Assessment of Public Relations’ Practice of Edo State University Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria

by Obinna Johnkennedy Chukwu
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BY

Obinna Johnkennedy Chukwu, Ph.D, BL
Department of Mass Communication,
Edo State University Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria
obinnakennedy@yahoo.com
chukwu.obinna@edouniversity.edu.ng

Ewowomina Daniel Akpor, Ph.D
Department of Mass Communication,
Edo State University Uzairue, Edo State Nigeria
Ewowomina.akpor@edouniversity.edu.ng

Olley, Oritesean Wilfred
Department of Mass Communication,
Edo State University Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria
olley.wilfred@edouniversity.edu.ng

Abstract
The study was carried out to assess public relations’ practice of Edo State University Uzairue. The study was predicated on Systems Theory (ST). The objectives were to determine the extent whether or not the Institution has a functional public relations department and to evaluate the extent of its public relations activities’ effectiveness, amongst others. Interview schedule was used to elicit information from the public relations office headed by the public relations officer. Findings indicates, amongst others, that the University has a public relations office, but does not have public relations department, and that the extent of her public relations activities’ effectiveness is average, amongst others. Given the above and the enormity of the importance of public relations to the educational institutions, the study, thus, recommend that Edo State University Uzairue should set-up a PR department with its ancillary compliments; step-up, and also, utilise effective public relations strategies in order to achieve effectiveness in its public relations’ campaigns or activities.

Keywords: Public relations, Practice, Edo State University
Introduction

Public relations is valued and regarded as a management role that maintains and perpetuates a positive image, understanding, and mutually beneficial interactions between an organisation and its constituents. Grunig and Hunt (1984) elaborate on the preceding (Public Relations) as the management of communication between an organisation and its publics. Similarly, researchers believed that public relations is the process of controlling and releasing information to the public from an individual or an institution (such as a business, government agency, or non-profit organisation) in order to influence public perception. Seitel (2007) distinguished between public relations and advertising; and Publicity and Public relations, thus – public relations may include an individual or an organisation gaining exposure to their audiences through topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payments, as opposed to advertising, which does and is a form of marketing communications; and public relations as one that is internally controlled, whereas publicity is not. Over the years, public relations (PR) have proven to be a tool that individuals and organisations (both private and public) cannot live without. According to Richard and Umor (2020), public relations is an excellent and cost-effective means of improving the image of an individual, organisation, social groupings, products, or services, among others. Given the foregoing, public relations practise comprises a wide range of activities with varying purposes that aim to assist organisations in developing and sustaining the variety of relationships that ensure their long-term success. - It encourages increased productivity, corporate discipline, and a peaceful industrial ecology, as well as persuades people of an individual's, institution's, or organization's credibility, performance, potentials, and the quality of its offered products or services. Furthermore, public relations provide benefits such as developing good relationships with both internal and external publics, as well as increasing brand awareness. As a result of the foregoing, organisations, as well as higher institutions, should have a functional public relations unit or department to ensure appropriate management of the organization's ties with its publics, amongst other things. Scholars agree that this promotes a positive image, a stronger reputation for the organisation, and a favourable climate for the growth of economic activities. Edo State University Uzairue, as an organisation and tertiary institution engaged in the business of manpower development, is not exempt from these prescriptions, and against the backdrop that an institution that operates without a public relations unit or a corporate communication department is doomed to fail or make obvious mistakes detrimental to the organization's success.
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Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria

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