

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENTS
TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING INSTITUTIONS: A CASE
STUDY OF KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

**BY
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INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

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DECLARATION

I **GEORGINA GEORGE EDEM**, here by affirm that this report is my original work and has never been presented by any student to any higher institutions for the award of degree or any academic purposes


Geedem

Date: 24/06/2014

APPROVAL

This is to certify that the report was done under the organization supervision.
The student has been fully supervised following the University for Submission
to the University.

Mrs. OWADE JOAN

Signature: 

Date: 24/06/2018.

APPENDIX II

BUDGET:

The study is estimated to cost 495,000/= arrived at as follows:-

ITEM	COST (UGHS)
Stationary and other related costs	150,000
Transport	200,000
Communication	50,000
Photocopy	20,000
Typesetting and binding	50,000
Internet	15,000
Subsistence	25,000
Miscellaneous	35,000
Total	495,000

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father Mr. George Uwem Edem, Mother Mrs. Comfort George Edem and my family members for their support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, all the praises and thanks to the Almighty God for the sound mind he gave me and energy throughout this research.

I wish to thank my dedicated and committed supervisor Mrs. Owade Joan for her intellectual, academic guidance which has enabled me produce this research work.

I wish to extend my gratitude to all lecturers from the faculty of Education who gave their helping hand.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Approval.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of content.....	v
List of acronyms.....	viii
List of tables.....	ix
List of Figures.....	x
Abstract.....	xi
 CHAPTER ONE.....	 1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	3
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	3
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	3
1.4.1 General objective.....	3
1.4.2 Specific objectives.....	3
1.5 Research questions.....	4
1.6 Scope of the study.....	4
1.7 Significance of the study.....	5
1.8 Conceptual framework.....	6
1.8 Theoretical framework.....	6
 CHAPTER TWO.....	 7
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.0 Introduction.....	7
2.1 Defining public relations.....	7
2.2 Growth of public relations in east Africa.....	8

2.3 Functions of pr departments.....	8
2.4 challenges of public relations.....	8
CHAPTER THREE.....	12
METHODOLOGY.....	12
3.0 Introduction.....	12
3.1 Research Design.....	12
3.2 Research population.....	12
3.3 Sample design.....	12
3.3.1 Sample size.....	13
3.4 Ethical procedure.....	13
3.5 Data collection instruments.....	13
3.5.1 Instruments.....	13
3.5.2 Sources of data collection.....	14
3.6 Data processing and analysis.....	14
3.6.1 Editing.....	15
3.6.2 Coding.....	15
3.6.3 Tabulation.....	15
3.7 Data Analysis.....	16
3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis.....	16
3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis.....	16
3.8 Anticipated limitations of the study.....	16
CHAPTER FOUR.....	18
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS.....	18
4.0 Introduction.....	18
4.1 Social Demographic Characteristics.....	18
4.1.1 Age of the respondents.....	18
4.1.2 Marital Status of the respondents.....	19
4.1.3 Sex of the respondents.....	21
The functions of public relations departments in learning institutions.....	24

4.3 The challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.....	26
4.4 The solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.....	28
CHAPTER FIVE.....	30
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	30
5.0 Introduction.....	30
5.1 Summary of the study.....	30
5.2 CONCLUSIONS.....	31
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	32
5.4 Areas for further research.....	33
REFERENCES.....	34
APPENDICES.....	37
APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE.....	37
APPENDIX II: BUDGET.....	41

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEO	Chief Executive Officers
KIU	Kampala International University
PR	Public Relations
PRSSA	Public Relations Student Society of America
PRSA	Public Relations Society of America
PRAU	Public Relations Associations of Uganda
PRSK	Relations Society of Kenya
US	United States

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Age distribution of respondent.....	18
Table 2: Marital status of the respondents.....	20
Table 3: Sex of the respondents.....	21
Table 4: Educational level of the respondents.....	22
Table 5: The functions of public relations departments in learning institutions.....	24
Table 6: The challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.....	26
Table 7: The solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.....	28

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure1: Conceptual framework.....	6
Figure 2: Age distribution of respondent.....	19
Table 3: Sex of the respondents.....	20
Figure 5: Educational level of the respondents.....	23
Figure 6: The functions of public relations departments in learning institutions.....	24
Figure 7: The challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.....	26
Figure 8: The solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.....	28

ABSTRACT

The research on the impact of public relations departments to the development of learning institutions was conducted in Kampala International University. A total number of 100 respondents were involved in the study. The research was guided by the objectives of the study which included; finding out the function of public relations departments in learning institutions, establishing the challenges of facing public relations departments in learning institutions and finding out the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.

The first research question sought to finding out the function of public relations departments in learning institutions and the study revealed that; keeping organizations' image, creating good will, informing the public about the organization and achieving organizational objectives were the functions of public relations department in leaning institutions. The second research question sought to establish the challenges of facing public relations departments in learning institutions and the finding revealed that; lack of finance, dominance by management, poor organizational objectives, and poor communication with top management.

The third research question sought to find out the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions, the research revealed that; funding of PR departments, reduce dominance by management, have clear organizational objectives, improvement communication with top management.

The researcher later concluded that public relations is very vital for learning institutions and some recommendations were; designing good communicative messages, understanding organizational values among others.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Public Relations (or PR) is a field concerned with maintaining public image for high-profile people, commercial businesses and organizations, non-profit associations or programs. An earlier definition of PR (by The first World Assembly of Public Relations Associations, held in Mexico City in August 1978) was "the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizational leaders, and implementing planned programs of action, which will serve both the organization and the public interest." (Grunig, 1984).

Others define it as the practice of managing communication between an organization and its publics. Public relations provides an organization or individual exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that provide a third-party endorsement and do not direct payment. Once common activities include speaking at conferences, working with the media, crisis communications and social media engagement, and employee communication (Biagi, 2005).

The need for public relations personnel is growing at a fast pace. The types of clients for whom PR people work include the government, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, specific industries, corporations, athletic teams, entertainment companies, and even countries. The title public relations is a broad description of the field because careers that one can have in the public relations field include a publicist, media specialist, analyst, and communications specialist (Burson, 2004).

The practice of public relations is spread widely. On the professional level, there is an organization called Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the world's largest public relations organization. PRSA is a community of more

than 21,000 professionals that work to advance the skill set of public relations. PRSA also fosters a national student organization called Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). In the USA for example, Public Relations professionals earn an average annual salary of \$49,800 which compares with £40,000 for a practitioner with a similar job in the UK. Top earners bring home around \$89,220 annually, while entry-level PR specialists earn around \$28,080.

In the industry today it is very critical for public relations professionals to learn and know the importance of new media outlets. New media outlets include blogs, social networking sites, as well as internet radio. Public relations professionals must know that using these new media outlets are ways to directly send messages to their key publicians (also known as target audiences). There are various tools that can be used in the practice of PR. Traditional tools include press releases and media kits which are sent out to generate positive press on behalf of the organization. Other widely-used tools include brochures, newsletters and annual reports. Increasingly, companies are utilizing interactive social media outlets, such as blogs, Twitter and Facebook, as tools in their PR campaigns. Unlike the traditional tools which allowed for only one-way communication, social media outlets allow the organization to engage in two-way communication, and receive immediate feedback from their various stakeholders and publics.

One of the most popular and traditional tools used by public relations professionals is a press kit (also known as a media kit). A press kit is usually a folder that consists of promotional materials that give information about an event, organization, business, or even a person (Wilcox et al 2002). What are included would be backgrounders or biographies, fact sheets, press releases (or media releases), media alerts, brochures, newsletters, photographs with captions, copies of any media clips, and social mediums. With the way that the

industry has changed, many organizations may have a website with a link, "Press Room" which would have online versions of these pieces.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Since public relations plays an important role in new product introductions by creating awareness, differentiating the product from other similar products, and even changing consumer behavior, many learning institutions now have increased need for public relations personnels. This is because public relations can help introduce new products through staging a variety of special events and handling sensitive situations. Public relation is often called on to give existing products and services a boost by creating or renewing visibility. Because public relations practitioners become heavily involved in crisis communications whenever there is a major accident or natural disaster affecting an organization and its community, the organizations cannot do without them-thus increased need for organizations to employ public relations professionals. The researcher therefore intends to find out impact of public on the development of learning institutions.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to assess the impact of public relations departments to the development of learning institutions.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General objective

The major objective is to assess the impact of public relations departments to the development of learning institutions.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

(i) To find out the function of public relations departments in learning institutions

(ii) To establish the challenges of facing public relations departments in learning institutions

(iii) To find out the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions

1.5 Research questions

(i) What are the functions of public relations departments in learning institutions?

(ii) What are the challenges of facing public relations departments in learning institutions?

(iii) What are the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions?

1.6 Scope of the study

(a) Contextual Scope

The study was on the impact of public relations departments to the development of learning institutions.

(b) Geographical Scope

The study covered Kampala International University which has its main campus at Kansanga, a location in the southeastern part of Kampala, Uganda's capital and largest city. The coordinates of the university's main campus are: 00 17 42N, 32 36 15E (Latitude: 0.2950; Longitude: 32.6040). KIU's second campus is located in Ishaka, in Bushenyi District, approximately 337 kilometres (209 mi), by road, southwest of Kampala.

(c) Time scope

The study took a period of two months, between July to August.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study will help the learning institutions to adjust in policies as far as public relations performance is organized.

The research will however help policy makers come up with appropriate policies of solving the problems of public relations in Kampala International University.

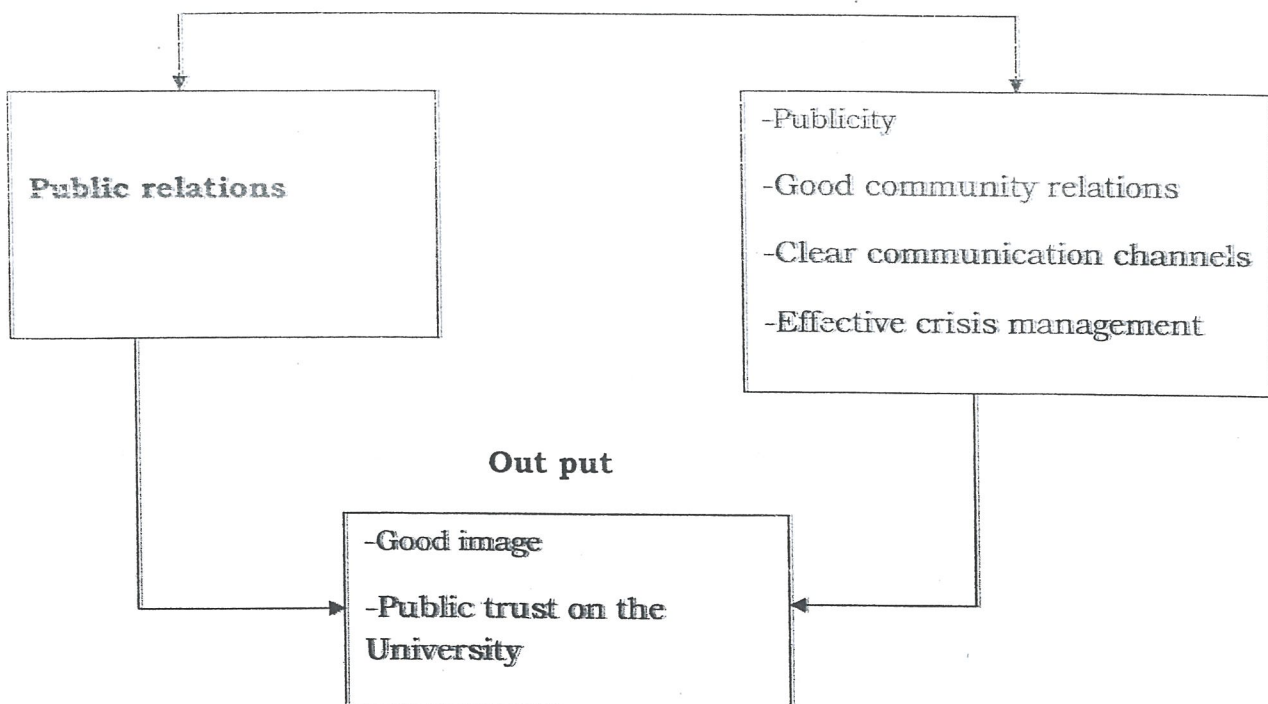
The research findings will boost the documented literature resource of Kampala International University.

The research will help learning institutions appreciate the role of public relations in organizations and hence properly handle their needs.

1.8 Conceptual framework

Independent variable

Dependent variable



Source: Researcher's conceptualization

1.8 Theoretical framework

Agenda-setting theory's main postulate is salience transfer. The agenda-setting theory is the theory that the mass-news media have a large influence on audiences by their choice of what stories to consider newsworthy and how much prominence and space to give them. Salience transfer is the ability of the mass media to transfer issues of importance from their mass media agendas to public agendas (Cohen, 1963). The media agenda is the set of issues addressed by media sources and the public agenda which are issues the public consider important.

Agenda-setting theory was introduced in 1972 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in their ground breaking study of the role of the media in 1968 presidential campaign in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The theory explains the correlation between the rate at which media cover a story and the extent that people think that this story is important (Druckman, 2004). This correlation has been shown to occur repeatedly. In the dissatisfaction of the magic bullet theory, McCombs and Shaw introduced agenda-setting theory in the *Public Opinion Quarterly*. The theory was derived from their study that took place in Chapel Hill, NC, where the researchers surveyed 100 undecided voters during the 1968 presidential campaign on what they thought were key issues and measured that against the actual media content. The ranking of issues was almost identical, and the conclusions matched their hypothesis that the mass media positioned the agenda for public opinion by emphasizing specific topics.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter included looking through the earlier research documents; literature with an aim of identifying a problem of concern eventual number of duplication of early research work is done. Apart from going through other related work. It also involved critically going through other services of materials that are related with the research topic.

2.1 DEFINING PUBLIC RELATIONS

Many U.S. textbooks present their own definition of public relations, often citing researcher Rex Harlow, who compiled more than 470 definitions of public relations before creating his own 87-word definition. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) promulgated a shorter, widely accepted definition in 1988: "Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other."

More recently, scholars have sought to develop more parsimonious definitions and, rather than providing a definition per se, identify key words that describe the practice of public relations. A study of U.S. public relations educators and practitioners (Reber & Harriss, 2003) identified four words linked to the profession: *strategy*, *managerial*, *tactical*, and *responsive*. The researchers found public relations too complex to fit into a single definition. Hutton (1999) and Bruning and Ledingham (1999) offered relational definitions that emphasize the management of strategic relationships. Other descriptive definitions commonly include words such as *reputation* and *credibility*, which describe general concerns of public relations that shape its form.

Another approach is to develop a composite definition of public relations from the Web sites of international public relations agencies, including Burson-

Marsteller, Weber Shandwick Worldwide, Fleishman-Hillard, Porter Novelli, and Edelman. Such a definition might be as follows: A form of strategic communication directed primarily toward gaining public understanding and acceptance and the process of creating a good relationship between an organization and the public, especially with regard to reputation and to communication of information.

2.2 GROWTH OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN EAST AFRICA

The wave of growth in PR practice is moving across the continent. To strengthen PR practice in the eastern region of Africa, the Eastern African Public Relations Associations (EAPRA) was established on December 13, 2002, comprising the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK), Public Relations Associations of Uganda (PRAU), Public Relations Associations of Tanzania (PRAT) and Rwanda's association. According to Peter Mutie "With the birth of EAPRA, Public Relations practice in the region is expected to take deeper root and cross-border consultation expedited. EAPRA seeks observer status in the East Africa Community and the preliminary indication from the community shows no objection to this status (Wilcox et al, 2002). The association will also be seeking to play a leading role in building the image of the region and supplementing the EAC's endeavors in projecting the true face of the region's economic, socio-political and environmental status" (Mutie,2003).

2.3 FUNCTIONS OF PR DEPARTMENTS

Public relations involves supervising and assessing public attitudes, and maintaining mutual relations and understanding between an organization and its public. The function of public relations is to improve channels of communication and to institute new ways of setting up a two-way flow of information and understanding. The main goal of a public relations department is to enhance a company's reputation. Staff that work in public relations, or as it is commonly known, PR, are skilled publicists. They are able to present a company or individual to the world in the best light. The role of a public

relations department can be seen as a reputation protector. The business world of today is extremely competitive. Companies need to have an edge that makes them stand out from the crowd, something that makes them more appealing and interesting to both the public and the media (Biagi, 2005). The public are the buyers of the product and the media are responsible for selling it.

Public relations provide a service for the company by helping to give the public and the media a better understanding of how the company works. Within a company, public relations can also come under the title of *public information* or *customer relations*. These departments assist customers if they have any problems with the company. They are usually the most helpful departments, as they exist to show the company at their best (Biagi, 2005).

PR also helps the company to achieve its full potential. They provide feedback to the company from the public. This usually takes the form of research regarding what areas the public is most happy and unhappy with. People often have the perception of public relations as a group of people who spin everything. *Spin* can mean to turn around a bad situation to the company's advantage. It is true that part of the purpose of public relations is to show the company in a positive light no matter what. There are certain PR experts that a company can turn to for this particular skill (Calcagni, 2007).

The PR department deals with the management of both internal and external communications they responsible for promotions of the learning institutions and implementations of the University's marketing programmes that are related to Overall Mission and vision of the University, also manage and improve the flow of information within the hospital and between the hospital and the community it serve (Phillips et al, 2009).

Public relations professionals have a role to play in helping management to keep in touch with their various public because the role of PR within an organisation has become that of a spokesperson to the management, they

actively solicit both employee and consumer opinion and make management aware of the effects various decisions will have on consumers employees. This is similar to the Two-way symmetric PR Model (by Grunig and Hunt) which includes equality of communication using extensive dialogue and exchanges of views to change attitudes in order to reach the need of the other.

The responsibilities of PR specialist in such field includes; writing and distributing news release, feature articles to the press, compiling press list, writing of newsletters, handling and maintain a media information service, arranging press, radio and television interviews for management, preparing marketing plans for various programmes and strategies promotional and marketing effort. Public relation department is responsible for community relations, University publications, media relations special events and support for fundraising (Cutlip, et al, 2004).

2.4 CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Lack of skills is still a big challenge to the PR industry since most of the employees are fresh from school. "You have to train and this takes a journey because one has to understand the brand and the PR business environment. People need to specialize through practical courses but what is happening now is players in the industry pick from mass communication students without any skills thus posing a challenge to the industry. He also thinks that as a pioneer in this business, so many companies have mushroomed and need regulation to keep the name and image of the PR industry clean (Phillips et al, 2009).

PRAU (Public Relations Association of Uganda) has played in bringing members together but he thinks systems have to come up to self regulate the industry. To protect the industry, there is need for PR companies to come together, set rules and regulations and monitor standards. PRAU should be doing this but it's still a young body. It should grow to take charge of the industry and guide its growth to protect the image of all PR companies so that everybody benefits.

PR supports businesses that do a lot of good things and pay for advertisements (Calcagni, 2007).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter included the methodology of the study. It entailed research design, geographical location/area and population, sampling design, data collection methods and instruments, data analysis and processing and the limitations of the study.

3.1 Research Design

The research used descriptive and analytical research design. These are selected because they are effective ways of research presentation. It was survey-based on quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

3.2 Research population

The research was conducted in one area that is in Kampala International University located in Kampala city-Uganda. Kampala International University has its main campus at Kansanga, a location in the southeastern part of Kampala, Uganda's capital and largest city. The coordinates of the university's main campus are: 00 17 42N, 32 36 15E (Latitude: 0.2950; Longitude: 32.6040). KIU's second campus is located in Ishaka, in Bushenyi District, approximately 337 kilometres (209 mi), by road, southwest of Kampala.

3.3 Sample design

The researcher used purposive sampling technique since it ensures that the only predetermined and chosen respondents are approached, hence getting relevant, correct and adequate information.

3.3.1 Sample size

The sample size of 100 respondents was chosen and this included; 30 KIU staff, 27 public relations consultants, 3 public relations officers and 40 public relations practitioners.

3.4 Ethical procedure

Before going to the field, I began with getting authorization letter from the Dean of the faculty of arts and humanities then take it to the respondents and this enabled the researcher attain adequate information from the respondents. During the process of data collection, confirmation was given to the respondents in that the researcher assured the respondents that the reason for the research will be for only academic purpose and that no information was given out outside .

3.5 Data collection instruments

3.5.1 Instruments

The following data collection methods were used:

(i) Questionnaire

This was designed in line with the topic, objectives and hypothesis. They included both open and closed-ended questions. This instrument has been selected because it is efficient and convenient in a way that the respondent is given time to consult the documents before answering the questions. It is also because the respondent can give unbiased answers since she/he is given to write whatever she/he would like to write which would otherwise be hard for the respondent to write if the researcher is present.

(ii) Structured Interviews

Interviews were administered especially to the respondents. The interview was used with interview guide. The researcher used interview a means which were used to provide information that were not obtained from questionnaires.

(c) Documentary Review

This included detailed review of already existing literature. The tool is selected because it gives accurate, correct and historical data, which may be used for future aspects. The sources of the information here were the libraries, data banks, news papers and any other published information that can readily be available for use as regards the topic of research.

3.5.2 Sources of data collection

The researcher collected data from both primary and secondary sources.

i. Primary Data

This was sourced by physical and visiting of the files and collecting data through variable tools. The respondents were got by first determining the number of the respondents and then taking a physical visit to seek for the consent of the respondents to have them answer the set questions in the questionnaire and this was through following stratified random sampling techniques in the respondents are first selected and then approached.

ii. Secondary data

This was sourced by reviewing of documented resources as newspapers, journals, reports, presentations, magazines and online publications. This is done in order to first identify the existing information on the topic of research and to understand how much the respondent knows about the research topic in order to avoid lies.

3.6 Data processing and analysis

Audrey J. Roth argues that “data processing is concerned with classifying response into meaningful categories called codes.” Data processing starts by editing the schedules and coding the responses. Editing, Coding and

Tabulation techniques are used in data processing exercise. Data processing is the link between data collection and analysis.

Nachmas and Nichimas pointed out that it involves the transformation of data gathered from the field into systematic categories and the transformation of these categories into codes to enable quantitative analysis and tabulation; the data collected is classified into a meaningful manner for easy interpretation and understanding. This involved preparing data collected into some useful, clear and understandable data. The whole exercise involved editing, tabulation and analyzing the data statistically to enable the researcher draw conclusions in relation to the research variables.

3.6.1 Editing

Editing is the process whereby the completed questionnaires and interview schedules are analyzed in the hope of amending recording errors or at least deleting data that are obviously erroneous. This is aimed at improving the quality of information from respondents. The researcher fills out few unanswered questions. However, answers filed are deducted from the proceeding answers or questions.

3.6.2 Coding

"The purpose of coding in research is to classify the answers to questionnaires into meaningful categories so as to bring out their essential patterns." Coding was used in this research in order to summarize data by classifying different response given into categories for easy interpretation. For each question, list of probable answers was prepared.

3.6.3 Tabulation

According to Moser and Kalton, "data once edited and coded are put together in some kind of tables and may undergo some other forms of statistical analysis." Data is put into some kind of statistical table showing the number of

occurrences of responses to particular questions with percentage to express data in ratio form.

3.7 Data Analysis

3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Editing of the information from the respondents was done. This is before leaving the respondent purposely to avoid the loss of material, misinformation and also to check for uniformity, consistency, accuracy and comprehensibility.

3.7.2 Qualitative data analysis

Data was analyzed before, during and after collection. Before data collection, tentative themes were identified. The tentative themes are social, economic and environmental factors associated with social service delivery. After data collection, information of the same codes were assembled together and a report was written.

3.8 Anticipated limitations of the study

Financial constraint was also a factor that limited the study. Transport costs were also high to be met by the researcher and this fully contributed to the delay of the research because it made it hard for the researcher to continue with the tight budget.

Rudeness and hostility among some respondents were also other limitations of the study in the sense that the researcher found that there are rude and hostile respondents who in the long run turned down the request of the researcher to answer the questions. Many of such respondents walked away despite of the fact that the researcher may tried to plead for their attention.

Shyness of the respondents was another limitation of the study.

The researcher was also affected by the prevailing weather conditions i.e. the rain. It is true that the researcher was conducted during rainy season and it

became so hard for the researcher to find the respondents since they were in doors.

However, these problems were overcome by the researcher in the following ways;

Strict adherence to the tight budget was the solution to the problem of lack of finance.

Humble talk and convincing of respondents was the ways employed by the respondents to overcome the problem of unwilling and shy respondents to answer the questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods, which was then analyzed and processed to make it useful and understandable. Data was collected, tabulated and then analyzed.

4.1 Social Demographic Characteristics

4.1.1 Age of the respondents

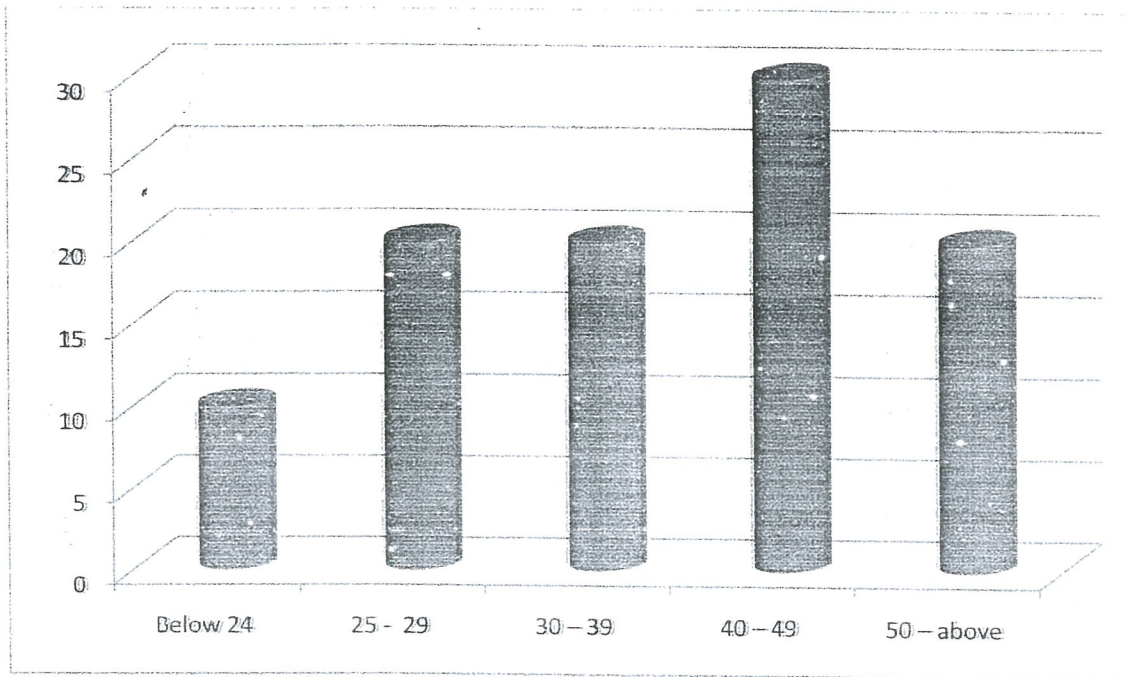
Respondents were asked questions related to their age and the results are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Age distribution of respondent

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
Below 24	10	10
25 - 29	20	20
30 - 39	20	20
40 - 49	30	30
50 - above	20	20
TOTAL	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Figure 2: Age distribution of respondent



Source: Primary data

The table 1 and figure 2 above show that 10% of the respondents were below 24 years, 20% were between 25-29 years of age, 20% were between 30-39 years of age, 30% were between 40-49 years and 20% were above 50 years of age.

4.1.2 Marital Status of the respondents

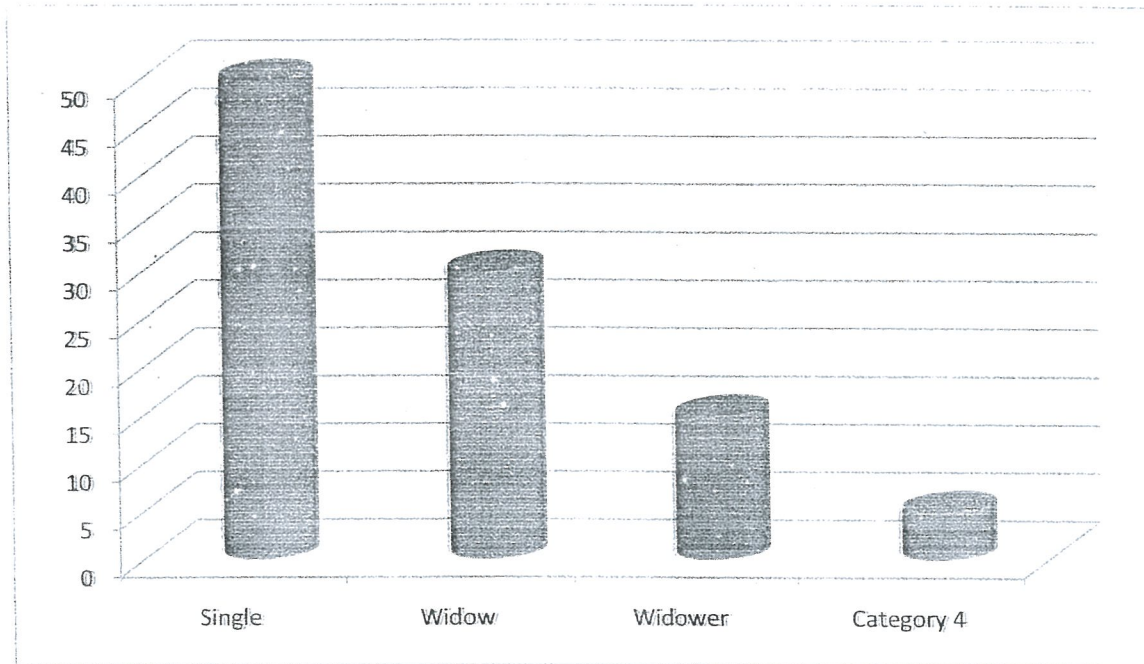
Another variable which was important in respect to the situation of the people in the area was marital status. Information regarding marital status of the respondents was obtained by asking them whether they were married, single, widowed or widowers.

Table 2: Marital status of the respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	50	50
Single	30	30
Widow	15	15
Widower	5	5
TOTAL	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Figure 3: Marital status of the respondents



Source: Primary data

Table 2 and figure 3 above show that 50% of the respondents were married, 30% were single, 15% were widows and 5% were widower. This therefore shows that the majority of the respondents were married.

4.1.3 Sex of the respondents

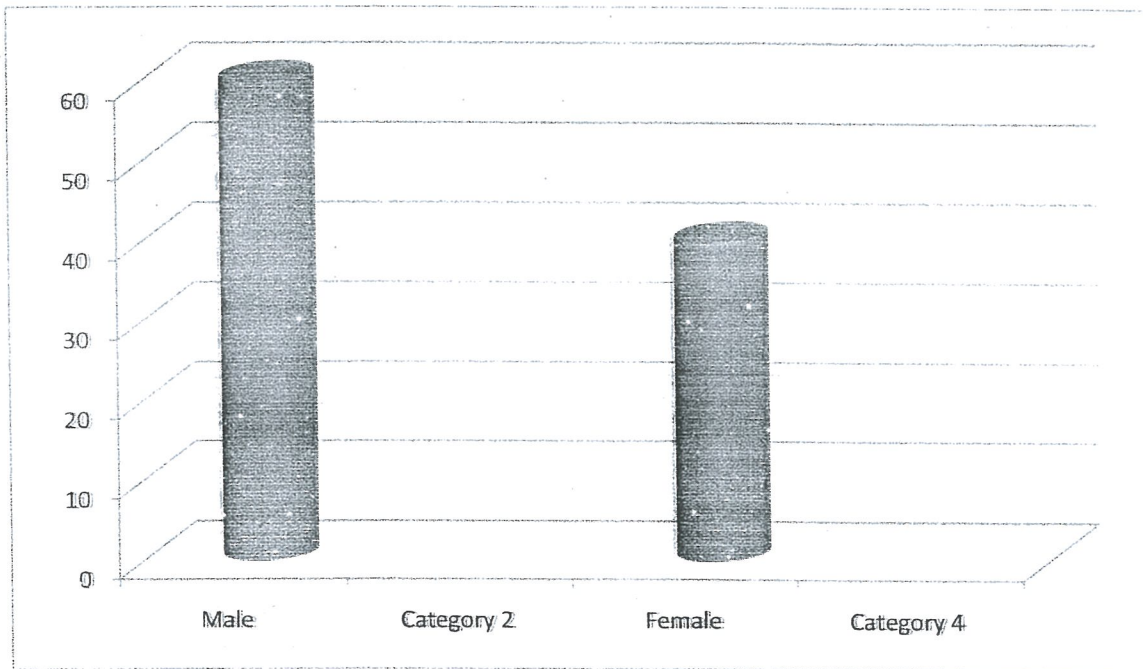
Sex was also another factor which was considered during the study. This is because the researcher was interested in finding out the number of females and males in the whole of the population, and compares the percentage composition of the two.

Table 3: Sex of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	40	40
Male	60	60
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4: Sex of the respondents



Source: Primary data

Table 3 and figure 4 above show the sex of the respondents and it was found that 40% of the respondents were females and 60% were males.

4.1.4 Educational status

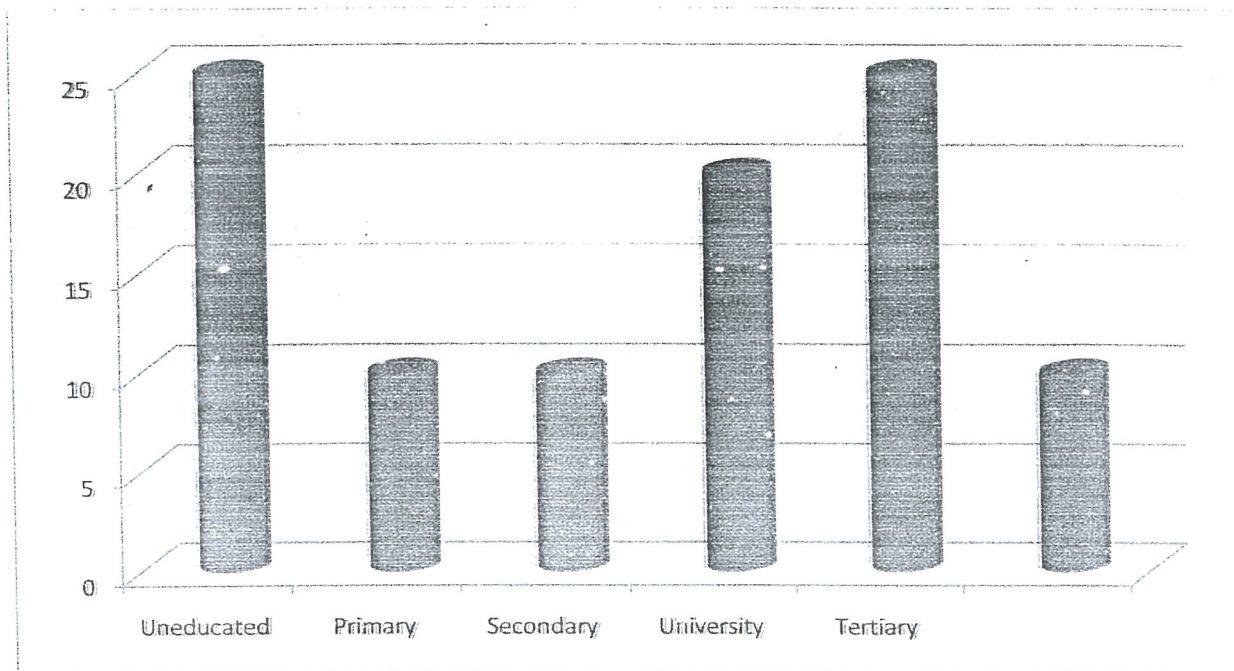
Respondents were asked questions related to their educational status and their responses are shown in the table below;

Table 4: Educational level of the respondents

Education levels	Frequency	Percentage
Uneducated	25	25
Primary	10	10
Secondary	10	10
University	20	20
Tertiary	25	25
Others	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Figure 5: Educational level of the respondents



Source: Primary data

Table 4 above and figure 5 above show the educational levels of the respondents and it revealed that 25% of the respondents were uneducated, 20% were of primary level, 10% had secondary education, 20% received university education, 25% had tertiary education and 10% fell under other levels of education.

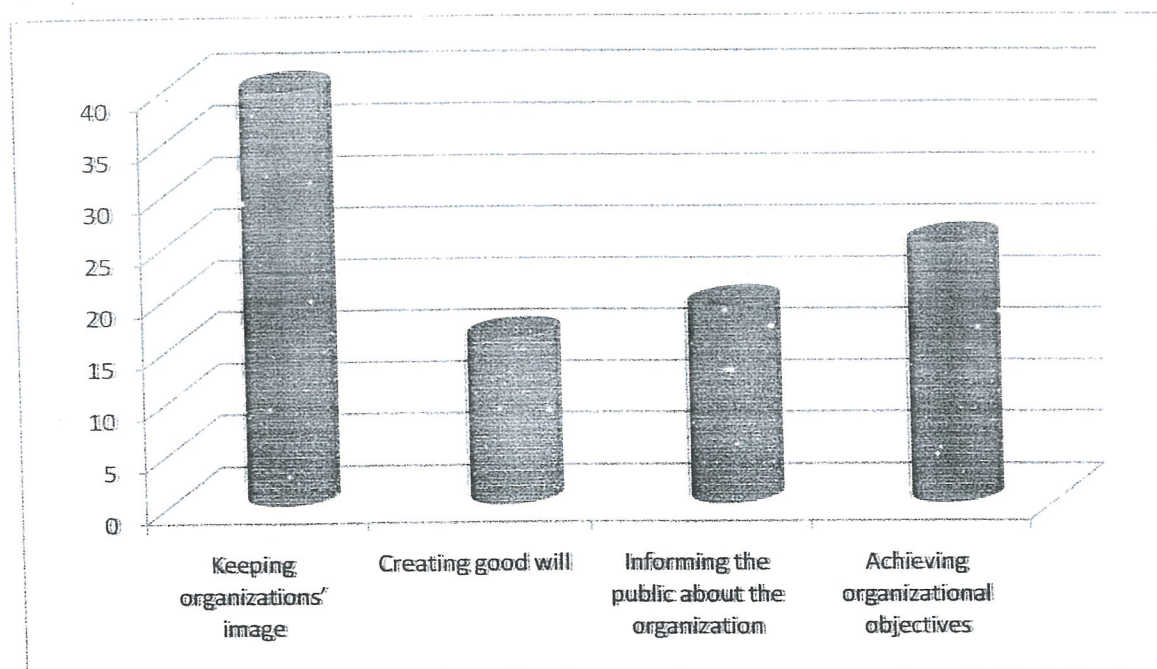
4.2 The functions of public relations departments in learning institutions

Table 5: The functions of public relations departments in learning institutions

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Keeping organizations' image	40	40
Creating good will	16	16
Informing the public about the organization	19	19
Achieving organizational objectives	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: primary data

Figure 6: The functions of public relations departments in learning institutions



Source: primary data

The table and figure above show the function of public relations department in learning institutions and the findings revealed that;

Over 40% of the respondents said that some of the main goals of public relations 'are to create, maintain, and protect the organization's reputation, enhance its prestige, and present a favorable image. Studies have shown that consumers often base their purchase decisions on a University's reputation, so public relations can have a definite impact on sales and revenue. Public relations can be an effective part of a company's overall marketing strategy.

Another major public relations goal is to create good will for the organization. Over 16% of the respondents said that this involves such functions as employee relations, stockholder and investor relations, media relations, and community relations. Public relations may function to educate certain audiences about many things relevant to the organization—including the business in general, new legislation, and how to use a particular product—as well as to overcome misconceptions and prejudices.

The respondents also said that both the nonprofit organization do educate the public regarding a certain point of view. The learning institutions here ensure that they get in touch with the public and they try to inform them of the developments in the organizations. So they inform the public regarding particular developments that the Universities introduce to the public.

Finally, 25% of the respondents said that another role of the public relations is to achieve organizational objective. Create in the case of a for-profit company, public relations and marketing should be coordinated to be sure they are working to achieve the same objectives in that the PR departments strive to draw programmes that the suit the objectives of the organization .

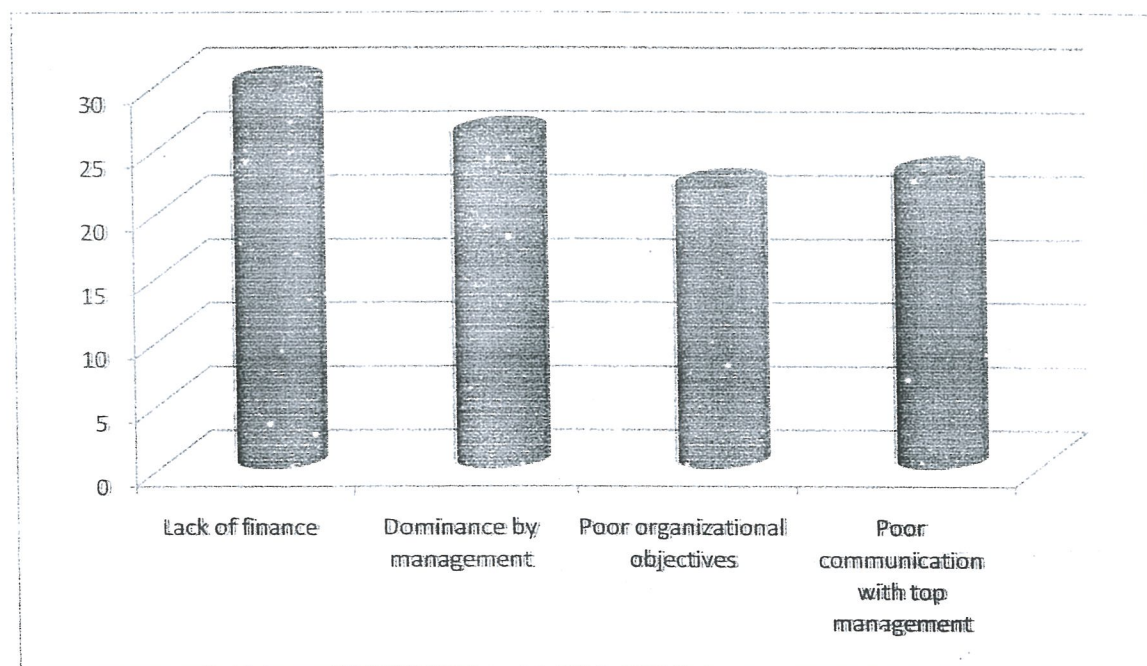
4.3 The challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions

Table 6: The challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions

Responsé	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of finance	30	30
Dominance by management	26	26
Poor organizational objectives	22	22
Poor communication with top management	23	23
Total	100	100

Source: primary data

Figure 7: The challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions



Source: primary data

Table and figure above show challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions and the findings revealed that;

Over 30% (majority) of the respondents noted that lack of finance is one of the major changes facing PR departments in learning institutions. The respondents noted that many of the organizations allocate very little funds to the PR departments and causes problems to the detriment as it has to operate under tight budget and at the end fail to fulfill organizational objectives

The respondents also said that over dominance by the top management of learning institutions also affect the management and the performance of PR departments in KIU. Over 26% of the respondents said that many PR officers have for long been dictated upon by the top management and this frustrates their independence in individual organizations. As a result, the PR department ends up less performing due to lack of independence and because of deprivation of departmental decision.

Over 22% of the total percentage of the respondents said that lack of clear organizational objectives is yet another challenge of PR departments in learning institutions. The respondents revealed that the learning institutions expect the PR departments to perform more than the organizational objective yet the objectives are not well spelt by the management.

Over 23% of the respondents noted that another challenge faced by PR departments in learning institutions. The respondents here said that organizations cannot survive without clear communication. Clear communication enables the organizations to effectively speak to their publics and once there is no clear communication, the organization is bound to suffer failure and that they will only perform better when the challenges are addressed.

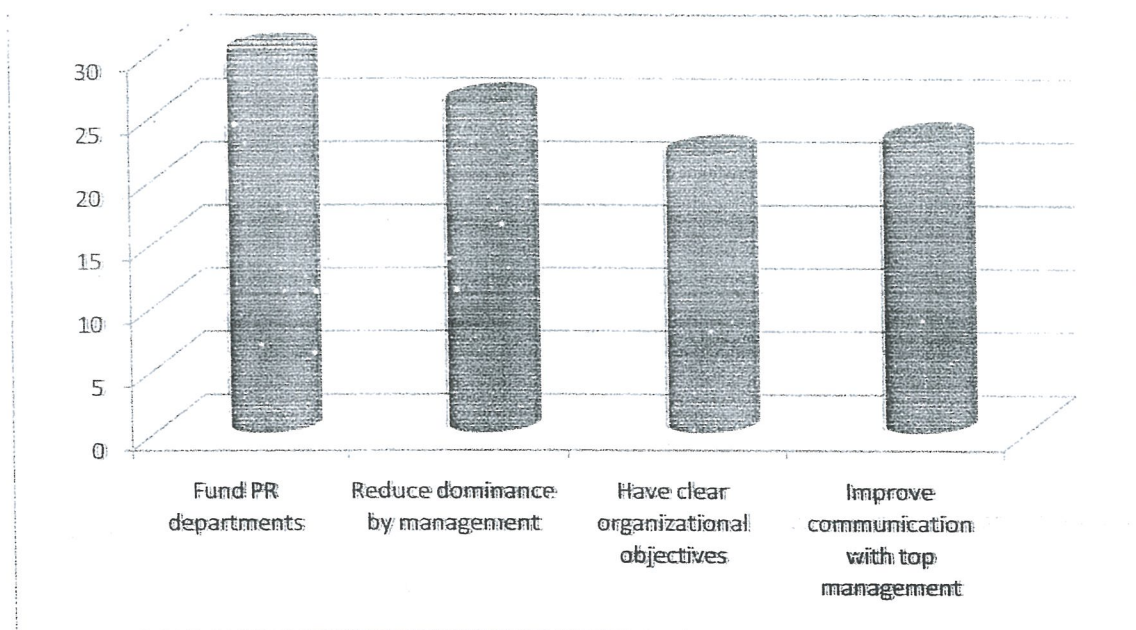
4.4 The solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions

Table 7: The solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Fund PR departments	30	30
Reduce dominance by management	26	26
Have clear organizational objectives	22	22
Improve communication with top management	23	23
Total	100	100

Source: primary data

Figure 8: The solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions



Source: Primary data

Figure and table above show the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions and the findings revealed that;

Majority (30%) of the respondents noted that financing of PR department in an organization is the best way of solving the challenges facing PR departments in learning institutions. The respondents said that PR departments need to fully be financed if the organization is to effectively function. Poor funding of the PR departments in organization is what leads to poor performance of the whole structure.

Over 26% of the respondents said that reduction in the dominance of top management decisions in PR department is yet another solution to the challenges facing PR departments in learning institutions. The respondents here stressed that public relations departments need to be given autonomy since the occupants know what to do and they should not be dominated by the top management decisions since this will interfere with their operations.

Over 22% of the respondents noted that learning institutions should have clear organizational objectives. The respondents here noted that many organizations have poor organizational objectives and this fully affects their performance. To solve the challenge facing PR departments in learning institutions and it is not until this problem is solved that the PR department can be effective.

Finally, 23% of the respondents noted that improve communication with top management is yet another solution to the challenges facing PR departments in learning institutions. The respondents revealed that many of the challenges that appear in PR departments are basically poor communication between the PR officers and the management and this affects autonomy of the department.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter was concerned with the summary of the major findings, recommendation and conclusion.

5.1 Summary of the study

The research was conducted in Kampala International University. Kampala International University which is has its main campus at Kansanga, a location in the southeastern part of Kampala, Uganda's capital. The research was guided by the objectives of the study which included; finding out the function of public relations departments in learning institutions, establishing the challenges of facing public relations departments in learning institutions and finding out the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions.

On finding out the function of public relations departments in learning institutions, the study revealed that; keeping organizations' image, creating good will, informing the public about the organization and achieving organizational objectives were the answers given by the respondents.

On establishing the challenges of facing public relations departments in learning institutions, the research revealed that; lack of finance, dominance by management, poor organizational objectives, and poor communication with top management were the answers given to the respondents.

On the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions, the research revealed that; funding of PR departments, reduce dominance by management, have clear organizational objectives,

improvement communication with top management were the answers given by the respondents.

Conclusions and recommendations were then made after interpreting and analyzing data.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The researcher concludes that public relations serves a wide variety of institutions in society such as schools, colleges and religious institutions and also businesses, trade unions, government agencies, voluntary associations, foundations, and hospitals. To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or publics such as employees, members, customers, local communities, shareholders, and other institutions, and with society at large.

The also concludes that it is harder to develop effective relationships with many different audiences now because audiences are so fractured and can strike back in more ways. CEOs, especially, have learned to their peril that their roles are limited as boards become more active. Boards have learned they are not free from the pressure of activists. PR's opportunity to act as a counselor to management and as a mediator helping to translate private aims into reasonable, publicly acceptable policy and action is not so simple. There should never be a cessation of researching, conducting and evaluating programs of action and communication. However, PR practitioners almost always lag in this regard.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations were made after interpreting and analyzing data. The following recommendations were then advanced;

A PR person must keep abreast of current events and be well versed in pop culture to understand what stories will get the publics' attention. It takes a combination of analysis and creative problem solving to get your client in the public eye. The content of the work is constantly changing and unforeseen challenges arise every day.

Public relations professionals should be the ones to alert senior management when ethical issues arise. Public relations counselors should also know the values of both internal and external publics, and use these in astute analyses and ultimate resolutions of ethical dilemmas.

Professional communicators must be conversant with the value systems of their organizations before these values are publicly called into question. Public relations professionals should begin studying ethics now, before you "must" address a problem, and as soon as possible. Public relations professionals should identify the underlying values in the organization's mission statement, code of ethics, or other policy document. You should identify the approach in ethics closest to existing organizational values. Those mentioning the greater good, benefit of society, or consequences of operating are most likely utilitarian. The PR officer should be an outgoing person as he has to interact with lots of people, like, potential clients and also media persons. It is the responsibility of the public relations officer to answer the questions of the public and the media, if some issues arise about products or services of the company.

Along with knowledge of the media, sales and marketing, it is also important for the PR official to know something about the psychology of the public, which

would help in understanding and planning what kind of strategy would work with a particular group of people.

5.4 Areas for further research

The researcher recommends that further research be done on the effects of management decisions on the performance of public relations department in learning institution.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

I Githui Anne Nyawira a student of Kampala International University pursuing a Bachelor's Degree of Mass communication kindly request you to answer these questions in utmost faith that would really help me successfully finish my course as a partial fulfillment of the award of Bachelor of Mass communication (BMC). I therefore affirm that this information is purely for the academic purpose.

SECTION A

1) Sex

(a) Male ☐ (b) Female ☐

2) Age

(a) 20-25 ☐ (b) 25-30 ☐

(c) 30-40 ☐ (d) 41-50 ☐

(e) 50-60 ☐ (f) 61-70 ☐

3) Marital Status

(a) Married ☐ (b) Single ☐

(c) Widower ☐ (d) Widow ☐

4) Religion

- (a) Catholic ☐ (b) Protestant ☐
 (c) Muslim ☐ (d) Others (Specify)

5) Educational Level

- (a) None ☐ (b) Primary ☐
 (c) Secondary ☐ (d) Post Secondary ☐

SECTION B

1) Do you have children?

- (a) Yes ☐ (b) No ☐

2) Have you ever heard of public relations?

- (a) Yes ☐ (b) No ☐

(c) If yes, state what you know about public relations?

- (a)
 (b)
 (c)
 (d)
 (e)
 (f)

SECTION C

(i) What are the functions of public relations departments in learning institutions?

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)
- (f)

(ii) (ii) What are the challenges of facing public relations departments in learning institutions?

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)
- (f)

(iii) What are the solutions to the challenges facing public relations departments in learning institutions?

- (a)
- (b)