

**THE APPLICATION OF EXCELLENCE THEORY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS  
PRACTICE IN KADUNA POLYTECHNIC**

**BY**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES,  
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**JUNE, 2015**

## **DECLARATION**

I, Maryam Suleiman Jamo declare that this thesis titled “The Application of Excellence Theory in Public Relations Practice in Kaduna Polytechnic” was written by me in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, under the supervision of Dr John Okpoko and Mr. Cosmos I. Eze. And it has not been previously presented in any publication for the award of a degree and all quotations and sources of information have been duly acknowledged.

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**Maryam Jamo Suleiman**

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**Signature**

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**Date**

## CERTIFICATION

This Thesis titled THE APPLICATION OF EXCELLENCE THEORY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN KADUNA POLYTECHNIC by MARYAM SULEIMAN JAMO meets the regulations and standard governing the award of the Degree of Master Science (M.Sc) in Mass Communication of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my late mother Hajiya Fatimah Yakole, my grandmother Hajiya Sanda, my husband Suleiman Jamo and my children Fatimah, Aisha, Hafsat, Mustapha and Hauwa Suleiman Jamo.

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates how excellence theory is being applied in the public relations practice of Kaduna polytechnic. Excellence theory is a theory that specifies how public relations practice makes institutions to be more effective in organization and management for optimum productivity. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative assessment of the application of excellence theory in public relations practice of Kaduna polytechnic. In-depth interview with structured and unstructured questions was used in collecting data from purposively selected informants at Public relations department of Kaduna polytechnic for the qualitative study, while a structured questionnaire was used in collecting the data and information for quantitative study. 1,376 questionnaires were issued to the sampled population of the institution. Findings show that Kaduna Polytechnic makes use of information and protocols unit as their PR department. However, the study reveals that, the institution does not fully understand the importance of the unit to its success or operations. Kaduna Polytechnic does not apply the excellence theory principles in its public relations activities. The Involvement of public relations in strategic management is critical to the application of excellence theory. An organization that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with its strategic publics, both external and internal that provides the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organization. Kaduna Polytechnic Public relations unit does not recognize this role, as public relations are not seen as a management function in the institution.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

For an organization or institution to be effective, according to the theory, it must behave in ways that solve the problems and satisfy the goals of stakeholders as well as of management. If it does not, stakeholders will either pressure the organization or institution to change or oppose it in ways that add cost and risk to organizational policies and decisions. To behave in socially acceptable ways, organizations institutions must scan their environment to identify publics who are affected by potential organizational decisions or who want organizations to make decisions to solve problems that are important to them. Then, organizations must communicate symmetrically with publics (taking the interests of both the organization and publics into account) to cultivate high-quality, long-term relationships with them (Grunig 2008).

This makes Public relations (PR) today to become an integral part of every business organization. It is being regarded, more and more today as a management process in itself like other management processes, professional public relations work requires setting clear objectives, planning strategies, detailing out appropriate tactics and techniques. Often, the outcome is reflected in the overall reputation of the company and the total profit margins. As a management functions also, public relation demands a wide range of skills to cope with the four cardinal areas of full public relations task (Ajala 2002). No doubt, these are the canon of the excellence theory in practice.

Public relations as it exists in any given organization and institution, however, have different organizations assigning different names to their public relations departments or units. Some refer to it as customer care, public affairs division, public service division, customer

service or information and protocols unit among others as the case may be with Kaduna polytechnic which is our point of reference in this study and as one of the recognized institutions of learning.

Kaduna Polytechnic, since its establishment in 1956 where it started as Kaduna Technical Institution to what it is today. It is the biggest Polytechnic in Africa, South of Sahara in terms of staff, student population and physical infrastructure, it is the second oldest technological institution in Nigeria, the oldest being Yaba College of Technology which was established in 1948. Kaduna Polytechnic is also the second largest tertiary institution in Nigeria after Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The Polytechnic is cosmopolitan with students admitted from both within and outside Nigeria. It has been in the forefront in the training of high and middle level manpower for the various sectors of the economy. It started with a modest figure of 158 students in 1961 but currently, the polytechnic has over 20,000 students undertaking 173 programs spread over 35 academic departments of the five colleges of the institution.

Based on the brief history of the Polytechnic given, it is evident that the institution has a large number of public both internal and external upon which its success is dependent. As a result, public relations practice becomes inevitable to help keep good lines of communication, and build goodwill between the institution and its numerous publics. By so doing, they have to apply excellence theory in their public relations practice. Due to the nature of the public of the institution, Kaduna Polytechnic came up with the Information and protocols unit to cater for the numerous communication needs of the institution and to build good reputation as well. The information and protocols unit of Kaduna Polytechnic has been involved with numerous public relations activities and uses many public relations strategies organized through the information and protocols unit. It uses both the broadcast, print media as well as the internet to communicate

with their vast publics. It organizes meetings with community leaders of the various localities such as those of Tudun Wada, Unguwar Rimi, Sabon Tasha and Barnawa respectively. Kaduna polytechnic also organizes educational programs and other community service activities beneficial to the people in the host communities and even other people far away from these communities. Despite these public relations efforts, certain problems that need public relations solution still exist within the institution. This is an issue of great concern which if not traced and tackled appropriately will pose a serious threat to the peace and image of the institution. One of such problem is in terms of crisis between the staff and the management of the institution where the Federal Government had to intervene despite the presence of the public relations team within the organization. With these myriad of problem, those that mean Kaduna Polytechnic public relations practice have not embrace the excellence theory approach in its dealings with the public?

Adekunle (1994), laments that the proper practice of public relations in government institutions particularly require that it should be a planned action; that public relations need research for meaningful planning, that public relations must pass judgment that evaluate the relationship between an organization and its public. Also public relations practitioner must advise management or administration on possible options on dealing with institution and its public in general. Public relations practitioners must also use communication and the mass media as tools for influencing the organization and the society positively. Otherwise, that public relations position must be socially responsible to the community, the organization it serves. Also, public relation campaign strategies must follow the horizontal to vertical pattern of communication in order to achieve the desired goals and objectives of the institution. Public relation practice must monitor the public activities and pronouncements of management. It is

worthy of note that, effective public relations management in an organization which experiences rapid change would depend greatly on the use of the mass media. This is because the mass media are agents of social change in the society. The essential tool of making the public relations strategies and tactics possible and meaningful is through communication.

Adekunle's description of public relation which is in line with the dictate of excellence theory is all en-compassing as it describes the effective way that public relations should be practiced by an organization especially in government institutions. This study used Kaduna Polytechnic to assess whether the institution actually practice public relations in accordance with excellence theory description of proper public relations practice.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Public Relations as a discipline suffer serious misconceptions and misuse. These misconceptions results in misuse by the public and even by some of the practitioners themselves, because for any Public Relations to succeed, it has to be well understood and accepted. Therefore, proper understanding of this term and its importance goes a long way to determine its efficient and effective application.

In recent years, numerous tertiary institutions have established public relations units. They have done so in order to better communicate with students, alumni, donors, neighboring communities, and other publics (e.g., Kettman & Robinson, 1991; Mullins, 1996 Grillis, 1997; Kaverina, 2003 and Sterne, 2011). Tertiary institutions look up to public relations units to manage crises, boost rankings, increase donations, and carry out a variety of other tasks (Hirsh & Weber, 1999; Spagnolia, 1998). How these institutions public relations units are practicing public relations and whether their practices are excellent are not well understood. Excellence

theory is a theory that specifies how public relations practice makes institutions to be more effective in organization and management for optimum productivity. The excellence theory is a general theory of public relations that resulted from a 15-year study of best practices in communication management funded by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Research Foundation. The Excellence theory (J. Grunig, 1992; L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002) of relations identified a set of characteristics of an excellent public relations function. The excellence theory explained the value of public relations to organizations and society based on the social responsibility of managerial decisions and the quality of relationships with stakeholder publics.

This study seek to investigate how excellence theory is been applied in the public relations practice of Kaduna polytechnic.

### **1.3 Aim And Objectives**

This study is aimed at investigating the application of excellence theory in Public Relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic. To achieve this, the following objectives have been set:

1. To examine the application of excellence theory in public relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic.
2. To examine the public relations strategies that Kaduna Polytechnic Public Relations Unit have been applying in the past.
3. To find out the problems associated with application of excellence theory in Public Relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic.

4. To determine the prospect for application of excellence theory in Public Relations Practice in Kaduna Polytechnic

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions have been design:

1. What is the extent of the application of excellence theory Kaduna Polytechnic Public Relations practice?
2. What strategies have Kaduna Polytechnic Public Relations Unit have been applying in the past?
3. What are the problems associated with application of excellence theory in Public Relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic?
4. What are the prospects for application of excellence theory in Public Relations Practice in Kaduna Polytechnic?

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

Over the years, public relations researchers focus mostly on the role of public relations in an organization (mostly corporate organization), public relations role in corporate social responsibility (CSR) as well as its role in crisis management among others.

However, little work has been to evaluate the application of the excellence theory in public relations practice in tertiary institutions like Kaduna Polytechnic where Public Relations practice has to come into play to enable the institution cater for the communication and other needs of its various publics. This is to ensure the effective organization and management of the institution.

In addition, this study will be useful or important to various institutions of learning because it will help them to ascertain whether or not they make effective and proper use of public relations and to know whether due recognition has been accorded to their public relations departments and their personnel.

Also, the study will provide the platform on which excellence theory can be use by tertiary institutions to achieve effectiveness in organization and management of the institutions affairs for optimum productivity. This can invariably be achieved through the application of the principles of excellence theory in their PR practice.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study examines the application of excellence theory in Public Relations practice in Public Relation Units of tertiary institution with specific reference to Kaduna Polytechnic Public Relations Unit.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the literature review. Wimmer and Dorminic (2000) opine that literature review is an intellectual excursion into the existing body of knowledge in one's chosen topic of research. It is therefore the survey of the existing literature in the library or other sources related to one's field of study. In the same vein, Osuala (1993) observes that, review of related literature should be in an organized form, with appropriate sub-headings to indicate the area or topics covered. Also, Tejumaye (1994) advised a researcher to always review related works in order to produce a meaningful and worthy reading that would make sense to the reader. In line with the above understanding, review of literature will be done in related to the application of excellence theory in Public Relations practice in tertiary institutions. This work is reviewed under the following sub-themes: the concept of public relations practice; the application excellence theory in public relations practice in institutions; Public relations practice in higher educational institutions; Public relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic and Theoretical framework.

#### **2.2 The Concept of Public Relations Practice**

According to the Public Relations Institute of South Africa: "Public Relations is the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain understanding between an organization and its public" (Malan and L'Estrange, 1981:5). PR is a broad and complex activity although its basic objective is simple: to communicate in order to achieve understanding through knowledge (Jefkins, 1982:5). Consequently, PR exists, like it or not, and all modern organizations, because of their size and complexity, need and are concerned with PR. Good PR

- the conscious effort to inform and be informed - provides knowledge, understanding, goodwill and a good reputation. PR exists to keep institutions alert to an ever-shifting environment of circumstance and public opinion (Cantor, 1989:26). Especially in South Africa where the country, and hence all its institutions, is undergoing a phase of transition, this function is absolutely vital.

PR is an on-going activity, hence the word "sustained" in the definition. It must anticipate problems and eliminate causes before problems arise. It is not there to rescue an operation or to apologize for it (Malan and L'Estrange, 1981:12). PR is essentially concerned with communication: between people, between people and organizations and within and between organizations.

Public relations is a discipline which when employed and practiced appropriately assists an organization in numerous ways ranging from image creation and building, image promotion, creation of goodwill, problem research, analysis, proffering solutions and execution of deliberately planned policies, advocating the management, decision making, sales promotion, communication with the organization's publics and crisis prevention and management among others. To build their image and carry out successful activities that will satisfy the organization and its internal or external publics, government or business organization have to employ appropriately planned public relation strategies and tactics in carrying out their activities.

According to Chau (2002) public relations have other names like publicity department, press office, literary Bureau, Promotions Department, Communication Department, Public Affairs Office and Marketing Communication. However, because of the numerous ways that public relations departments are titled, many organizations and even people do confuse certain close terms with public relations and this notion usually disrupts the proper use and understanding of what public relations is or how it should work for maximum success and

excellent result. These terms mistaken for public relations include publicity, advertising, sales promotions, marketing and propaganda. These close terms may be part and parcel of public relation activities but they cannot be regarded as public relations.

Ajala (2002) States that “Public relations is not a means of giving publicity to political aspirants, leaders in government, business executives, etc. It is not a means of giving free meals or gifts to journalists, clients and others not to catch media attention or to carry one form of favor or the other. Neither is it a profession of publicity seeking event, but rather a deliberate planned effort to establish friendship to maintain goodwill. Public relation is concerned with or devoted to creating mutual understanding among groups and institutions. The nature of public relations is quite broad and as such based on the above statement by Ajala, there is the need to assess how public relations are practiced in tertiary institutions with direct reference to Kaduna Polytechnic.

### **2.3 Public Relations as a Means of Achieving Corporate Goals of an Institution**

A group of people work together with a common goal or objective in an organization. The word organization simply refers to an ordered manner of functioning John and Seks (2008) explain organization as social invention for accomplishing goals through group efforts. This definition covers wide variety of groups such as businesses, schools, hospitals, fraternal groups, religious bodies, government agencies and so on. The authors further explained the three key aspects of the definition namely; social invention, accomplishing goals and group efforts. On social invention, the authors viewed the word social as a derivative of society which basically means gathering of people. It is the people that primarily made up of an organization. All organizations have reasons for their existence. These reasons are the goals towards which all organizational efforts are directed, while the primary goal of any commercial organization is to

make money for its owners, this goal is inter-related with many other goals. Accordingly, any organizational goal must integrate in itself the personal goals of all individuals associated with the organization. People, both as members of the society at large and as a part of an organization interact with each other and are interdependent which results in group efforts. Individuals in themselves have physical and intellectual limitations which can only be overcome by group efforts.

Shapiro (2006) explains that the origin of the word goal comes from the old English word, "obstacles or a hindrance". In order to achieve a goal, you must work hard to overcome barriers and roadblocks. According to Mcshane and Calinous (1997), "goals are immediate or ultimate objectives that employees are trying to accomplish from their work efforts. Goals in general are a statement of what an organization or sub-unit of an organization (example, a function or department) wishes to do. Goals state the end toward which effort is directed. They are usually a reflection of an organizational (or subunit) problem or of a desire to capture an opportunity to improve or advance the organization. They should be specific, measurable and time bounded. Therefore, organizational performance in such analysis, the goals of the organization is often viewed as constant. Thus, a wide variety of data such as official documents, work activity records, organization outputs or statements by organization's spokesmen may provide the basis for the definition of goals. It is possible, however to view the setting of goals (i.e. major organizational purposes) not as static element but as a dynamic and recurring whether educational, medical, religious or other type.

Most organizations in Nigeria, including tertiary institutions have objectives for which they have devised several ways of achieving them. Every unit or department in an organization, work so hard to contribute its part to the achievement of the desired goal. Effective public

relations practice in an organization helps to increase the goodwill of the organization and also leads to the attainment of the organizational goal. In recent years, many private tertiary institutions have been established in Nigeria. Most of these institutions have seen the need to set up public relations units to communicate better with their publics such as lecturers, students, alumni and affiliate universities. As to how well these institutions practice public relations is what this study sought to reveal. Okpoko (2013) states that every government, organization, individuals and groups need to communicate with public to achieve their corporate goals and the only way that public will get to understand the policies, programs, activities of an organization is through a two way communications.

An examination of communication management in two eastern U.S. universities by Luo and Yi (2005) revealed the need for tertiary institutions to have a full fledged public relations department. In Luo and Yi's study, nine participants working at two eastern institutions (distinguished as state university and University College in the research) in the U.S. were recruited and interviewed. The first two participants were identified through university phone books and the rest were recruited through snowball sampling. In total, seven female and two male participants were interviewed. At the state university, the communication function was divided into marketing Communications, alumni relations, fund raising and university foundation. The executive director of marketing communications supervises four units: marketing, university communications, internet communication and publications. Five participants at the state university were recruited including four from the marketing communication unit and one from the alumni relations. The remaining four participants were from the university college. Among the four participants, two were from the communication office and one was from the fund raising office. The communication function at these institutions

comprise five offices; public relations, marketing communication, alumni relations and fund raising. Nine face-to-face in-depth interviews, lasting approximately 60 minutes, were conducted at each participant's office. Prior to each interview, the purpose of the study was explained, participants were asked to sign a consent form and permission was asked before audio-taping. The interview consistent of a series of open-ended questions meant to examine how communication programs were managed. These questions focused on empowerment of the public relations function, communicator role, organization of communication functions and public relations models. The study discovered that in both institutions the senior communication executives actively participated in the decision making process. The vice president for communications at the local college noted that he reported directly to the president and was a member of his cabinet. He cited his professional knowledge as the reason why he was included in the cabinet level decision-making. In the area of public relations practitioners assuming managerial roles, the study found out that the senior executives in both institutions assumed the managerial role by participating in decision-making at the organizational level and program planning at the departmental level, also media relations was a prominent part of public relations activities at both institutions and the public relations office is the office charged with telling the university story to external audiences through the media. The study further found that the public relations unit at the state university and University College were decentralized. In both cases, different sections handle different public relations functions. What this study suggests according to the authors is the need for tertiary institutions to help extend the .excellence theory in public relations (Grunig 2002) by applying the theory to public relations in a higher education setting.

This research is significant to this study because it clearly shows a perfect practice of public relations in tertiary institutions in the U.S. However, the findings will serve as a guide to

this study in discovering how tertiary institutions especially in Nigeria also practice public relations and its impact on these institutions, where Kaduna Polytechnic will be put to test.

In another study by Kwame Baah-Boakye and Ming-yi (2007) on the topic "A profile of public relations practice in Ghana; practitioner's roles, most important skills for practitioners relationship to marketing and gender equality", highlighted that "Steyn (2005) did a data base search of African thesis and dissertations (a project of the association of African universities) only the master's thesis (Gyan 1991) discussed public relation practice in Ghana and argued that public relations has received little attention in Ghana. Public relations practitioners also played insignificant roles in their organizations. Gyan 1991 thesis provided preliminary information about public relations practice in Ghana. However, her study was conducted 22 years ago. Ghana has gone through dramatic political, societal and economical changes after Gyan's (1991) study was conducted". In Baah-Boakye and Wu's study, it was revealed that majority of Ghanaian organizations have now seen the importance of public relations and have given it necessary support. The study showed that 84.4% of the participants who were public relations practitioners answered "yes" to a question asked in relation to whether the participants have decision-making power in their various organizations. On specific functions and most important skill for public relations practitioners in Ghana the study showed that eight (12.5%) participants chose writing. Forty nine (76.6%) participants chose inter-personal communications seven (10.9%) participant chose speaking different languages; it was obvious that inter-personal skill was the most important skill for public relations in practitioners then. The significance of the above study according Baah Boakye and Wu, was that it discussed various contemporary research issues, including the roles that Ghanaian Public Relations practitioners perform, the most important skills for public relations practitioners, among few others.

This work is relevant to this study because it provides an overview of how organizations achieve their goals through public relations practice in Ghana. Following a recommendation that was made by Baah-Boakye and Wu's that their research only focused on organizations in Ghana and that, it will be helpful if another research can be done to extend to other parts of Africa. This study therefore, broadens the scope of the study of public relations practice in Africa, Nigeria to be specific by focusing on the impact of practice in tertiary institutions with particular reference to Kaduna Polytechnic.

#### **2.4 Application of Excellence Theory in Public Relations Practice in Institutions**

The four models of public relations and excellence theory as proposed by Grunig and Hunt in 1984 remains one of the most dominant and also critiqued theoretical perspectives in public relations (Laskin, 2009). The evolution of communication practices by organizations has been heavily influenced by the idea of two-way symmetrical communications. Many more organizations have adjusted the way that they communicate with their publics as a result of 'excellence theory' and the growth in new technologies- specifically social media. However, many public relations scholars and practitioners argue that the two-way symmetrical communication and excellence theory simply provides a theoretical and unrealistic ideal for practitioners to strive to achieve, rather than reflecting what Grunig (2001) maintains to be a practiced model by excellent public relations departments.

The model of two- way symmetrical communication was identified as the most effective form of public relations by Grunig and Hunt in 1984 (Edwards, 2009a) and become the principal normative model for public relations practice, forming part of what is known as 'excellence theory' (Laskin, 2009). This theory was developed after a study commissioned by the IABC (Grunig, 2001). Grunig and Hunt undertook an extensive study to determine the extent to which public relations makes an organisation more effective, as well as the typical characteristics of the public relations function, (Grunig, 2001). 'Excellence theory' as it is known, incorporates the four models of public relations identified by Grunig

and Hunt and is based around a sociological theory known as systems theory (Edwards, 2009). Systems theory describes an organisation as a set of subsystems that operate most effectively when it interacts with its surrounding environment, rather than functioning in isolation (Gregory, 2009). According to Grunig, excellent public relations follow this idea of communicating effectively with publics within and outside of the organisation. To do this, public relations practitioners need to have a knowledge of the public's the organisation is communicating with and understand the reason for communicating with them (Laskin, 2009). Similarly the public relations practitioner needs support from the senior management to conduct effective communication rather than simply generating news releases. Finally the organization must operate a 'participative culture' (Laskin, 2009) in which internal dialogue within the organization is valued and welcome.

The following are the ten generic principles J. Grunig and his colleagues suggested (Vercic, Grunig, & Grunig, 1996):

1. Involvement of public relations in strategic management. An organization that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with strategic publics, both external and internal that provide the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organization.
2. Empowerment of public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management. In effective organizations, the senior public relations person is part of or has access to the group of senior managers with greatest power in the organization.
3. Integrated public relations function. All public relations functions are integrated into a single department or have a mechanism to coordinate the departments. Only in an integrated system of public relations is it possible for public relations to develop new communication programs for changing strategic publics.
4. Public relations is a management function separate from other functions. Many organizations splinter the public relations function by making it a supporting tool for other departments such as marketing,

human resources, law, or finance. When the public relations function is sublimated to other functions, it cannot move communication resources from one strategic public to another as an integrated public relations function can.

5. Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out day-to-day communication activities. However, excellent public relations units must have at least one senior communication manager who conceptualizes and directs public relations programs.

6. Two-way symmetrical model of public relations. A two-way symmetrical public relations is based on research and uses communication to manage conflict and improve understanding with strategic publics. Excellent public relations departments model more of their communication programs on this model than on the press agency, public information, or two-way asymmetrical models. However, they often combine elements of the two-way symmetrical and asymmetrical models in a “mixed-motive” model.

7. A symmetrical system of internal communication. Excellent organizations have decentralized management structures that give autonomy to employees and allow them to participate in decision making. They also have participative, symmetrical systems of internal communication with employees that increases job satisfaction because employee goals are incorporated into the organizational mission.

8. Knowledge potential for managerial role and symmetrical public relations. Excellent programs are staffed by professionals—people who are educated in the body of knowledge and who are active in professional associations and read professional literature.

9. Diversity embodied in all roles. The principle of requisite variety (Weick, 1969) states that effective organizations have as much diversity inside the organization as in the environment. Excellent public relations include both men and women in all roles, as well as practitioners of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

10. Organizational context for excellence. Excellent public relations departments are nourished by participative rather than authoritarian cultures, activist pressure from the environment, and organic rather than mechanical management structures. (pp. 37–40).

Over the years, the excellence theory has been tested and supported through studies by several researchers (for example, Kaur, 1997; Rhee, 2002; Shrout, 1991; Vercic, Grunig, & Grunig, 1996). Most of its theoretical components have been extended and incorporated into the recent development of relationship management theory. In particular, the two-way models were directly applied to Grunig and Huang's (2000) relationship management model as maintenance strategies.

Based on this theoretical premise about the value of public relations, the excellence theory derived principles of how the function should be organized to maximize this value. First, the research showed that involvement in strategic management was the critical characteristic of excellent public relations. Public relations executives played a strategic managerial role as well as administrative manager role. Public relations also was empowered by having access to key organizational decision-makers (the dominant coalition).

Second, the study shows that public relations lose its unique role in strategic management if it is sublimated to marketing or other management functions. Sublimation to another function resulted in attention only to the stakeholder category of interest to that function, such as consumers for marketing. Sublimation to marketing also usually resulted in asymmetrical communication. An excellent public relations function was integrated, however. Programs for different stakeholders were gathered into a single department or coordinated through a senior vice president of corporate communication. An excellent public relations function did work with other management functions to help them build relationships with relevant stakeholders.

Third, the excellence study showed that a symmetrical system of internal communication increased employees' satisfaction with their jobs and with the organization. However, internal

communication generally was not practiced unless organizations had a participative rather than authoritarian culture and a decentralized, less stratified (organic) structure rather than a centralized, stratified (mechanical) structure.

Fourth, the excellence study examined the effect of the growing number of women in public relations and evidence that women had difficulty entering managerial roles. The research showed that organizations with excellent public relations valued women as much as men for the strategic role and developed programs to empower women throughout the organization.

Grunig (2001) affirmed that excellent PR departments do practice the two-way symmetrical model of communication, suggesting that it is a model that is practiced by excellent organizations and not simply a normative model.

This claim has since been subject to much scholarly debate and criticism. As Laskin (2009, p45) states “scholars are not able to conclude that two way symmetrical model of public relations is in fact the one predominantly practiced in the public relations industry.” Leichty and Springston (1993) also identified weaknesses in the research conducted by Grunig and Hunt suggesting that the average reliability coefficients were below the recommended reliability level and the subsequent adoption of fractionation scales similarly failed to address the issue. Contradictions in the excellence model have also been highlighted by Pieczka (1996 cited Edwards, 2009a). She suggests that the dominant coalition of the organisation and the role of the public relations practitioner contradict the concept of openness, dialogue and inclusion advocated by two-way symmetrical communications. Furthermore, scholars such as Cancel et al critique the nature of the four models suggesting that the framework of the four models does not properly identify the full dimensions of public relations practice, suggesting that a continuum may be more appropriate framework (1997 cited Hutton, 1999) using the dimensions of interest, initiative and image with interest being the balance of intended effects, initiative determining the level of reactive versus proactive activity and image dictating the distance between an organisation’s desired perception

versus the actual reality. Other scholars such as Kunczik (1994) Pieczka (1995) and L'Etang (1995, all cited Laskin, 2009) have criticized the accuracy of excellence theory, suggesting that it is not based on a positive description of the public relations industry as suggested by Grunig, but instead offers a normative theory of how practitioners should conduct public relations (Laskin, 2009). Similarly, Dozier found fault in the ideology of excellence theory arguing that it does not fully address the separate issues of powerless publics or irreconcilable differences (Dozier, 2000).

The Excellence theorists ( Grunig, et al., 2002) identified several excellence principles of an excellent communication department, which they grouped into four categories: empowerment of the public relations function, communicator roles, integrated function and relationship with other functions, and models of public relations. These categories provide a useful benchmark for determining whether a public relations department is indeed excellent.

**Empowerment of the Public Relations Function:** The first category, empowerment of public relations, includes the following excellence characteristics: involving the senior practitioners in the dominant coalition, managing communication programs strategically, and building a direct reporting relationship between the public relations executive and the dominant coalition. An organization whose public relations function adheres to these characteristics is more capable of effectively balancing its needs with that of publics. Empowering the public relations function in this manner helps organization quickly recognize issues related to publics before they become problems ( Grunig et al., 2002).

**Communicator Roles:** Excellent public relations units have top managers who know how to manage strategically and who enact a managerial role. When the head of a public relations department assumes the manager role, he or she is likely to be included in the dominant coalition and help organizations make decisions that “satisfies” ( Grunig et al., 2002, p.207).

**Integrated Function & Relationship to Other Functions:** Excellent public relations units are organized as integrated functions and are separate from other management functions. An integrated public relations unit is able to quickly respond to issues and allocate resources to address problems without delay ( Grunig et al., 2002).

**Models of Public Relations:** Excellent public relations units utilize the two-way symmetrical communication model instead of the public information, press agency, or the two-way asymmetrical models. The two-way symmetrical model uses research to facilitate mutual understanding and communication. Practitioners adopting the two-way symmetrical model play a key role in adjusting or adapting behaviors of dominant coalitions. This allows them to bring publics and dominant coalition closer together (L. Grunig et al., 2002).

Support for these principles has been found in studies conducted around the world. Grunig, Grunig, and Vercic (1998), for example, found the principles of excellence in 30 Slovenian firms. Wakefield (2000) found support for the principles of excellence in 29 countries. Rhee's (1999) replication of the Excellence study in Korea found support for the Excellence principles.

## **2.5 Public Relations Practice in Higher Educational Institutions**

Historically, the practice of public relations within universities has been one-way, asymmetrical (Pirozek & Heskova, 2003). In the past, practitioners have engaged in public relations practice that placed a great deal of emphasis on media relations. In recent years, however, scholars have advocated a strategic approach to university public relations that moves beyond media relations and embraces strategic management, two-way symmetrical communication, and various other Excellence principles.

This strategic perspective is evident in recent studies of public relations in the university setting. Samsup, Brunner, and Hon (2002), for example, examined how practitioners can measure relationships in a university setting. DeSanto and Garner (2001) recommended that university public relations practitioners set synchronized goals, identify stakeholders, and conduct evaluations. Grillis (1997) argued that it is critical for public relations practitioners to have access to the top leaders within a university.

Henderson (2001) proposed a four-step process for managing communication in universities: research, planning, communication, and evaluation. This emphasis on strategic public relations management is clearly evident in research done by scholars studying the practice of public relations by universities in the former Soviet-bloc countries (e.g., Hall, 2002; Hall & Baker, 2003; Pabich, 2003).

Universities in former Soviet-bloc are facing complex environments. The introduction of capitalism has meant that old state-owned universities, which never had to compete, now find themselves losing students to new private universities that offer attractive packages to students (Miroiu, 1998; Neculau, 1997; Stanciulescu, 2002). This competition has prompted both state-owned and private universities to seek to utilize public relations as means of getting an edge. In the past, public relations practice at these universities was a mixture of marketing, advertising, and lobbying (Coman, 2003). Recent studies, however have advocated a move away from one-way asymmetrical methods and toward practices that resemble the characteristics conceptualized in the Excellence study.

Pirozek and Heskova (2003), for example, examined the public relations practice of a university in the Czech Republic. They showed how the two-way symmetrical tactics of research

and feedback systems helped the university gain a better understanding of the attitudes of its key publics. Kaverina's (2003) study of a state university in Russia showed how two-way symmetrical efforts to initiate dialogue (e.g. radio call in shows, open house functions) helped strengthen the relationship between the university and its key publics.

Popular publications aimed at university public relations practitioners have also advocated practices that are similar to the Excellence characteristics. Schoenfeld, Wiemer, and Lang (1997) encouraged practitioners to embrace strategic planning and outcome evaluation. Jarrell (2003) encouraged universities to involve public relations in decision making because practitioners can lessen risk by forging good relations with publics and can scan for emerging issues. Simpson (2002) advised university communicators to build strong community relationships, take local concerns seriously, and attend to internal and external constituencies. Ross and Lindenmann (2002) suggested that practitioners clearly define their goals and measure output, outgrowth, and outcomes. Ross (2004) urged practitioners to utilize external research resources (e.g., consulting firms) to enhance their practice.

The above studies and articles illustrate that practitioners are being encouraged to practice public relations in a strategic, two-way symmetrical manner. However, more studies need to be done to see if practitioners are following those recommendations.

Adegoke (2009) posits that public relations programs refers the techniques which the public relations practitioner uses to disseminate information to the public of an institution. In other words, public relations actions are the activities an institution carries out in order to win the understanding and support of its varied publics. In a study conducted-by Luo (2005) shows that the excellence theory ( Grunig 1992, Grunig and Dozier, 2002) of public relations (which is also

the theory chosen for this work) identified a set of characteristics of excellent public relations functions. Various scholars (Grunig and Jaatinen, 1998; Grunig & Grunig 1998; Rhee, 2002) studying primarily corporations, have provided consistent support for the excellence principles.

The study follows the Kuhn's call and extends the application of the excellence theory by examining practice of public relations in a higher education setting, a field in which few studies has been conducted using the excellence theory. In recent years, numerous educational institutions have done so in order to better communicate with students, alumni, donors, neighboring communities and other publics (example, Grills 1997; Kettman and Robinson 1991; Mullins, 1996) higher institutions look up to public relations units to manage crisis, boost rankings, increase donations and carry out a variety of other tasks: (Hirsh and Weber 1999; Spagnolia 1998). How these institution's public relations units are practicing public relations and whether their practices are excellent are not well understood.

According to Luo's studies (2005), the excellent theorists ( Grunig et al 2002) identified several excellence principles of excellent communication departments which they grouped into four categories;

- (a) Empowerment of the public relation function,
- (b) Communicator role,
- (c) Integrated function and relationship with other functions (d) models of public relations. These categories provide a useful benchmark for determining whether public relations are indeed excellent.

### **(a) Empowerment of Public Relations Function**

The first category, empowerment of public relations include the following excellence characteristics: involving senior practitioners in the dominant coalition, managing communication programs strategically and building a direct reporting relationship between the public relations executive and the dominant coalition, an organization where public relations function adheres to these characteristics is more capable of effectively balancing its needs with that of the public's. Empowering the public relations function in this manner helps organizations to quickly recognize issues related to publics before they become problems (Grunig et al 2002). The question one asks here is, does the management of Kaduna Polytechnic has amongst it a public relation executive who can report issues directly to the dominant coalition to quickly know and respond to issues related to public?

### **(b) Communication Roles**

Excellent public relations units have top managers who know how to manage strategically and who enact a managerial role. When the head of a public relations department assumes the managerial role, he or she is likely to be included in the dominant coalition and help organizations on the decision that satisfies ( Gruning et al 2002). Again we need to ask here if at all the head of the information and protocols unit is a public relation practitioner, i.e. having relevant training in the field?

### **(c) Models of Public Relations**

Excellent public relations units utilize the two-way symmetrical communication model instead of the public information, press agency or the two-way asymmetrical model. The two-way symmetrical model uses research to facilitate mutual understanding and communication.

Practitioners adopting the two-way symmetrical model play a key role in adjusting or adapting behaviors of dominant coalitions. This allows them to bring publics and dominant coalition closer together ( Grunig et al 2002). This is another area of great concern in this study; there is the need to find out if Kaduna polytechnic is using the open rather than the closed system of communication which is a determinant of the success of every organization that employs it.

Support for this principle has been found in studies conducted within the United States and outside. Grunig and Vereic (1998) for example found the principles of excellence in 30 Slovenian firms. Wakefield (2002) found support for principles of excellence in 29 countries. Rhee's (1999) replication of the excellence study in Korea found support for the' excellence principles. Public relations in higher educational institutions, historically has been one-way asymmetrical (Pirozek and Heskova, 2003). In the past, practitioners have engaged in public relations practice that placed a great deal of emphasis on media relations. In recent years, however, scholars have advocated a strategic approach to higher institutions public relations that moves beyond media relations and embraces strategic management, two-way symmetrical communication and various other excellence principles. This strategic perspective is evident in recent studies of public relations in the higher education setting.

Samsup, Brunner and Hon (2002) for example examined how practitioners can measure relationships in the higher educational setting. Desant and Gorner (2001) recommended that tertiary education public relations practitioners set synchronized goals, identify stakeholders and conduct evaluation. Grillis (1997) argues that it is critical for public relations practitioners to have access to the top leaders within an institution. Henderson (2001) proposed a four-step process for managing communications in tertiary institution's; research, planning, communication and evaluation. This emphasis on strategic public relations management is

clearly evident in research done by scholars studying public relations practice in tertiary institutions in the former Soviet-bloc countries (example, Hall, 2002; Hall and Baker, 2003; Pabich 2003). Institutions in former Soviet-bloc are facing complex environments. The introduction of capitalism has meant that old-state owned institutions which never had to compete, now find themselves losing students to new private institutions that offer attractive packages to students (Mircovic, 1998; Neculau, 1997; Stonciulescu, 2002). This competition has prompted both state owned and private institutions to seek to utilize public relations as means of getting an edge. In the past, public relations practice at those institutions was a mixture of marketing, advertising and lobbying (Coman 2003) recent studies however have advocated a move away from one-away asymmetrical methods towards practices that resemble the characteristics conceptualized in the excellence study. Pirozek and Heskova (2003) for example examined the public relations practice of a university in the Czech Republic. They showed how the two-way symmetrical tactics of research and feedback systems helped university gain a better understanding of the attitudes of its key publics. Kaverinah's (2003) study of a state university in Russia showed how two-way symmetrical efforts to imitate a dialogue (example radio call in shows, open house functions) helped strengthen the relationship between the university and its key publics.

Popular publications aimed at tertiary public relations practitioners have also advocated practices that are similar to the excellence characteristics. Schoenfeld, Wiemer and Lang (1997) encouraged practitioners to embrace strategic planning and outcome evaluation. Jarrel (2003) encouraged tertiary institutions to involve public relations in decision-making because practitioners can scan for emerging issues. Sirmpsons (2002) advises tertiary institution's communication to build strong community relationships, take local concerns seriously and attend

to internal and external constituencies. Ross and Lindenmann (2002) suggested that practitioners clearly define their goals and measure output, outgrowth and outcomes. Ross (2004) urged practitioners to utilize external research resources (example, consulting firms) to enhance their practice.

In conclusion, these studies illustrate that, practitioners are being encouraged to practice public relation in a strategic two-way symmetrical manner. However, more studies need to be done to see if practitioners are following these recommendations. In fact, this study on assessing public relation practice in Kaduna polytechnic was prompted to find out if the institution applies the excellence principle in its public relation practice.

Few studies have used a systematic measure to examine comprehensively, at a departmental level, the practice of public relations in a higher education setting. The characteristics of an excellent public relations unit identified in the Excellence theory provide a tool for such analysis. This study, guided by these principles, poses the following questions to evaluate the practice of the public relations at two higher education institutions.

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

The excellence theory is a general theory of public relations that specifies how public relations make organizations more effective, how it is organized and managed. When it contributes most to organizational effectiveness, the condition in organizations and their environments that make organization more effective and how the monetary value of public relations can be determined. The excellence theory resulted from a study about best practice in public relations which was headed by James .c. Grunig and funded founded by the foundation of the International Association of Business Communications (IABC) in 1985. Constructed upon

a number of middle range theories and with survey and interviews of professionals and CEO's in the United states of America, the united kingdom, and Canada , the excellence provides a theoretical and empirical bench mark for public relations unit. The excellence theory of public relations (Grunig, 1992, Dozier, 1992; Grunig, 2002) identified a set of characteristics of an excellent public relations function. Different researchers (Grunig and Jaatinen, 1998; Grunig and Grunig 1998; Rhee, 2002; Luo and Yi 2005), out of their research of various organizations have provided consistent support for the excellence theory of public relations principles. A need exist for different context study to be conducted to task the excellence theory in public relations and extend its application.

This study follow Luo and Yi (2005) call that "a need exists to study the impact of public relations practice in tertiary institutions: A study of Kaduna Polytechnic, a tertiary institution in Kaduna, Nigeria would provide a comprehensive picture of how higher education manages the communication by assessing the impact of public relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic. The excellence in public relations theory explains the value of public relations to organization and society based on the social responsibilities of managerial decisions and the quality of relationships with stakeholder publics. For an organization to be effective according to the theory must behave in ways that solves the problem and satisfy the goals of stakeholders as well as of the management.

Grunig (1992) suggested that the most effective public relations practice requires excellence in practice. The author describes it as excellent public relations. According to him, there are four levels analysis of excellent public relations, they are: The theory states that at the program level, public relations department should know why, when and how individual communication programs are implemented. That is, there is a conscious effort to have in place a

public relations plan that is strategically geared towards the attainment of organizational goals. The theory again explains at the departmental level. How the public relations department operates and fits in with other departments and the organization as a whole. At this level, there is a single or integrated public relations department separate from marketing.

The department head assumes a managerial role and reports directly to top management. The head and those who work under him have academic qualification in public relations or the field of communication as professionals. Two-way symmetric model of communication is one in which employees are provided mechanisms for dialogue with each other and with supervisors and top managers. Two-way symmetric communication as a result contributes to the overall effectiveness of the organization. This model helps to improve morale of employees that are more likely to enhance rather than to constrain the organization. Two-way symmetric model of communication also helps to increase employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

The organizational level also talks about the understanding of and respect given to communication processes and audience feedback by the organization and its staff. The public relations head has a strong voice within the organization and attempts are made to promote participative rather than authoritative organizational culture. Effective internal communication is promoted. In such a case, the public relations practitioner becomes the main channel facilitating communication between management and employees.

At the economic level, the theory states that the communicating programs that are managed strategically help organization to manage relationships with strategic public that have the power to constrain the ability of the organization to achieve its goals. When organizations manage these inter-dependencies poorly the strategic publics protest, boycotts or go to court, or

ask for government's regulations to constrain the autonomy of the organization. All these activities cause the organization money; if strategic communication is successful it should help. In essence, if programs should meet communication's objectives it reduces cost and ensure job satisfaction among employees. This theory is relevant to this study because Kaduna polytechnic had experienced some series of closure of the institution due to various problems ranging from hoarding important information from the public, financial misappropriation and non-payment of allowance to the staff among others. Based on the finding by Maicibi (2006) decision making which is one of the excellence principles that makes public relations an excellent one is restricted to only the management cadre. Moreover, another issue in the excellence principles is that of the empowerment of the public relation department and its personnel, despite the fact that the institution recognizes and uses the information and protocols unit extensively based on the (2013) pamphlet produced by the unit, the department or unit lacks adequate modern facilities to facilities their work to boost the image of the institution and disseminate important information accordingly. Lack of facilities does not move well with the excellence principle that encourages empowerment of the unit and its personnel. To carry out public relation function and activities one need to have adequate training in the field. The excellence principle disapproves having untrained personnel as public relation practitioner. Excellence principle also encourages organization to use two way symmetrical communications which implies using two-way communication to manage relationship with strategic publics. However Tonga's (1991) study on Nigerian polytechnics claim that not so many Nigerian polytechnic rector encourage participatory decision making which is core in the area of two-way symmetrical communication. The public relations unit of any given organization is in charge of communicating with the organization's publics either directly through interpersonal communication or indirectly through

other medium of communication like, the media, internet, etc. they conduct research and to find out, problems and other issues relating to the organization's publics. When issues arising in organization do not involve the public relation expert or his/her team, how then can any of these actions do? When the action is taken how will it get communicated? How then, would the organization know whether the public are satisfied or not.

In essence, this study seeks to affirm or debunk the principles of excellence theory as been practice in Kaduna Polytechnic Public Relations practice.

## **2.7 Public Relations Practice in Kaduna Polytechnic**

### **2.7.1 Responsibilities of the Staff in Public Relations Unit**

The pamphlet (2013) information and protocols unit states that the Deputy Registrar (Information) ensures the effective flow of information to the polytechnic community; issues press releases, organizes press conferences and interviews. The Deputy Registrar is also responsible for protocol arrangements within and outside the polytechnic on behalf of the management. He also coordinates the activities of all the sections in the rectory in terms of promotion. It is also the duty of the Deputy Registrar to cover public lectures and produce newsletters through his/her staff in the unit as well as editing of all correspondences and speeches of the Rector. He/she also draws management's attention to any publication in the national dailies that concerns the institution and government's general policies on education.

In addition, the Principal Assistant Registrar assists the Deputy Registrar in the following; deputizing for the Registrar in his absence, assists in effective flow of information to the polytechnic's community, issuance of press release and organizing press conferences and interviews. He/she makes protocol arrangements, edits newsletters and performs any other job

assigned by the Deputy Registrar. Moreover, the Assistant Chief Executive Officer is in charge of all the division's files and filing. He/she supervises junior staff in the division. He/she writes and issue official circulars in the division, press cuttings and circulation of some national dailies are supplied to the Rector through the Deputy Registrar Information, for onward submission to Bursar and preparation of voucher for payment to the vendor. The Higher Executive Officer on the other hand drafts correspondence and Rector's speeches issues press, release, assists the Deputy Registrar in organizing press conferences, interviews and covers occasions that concern the polytechnic for the purpose of reporting in the news bulletin, he/she also makes protocol arrangements, arrangement of public lecture, production of news and any other job assigned by the superiors.

Also assisting the Higher Executive Officer is the clerical officer who drafts all correspondence and Rector's speeches, he/she participates in the production of news bulletin, receiving and recording mails, keeping records of subject files, going round the colleges to source for news and issues press invitations. Similarly, the senior typist is responsible for the collection of national dailies for the division, dispatching news bulletin and other correspondence. He/she also types and photocopies for the division.

### **2.7.2 The Organogram of the Information and Protocols Division in Kaduna Polytechnic**

DEPUTY REGISTRAR



CLERICAL OFFICER



TYPIST



DRIVER



MESSENGER

### **2.7.3 Public Relations Activities in Kaduna Polytechnic**

Kaduna Polytechnic is among the many Federal Government institutions under the Federal Ministry of Education with the mandate of systematically providing qualitative tertiary education to both technical, engineering, business administration, mass communication and other related courses teeming Nigerian youth for the achievement of educational excellence in all spheres. This study seeks to document the practice of public relations in the institution under review. The question agitating for answer is what is the impact of public relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic?

The essential objective of public relations in any organization is to increase public awareness of the organization or institution, to persuade the public to view the organization positively; to discover and target relevant audience; to change personnel attitudes in favour of the organization; to extinguish doubts and create appropriate internal and external environments for an organization as indicated by various studies cited in the previous part of this work. Government institutions in Nigeria like Kaduna Polytechnic are now fully aware of this powerful tool and are utilizing it in their relationship with an internal environment (that consist of many inter-connected subsystems all of which function sometimes simultaneously, as shown by Luo's

studies (2005) at times either in union or even in conflict) and/or external environment (that is either hostile or indifferent) (Onah, Ibid).

The main function of the information unit of Kaduna Polytechnic is to keep informed the staff, students and the public about any decision and action taken by the institution. This is imperative because the institutions' operation affects everybody in the polytechnic community. The information unit ensures that people within the polytechnic environment are properly informed. This is justified by Luo and Yi's study (2005) that effective public relations practice helps to increase the goodwill of the organization and also leads to attainment of organizational goal. Kaduna Polytechnic pamphlet on public relation (2013) reveals that; the information and protocols unit exists to bridge the information and other communication gaps between the institution and its internal and external publics.

According to the pamphlet, the unit or department functions in the following ways to ensure that the interest of both the organization and its publics are well protected and its image projected as well. In addition, the institution relates with the media both broadcast and print to release vital information sought by the public, particularly in the areas of the institutions services, programs and operations. The unit also explains important decisions taken in respect of its policies. It also publishes monthly newsletter known as Kaduna Polytechnic Newsletter which carries information on various activities of the polytechnic and is issued to all the key Offices of the Polytechnic with no fee attached. In the same vein, the Polytechnic also through the information and protocols unit is involved in community relations. An example is the introduction of a poverty eradication and empowerment program for the Tudun Wada Community and even other part of Kaduna metropolis through organizing training workshop in various fields for women and youth with little or no monetary charge.

According to the Kaduna Polytechnic pamphlet (2013) the information and protocols unit offers advice to the management, especially on the need to dish out credible information to keep its public well informed to avoid damaging rumors and escalation of crisis. However, Maichibi's study on organizational decision making of Nigerian Polytechnics shows that, Tonga, (1997) points out that it seems not so many Nigerian Polytechnic Rector encourage participatory decision making. The unit is further regarded as the resource centre for the polytechnic as it releases vital information needed for its proper functioning and survival. Similarly, the unit carries information on image projecting activities to strengthen and further project the image of the institution. The information released through this unit is found to be credible and acceptable by the public, it is seen as firsthand information from the management.

As part of the public relations efforts of Kaduna Polytechnic, the unit organizes sensitization workshops, seminars and press conference to enlighten its numerous publics. Consequently, the institution's public relations unit from time to time prepares good articles on issues that relate to the day- to- day activities of the school and send to the media for publication, such articles are well written and very interesting to serve as hook to the editors. The articles come both from within and outside the institution, they are well edited before they are being added to the media kit. (Nwosu 1996) reiterates the use of features articles in public relations departments by stating that the techniques of features and articles should be mastered by public relations manager and should be written in such a way that it will look attractive and catchy for both editors and the public.

Considering the excellence studies conducted by Luo (2005) Kaduna Polytechnic is fully making use of its information and protocols unit which partially show its support and application of the excellence theory by (J. Grunig 1992, L, Grunig and dozier, 2002. Based on this

discussion, Kaduna Polytechnic employs various techniques of public relations needed to communicate with various publics to achieve the desired objective. However, corporate social responsibility is another great method of executing public relations activities and image projection as well, as discussed below.

#### **2.7.3.1 Media Relations**

According to the pamphlet, the institution relates with the media both broadcast and print to release vital information sought by the public particularly in the areas of the institution's services, program and operations. The unit also explains important decision taken in respect of its policies.

#### **2.7.3.2 Publications**

The information and protocols unit also publishes the newsletter of the institution known as the Kaduna Polytechnic Newsletter on monthly basis. The newsletter carries information on all the activities of the polytechnic which is issued to all the key offices of the polytechnic.

#### **2.7.3.3 Community Relations**

The polytechnic also through the information and protocols unit is involved in community relations. An example is the introduction of a poverty eradication program for the Tudun Wada Community and even other parts of the Kaduna metropolis through organizing training workshops in various fields for the youth with little or no fee charged.

#### **2.7.3.4 Advising Management**

According to the Kaduna polytechnic (2013) pamphlet the information and protocols unit takes part in offering vital advice to the management especially on the need to roll out credible

information to keep its publics informed to avoid damaging rumors and escalation of crisis. However, Maichibi's study on organizational decision making of Nigerian Polytechnics shows that Tonga (1997) points out that it seems not so many Nigerian Polytechnic rectors encourage participatory decision making.

#### **2.7.3.5 Information Dissemination**

The unit is regarded as the resource centre for the polytechnic as it release vital information needed for its proper functioning and survival. Similarly, the unit carries information on image projecting activities to strengthen and further project the image of the institution. The information provided by this unit is found to be credible and acceptable by the public because it is seen as firsthand information from the management.

#### **2.7.3.6 Organizing Workshops/Seminars/Conferences**

The unit organizes sensitization workshops, seminars and press conferences to enlighten its numerous publics. The department also strives hard to reduce eruption of crises and combat them when they occur, just as was the case in the most recent crisis between the management and the academic staff union of the polytechnic.

#### **2.7.3.7 Features/Articles**

Kaduna Polytechnic public relations unit from time to time prepare good articles on issues that relate to the day to day activities of the institution and send to the media for publication. Such articles are well written and very interesting, which catches the attention of editors, articles come both from within and outside the organization. The techniques of features and article writing are mastered by the public relations officer of the institution before he adds to

the media relations kit. (Nwosu, 1996) reiterate the use of features and articles in public relations units of various organizations by stating that the techniques of features and articles should be mastered by the public relations manager and should be written in such a way that it will look attractive and catchy for both editors and the public.

In conclusion, the aforementioned categorically represents the roles of public relations in effectively and professionally managing information for the overall good of the institution, its management and the various publics.

#### **2.7.4 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as Part of Public Relations effort in Kaduna Polytechnic**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is one of the duly recognized and important activities of public relations practice. For any business or organization to operate successfully in a given area or locality it needs to be socially responsibly by involving in community development programs and projects. Without these projects and programs the host community or the society at large turns hostile to such businesses and organizations. When these communities or the society turn hostile it becomes difficult for these businesses or organizations to achieve their corporate objectives or even survive the hostility as put by Anthony and Sandeep (2012) that the desire to avoid rousing community hostility may encourage firms to behave in an environmentally responsible manner. Firms may engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) to maintain community support and/or to regain the support of a community where it has been lost. Therefore, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) defines Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families

as well as of the community and society at large. Indeed, this unites Anthony and Sandeep's statement and the above definition, Kaduna Polytechnic, in its effort to become socially responsible to its host communities and other parts of the Nigerian society mostly in the north where it is situated also render some community development programs and projects as noted in the information and protocol unit's pamphlet (2013).

According to the (2013) pamphlet by information and protocols unit, through the effort of the unit, the institution offers scholarship to students and staff with outstanding performance as well as serious and recognized problems as shown in July/August Kaduna Polytechnic Bulletin (2013) that Kaduna Polytechnic in collaboration with Kaduna Refinery and petro-chemical company, through the Social Welfare Development Initiative (SOWED) in conjunction with Kaduna State Ministry of Women Affairs renders youth empowerment and training skills. It also registered over 300 beggars' children at their colony, Kano Road, Kaduna, the birth certificate were issued by the National Population Commission (NPC). According to the bulletin, the rector of Kaduna Polytechnic Dr. Mohammed Bello Ibrahim comments that "Kaduna Polytechnic as a socially responsible corporate organization is ready to partner with other organizations, agencies and individuals to impact positively on the lives of the people especially the less privilege through conceiving, Designing and delivering meaningful intervention programs. He added that the qualified beggars' children will be accommodated in the institutions scholarship scheme for indigent people in the society.

Another area that the institution proves responsible to its society is through its students who participated in (SIFE) competition where over 30 higher institutions participated and emerged winners through what they call enactus Kaduna Polytechnic in (2012). The enactus Kaduna Polytechnic presented its activities through power point presentation titled POWER IN

MY PALM which presented two of Kaduna Polytechnic's numerous outreach projects namely: PROJECT EVERGREEN executed in Mai Adua and Kaita LGA's and PROJECT PIMP at Kaduna State Rehabilitation Centre; At the rehabilitation centre the team trained the physically challenged on sustainable trades such as bag production and basket weaving. The training has now given the beneficiaries the opportunity to make income for self- sustenance.

Similarly, about 750 rural women in the two LGA's in Katsina State were trained on how to fabricate locally made stove instead of depending on firewood with its attendant effect of falling of trees. These women presently earn their living through the production of the stove for sale to the public. In addition, the institution also built primary schools in its own community, mainly, Tudun Wada. It provides free medical services to staff and students and has as well provided portable drinking water to the Tudun Wada and the Polytechnic's Community. Kaduna Polytechnic also organizes various empowerment programs and workshops for the people in Tudun Wada, Unguwar Rimi, Barnawa, Mando, Sabon Tasha and other parts of Kaduna Metropolis and neighboring communities. It sponsors both deserving staff and students to study in Nigerian and overseas to enable them improve their intellectual and production capabilities. However, despite all their efforts, most of these programs, activities and projects are not dually published through the appropriate channels or even documents. This is one of the major functions of the information and protocols unit because corporate social responsibility is one of the public relations strategies which are at the fore front in bringing credibility, boosting image and promoting acceptability by the public concerned.

### **2.7.5 Public Relations in Promoting Peaceful Coexistence**

Another very important role that public relations plays, particularly in tertiary institutions like Kaduna Polytechnic is in the area of crisis management. This is so, because every tertiary institution mostly encounters security problems because of its frequent contact with students and other external publics. For years, crisis management has been regarded as a specialized area of public relations practice. As such, the profession has developed skills which the board of directors of organizations is increasingly recognizing as having relevance to policy on one hand and the success of the chief executive officers on the other. Salu (1994) observes that because most crisis bear directly on the corporate image of organizations, certain policy guidelines have evolved.

They have led to the establishment of certain measures which help either to anticipate and prevent the outbreak of crisis or to control crisis when they do break out rather than be controlled by the crisis. Salu's observation coincides with the case of Kaduna Polytechnics management which was affected by the crisis as a result of its failure to prevent the crisis after receiving several warning strike actions from the academic union of the institution and their failure to take positive action at the initial stage of the crisis.

The Kaduna Polytechnic's management went into a very serious crisis with the academic union of the institution after the ASUP had realized the damage done to the institutions treasury where the management was at large. This was done through public relation problem research with the help of the information and protocols unit. Moreover, the management decided to cut down the salaries of the entire staff and then threatened to disengage any staff that joined the strike action declared by the ASUP after several warnings to the management through the

information and protocols unit. The ASUP chairman; Mallam Mustapha Yabani laments that, the ASUP, Kaduna Polytechnic chapter through the efforts of the information unit of the institution popularly known as the information and protocols unit played a very significant role in alerting the public and other important bodies towards the plight of the staff of the institution. The major decision taken by the ASUP was to call for a congress meeting to intimate each staff present about the situation on ground which is one of the very powerful strategies employed by public relations experts. It was followed by a decision to call for a press conference which had a very serious impact on the issue. The Minister of Education got to know about the issue through the media broadcasts and print media publications. Mallam Mustapha adds that ASUP employed other strategies like granting interviews on the issue, personal contacts, talk shows on AIT both national and international networks, NTA, KSTV, and documentaries respectively. The chairman was also interviewed by Jummai Ali of the Voice of America (VOA) over the issue, through that, the international community came to the picture of the crisis. The ASUP also mounted public relations pressure on the committee to investigate the issue. The ASUP made all efforts to keep peace despite all the intimidations by the management. Mallam Mustapha further puts that, ASUP kept intimating its members of every detail of the situation on ground and progress made. It made personal contacts with the secretary to the federal government who directed the ministry of education led by Professor Rukayyatu Rufai to file a report on the institution's crisis. ASUP made further personal contacts with two governors; Kaduna State governor and the chairman of Northern Governors Forum Babangida Aliyu. ASUP met with a group called; the concerned parents and was invited for discussions with the National Assembly, House of Representatives led by Alhaji Faruk Lawal, Emir of Zazzau and Emir of Bida. Another press conference was organized by ASUP in collaboration with the information and protocols unit after the crisis had

been resolved to appreciate all the efforts of the concerned parties. The public relations strategy followed by ASUP could be described as a very remarkable one. The strategies followed in order to eliminate the crisis are presented below:

**Table 2.7.5.1 Strategies followed in order to eliminate the crisis**

<b>STRATEGIES FOLLOWED</b>	<b>CHANNELS</b>
Series of congress meetings	Personal contact with academic staff Kaduna Polytechnic.
Live programs	AIT, NTA, KSTV
Press conference	All media outfits
Interviews	VOA, AIT National and International
Documentaries	NTA, AIT, KSTV
Personal Visits	Emirs, Secretary to federal government, National Assembly, Arewa Consultative Forum, House of Representative
Meetings	Concerned Parents

### **2.7.6 Challenges of Public Relations in Kaduna Polytechnic**

Polytechnics, the tertiary technology institutions in Nigeria exist to achieve some specific goals of teaching, learning, research and growth of citizens which is one of the works of public relations among other roles. The polytechnic's head, the rector's functions are to manage people, tasks and resources in order to achieve the aforementioned goals. All the activities of the

institution's management whether working with the public, the management ranks, academic board of directors, staff or student unions, ultimately contribute to this end. In this process, both conscious and unconscious processes are involved, when these processes are conscious, then decision making is already evoked as in use. Maicibi (2006) laments that the polytechnics heads are always faced with the situation where selection of best alternative is consciously made to satisfy certain wants or needs or to solve some problems all with the aim of attaining the institutions goals. According to a study conducted by Maicibi (2006) on Nigerian Polytechnics, Federal Polytechnic Kaduna in the 1998 session had a student population of 24,000 undergoing 173 different programs in 30 academic departments spread among four colleges (the spider 1998:3), this structure has resulted in administrative problems particularly in the area of decision-making. A situation like this culminates in having issues affecting staff and students unattended to. Thus, no one individual in any institution such as Kaduna Polytechnic can offer competent decision and professional advice on all cases and issues in calling for rational decision. Therefore, participatory or shared decision-making especially with the public relations department personnel is the only preventive prescription for Kaduna Polytechnic. He adds that not all administrators encourage and practice participatory decision-making in their organizations. Savage (1968) points out that administrators vary greatly in the extent to which they encourage or allow other staff participation especially those in the public relations unit in the decision making process. Decision gives rise to policies and plans which are of course mere intentions when not implemented. The actual task of the implementation rests with all the staff of an organization. Therefore, there should be participatory decision making which is also necessary to call the expertise of different people involved in the act of deciding. Tonga (1997) points out that it seems that not so many Nigerian Polytechnic rectors encourage participatory

decision-making and even among the few that try it fewer still understand the basic principles of participatory decision-making. This is evident in many staff strikes which were caused by faulty decision-making.

The state of the art of decision-making seems to be defective in Nigerian Polytechnics, Kaduna Polytechnic inclusive. The lack of effectiveness results in cases of stress, tensions, frustration, isolation, selfishness, conflicts between the staff and management between the students and staff, between students and management, among staff themselves and in management ranks and file (Salisu, 1996). For instance, the 1997 staff strike in Kaduna Polytechnic was due to hoarding of information by the management (Tonga 1997), the same institution went on strike in 2010 because of the management's poor relationship with lecturers and non- involvement of the lecturers or their union on sensitive issues which affect the lives of the lecturers.

In addition, the interview conducted with the new Rector of Kaduna polytechnic Dr. Mohammed Bello Ibrahim in 2014 reveals how the management used public relations to promote peace in the institution. The rector was questioned that, "your predecessor had serious battle with ASUP which brought the school to a standstill on many occasions. How is your relationship with the union;" cordial?

He answered: "it is all about constructive engagements, we met some financial issues on ground that bothered on allowances, when we came in we engaged the staff and we let them know that we are willing to solve their problems within the limits of our financial and other available resources. They understand this and we have not disappointed them. We have started

seeing to the allowances and as you can see the terrain is low in the institution. We have strategic plans for solving these issues and we are implementing it point by point”.

As seen in the rector’s discussion with daily trust strategic planning and execution are core of public relation activities, the institution’s management are already on the implementation stage of the strategic planning which has to be planned and implemented with the help of the information and protocols unit.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the methodology used in this study and the data analysis. Issues discussed in this chapter include the research design, research population, sampling technique and sample size and selection, construction and validation of instrument, and data analysis techniques.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design provides a procedural outline for the conduct of any given investigation; (Ujo 2000). The research design used for this study was naturally the survey method of research design. Wimmer and Dominick (2006), describes the survey research design as a design which describes and explains why situations exist. The result allows the researcher to examine the inter-relationship among variable and to develop explanatory references. The reason for the choice of this method is because this study deals with the study of human behavior and need divergent views about the phenomenon under study. Hence, the views of respondents from among the stakeholders of Kaduna polytechnic were surveyed, to know the extent of Public Relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic.

#### **3.3 Study Variables**

There are two sets of variables involved in this study, the dependent and the independent variables. The major independent variables are the principles of excellence theory as status of public relations and information unit in the institution, demographics like gender and age

category. The dominant dependent variables in this study is the potentiality of the unit in the general outlook of the public relations and managerial activities of the institution, sources of information, level access, awareness, and opinion. According to Kerlinger (2008), survey research deals with the incidence, distribution and inter-relationship of sociological and psychological variables.

### **3.4. Population of the Study**

In any research especially scientific, the goal is to describe the nature of a population; which is the aggregate of all cases that conforms to some designated set of specifications. Population is sometimes referred to as the universe, or defined as consisting of all the people residing in a particular environment. According to Nkwoacha (2004:74), population is the entire group whose characteristics are to be measured and estimated. Similarly, Wimmer and Dominick (2006) state that population includes a group or class of subjects, variables, concepts, or phenomena. In view of the above, the research population of this study is the staff (academic and non-academic) and students of Kaduna Polytechnic and the external publics within the environment of the institution.

According to Kaduna Polytechnic website (2012), the estimated total of staff and students is 38,000 which, which are made up of 25,000 student population and the staff strength is made up of 13,000.

The research population for this study included all students of the five respective colleges of the polytechnic, based on their level of education. This population was chosen because they represent majority of young students and experienced staff with formal education in urban centre in Kaduna. In addition, most students in these tertiary institutions fall within ages 18-35 years.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques**

The sample for this study was drawn based on purposive sampling techniques. The purposive or non-probability sampling technique includes subjects or elements chosen for specific characteristics or qualities and excludes those who fail to meet these criteria. According to Ozo, et al (1999), “sampling is essential in order to obtain a part of population that can be inferred”. They state that “Sample here refers to a portion of the universe of population which reasonably reflects the opinion, attitudes or behavior of the entire group. A good sample must therefore portray the same characteristics of the population represented. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2003:86), a sample is a subject of the entire population’.

The sample was therefore pulled together from four main sources. These include staff of public relations unit, other staff of the institution which comprises of both the academic and non-academic, students of the institution cutting across all levels and departments, and the external publics of the respective environs. Purposive sampling which is also known as judgmental selective has been duly employed because of its inclusion of specialist knowledge of the research issue (such as those staff of the public relations unit) or capacity and willingness to participate in the research. Therefore the sample used portrays the same characteristics of the population.

To corroborate the survey data, face to face indepth interview was conducted with the chief executive officer of the Public Relations department of the institution and the Rector of the Polytechnic.

### **3.6 Sampling Size**

Van-Dalen (1979 cited in Key 1997) listed three factors to be considered in determining the size of an adequate sample as;

- The nature of the population
- The type of investigation
- The degree of precision desired

Based on this, the formula for estimating the sample size and a table to determine the sample size based on confidence level needed from a given population was provided by Krejcie and Morgan (1970 cited in Key 1997). The formula is as below;

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1 - P)}{d^2 (N - 1) + X^2 P (1 - P)}$$

Where;

S = required sample size.

N = the given population size

P= population proportion for the table construction has been assumed to be 0.05, as the magnitude yields the maximum possible sample size required.

d = the degree of accuracy as reflected by the amount of error that can be tolerated in the function of a sample proportion P about the population P – the value for d being .05 in the calculations for entries in the table, a quantity equal to  $\pm 1.96$ .

$X^2$  = table value of Chi-square for one degree of freedom relative to the desired level of confidence, which was 3.841 for the .95 confidence level represented by entries in the table.

Based on the formula above, the sample size of the study as indicated in the “table of recommended sample sizes (n) for populations (Number with finite sizes” is approximately 2247 respondents.

Nonetheless, the researcher used a sample of 1376 because Gay (1980 as cited in Olayiwola 2007:83) suggests for descriptive research, a minimum of “...100 participants for

descriptive study Using 10% of the research population (10% of 35,000 = 3500) for this study might be cumbersome while 100 respondents, which is the minimum for descriptive study, are not representative enough. Hence, due to ease of managing the sample and the fact that the sample size is not too far from that obtained in the table, a sample size of 1,376 staff, students, and external publics was selected for the study.

### **3.7 Method of Data Collection**

The method of data collection used for this study was the descriptive survey method. Winner and Dominick (2006:179) notes, “The descriptive survey attempts to describe or document current conditions or attitudes-that is, to explain what exists at the moment”. According to Kotler (1985:133), “developing a research plan or design calls for decisions on the data sources research approach research instruments, sampling plan and contact method”. Survey refers to techniques that are used in the collection of data in a large population. Hence, a structured questionnaire was used in collecting the data and information from the sample population. The design is aimed at properly assessing the audience viewpoints especially on the main focus when suitably designed.

According to Ozo et al (1999:97), questionnaire is a formalized schedule for obtaining and recording specified and relevant information with tolerable accuracy and completeness directing the questioning process and promoting clear and proper recording. The first part of the questionnaire was on demographic variables like gender, age, educational status as well as the relationship between the organization and its information and protocols unit, while the second part includes the public relations programs utilized by the organization, advantages of such public relations programs utilized by the organization, advantages of such public relations programs and the challenges facing them in the formulation and execution of these programs. To

achieve the objectives of the study, the questions were served in close-ended pattern with series of possible answers. Besides, the instrument was pre-tested randomly on selected potential respondents. This enabled the testing of the validity and reliability of the instrument.

Two face-to-face in-depth interviews, lasting approximately sixty minutes, were conducted at each participant's office. Prior to each interview, the purpose of the study was explained, participants were asked to sign a consent form, and permission was asked before audio-taping. The interviews consisted of a series of open-ended questions meant to examine how communication programs were managed. These questions focused on empowerment of the public relations function, communicator roles, organization of communication functions, and public relations models. In addition, historical documents in relation to Public Relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic in form of secondary data were inferentially analyze.

### **3.8 Instrument for Data Collection**

The instrument for data collection used for this research is written questionnaire. A written question is data collection tool in which written questions are presented to be answered by the respondents in written form. Questionnaire was chosen because it is less expensive; eliminates bias due to phrasing questions differently with respondents and permits anonymity that result in responses that are more honest.

### **3.9 Validity and Reliability**

According to Olayinola (2007), face validity assesses how a test measure what it is supposed to measure. It involves a cursory glance at a test. A test that looks like it measures what it is expected to measure has face validity. If the instrument is measuring a particular behavior, the items must seem to be measuring the behavior. A pilot study was conducted in all respective

schools to enable the researcher test and validate the instrument with a view to correcting any weakness, and review the questionnaire. The pilot was done to improve the validity of the data.

A sample size of 10% of the sample (1376) was selected for the pilot study. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006:101), “Samples with 10-50 subjects are commonly used for pretesting measurements instruments and pilots studies...” Hence, the research uses the averages, which are 130 respondents. The measuring instrument was administered to the respondents personally by the researcher. It was observed that majority of the respondents were reluctant to answer the open ended questions, preferring to remain neutral. In addition it was pointed out that some people need to select more than one option due to mixed opinion or uncertainty prevailing at the time.

### **3.10 Method of Data of Analysis**

Ozo et al (1999:162) states that in data analysis, we perform the following; bringing the raw data into measured order; summarizing the data, and applying analytical methods to analyze the data so that their inter-relationships and quantitative meaning become evident. The data collected for this research can only be meaningful if they are analyzed and interpreted to the understanding of the reader. The Simple percentage method and frequency distribution tables were clearly used to present the data gathered from the field. Discussion of the data were followed for lucid explanation and understanding. This technique was used by the researcher because it makes the data easier to interpret.

According to Luck and Rubin (1989:124), statistical percentage is the retirement and manipulation of data that prepares them for the application of logical inference. Supporting this view, Kerlinger (as cited in Timothy, and Yair 2008; Muhammad 2011) explains that percentage method could be used to reduce different set of numbers to a common base, and any set of

frequency can be transformed to percentage in order to facilitate statistical manipulation and interpretation.

All audio tapes of interviews were transcribed. Data analysis was based on the techniques outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) who argued that qualitative data analysis should consist of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, short summaries and field notes were written to highlight important recurring themes, and patterns. Recurring patterns were identified by listening to the tapes repeatedly. To display data, several tables were generated to categorize the responses of participants. This display made it easier to see the relationships between different themes. Conclusions were drawn by identifying themes or patterns, clustering categories, and noting the relationships among patterns.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This section contains presentation and analysis of data collected from respondents of Kaduna Polytechnic and extends publicly within 1.5 kilometer radius of the various schools which make up the institution: these schools include; College of Science and Technology, College of Engineering (in Tudun-Wada), College of Business and Management Studies (in Unguwan Rimi), College of Environmental Studies (in Barnawa) and College of Administrative Studies and Social Sciences (in Sabon Tasha). The questionnaires encompass the demographic variables, educational status and job designation of the respondents. Also within it is the public relations activity of the organization under study, and the crises management strategies in Kaduna Polytechnics.

A total of 1,500 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 1,376 were properly filled, completed and returned. The returned copies of the questionnaire represent about 92% of the total number distributed. Hence, data analysis was based on the returning copies of the questionnaire.

#### 4.2 Data Presentation and Interpretation

**Table 4.2.1: Sex of Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	776	56.4
Female	600	43.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

Table 4.2.1 Shows that there were more male (56.4%) than female (43.6%) in the respondents. Although respondents were selected purposively, however, the researcher did not intentionally seek to distribute questionnaires to more male than female respondents.

**Table 4.2.2 Age of Respondents:**

<b>Age class distribution (yrs)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
18 – 21	394	28.62
22 – 25	466	33.87
26 – 29	168	12.21
30 – 33	120	8.72
34 – 37	85	6.18
37 – 40	73	5.31
40 & Above	70	5.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

The data in the study were between age group is 22 – 25 years representing 33.87%, while the next major age group is 18 – 21 years representing 28.62%, and the others are 26 – 29 years; 12.21%, 30 – 33 years; 8.72%, 34 – 37 years; 6.18%; 37 – 40 years; 5.31%, 40 and above; 5.09%. Thus, majority of respondents appears to be in their twenties.

**Table 4.2.3 Educational Qualification**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Secondary cert. holders (SSCE, NABTEB)	138	10.00
Diploma Student	567	41.20
HND Students	369	26.80
B.Sc/HND Holders	161	11.70
Post Graduate M.SC/PHD	143	10.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

Table 4.2.3 above contains data that shows that majority of the respondents are diploma students 567 (41.20%, 26.80% are HND students, placing them second to the diploma students; B.Sc/HND holders made up 11.70% while 10.30% where post graduate degree holders in various discretions.

**Table 4.2.4 Job Experience**

<b>Duration in service (years)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Less than 5	112	19.40
5 – 10	176	30.60
11 – 15	99	17.20
16 – 20	67	11.60
21 – 25	34	5.90
26 – 30	41	7.10
30 & Above	47	8.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

From the data gathered in the above table 4.3.4, majority of the respondents (176) 30.60% have spent 5 – 10 years serving with the Kaduna Polytechnic Institution. 112 (19.40%) have spent less time. 99 (17.20%), 67 (11.60%). 34 (5.90%), 41 (7.10%), 47 (8.20%) have all spent 11 – 15 years, 16 – 20 years, 21 – 25 years, 26 – 30 years and above 30 years respectively working with the Kaduna Polytechnic. This shows that the respondents will be able to provide information about the challenges confronting the public relations and information unit of the Kaduna Polytechnic Institution.

### 4.3 Key Variables in Public Relations Activities

The next section presents and describes the key variables in this research work.

**Table 4.3.1: How conversant are respondents with the public relations activities of the in house public relations department/unit?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Very conversant	513	37.30
Fairly conversant	470	34.15
Not very conversant	323	23.47
Not conversant at all	70	5.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

The analysis of the above table 4.3.1 reveals that the majority of the respondents 513 (37.3%) are very conversant with the activities of the protocols and information's unit of the Polytechnic. The percentage of those who consider themselves to be fairly conversant, not very conversant and the ones that are not at all conversant with the activities of the protocols and information's unit are 470 (34.15%), 323 (23.47%) and 70 (5.08%) respectively.

**Table 4.3.2: Does the structure of Kaduna Polytechnic management affect in with the practice of public relation’s unit in the institution?**

<b>Respond</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	979	71.20
No	367	28.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

The data in the table 4.3.2 above reveal that majority of the respondents 979 (71.2%) agree that the structure of Kaduna Polytechnic management affects the practice of public relations in the institution’s information and protocol units, while 397 (28.8%) stated otherwise. These portrays that the management structure is in synch with the unit thereby affecting in it either positively or negatively in its overall performance and proper execution of its responsibilities as due.

**Table 4.3.3: Public relations activities of Kaduna Polytechnic as perceived.**

<b>Perception/response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Perception (%)</b>
Seminars, press conferences, workshops.	468	34.01
In-house journals	220	15.99
Community relations/public enlightenment campaigns.	226	16.64
TV productions/radio program	61	4.43
Facility visitations.	47	3.42
Press releases, speeches, flyers	354	25.51
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

In the table 4.3.3 above, more respondents 468 (34.01%) did perceive that the protocols and information unit's activities through seminars, press conferences, and workshops. 354(23.51%) came in contact with the unit through press release, speeches, and flyers. 220(15.99%), 226(16.64%), 61(4.43%) of the respondents only perceived the unit through in-house journals, community relations and public enlightenment campaign, facility visits, and TV productions and radio programs respectively as public relation activities of the institutions.

**Table 4.3.4: Respondents' responses on role of public relations as a means to achieving corporate management goals in tertiary institutions**

<b>Opinion Respond</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Completely agree	593	43.10
Fairly agree	359	26.06
Neutral	298	21.70
Fairly disagree	79	5.74
Completely disagree	47	3.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

The data in the table above include that majority of the respondents (593 representing 43.10%) completely agree that the public relations and information unit of the institution's. 359 (26.06%), fairly agree, 21.70% (298) correspondents remained neutral about the issue. 79 (5.74%), 47 (3.40%) responded fairly and completely disagreeing respectively. It can therefore be referred that to some extent, the Public relations unit of the organization is perceive to be playing a role in the achieving of corporate goal of the management. This is one of the principles of the excellence theory in partial application in the institution.

In his contribution, the Chief executive officer of the public relation units of the institution state that, it's their responsibility to advice the management on how the institution can achieve it set goals and objectives. He state that:

We render advisory role to them in various areas that need to be exploited to improve the strength of the institution. We engage on research on how we can exploit our strength to our advantage and then meet the Chief executive for implementation.

The excellence theory state that an organization that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with strategic publics, both external and internal that provides the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organization.

**Table 4.3.5: Responses on the view that the public relations and information' unit contributes in management function of the institution for achieving its goals**

<b>Respond</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Completely agree	298	21.70
Fairly agree	138	10.03
Neutral	34	2.47
Fairly disagree	428	31.10
Completely disagree	478	34.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

Results in table 4.3.5 shows that many of the respondents 34.70% (478) completely disagree that the public relations and protocols unit plays a major role in management and for the achieving of the institutions goals. 31.10% (428) fairly disagree, 2.47% (34) remained neutral, 10.03% (138) of the respondents fairly agree while the remaining 21.70% (298) completely

agreed. It can be inferred that Public relations is not seen as a management function in its practice.

The excellence theory states that Public relations is a management function separate from other functions. Many organizations splinter the public relations function by making it a supporting tool for other departments such as marketing, human resources, law, or finance. When the public relations function is sublimated to other functions, it cannot move communication resources from one strategic public to another as an integrated public relations function can.

The Chief executive officer of the public relation units of the institution understands that:

public relation is a management function. You see our department (Public Relations) is unprofessionalized. I don't know whether is applicable to other institutions. But ordinarily, it is suppose to be a professionalized department, were a professional is to be the head of the division. We have a deputy register who did not read anything related to public relations. This is pure civil service way of doing things. This is not supposed to be so.

However, Maichibi's study on organizational decision making of Nigerian Polytechnics shows that, Tonga, (1997) points out that it seems not so many Nigerian Polytechnic Rector encourage participatory decision making. The units is further regarded as the resource centre for the polytechnic as it releases vital information needed for its proper functioning and survival. Similarly, the unit carries information on image projecting activities to strengthen and further project the image of the institution. The information released through this unit is found to be credible and acceptable by the public, it is seen as firsthand information from the management.

**Table 4.3.6: Response on whether the Kaduna Polytechnic management is in consonance with the public relations and information unit**

S/N	Probable Indicators	Acceptance level/Rating Frequency/Percentage.				
		Most often	Often	Rarely	Not at all	Total
1.	Does the management of Kaduna Polytechnic hold regular meetings with the information and protocols team?	5	81	7	0	93
		5.38%	87.10%	7.52%	0%	100%
2.	Does the institution involve the head of the unit and its team in crucial decision making?	6	12	75	0	93
		6.45%	12.90%	80.65%	0%	100%
3.	Does the management of Kaduna polytechnic understand the importance of the unit to its existence?	4	73	11	5	93
		4.29%	78.50%	11.83%	5.38%	100%
4.	Does the use the information and protocols unit in carrying out its public relations activities?	78	11	3	1	93
		83.87%	11.83%	3.23%	1.07%	100%
5.	Is the information unit adequately equipped with modern communication s facilities?	0	2	9	82	93
		0%	2.15%	9.68%	88.17%	100%
6.	Do you think Kaduna polytechnic will operate well	0	3	5	85	93

	without the information and protocols unit?	0%	3.23%	5.38%	91.39%	100%
7.	Do the activities of the public relations and information unit affect the institution positively?	81 87.10%	7 7.54%	5 5.38%	0 0%	93 100%
8.	Does Kaduna Polytechnic use the information and protocols unit in serving its corporate social responsibilities?	53 56.99%	20 21.50%	9 9.68%	11 11.83%	93 100%

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

Table 4.3.6 reveals the degree to which the Kaduna Polytechnic management is in consonance with public relations and information unit in its operation. Majority (81 representing 87.10%) of the respondents from the unit said that regular meetings are often held between them and the management of the institution. 5 (5.38%) and 7 (7.52%), respectively said the meetings were held most often and rarely, while no one said not at all. 75 (80.65%) said the institution rarely involves the head of the unit and his team in crucial decision making. 6 (6.45%) and 12 (12.90%) of the respondents respectively answered most often and often to the same question while none of respondents said not at all. Majority (73 making for 78.50%) of the respondents said the management of Kaduna polytechnic does often understand the importance of the unit to its existence. 11 (11.83%), 4 (4.29%) and 5 (5.38%) said rarely, most often and not at all respectively to the same question. 78 (83.87%) of the respondents said the institution most often use the information and protocols unit in carrying out its public relations activities, while 11 (11.83%), 3 (3.23%) and 1 (1.07%) respectively said they often, rarely and do not at all do so. From the same table 4.3.6, 82 (representing 88.17%) of the respondents said that the information and protocols unit is not at all adequately equipped, 9 (9.68%), 2 (2.15%) of the respondents respectively said rarely and often, while none said most often to the directed question. 85 (91.39%)

said they think that the Kaduna Polytechnic will not at all operate well without the information and protocols unit, while 5(5.38%) and 3(3.23%) said rarely and often respectively, and non said most often. 81 of the respondents representing 87.10% of the total said the activities of the information unit definitely affects the institution positively. 7(7.54%), 5(5.38%) of the respondents said often and rarely respectively while none of them said not at all. 53(56.99%) of the respondents from the unit said the Kaduna polytechnic most often use the information and protocols unit in serving/executing its corporate social responsibility (CSR). 20(21.50%), 9(9.68%) and 11(11.83%) respectively said often, rarely and not at all to this directed question.

Data from the interview with the Chief executive officer of PR unit state that:

We also work on the relationship between the management and the public. That is the internal public and the external public. In internal public, we have the staff, the students, and the staff union. These public each is a stakeholder in their own right. So we have to know how to relate with each public successfully. We equally look at the external public, like the government, the contractors, parents of students and also host communities. Most at times we used to organize meetings, seminar, between the management and leaders of host community. We do create synergy together.

This invariably proof that the management function of Public relations Units is not fully utilized in Kaduna Polytechnic PR practice. This is so because the excellence theory state that Integrated public relations function. All public relations functions are integrated into a single department or have a mechanism to coordinate the departments. Only in an integrated system of public relations is it possible for public relations to develop new communication programs for changing strategic publics. This is a management function.

**Table 4.3.7: Response on possible challenges facing the in-house public relations unit of Kaduna Polytechnic**

S/N	Possible Challenges	ACCEPTANCE LEVEL/RATING					
		Frequency/Percentage					
		CA	FA	N	FD	CD	Total
1.	Insufficient or inadequate budget allocation to the public relations and information unit of the Kaduna Polytechnic.	608	536	32	102	98	1,376
		44.22%	38.98%	2.30%	7.40%	7.10%	100%
2.	Public relations and information's unit lacks enough public relation professionals.	424	80	194	111	567	1,376
		30.80%	5.80%	14.10%	8.08%	41.22%	100%
3.	The public relations and information unit in Kaduna Polytechnic is not effective.	237	142	105	413	479	1,376
		17.22%	10.35%	7.6%	30.05%	34.8%	100%

		2%	%		%		
4.	The perception of the management towards the public relation unit of the Kaduna Polytechnic is that of a propaganda agent.	275	188	462	347	275	1,376
		20.00%	13.69%	33.6%	25.20%	20.00%	100%
5.	Bureaucracy Is A Challenge Facing The Public Relations Unit Of Kaduna Polytechnic.	319	297	138	347	275	1,376
		23.20%	21.60%	10.00%	25.20%	20.00%	100%
6.	Inadequacy in the institutions execution of corporate social responsibilities (CSR).	129	74	132	270	771	1376
		9.27%	5.41%	9.68%	19.60%	56.04%	100%

Source: Primary Research Data (2013)

The table 4.3.7 above shows correspondents' responses to the possible challenges facing the in-house public relation's unit of the Kaduna Polytechnic. A significant number (608

respondents) 44.22% of respondents completely agree that the public relations and protocol/information unit is inadequately funding. 536, 32, 102 and 98 respondents fairly agreed, remained neutral, fairly disagreed and completely disagreed, that the public relations and information unit is inadequately allocated in the Kaduna Polytechnic budget. Majority of the respondents (567) about 41.22% completely disagreed that the public relations and information unit lacks enough public relations professionals; while 424 of the respondents completely agree. 194 (14.10%) respondents remained neutral. 80 (5.80%) and 111 (8.08%), fairly agreed and fairly disagreed respectively. 479 (34.8%) and 413 (30.05%) completely disagreed and fairly disagreed that the public relations and information unit of the Kaduna Polytechnic is ineffective. 105 (7.6%) were neutral, 237 (17.2%) completely agreed, 142 (10.35%) respondents fairly agreed that the unit is ineffective.

Considering the perception of the unit as a propaganda apparatus, majority respondents preferred to remain neutral, 275 (20.00%) and 249 (18.00%) completely agreed and completely disagreed respectively. 188 (13.69%) and 202 (14.71%) fairly agreed and fairly disagreed respectively.

Many of the respondents 347 (25.20%) fairly disagreed that bureaucracy is a challenge facing the public relations unit of the Kaduna Polytechnic. 319 (23.20) completely agreed while 297 (21.60%), 138(10.00) and 275 (20.00%) of the correspondents fairly agreed, remained neutral and completely disagreed respectively.

Data from interview shows that among the challenges the PR Units faced are lack of professionalization of the department, lack of the department seeing as a management function, lack of funding and poor technology availability. The Chief executive officer of PR unit state that:

You see our department (Public Relations) is unprofessionalized. I don't know whether is applicable to other institutions. But ordinarily, it is suppose to be a professionalized department, were a professional is to be the head of the division. We have a deputy register who did not read anything related to public relations. This is pure civil service way of doing things. This is not supposed to be so.

This will not make the PR of the institution to apply the principle of excellence theory that stated that Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out day-to-day communication activities. However, excellent public relations units must have at least one senior communication manager who conceptualizes and directs public relations programs.

Also, He stated that:

Another major problem is lack of having public relation to be part of management team in the institution. The PR in this institution is not even up to the rank of a director to warrant him being part of management team, so as to be part of decision makers. That is why whatever input the PR unit has, they only relate it to the management team or the Rector. No PR man in the discussion at the managerial level.

This is not suppose to me so as excellence theory have stated that A symmetrical system of internal communication. Excellent organizations have decentralized management structures that give autonomy to employees and allow them to participate in decision making. They also have participative, symmetrical systems of internal communication with employees that increases job satisfaction because employee goals are incorporated into the organizational mission.

The Chief Executive Officer emphasized that

This is a serious constrain to our PR practice. Because if you are part of the management, you look at the decision being taken that affects the public to cause problem, you should be able to give advice to avert that. But this is not so hear. So whatever decision is taken up there, they relay it to our unit. And ours is to pass it to the public.

Among the principles of the excellence theory is that “Organizational context for excellence”. Excellent public relations departments are nourished by participative rather than authoritarian cultures, activist pressure from the environment, and organic rather than mechanical management structures.

On the issue of the prospect of the Public relations units of the institution in applying excellence theory in its operation, The Chief Executive officer of PR Units observed that:

The departments division of PR has to be professionalized by the institution. When we have a professional manning the Unit, he or she will know what to do in terms of PR practice at the managerial level for the improving of the institution PR activities.

He equally observed that for them to practice PR in its fullest:

Public relations officer which is supposed to be head of the department supposes to be part of the management. As a member of management, the PR will be part of decision making process, by so doing, he will contribute positively. You know the PR knows the feelings of the public as he is always together with them, which the directors or management are hardly having time to be with the public.

For the public relations Units of Kaduna Polytechnic enjoy the full potential of Public relations activities for the optimum benefits of the organization, the management of the institution have to recognize the ten principles of excellence theory in its Public relations practice. These principles are: Involvement of public relations in strategic management; Empowerment of public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management; Integrated public relations function; Public relations is a management function separate from other functions; Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out day-to-day communication activities; Two-way symmetrical model of public relations; A symmetrical system of internal communication; Knowledge potential for managerial role and symmetrical public relations; Diversity embodied in all roles and Organizational context for excellence.

#### 4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section looks at questions and how they were answered by the respective respondents based on the data collected from the survey.

**4.4.1: RQ1:** What extent has Kaduna Polytechnic applied excellence theory in its Public Relations practice?

Table 4.4.3 shows that there is a high level of acceptance by respondents that the information and protocols unit impacts well in living up to its responsibility as a unit. Majority of respondents with 468 making up 34.01% of the total have in one way or the other attended seminars, press conferences, conferences, and/or workshops organized through the unit by the institution. From the same table, 354 of the respondents making for 25.51% indicated that the press releases, speeches, and flyers have helped them in obtaining from trivial to very important information about the institution

The institution also uses information and protocols unit to reach out to the community through public enlightenment programs and campaigns and other community related services since the substantial since a substantial number of the respondents (226 Nr) agreed to the same question. The in-house journals also plays important role in helping the respondents access very important information. This statistics may indicate that the public relation does have some impact on tertiary institutions. Thus, the data above indicate that the impact of the public relations is being felt by all, regardless of who the respondents are.

But this does not transfer to be said that they apply excellence theory in their Public relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic.

It can therefore be referred that to some extent, the Public relations unit of the organization is perceive to be playing a role in the achieving of corporate goal of the

management. This is one of the principles of the excellence theory in partial application in the institution.

In his contribution, the Chief executive officer of the public relation units of the institution state that, it's their responsibility to advice the management on how the institution can achieve it set goals and objectives. He state that:

We render advisory role to them in various areas that need to be exploited to improve the strength of the institution. We engage on research on how we can exploit our strength to our advantage and then meet the Chief executive for implementation.

The excellence theory state that an organization that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with strategic publics, both external and internal that provides the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organization.

Results in table 4.3.5 shows that many of the respondents 34.70% (478) completely disagree that the public relations and protocols unit plays a major role in management and for the achieving of the institutions goals.

It can be inferred that Public relations is not seen as a management function in its practice.

The excellence theory states that Public relations is a management function separate from other functions. Many organizations splinter the public relations function by making it a supporting tool for other departments such as marketing, human resources, law, or finance. When the public relations function is sublimated to other functions, it cannot move communication resources from one strategic public to another as an integrated public relations function can.

The Chief executive officer of the public relation units of the institution understands that:

public relation is a management function. You see our department (Public Relations) is unprofessionalized. I don't know whether is applicable to other institutions. But ordinarily, it is suppose to be a

professionalized department, were a professional is to be the head of the division. We have a deputy register who did not read anything related to public relations. This is pure civil service way of doing things. This is not supposed to be so.

However, Maichibi's study on organizational decision making of Nigerian Polytechnics shows that, Tonga, (1997) points out that it seems not so many Nigerian Polytechnic Rector encourage participatory decision making. The units is further regarded as the resource centre for the polytechnic as it releases vital information needed for its proper functioning and survival.

But the interview with the Chief Executive Officer of PR unit of the institution state that :

it is suppose to be a professionalized department, were a professional is to be the head of the division. We have a deputy register who did not read anything related to public relations. This is pure civil service way of doing things. This is not supposed to be so. When you have someday who is not a professional, definitely there bound to be a problem. Here the head is some who study business studies. This makes us to divide the work into two. Him doing the registry work and me doing the Public relations work and there have to be an intermediary that will be reporting to him all the decision that we took. I don't report as public relations officer directly to the Rector because I have immediate Boss. So, we don't have anybody as public relations officer being part of the management team.

This invariably proof that the management function of Public relations Units is not fully utilized in Kaduna Polytechnic PR practice. This is so because the excellence theory state that Integrated public relations function. All public relations functions are integrated into a single department or have a mechanism to coordinate the departments. Only in an integrated system of public relations is it possible for public relations to develop new communication programs for changing strategic publics. This is a management function.

Also, the institution PR practice cannot be said they have apply the following ten principles of excellence theory in their function: Involvement of public relations in strategic management; Empowerment of

public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management; Integrated public relations function; Public relations is a management function separate from other functions; Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out day-to-day communication activities; Two-way symmetrical model of public relations; A symmetrical system of internal communication; Knowledge potential for managerial role and symmetrical public relations; Diversity embodied in all roles and Organizational context for excellence.

**4.4.2: RQ2:** What is the best public relations strategy(s) applied by Kaduna Polytechnic Public Relations Unit?

In the table 4.3.3 above, more respondents 468 (34.01%) did perceive that the protocols and information unit's activities through seminars, press conferences, and workshops. 354(23.51%) came in contact with the unit through press release, speeches, and flyers. 220(15.99%), 226(16.64%), 61(4.43%) of the respondents only perceived the unit through in-house journals, community relations and public enlightenment campaign, facility visits, and TV productions and radio programs respectively as public relation activities of the institutions.

Table 4.3.4 shows that the majority of the respondents (593 Nr representing 43.1%) completely agreed that the achievement of corporate goals are being met through the preparedness of the institution in its business mission and vision statements. 359 of the respondents making up 26.06% which is quite substantial also agreed to this directed (statement). This statistics may indicate that the level of acceptance may be due to the institution's calibrated performance ratings across the organization.

According to the Kaduna Polytechnic pamphlet (2013) the information and protocols unit offers advice to the management, especially on the need to dish out credible information to keep its public well informed to avoid damaging rumors and escalation of crisis.

As part of the public relations efforts of Kaduna Polytechnic, the unit organizes sensitization workshops, seminars and press conference to enlighten its numerous publics. Consequently, the institution's public relations unit from time to time prepares good articles on issues that relate to the day- to- day activities of the school and send to the media for publication, such articles are well written and very interesting to serve as hook to the editors. The articles come both from within and outside the institution, they are well edited before they are being added to the media kit.

According to the (2013) pamphlet by information and protocols unit, through the effort of the unit, the institution offers scholarship to students and staff with outstanding performance as well as serious and recognized problems as shown in July/August Kaduna Polytechnic Bulletin (2013) that Kaduna Polytechnic in collaboration with Kaduna Refinery and petro-chemical company, through the Social Welfare Development Initiative (SOWED) in conjunction with Kaduna State Ministry of Women Affairs renders youth empowerment and training skills. It also registered over 300 beggars' children at their colony, Kano Road, Kaduna, the birth certificate were issued by the National Population Commission (NPC). According to the bulletin, the rector of Kaduna Polytechnic Dr. Mohammed Bello Ibrahim comments that "Kaduna Polytechnic as a socially responsible corporate organization is ready to partner with other organizations, agencies and individuals to impact positively on the lives of the people especially the less privilege through conceiving, Designing and delivering meaningful intervention programs. He added that

the qualified beggars' children will be accommodated in the institutions scholarship scheme for indigent people in the society.

Another area that the institution proves responsible to its society is through its students who participated in (SIFE) competition where over 30 higher institutions participated and emerged winners through what they call enactus Kaduna Polytechnic in (2012). The enactus Kaduna Polytechnic presented its activities through power point presentation titled POWER IN MY PALM which presented two of Kaduna Polytechnic's numerous outreach projects namely: PROJECT EVERGREEN executed in Mai Adua and Kaita LGA's and PROJECT PIMP at Kaduna State Rehabilitation Centre; At the rehabilitation centre the team trained the physically challenged on sustainable trades such as bag production and basket weaving. The training has now given the beneficiaries the opportunity to make income for self- sustenance.

Similarly, about 750 rural women in the two LGA's in Katsina State were trained on how to fabricate locally made stove instead of depending on firewood with its attendant effect of falling of trees. These women presently earn their living through the production of the stove for sale to the public. In addition, the institution also built primary schools in its own community, mainly, Tudun Wada. It provides free medical services to staff and students and has as well provided portable drinking water to the Tudun Wada and the Polytechnic's Community. Kaduna Polytechnic also organizes various empowerment programs and workshops for the people in Tudun Wada, Unguwar Rimi, Barnawa, Mando, Sabon Tasha and other parts of Kaduna Metropolis and neighboring communities. It sponsors both deserving staff and students to study in Nigerian and overseas to enable them improve their intellectual and production capabilities. However, despite all their efforts, most of these programs, activities and projects are not dually published through the appropriate channels or even documents. This is one of the major

functions of the information and protocols unit because corporate social responsibility is one of the public relations strategies which are at the fore front in bringing credibility, boosting image and promoting acceptability by the public concerned.

The interview with Chief Executive Officer of PR Units states the strategies they used in knowing the organization problems that they can tackle. This is through SWOT (Strength Weakness Opportunity and Traits) analysis. He observed that:

Mostly as PR Officers we deal with SWOT analysis, which has to do with the strength, the weakness, the opportunity and the traits of the institution. That is the Major work that we do in the Information and Protocol Units. We look at the strength of the institutions and try to explore all the opportunities we have to ensure that the institution keeps on growing

He emphasize that:

We also work on the relationship between the management and the public. That is the internal public and the external public. In internal public, we have the staff, the students, and the staff union. These public each is a stakeholder in their own right. So we have to know how to relate with each public successfully. We equally look at the external public, like the government, the contractors, parents of students and also host communities. Most at times we used to organize meetings, seminar, between the management and leaders of host community. We do create synergy together. That is why even during crisis, you hardly see commuters jumping through the fence to come and attack students and staff. This was made possible because of the relationship we have built over the years. We do provide water as part of our social responsibility programme. This was to keep the relationship because it is very important to the image and success of the institution.

**4.4.3: RQ 3:** Does Kaduna polytechnic make effective use of its information and protocols unit?

Table 4.3.6 shows that a significant number (78 representing 83.87%) from a total of 93 respondents of the unit responded thus; that they accept that the institution uses the information

and protocols unit in carrying out its public relations activities as indicated by sub-question 4 in the listed table.

In addition, the data in table 3.3.3 indicates that as many as 468 of the respondents have witnessed seminars, conferences, and /or workshops. 354 of the respondents have come in direct contact with press releases, speeches and/or flyers. Also, from the same table 220 and 226 making up 15.99% and 16.64% respectively of the respondents have used in-house journals or have witnessed public enlightenment campaigns and other community services executed by the institution. This study may deduce that that the Kaduna polytechnic makes efficient use of its information and protocols unit.

#### **4.4.3: RQ 3: What are the problems associated with application of excellence theory in Public Relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic?**

In table 4.3.7, respondents found this section interesting because of their freedom to express their mixed feelings their by providing mixed responses. Sub-question one discussed insufficiency and inadequacy in budgetary allocation as a possible challenge to the information and protocols unit in executing their duties. Here, 608 representing 44.22% of the respondents completely agreed, 536 (38.98%) fairly agreed, 98(7.10%) completely disagreed, 102(7.40%) fairly disagreed while 33(2.3%) of the respondents remained neutral about the issue.

In addition, 567(41.22%) of the respondents completely disagreed to sub-question 2 of table 4.3.7 which says that the information and protocols unit lacks enough public relations professionals. 424representing 30.80% completely agreed, 80(5.80%) fairly disagreed, 194(14.1%) remained neutral. 111(8.08%)fairly disagreed that the unit lacks enough public relations professionals.

Data from interview shows that among the challenges the PR Units faced are lack of professionalization of the department, lack of the department seeing as a management function, lack of funding and poor technology availability. The Chief executive officer of PR unit state that:

You see our department (Public Relations) is unprofessionalized. I don't know whether is applicable to other institutions. But ordinarily, it is suppose to be a professionalized department, were a professional is to be the head of the division. We have a deputy register who did not read anything related to public relations. This is pure civil service way of doing things. This is not supposed to be so.

This will not make the PR of the institution to apply the principle of excellence theory that stated that Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out day-to-day communication activities. However, excellent public relations units must have at least one senior communication manager who conceptualizes and directs public relations programs.

Also, He stated that:

Another major problem is lack of having public relation to be part of management team in the institution. The PR in this institution is not even up to the rank of a director to warrant him being part of management team, so as to be part of decision makers. That is why whatever input the PR unit has, they only relate it to the management team or the Rector. No PR man in the discussion at the managerial level.

This is not suppose to me so as excellence theory have stated that A symmetrical system of internal communication. Excellent organizations have decentralized management structures that give autonomy to employees and allow them to participate in decision making. They also have participative, symmetrical systems of internal communication with employees that increases job satisfaction because employee goals are incorporated into the organizational mission.

The Chief Executive Officer emphasized that:

This is a serious constrain to our PR practice. Because if you are part of the management, you look at the decision being taken that affects the public to cause problem, you should be able to give advice to avert that. But this is not so hear. So whatever decision is taken up there, they relay it to our unit. And ours is to pass it to the public.

Among the principles of the excellence theory is that “Organizational context for excellence”. Excellent public relations departments are nourished by participative rather than authoritarian cultures, activist pressure from the environment, and organic rather than mechanical management structures.

On the issue of the prospect of the Public relations units of the institution in applying excellence theory in its operation, The Chief Executive officer of PR Units observed that:

The departments division of PR has to be professionalized by the institution. When we have a professional manning the Unit, he or she will know what to do in terms of PR practice at the managerial level for the improving of the institution PR activities.

He equally observed that for them to practice PR in its fullest:

Public relations officer which is supposed to be head of the department supposes to be part of the management. As a member of management, the PR will be part of decision making process, by so doing, he will contribute positively. You know the PR knows the feelings of the public as he is always together with them, which the directors or management are hardly having time to be with the public.

For the public relations Units of Kaduna Polytechnic enjoy the full potential of Public relations activities for the optimum benefits of the organization, the management of the institution have to recognize the ten principles of excellence theory in its Public relations practice.

**4.4.4: RQ 4:** What are the prospects for application of excellence theory in Public Relations Practice in Kaduna Polytechnic?

On the issue of the prospect of the Public relations units of the institution in applying excellence theory in its operation, The Chief Executive officer of PR Units observed that:

The departments division of PR has to be professionalized by the institution. When we have a professional manning the Unit, he or she will know what to do in terms of PR practice at the managerial level for the improving of the institution PR activities.

He equally observed that for them to practice PR in its fullest:

Public relations officer which is supposed to be head of the department supposes to be part of the management. As a member of management, the PR will be part of decision making process, by so doing, he will contribute positively. You know the PR knows the feelings of the public as he is always together with them, which the directors or management are hardly having time to be with the public.

For the public relations Units of Kaduna Polytechnic enjoy the full potential of Public relations activities for the optimum benefits of the organization, the management of the institution have to recognize the ten principles of excellence theory in its Public relations practice. These principles are: Involvement of public relations in strategic management; Empowerment of public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management; Integrated public relations function; Public relations is a management function separate from other functions; Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out day-to-day communication activities; Two-way symmetrical model of public relations; A symmetrical system of internal communication; Knowledge potential for managerial role and symmetrical public relations; Diversity embodied in all roles and Organizational context for excellence.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter of the work is mainly the summary, conclusion, and recommendations for the study. The study is a combination of survey and historical research meant at investigating the application of excellence theory in Public Relations practice in Kaduna Polytechnic.

#### **5.2 Summary**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, public relations have become an integral part of every organization. Public relations professionals are on the constant move to bring to the attention of people the actual and proper use of the term to help organization realize and actualize their goals and at the same time serve public interest. As indicated in the study conducted by Luo (2005) that the excellence theory (J, Grunig 1992, L.G Grunig and Dozier,2002) of public relations identified several excellence principles of an excellent communications department which they grouped into four departments; these include,

- Empowerment of the public relations functions.
- Communication roles.
- Integrated functions and relationship with other functions.
- Models of public relations.

However, misconceptions about the term are deeply rooted into the minds of professionals which have resulted to improper application by most organizations. This has brought the profession to ridicule and some disadvantages therefore has prompted this fact finding study to access the impact of public relations in the tertiary institution under survey

(Kaduna Polytechnic). The researcher used historical and survey method in the study for empiricism. 1500 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents, residing in the five respective colleges and their environs. Out of the 1500 copies of the questionnaires distributed, 1376 were completely filled and returned. A statistical method was used in analyzing the data, and findings were discussed. In-depth interview was conducted with the chief executive officer of the Public Relations department of the institution and the Rector of the Polytechnic.

The result of the study, however, suggests that Kaduna Polytechnic as a tertiary institution actually makes use information and protocols unit. Despite effective use of the unit, from the study conducted, it has being realized that the institution does not fully understand the importance of the unit to its success or operations.

The finding shows that Kaduna Polytechnic does not apply the excellence theory principles in it public relations activities. The Involvement of public relations in strategic management is critical to the application of excellence theory. An organization that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with strategic publics, both external and internal that provides the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organization. Kaduna Polytechnic Public relations unit does not recognize this role.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In conclusion, public relations practice is good for an organization as well as society, especially when an organization conducts genuine public relations practice. With institutions waiting to stay in business as long as possible, learning how to effectively correctly deal with the public is important for its longevity. This study details the development of ways of measuring the public relations effectiveness by focusing on the application of excellence theory in public relations practice on the quality of the relationship between an organization and its public, by

using establishing relationship measures within a co-orientation framework as stated in the excellence theory. In addition, the work using various studies conducted by various scholars and experts alike, discussed how public relations should be practiced in higher institutions of learning. For instance Brunnar and Hon (2002) examined how public relations professionals can measure relationships in the higher educational setting.

Based on the findings of this study, the conclusions that can be drawn indicate that the information and protocols unit of the Kaduna Polytechnic does not live up its expectations and responsibilities. Though the unit is use to reach out to the community through public enlightenment campaigns/programs and other community related services. Also, the institution is achieving some of its corporate goals by making use of information and protocols unit. For instance, Kaduna Polytechnic on average promotes peaceful co-existence and achieving corporate goals in the institution as analyzed from the responses in table 4.3.5, and from the interview conducted with the ASUP secretary of the Kaduna Polytechnic, Chief Executive Officer of Public relations units and the Rector of the institution.

Even with this development, this achievement of PR units cannot be equated to be said that the institution has recognized the ten principles of excellence theory.

Similarly, Kaduna Polytechnic plays a very important role in the area of corporate social responsibilities (CSR) based on facts gathered on the field. These feasible facts include execution of workshops organized on poverty alleviation, organizing of entrepreneurial programs which are structured to include technical courses encompassing carpentry, metal work, auto mechanics workshops, catering services, textiles, and their likes; to youths living in the neighboring environs.

It has also been found out that, the unit faces some impending challenges in the areas of lack of professionalizing the unit, lack of the institution recognizing PR as a management function, budget allocation, including of the unit in the most overall or final decision making, and lack of modern communications facilities. Although the institution does not “fully” understand the importance of the unit to its success, it does to a considerable extent knows that it can not operate well without its information and protocols unit, since it is so far seen that the unit does all it possible best that it carries out all functions expected of it which therefore positively affects the institution.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Kaduna Polytechnic should apply the ten principles of excellence theory to reap the fully benefits of public relations practice in the institution. These principles are: Involvement of public relations in strategic management; Empowerment of public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management; Integrated public relations function; Public relations is a management function separate from other functions; Public relations unit headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out day-to-day communication activities; Two-way symmetrical model of public relations; A symmetrical system of internal communication; Knowledge potential for managerial role and symmetrical public relations; Diversity embodied in all roles and Organizational context for excellence.
2. The Kaduna polytechnic should take necessary steps in involving the public relations unit in decision making in its major programs and activities because this would make the members of the unit a part of the management team of the institution. This is so necessary because the public relations professionals of the unit are able to foresee issues that may

arise and thus effectively, effectively inform the institutions management using the two way symmetrical method of communication as presented by the excellence theory of public relations.

3. The management should adopt a plain and fair planning system of communicating information to the public instead of adulterating or hoarding fact filled and genuinely sourced information.
4. The information and protocols unit serves as the nerve centre of the institution; therefore, it is recommended that the unit should be well serviced with modern up to date equipment and information facilities.

### **5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies**

Based on the limitations of this study, the researcher recommends that a much broader study on the impact of public relations in other areas of the field; such study should expand in terms of population and sample size.

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## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire

#### Section I

Please kindly tick (✓) where appropriate among the box(es) for the answer you deem correct to the questions below:

(1) Sex: (a) Male ( ) (b) Female ( )

(2) Age: (a) 18-25 ( ) (b) 26-30 ( ) (c) 31-35 ( ) (d) 36-40 ( )

(e) 41 and Above.

(3) Educational qualification: (a) WAEC/NECO ( ) (b) NCE ( )

(c) HND/B.SC/B.A ( ) (d) Others (specify)

(4) Relationship with Kaduna Polytechnic.

(a) Staff ( ) (b) student ( ) (c) others (specify)

(5) Marital status:

(a) Single ( ) (b) Married ( ) (c) Divorced ( ) (d) widower ( )

(6) Years of service (if staff)

(a) 5yrs and below ( ) (b) 6-10 yrs ( ) (c) 11-20 yrs ( ) (d) 21yrs and about.

(7) Designation (if staff)

(a) Academic ( ) (b) non-academic ( )

(8) Do you know if the information and protocols unit exist in Kaduna polytechnic?

(a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )

- (9) Is the information and protocol unit expected to perform public relations activities for the institution? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (10) What kind(s) of Public Relations activities are been carried out by the Units?  
 (a) press realize ( ) (b) Newsletter ( ) (c) seminars ( ) (d) workshops ( ) (e) corporate social responsibility programmes ( ) (f) Advertising ( ) (g) Press conference ( ) (h) All of the above ( ) (I) others .....
- (11) Which among the PR activities do they employ most? (a) press realize ( ) (b) Newsletter ( ) (c) seminars ( ) (d) workshops ( ) (e) corporate social responsibility programmes ( ) (f) Advertising ( ) (g) Press conference ( ) (h) others .....
- (12) Does the institution make adequate use of the information and protocols unit to reach its public ? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (13) Do you think Kaduna Polytechnic understands the importance of the information and protocol unit to its operations? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (14) Do the activities of the unit affect the institution positively? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (15) To what extent have they fully applied Public Relations activities? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (16) Does the unit help the institution in achieving its corporate goals? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (17) Is Kaduna Polytechnic involved in corporate social responsibility activities? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (18) Does Kaduna Polytechnic relate well with its external and internal publics? (a) To a large extent ( ) (b) To some extent ( ) (c) Not at all ( )
- (19) What are the possible problems does the Public relations Units of the institutions Face?

.....

(20) What are the possible prospect(s) in Applying Public relations strategies fully in the institutions?

.....

## **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. What are the Public relations activities your units engage upon?
2. How does the PR practice impact on the image of the institutions?
3. What are the best PR strategies your department engages upon?
4. What are the problems encountered in your department?
5. Is there any prospect to the aforementioned problems?