the Corporation's communication practice situated in a better position. Timeliness is also another core component of communication practice which is included as one component of the questionnaire. According to the majority (54%) of the respondents, the Corporation stood at a "poor" and "very poor" status with regard to providing timely information to the public. On the other hand, 43% of questionnaire respondents rated "very good" and "good" regarding the timeliness of the communication practice. One issue raised with regard to the lack of timeliness of the Corporation's practice, as it was indicated at the open ended section of the questionnaire, was that the Corporation's inability to provide timely information on some important issues such as the declaration of the registered assets of appointees, elected persons and pertinent public servants.

As it was also discussed in the literature review, the inability to timely communicate important issues can create rumors to prevail. It also causes negative type of public opinion to develop through time and create adverse effects on the image of institutions. Therefore, lack of timely communication practices can cause multifaceted negative consequences not only on the future communication practice of institutions but also the overall practice of organizations. Concerning the participatory habit of the Corporation on important issues such as law formulation, the largest number of questionnaire respondents (38%) rated that it is in a “poor” condition. In addition, the sum of “poor” and “very poor” added up to reach 62% of the respondents making it much bigger.

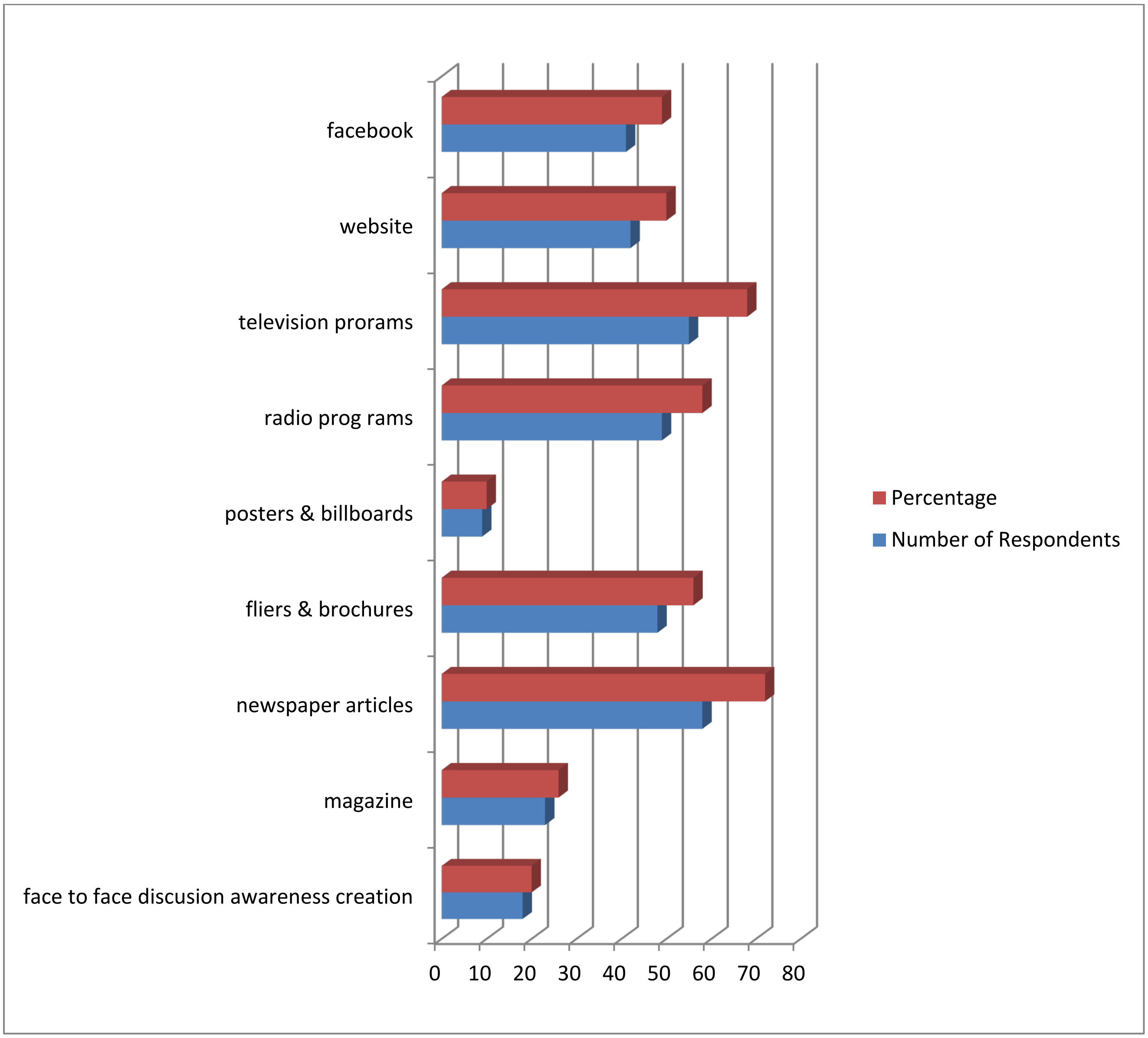
Since public participation is one component of a two-way communication, the respondents’ evaluation also strengthens the previous evaluation that the Corporation’s communication practice falls under a one-way communication system. As stated earlier, public input on important issues such as law formulation plays a decisive role by making the practice to be grounded on the ideas of the society. Consequently, it would help address the society’s problem based on the solution provided by the society itself. Concerning research, only 10% of respondents believe that the Corporation gives priority for research. The rest of the respondents (86%) believed that the Corporation didn’t give priority to communication researches.

Accordingly, conducting researches was another gap of the Corporation’s communication practice. As it was also discussed in the literature review, research is one of the most important components of modern public relations activity. The questionnaire response contradicts the plan stated in the communication documents that stressed the importance and the targets to conduct researches. Thus, the practicality of the plans to conduct researches should be checked. Hence, a communication activity can not be as effective as it is desired if it is not guided by a research. Research helps to find out if a communication activity is effective or not. It also has benefits to know the gaps, problems and solutions regarding an ongoing communication activity. It also has the potential to help find out about an existing public opinion and provide the mechanism to deal with an adverse public opinion.

4.5.4 Familiarity with communication tools

TABLE FOUR: FAMILIARITY WITH COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Frequency of Familiarity with Communication Tools

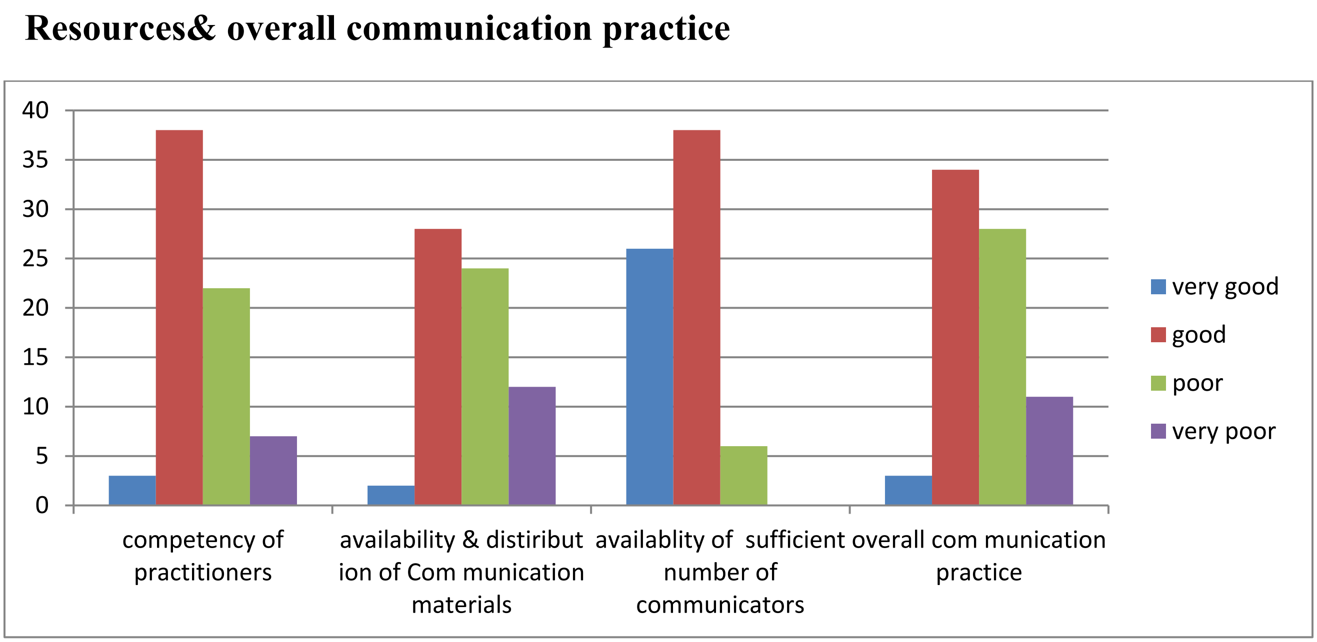


As stated above, the questionnaire data indicated that the majority of the respondents (71%) were more familiar with television messages than the rest of communication tools employed by the Corporation. This can be linked with the reason that television has the largest audience than any other media in Addis Ababa. Thus utilizing television programs more effectively can have contributions to get more audiences than the rest of the channel of communication. However, as it was stated during the interview, the Corporation has difficulty to get sufficient amount of frequency. This might have a negative impact in being effective to communicate the issue and utilize the opportunity of getting large number of audiences through television. Newspaper features were the second most familiar (66%) communication tool to the respondents. Better volume and distribution of newspapers might be the reason for larger number of familiarity with newspaper articles than the rest of the media mentioned. This is also a good opportunity to use in order to get large number of audiences.

On the other hand, modules (10%), Facebook (20%) and website (26%) were familiar to the least percentage of respondents. The reason for the least number of familiarities with modules might have some connections with the small number of publications and distributions made to stakeholders. As the response in connection with the Facebook and the website indicated, comparatively a small number of respondents were familiar with them. Sufficient knowledge and motivation is needed to employ modern means of communication such as the website and Facebook and get the best out of them. Although these modern means of communication are on the rise and are making communication easier, the respondents' low familiarity with the media indicates that sufficient recognition and advertisements were not made in order to increase their familiarity.

4.5.5 Communicators and communication materials

TABLE FIVE: Communicators and communication materials



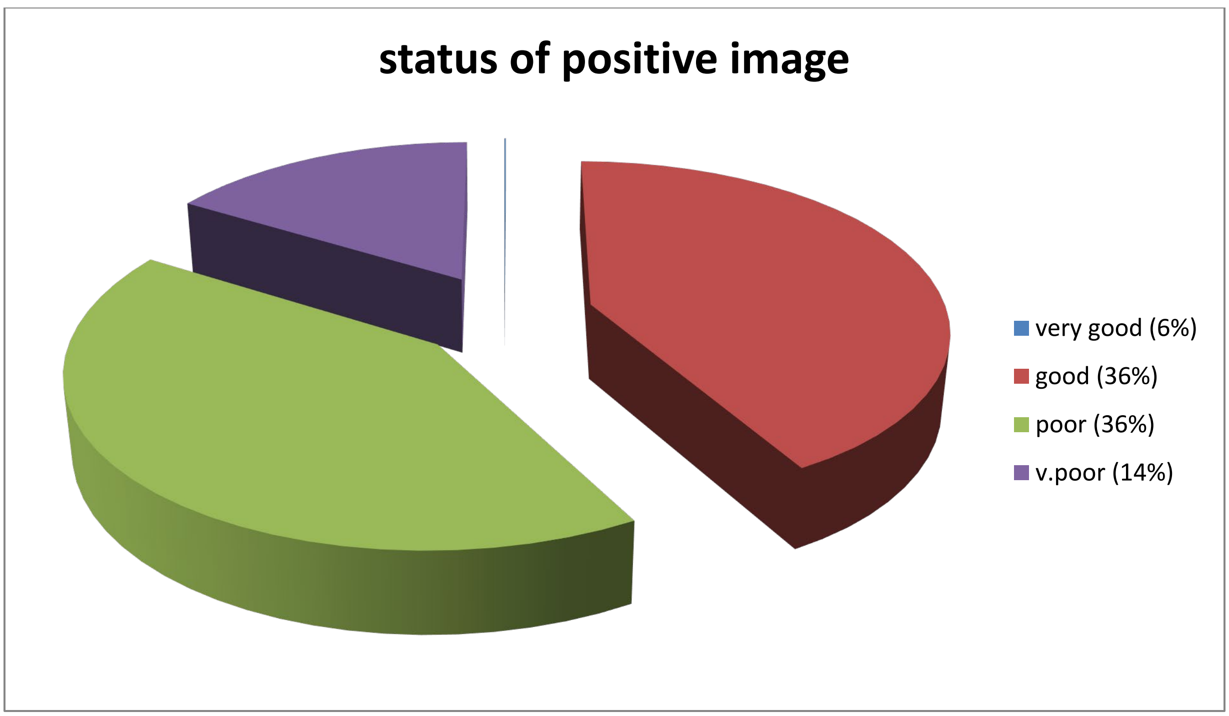
With regard to the sufficiency of the number of communicators, the largest number of respondents (45%) indicated that there was "low" number of communicators in the Corporation. Moreover, concerning the competency of communicators, the majority (45%) agreed that they were in a "good" position. The Corporation has been dealing with a large number of stakeholders and the public since it has implemented the new reform.

Moreover, as the documents and the practice indicate, there is an increased number of people who are taking Corporation's responsibilities, what are improved regard to good and modern Houses administration. In addition, the Corporation has been increasing the number of people who are taking Corporation's responsibilities, what isimproved regard to good and modern Houses administration which also needs an increased number of communicators. The availability of communication materials is also the other issue that needs some consideration.

Although, 42% of the respondents rated it to be “good” and “very good”, a comparatively larger number of respondents(43%) rated the availability of communication. Materials had been in a”poor”and “very poor” condition. There are largenumbers of stake holdersof the Corporation in addition to general public to which communication materials are distributed. A careful consideration was not given to increase the amount of communication materials distributed when the corporation started to embrace considerable number of stakeholders. Shortage of budget has been raised as reason for the limited number of communication materials produced and distributed. It would be difficult, therefore to equip the stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and enable them reach the public with a limited amount of communication materials. Therefore, the limited amount of communication materials might negatively influence the quality of message delivered to the public by the stakeholders.

4.5.6 Image building

TABLE SIX: STATUS OF POSITIVE IMAGE



Questionnaire respondents were also asked the status of the Corporation’spositive image. Thus, 50% of respondents rated the positive image of the Corporation to be in a “poor” and “very poor” status, while 42% of respondents rated the positive image to be in a “very good” and “good” status. In their opinion in an open ended questionnaire section, significant number of respondents expressed their view that the Corporation had negative images.

Among the frequently mentioned negative images of the FHC by the respondents were those in connection with “lack of political independence”, “lack of sufficient protection for whistle blowers”, “tendency to focus only outside the Corporation, neglecting the internal issues that can affect image of the Organization. Among these, the majority of respondents (38%) believed that the Corporation had a negative image in connection with the perception that it was corrupted. The respondents explained that there was also a perception that the Corporation had a fear to take measure up on illegal House holders of higher level government officials.

They also commented that the public had a perception that the majority of measurements taken by Corporation up on illegals focused on ordinary people who were at the lower level of political and economic situations rather than focusing on the “big fish”. Moreover, the questionnaire respondents indicated that there were other negative images attached to the Corporation. Recently, there had also been complaints about the unclear situation of Houses allocation process. Some stated that this had been creating an additional pressure on the image of the Corporation.

CHAPTER FIVE:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This research attempted to explore the practices and challenges of communication practiced by the Federal Housing Corporation (FHC). The main focus of the research is to find out how communication is practiced and what challenges of communication are being encountered while practicing communication. To this end, a qualitative research design was used as the main research method of the study and the study also used quantitative method of research to triangulate and strengthen the findings. The study also used a two-way symmetrical public relations model as its theoretical framework.

For the purpose of collecting the data, document analysis, questionnaire, interview and personal observations were employed. Two documents which were used as communication guidelines were analyzed. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analyzed. In addition, interview was conducted with 5 people selected from the Corporation employees. The interviewees comprised practitioners as well as heads who were responsible for communication activities. According to the analysis of the research findings, the following conclusions were made.

The FHC was established close to half century ago by having the name (AARH) with the purpose of administering and constructing additional public rental houses. With regard to this, there have been efforts exerted to communicate the issue with the public using different methods and types of communication. In addition, attempts were made to reform both the guidelines and the practice of communication practiced by the Corporation. Although there have been some achievements made, there have been also challenges and gaps which have been posing a stumbling block to the communication practice. With regard to the documents which have been used by the Corporation as guidelines, the major problem was that they didn’t include important points so as to make them go in line with modern communication standards. Although the documents highlight to address quality problems which had been challenges of the communication practice before the BPR and Citizens’ Charter were adopted, they didn’t properly articulate and clarify the procedure. Therefore, it can be said that the objective of attaining quality outputs couldn’t go beyond the paper work since there haven’t been any mechanism to solve the problem and check the quality by setting standards.

The other drawback of the communication was it had been stuck to the old fashioned one way method of communication. As it was discussed in the theoretical framework, the modern two way symmetrical public relations model targets to achieve mutual benefit for both the institution and the public. In other words, there is an equal chance of sending and receiving messages between the two parties. Consequently, changes would take place on the side of both parties as a result of equal chance of interactivities.

Hence, the modern public relations model indicates that a two-way symmetrical model is distinguished by its quality of promoting the agenda of not only an institution but also both of the institutions and the public’s. Here, some might argue that ethics and anti-corruption issues are a public agenda that the Corporation is trying to promote. However, it should be understood that on the same agenda of administering the public rental Houses and the Corporation might have their own issues on how to proceed. In other words the public also has its own procedural issues that it would like the Corporation to abide with as much as the Corporation wants the public to behave in a certain way.

With this in mind, the findings show that the communication employed by the Corporation is more of a one-way communication that facilitates the condition for the Corporation to influence the public but not the other way round. Similarly, the documents emphasize the objective to increase the participation of the public. However, both the interview and questionnaire data indicate that the Corporation practically does not involve the public in important issues such as in law formulation. The other most important issue which lacks clarification is the issue in connection with the right of the public to have access to information. Although ensuring the right of the public to get information is one of the major responsibilities of public relations, the communication guidelines lack clear direction.

Accordingly, FHC’s Citizen’s Charter couldn’t clarify the issue by only states that: “Citizen’s have the right to get information except those which are confidential”. The statement creates a loophole for excuses not to provide information to the public as well as gives the chance for personal manipulation. With regard to positive image, the findings indicate that there are still a number of negative images prevailing. According to the data gathered, the negative images of the Corporation are among the most challenging issues of the communication practice. Furthermore, there is no media strategy that can guide the work relation between the Corporation and the media. Hence, this has been creating considerable drawbacks on how to properly utilize the media. One such drawback includes the pressures on the amount and frequency of the messages transmitted through different media channels. The amount and frequency of the messages sent through the media have been limited due to lack of a full-fledged media policy. It is also stated that a modern public relations activity gives important consideration to "give voice to the voiceless" and empower the poor. However, there has been no special communication package included in the documents of the Corporation to deal with this issue. Moreover, the findings also suggest that both the documents and the practice do not entertain such an issue.

Thus, in Ethiopia where a considerable portion of the society lives under poverty, a communication scheme that doesn't give special attention to the poor cannot be as effective as it is imagined. It is good that the Corporation's communication guidelines have included the importance of conducting researches. However, the findings show that in practical terms, there have not been sufficient researches conducted with the proper standard. Although research is an important component of a modern communication practice, the Corporation is lacking consideration to conduct sufficient and professional research and effectively change them in to practice.

Moreover, as it is the aim of asymmetrical PR communication, the purpose of some of the researches is not to bring about a mutual understanding and benefit to both the Corporation and the public. Thus, the researches made on the practice of the communication are not aimed at changing the conduct of the Corporation. According to questionnaire respondents, television and newspapers are respectively the first and the second most familiar media in relation to the Corporation's message transmission. However, there are problems in efficiently and effectively utilizing the media such as lack of sufficient airtime for messages that are being channeled through television. On the other hand, website and Facebook are rated as the least familiar communication tools.

In contemporary communication practice website and Facebook have crucial role to play in providing timely and the most accessible information to the public. However, the data from both the questionnaire and the interview shows that these modern communication tools are not being appropriately utilized to better reach the public. With the plan to increase the number of people that take part in delivering corporatio's message as well as having a considerable number of stakeholders, there is no measure taken to increase both the number of communicators that deal with the issue and the amount of communication materials produced and distributed. This has been confirmed by the data from both the questionnaire and the interviewees. There has been also a fundamental problem observed with regard to the guiding principles of the communication activity. There is no communication strategy available to guide all the plans and activities of communication.

Not only the unavailability of a communication strategy that matters most, but also the available documents also lack professional guiding principles that are founded on theoretical basis. With regard to the strength of the communication practice, the findings from questionnaire data show that sustainability is among the strong sides of the communication practice. However, there are challenges concerning providing timely information to the public. Although the proper implementation of the plan is a problem, emphasis and recognition has been given in the documents to conduct researches on the communication activities of the Corporation. In addition, the effort to make the messages based on facts and to make them interesting can be taken as the other positive side of the communication practice. The implementation of the objective to embrace variety of stakeholders and making them take part in the activity delivering messages to the public can be taken as the other strength of the communication practice.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are forwarded based on the findings of the research. First of all the guidelines of the communication practice should be appropriately revised and it should be made comprehensive to include all the important components of communication. It should also provide clarifications and standards on the qualities of the contents and products of communication tools.

The communication practice should also be checked with available modern models of public relations. Therefore, practice should be amended so as to make revision on the current conventional one-way communication methods and adapt to a more society-focused two-ways symmetrical methods of communication.

Clarity should also be included as one component of the communication activity. The right of the public to have access to information which is included as one component of the communication documents should be clarified appropriately. Therefore, the statement in the FHC's Citizen's Charter: "Citizenshave the right to get information except those which are confidential" should specify what confidential information is and what is not.

Messages should also be communicated on timely fashion and as clearly as possible. Clarification should be made on how to disclose the assets of appointees, elected persons and pertinent public servants to the public.

The Corporation should also involve the public to take part on important issues such as law formulation. Moreover, attention should also be given to empower the poorer section of the society and give voice to the voiceless.

The Corporation should also develop a media relation guideline so as to deal with the problems which are being faced and to better use the media. The Corporation should also increase the amount of messages and frequencies to channel them through broadcast media especially through television which has the highest audience as it was indicated by the data. The Corporation should also publicize and use the website and the Facebook in a better way.

The Corporation should also give the necessary attention to have an appropriate guideline and to take measures that can help shed the negative images of the Corporation.

Professional researches should also be conducted based on the two-way symmetrical model of public relations. Therefore, there should be sufficient and up-to the standard researches made frequently and the implementation should be checked.

The Corporation should also increase the number of communicators and their capacity should be built frequently. Similarly, there is a need of more amounts of communication materials to be distributed and meet the increasing demand of the public.

The Corporation should also design and implement a full-fledged communication strategy document in order to appropriately address communication issues in an organized manner.

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APPENDICES

A questionnaire to gather research data for the partial fulfillment of an M.A Thesis in Public relation and strategic Communication

This questionnaire is designed to assess the practices and challenges of Communication practiced in the Federal Housing Corporation. The data gathered by this questionnaire will be used only for academic research purposes. Therefore, you are respectfully requested to provide genuine responses and return it back as soon as possible.

N.B.Youare not required to provide your names.

Section one

Issues related to general matters

(Please specify your choice by putting the sign"√" where ever choice is available)

1.1 Name of the association/ organization -------------------------

1.2 Sex: Female ☐ Male ☐

1.3 Age: less than 25 ☐ 25-30 ☐ 30-35 ☐ More than 35 ☐

1.4 Educational status: Certificate: Diploma ☐ BA/BSC ☐ MA/MSC ☐ PHD ☐ Other ☐

Section two

Questions Related to professional and theoretical standard of communication practice

2.1 Which of the following communication tools of the FHC are you used with? (you can select more than one if applicable)

☐ **Face to face discussion**

☐ **Magazine**

☐ Newspaper articles

☐ Fliers& brochures,

☐ Posters& billboards

☐ Radio programs

☐ Television programs

☐ Website

☐ Facebook

Specify if any other tools you are used with ________________________

2.2 How do you rate the current Communication practice of the Corppration according to their importance to the Corporation? (you can give no.1 for the most important and continue numbering down based on the importance)

☐ Giving information

☐ Research

☐ Awareness creation

☐ Persuading the public to behave in away the Corporation wants them to

☐ Works for mutual benefit of both the stakeholders and the Corporation through the methods of bargaining, negotiating, and conflict resolution.

☐ Listening to what the public is saying and respecting their ideas

☐ Providing guidance and consultation

☐ Changing the behavior and attitude of both on the Corporation and the public.

☐ Empowering the "Marginalized; giving voice to the voiceless

2.3 How do you evaluate the sustainability of the Corporations' communication practice?

Very good ☐ ood poor ☐ very poor ☐ ☐

2.4 How do you evaluate the role of the Corporation in empowering the poorer section of the society and giving 'voice to the voiceless' (allowing poorer section of the society to express their views)

Very good ☐ good ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐

2.5 How do you rate the pace of the Comrporation to give timely information

Very good ☐ good ☐ poor ☐ slow ☐ very slow ☐

2.6 How do you evaluate the communication of the Corporation to allow public participation such as in law formulation and other important issues?

Very good ☐ good ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐

Section three

<u>Questions in relation to challenges of communication practice</u>

3.1 How do you rate the number of communicators in the Corporation?

Very good ☐ good ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐

3.2 How do you evaluate the competency of the practitioners?

Very good ☐ good ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐

3.3 How do you rate the availability and distribution of communication materials ?

Very good ☐ good ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐

3.4 How do you rate the status of the Corporation's positive image?

Very good ☐ **good** ☐ **poor** ☐ **very poor** ☐

3. 5 please specify if there is any kind of negative public perception that affects the image of the Corporation

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3.6 How do you evaluate the overall Communication practice of the Corporation?

Very good ☐ **good** ☐ **poor** ☐ **very poor** ☐

3.7 What measures do you think should be taken to improve the current communication practice of the Corporation?

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Interview questions for communication practitioners and director

1. What are the guidelines of the communication practice of the Federal Housing Corporation (FHC)?
2. What are the communication tools used by the Corporation?
3. What are the main focus areas of the Corporation's communication practice?
4. What strategies do you use to build the image of the Corporation?
5. How do you see the practice of the Corporation in providing timely and up to the standard information to the public?
6. Do you have a media communication strategy?
7. What challenges do you have in maintaining the relationship with the media?
8. What kinds of complaints are made concerning the communication practice of the Corporation?
9. How do you treat such complaints?
10. What are the main achievements made by the communication practice?
11. What challenges are faced in practicing communication?
12. What opportunities are there for advancing the communication practice?
13. What kind of measures should be taken to improve the current communication practice