

# **GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH**



**MA PUBLIC RELATIONS**



**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL IN A PUBLIC SERVICE  
ORGANISATION: A STUDY OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE  
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION - ACCRA**

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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MA IN PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this study is the result of my own research and that no part of it or its entirety has been presented to any institution for any award. All references have been duly acknowledged. I am responsible for any shortcoming in this research work.

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Signature: .....

Date: 25<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2017.....

### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this study were supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of research work laid down by the School of Graduate Studies and Research (SoGSaR) of the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) - Accra.

Mr. Prosper Tom Quarshie

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## ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study was to examine whether public relations is a management tool and whether PR practitioners perform modern PR roles and functions in the public service of Ghana particularly at the MESTI towards achieving its overall organisational goals and to identify the challenges PR practitioners face in the public service in the delivery of their duties and services.

The study was underpinned by the roles theory and systems theory. The mixed method to research was used in data collection, specifically structured interview guides and questionnaires were used in gathering the data for analysis. The quantitative data was analysed and interpreted using SPSS, paying particular attention to frequency and percentage while the qualitative data was recorded, transcribed and analysed in relation to whether PR is a management tool and whether PR practitioners perform modern PR roles and functions in the Public Service and in the MESTI in particular towards achieving its overall organisational goals and objectives.

The study revealed that, though there are a few misgivings as to why PR should be part of the dominant coalition, the Public Service organogram positioned it to as such to coordinate all communication related activities of all government institutions including the MESTI. It was recommended that the management of the MESTI should provide the necessary financial assistance, logistics, improve on how it communicates with its publics especially the internal publics. In summary, top management was advised to give motivational incentives to enable the PR department of function more efficiently and effectively to ensure that the image and reputation of the Ministry is well managed since the internal publics are the mirror that reflects the Ministry and its ideologies.

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I am also very grateful to my able supervisor, Mr. Prosper Tom Quarshie, whose advice and guidance led to the successful completion of this dissertation. May the Lord Almighty bless you abundantly.

## **DEDICATION**

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my loving husband, Henry Kofi Asamoah for his patience, love, encouragement and support during my study. To my dad and siblings, it is your prayers and words of encouragement that have brought me this far in education. Finally, to Ms. Christine Aku Fugar for her love, support and prayers during my study. May the almighty God richly bless you all.

## ACRONYMS

<b>BS</b>	-	<b><i>Boundary Spanner</i></b>
<b>CEO</b>	-	<b><i>Chief Executive Officer</i></b>
<b>CG</b>	-	<b><i>Core Government</i></b>
<b>CM</b>	-	<b><i>Communication Manager</i></b>
<b>CT</b>	-	<b><i>Communication Technician</i></b>
<b>DA</b>	-	<b><i>Deductive Approach</i></b>
<b>DC</b>	-	<b><i>Dominant Coalition</i></b>
<b>FT</b>	-	<b><i>Frequency Table</i></b>
<b>GC</b>	-	<b><i>Government Council</i></b>
<b>GIJ</b>	-	<b><i>Ghana Institute of Journalism</i></b>
<b>GTUC</b>	-	<b><i>Ghana Telecom University College</i></b>
<b>HODs</b>	-	<b><i>Head of Departments</i></b>
<b>IA</b>	-	<b><i>Inductive Approach</i></b>
<b>ICT</b>	-	<b><i>Information Communication Technology</i></b>
<b>IGF</b>	-	<b><i>Internally Generated Funds</i></b>
<b>IO</b>	-	<b><i>Information Officer</i></b>
<b>IPR</b>	-	<b><i>Institute of Public Relations</i></b>
<b>ISD</b>	-	<b><i>Information Services Department</i></b>
<b>MA</b>	-	<b><i>Master of Arts</i></b>
<b>MDAs</b>	-	<b><i>Ministries, Departments and Agencies</i></b>
<b>MESTI</b>	-	<b><i>Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation</i></b>
<b>MoC</b>	-	<b><i>Ministry of Communication</i></b>

<b>MUCG</b>	-	<b><i>Methodist University College Ghana</i></b>
<b>OECD</b>	-	<b><i>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</i></b>
<b>PC</b>	-	<b><i>Pie Chart</i></b>
<b>PO</b>	-	<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>
<b>PR</b>	-	<b><i>Public Relations</i></b>
<b>PRAG</b>	-	<b><i>Public Relations Association of Ghana</i></b>
<b>PRO</b>	-	<b><i>Public Relations Officer</i></b>
<b>PRP</b>	-	<b><i>Public Relations Practitioner</i></b>
<b>PRP</b>	-	<b><i>Public Relations Publics</i></b>
<b>PRSA</b>	-	<b><i>Public Relations Society of America</i></b>
<b>PS</b>	-	<b><i>Public Service</i></b>
<b>PSC</b>	-	<b><i>Public Services Commission</i></b>
<b>R&amp;D</b>	-	<b><i>Research and Development</i></b>
<b>RSIM</b>	-	<b><i>Research, Statistical and Information Management</i></b>
<b>RUC</b>	-	<b><i>Regent University College</i></b>
<b>SOEs</b>	-	<b><i>State Owned Enterprises</i></b>
<b>SPSS</b>	-	<b><i>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</i></b>
<b>TOR</b>	-	<b><i>Terms of Reference</i></b>
<b>UN</b>	-	<b><i>United Nations</i></b>
<b>WB</b>	-	<b><i>World Bank</i></b>

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter covers the introduction, background, problem statement, objectives, significance, scope and limitations, operational definition of terms and organization of the study.

## 1.2 INTRODUCTION

Right from creation rendering a service to mankind rather than one's self is a natural phenomenon that has come to stay. Therefore, it is not surprising that today there is a sector called the public service where services are being provided by governments to people living within its jurisdiction; either directly or by financing provision of services.

The name public service is normally associated with a social consensus which is usually expressed through democratic elections that certain services should be made available to all, irrespective of their income, physical ability or mental status. By extension and for social and political reasons such services are well structured in a manner that they are usually subjected to regulations to prevent or avoid misuse and corruption.

In a similar development, 'word' was used to create the world and fast forwarding it today suggests that it has been the oldest tool for one person to communicate to another for a mutual understanding and co-existence. But with time, mastering 'words' for communication calls for skills and certain clouts that will further enhance relationship between two entities, organisations or societies. Leaders in virtually every great

society throughout history understood the importance of influencing public opinion through persuasion. But in the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all elements of society, companies, non-profit organisations, governments and other institutions are wrestling with constant shifts in technology, economics, security and popular opinion, in all this, the public relations profession is expected to thrive because increasing numbers of organisations are interested in communicating their stories due to the complexities in the global world.

It is in this light that every government institution must have a prudent and vibrant public relations or communications department or practitioners mediating on behalf of and for its publics. Here, communication or public relations department's mandate is to give regular information on policies, legislations, regulations, plans and achievements of its organisation or the sector it stands for. Also, help to educate the various publics on its policies, regulations and any other issue that affects its publics in a mutually beneficial manner.

Research shows that three major factors shape the landscape of global public relations, it includes the rapid development of the public relations field, its leading role in assisting the world economy, and the democratization of information worldwide (Wilcox, 2006). This means that more and more organisations and institutions are recognising PR as an integral part of the dominant coalition for a lasting solution because public relations practice has become the most powerful communication tool driving the world economy through the concept of information communication technology (ICT) and globalisation.

In summary, my study seeks to investigate whether Public Relations' role is constructively practiced as a management tool at MESTI, a public service organisation.

### 1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Basically, a profession is considered as an activity that requires specialized training, knowledge, qualification and skills. Therefore, professions around the world are guided by certain agreed standards to aid them as they go about their duties. For example, the entry point of Public Relations in the public sector according to Alison Theaker (2001:219) started with the formation of the Crombie Committee in 1947. The said committee established certain terms of reference (TOR) leading to the creation of professional group of civil servants to provide formidable relation between government and the media. This committee came out with a report regarding the role of an Information Officer as follows:

- to create and maintain an informed opinion about subjects with which each department deals
- to use all methods of publicity where suitable to help the department achieve its purpose
- to assist and advise in all matters bearing on relations between the department and the public and
- to advise the department on the public's reaction to the policies or actions of the department

Crowning the above points was a further insistence that a Public Relations Officer (PRO) must have direct access to the Minister, so that his work and that of his subordinates would bring them into direct relation with all branches of the organisation at all levels. In addition, the PRO should be made aware of all developments in the policy of the department at the earliest practicable moment and should be consulted on matters relating either to the information of the public or to the response of the public. All these points go to support the clarion calls by scholars and professional bodies that PR must be part of Dominant Coalition (DC), that is the highest decision making body of all organisations.

Some professional bodies define PR as the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organisation's leadership and implementing planned programmes of action

serving both the organization and the public interest. Practicalizing this definition on the African continent, Wu and Baah-Boakye, 2008b, said if PR is viewed as a strategic management function in Africa, it will help African corporations to respond to economic, social and political changes in information technology and social institutions effectively. An efficient public relations practice is a strong pillar which transforms lots of organisations in the new era of information communication technology (ICT) and globalisation of the world market. It becomes the means through which organisations effectively monitor and interact with other key groups within the organisational environment. This is the reason why it has to move from being all about disseminating information (press agency and publicity) to relationship building and management.

Effective PR practice is the means through which organisations monitor and interact with key groups within their internal and external environment. Over the years, PR has moved from being all about disseminating of information to relationship management. Modern researchers have proven that, for PR to play its role effectively, it must be part of the dominant coalition and be strategically positioned.

However a cursory observation at the PR department of the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) shows that it lacks modern PR management trends. With regard to these issues, my study seeks to investigate and examine the challenges leading to that and possibly recommend few strategies for a lasting solution.

## **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

According to Kirat 2005, Public relations as a term is often misunderstood and misused. Budd, 1991 also asserts that, the way PR is practiced often reduces it to mere transmitter of information. The ability of the public relations practitioner in performing his or her roles and functions effectively to influence decisions taken by the dominant coalition still remains a dilemma in most public sector organisations in Africa and Ghana in particular. There seems to be a lack of understanding and agreement between PR practitioners and the dominant coalition (major decision making body within organisations) about the roles and functions that PR perform in organisations.

If these unfortunate decisions continue, the performance of PR roles and functions will not sync with the organisation's goals and objectives. A typical example is where most organisations mistake Public Relations for Protocol Services only and so do not see how it should be a management tool. This mentality is negatively affecting the practice of Public Relations in the public service of Ghana today and MESTI is of no exception.

The problem with the roles public relations play in the public service is how to effectively communicate with their internal and external publics because most of their communications do not seek feedback. These limitations are due to the laid down systems that the public service operates with. The public service has a planned structure which controls its administration. The sessional activities of the public service determine its level of acceptance by its publics thereby the success of its performance and such achievements cannot be reached without public relations playing a key role as a powerful image building tool that organisations cannot do without in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. So if PR is relegated to the background, it becomes a challenge that must be settled, hence my study into examining PR as a management tool in a public sector organisation.

The general public has its own perceptions about the public service as a whole. The combination of perceptions and opinions from the various publics determine the total corporate image and reputation of an organisation. This makes it difficult for public relations practice to identify itself with programmes within the public sector. Thus, PR roles are considered subordinated to other organisational functions. It is in this light that Kotler (1994), generally described PR as a marketing stepchild and an after-thought to more serious promotional and strategic planning. The fact is, PR's value is more than what other professions perceive it to be because, it is the most powerful brand management tool when used in sync with an organisation's goals and objectives in promoting the values of the organisation and touching on its bottom line. The prevailing consensus is that a lot of PR practitioners work as technicians rather than managers in the public service organisations. Dozier 1992 wraps it up that, unless PR activities are considered as management role, the organisational perception and understanding of roles PR performs will be minimised.

In summary, this seemingly difficulty in identifying how PR is practiced in the public service of Ghana has necessitated my study into this area with particular attention to the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) Accra. As a result of the aforementioned circumstances, my research empirically seeks to examine the roles that the PR practitioners perform within the public service of Ghana as well as the challenges that come along in the performance of such roles in accordance with the goals and objectives of the public service with particular attention to the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) – Accra.

## **1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This research seeks to examine whether PR is a management tool and whether PR practitioners perform modern PR roles and functions in the public service particularly at the MESTI towards achieving its overall organisational goals.

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To find out whether PR is a management tool in the public service.
2. To examine the roles and functions played by the PR practitioner in the public service.
3. To access the various means the PR department communicates with its internal and external publics.
4. To find out if there is a policy underpinning the practice public relations in the public service.
5. To examine the challenge Public Relations Practitioners face in the public service in the delivery of PR activities.

### **1.5.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This research seeks to find answers to questions such as:

1. Is PR a management tool in the public service?
2. What PR roles and functions do PR practitioners play in the public service?
3. What means does the PR department of MESTI communicate with its internal and external publics?
4. Is there any policy underpinning the practice of PR in the public service?
5. Are there any challenges the PR practitioners face in the delivery of their PR activities within the public service?

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The result of this study would reveal the roles and functions PR practitioners perform in some public services as well as unveil the challenges PR practitioners face in the delivery of their services. It would serve as a means of educating the top management of the public service to know the value of professional PR practice and how it could help in projecting good corporate image and reputation of the public service to its publics and adding to its bottom line. It would add to existing knowledge about the practice of PR in general and the public service of Ghana in particular. By extension, this study sought to clear all negative perceptions people have with regard to the practice of PR and particularly about public service organisations. People usually perceive PR practice as propaganda, protocol service or a glorified messenger. By the end of this investigation most of the dilemmas concerning the practice would be unveiled. Public service officers in places of authority would acquire an in-depth understanding of the benefits and the importance of PR practice to organisations, be it public or private. Researchers would also refer to findings from this research as a source of secondary data when conducting related studies in the future.

## **1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study is limited to the Ministry of Environment Science Technology and Innovation (MESTI) – Accra. It is to examine public relations as a management tool in a public service organisation with particular attention to the roles and functions PR performs and the challenges that come along with the practice of PR within the public service of Ghana with particular attention to MESTI, Accra. The study adopted both inductive and deductive approaches to data gathering and analysis. Specifically, a structured interview guide and a questionnaire are the key methods of gathering data for analysis. The study would adopt a mixed method approach to enable the researcher to directly engage with the focal persons and probe beneath their delineated roles and functions to explore the actual factors which shape their practice and to find out the perceptions of other members of the sample population on whether the role of PR is seen as a management tool in the public service or not with a particular attention to the MESTI.

## **1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study is not without some inherent limitations. First of all, there is relatively little literature on the Ghanaian situation with regard to the history of the practice of Public Relations in the public service. Secondly, owing to the limited time available for conducting this study, the sample size has been kept to a minimum. This study was limited to the management and staff of the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) - Accra.

## 1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The research is presented in five chapters:

**Chapter One:** This covers the introduction, consisting of the background, problem statement, objectives, significance, scope and limitations, operational definition of terms and organization of the study. This chapter introduces the basic literature on the topic the researcher wishes to investigate. It goes on further to talk about the actual gap which has been identified and set objectives and structures that guide the study.

**Chapter Two:** This chapter covers the history of PR practice, theoretical framework and literature review which are bodies of text that aim to review the critical points of current knowledge on the topic of study. The ultimate goal is to bring the reader up to date with current literature on the topic of the study and to form the basis for justification for future research in this area.

**Chapter Three:** Here, the main issue has to do with data gathering processes and how they relate to the topic of the study. It is specifically composed of the research design, population, sampling, data collection and data analysis.

**Chapter Four:** This chapter covers data analysis and interpretation of the findings of data collection from some selected individuals in the MESTI. The analysis dwells on the following:

- Fifty (50) usable questionnaires,
- Two (2) structured interviews (PRO, Top Management Member of MESTI).

**Chapter Five:** This chapter discusses summary of results of the analysed data in chapter four (i.e. Data Presentation and Analysis). It also covers the limitations of the study and draws conclusions based on the findings as well as making reasonable suggestions.

## **1.10 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONER**

In this study, public relations practitioner refers to the person who is involved in decision making in an organisation in order to establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding and cooperation between an organisation and its publics and also serving as an early warning system to anticipate trends and counsel management. This is the major roles PR performs.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Public relations, is commonly defined as an organisational subsystem which helps the organization to define and maintain its boundaries. With reference to Edward Bernays, PR in this study refers to “information given to the public, persuasion directed at the public to modify attitudes and actions, and efforts to integrate attitudes and actions of an institution with its publics and of publics with those of that institution”. It is a planned process to influence public opinion through sound character and proper performance based on mutually satisfactory two-way communication.

## **MANAGEMENT**

Management according to Koontz and Weilrich, 1994 is defined as “the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups efficiently accomplish selected aims”. In this study management is defined as the attainment of organizational goals in an efficient and effective manner through planning, organizing, leading and controlling organizational resources.

## **BOUNDARY SPANNING ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Boundary spanning is an academic term used for developing external relationships in order to accomplish set goals and objectives. According to this study, the boundary spanning role of PR is to build and maintain relationships between organizations and their environment. The main understanding is how the PR practitioner interacts with others outside his or her profession to create relationships with the organization and its environment aimed at achieving set goals and objectives.

## **BOUNDARY SPANNER**

With reference to this study, the boundary spanner is the PR practitioner who conveys information and influence between the constituent group and outside groups and vice versa. He or she represents the perceptions, expectations and ideas of each side to the other. The PR practitioner represents management philosophy to external publics and interprets the concerns of external publics to the organization’s management team.

## **PUBLIC OPINION**

According to this study, public opinion is a collective distribution of individual preferences and evaluations on given issues, policies and persons.

## **DOMINANT COALITION**

The dominant coalition is the network of individuals within and around an organisation that most influence the mission and goals of an organisation. The dominant coalition maintains an influence on the goals of an organisation through informal means rather than formal channels. This allows individuals other than formal leadership to manipulate the goals of an organisation. Top management members are usually but not exclusively members of the dominant coalition because membership can be constituted internally, externally or both. In this study, the dominant coalition refers to the highest decision making body within the public service of Ghana.

## **INDUCTIVE APPROACH (QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD)**

Inductive approach to research starts with observations through which theories are proposed towards the end of the research process. At the beginning, there will not be any need for theories or hypothesis and so the researcher is free to alter the direction of the study after the research process has started. It is important to note that the inductive approach does not disregard theories when formulating questions and objectives. This approach aims to generate meaning from data collected in order to identify patterns and relationships to build a theory. A typical example of this theory was adopted by Emile Durkheim (1897) in a book entitled

suicide. However it does not prevent a researcher from using an existing theory to formulate research questions that are meant to be explored. This approach is based on learning from experience. It is usually referred to as the bottom-up approach in which a researcher uses observations to describe a picture of the phenomenon that is being studied.

### **DEDUCTIVE APPROACH (QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD)**

The deductive approach is considered by many to be the standard for scientific research. With deductive approach, a researcher tests a theory by collecting and examining empirical evidence to see if it is true. According to Wilson (2010), the deductive approach constitutes developing of an assumption based on the existing theories and forming a research plan to test the assumption. This approach can be explained using the assumption driven from theory. When a deductive method is applied for a research project, the author formulates a set of hypotheses that need to be tested using a relevant methodology to test the hypothesis. Deductive reasoning has specific characteristics that needs be understood. If the premises of deductive reasoning are accepted, then, the conclusion must necessarily be accepted. In addition, deductive argument can be described as a general to specific (top-down) reasoning process.

## **COMMUNICATION TECHNICIAN**

The communication technician is not involved in organisational decision making but implements PR programmes, such as writing press releases, organising events and production of communication materials. For example, the said technician will practically be present in a printing press to ascertain the quality of printing materials before mass production is done for a client. This exercise is a sign of implementing and upholding management's decision on agreed communication strategies.

## **EXPERT PRESCRIBER**

The Expert prescriber acts as a consultant, researches and defines PR problems, develops programmes to tackle these problems and oversees their implementation.

## **COMMUNICATION FACILITATOR**

The Communication facilitator acts as a communication broker by maintaining two-way communication between an organisation and its publics, liaising, interpreting and mediating. This is to say he/she performs a boundary spanning role between the organisation and its environment.

## **THE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS FACILITATOR**

The Problem-solving process facilitator is the PR person who partners with senior management to identify and solve communication problems by acting as a counsellor on the planning and implementation of programmes. This role is usually fulfilled by specialist consultancies as well as the in-house person.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

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

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers the history of PR practice, theoretical framework and literature review which are bodies of text that aim to review the critical points of current knowledge on the topic of study. The ultimate goal is to bring the reader up to date with current literature on the topic of my study and to form the basis for justification for future research in this area.

#### **2.2 AN OVERVIEW AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE**

Public relation is the lifeblood of any organisation. Whether an organisation is public or private, profit or non-profit, its reputation will determine its ultimate success. Instant worldwide communications make it more important than ever to manage an organisation's image and control how an organisation interacts with its publics. Public relations failures can seriously undermine the effectiveness of management and compromise an organisation's credibility. To keep things running smoothly, the public relations practitioner must be proactive and on top of issues. The PR practitioner must perform his or her boundary spanning roles effectively to achieve best results.

Moreover, the public service which is part of the executive branch of government machinery charged with policy formulation and policy implementation holds the destiny of the country to a large extent on the efficiency and effectiveness of its performance to provide a professional and technical support for the

development and transformation of Ghana. It is the main administrative tool that governments use in the delivery of their goals and objectives to the publics that they serve. The public service however has a historical beginning which is linked to the civil service reforms.

However, the need for effective public relations in an increasingly competitive business environment should push the demand for public relations practitioners in organisations of all types and sizes. Public relations practice as a field has grown immeasurably and today, it is clearly a grown industry according to (Seitel, 2007). Having seen how the practice of public relations look like currently, it is necessary to trace the profession to the history behind it. For example, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, within the US, Public Relations is a multibillion-dollar business practiced by 158,000 professionals and the employment of public relations practitioners is expected to increase faster than the average compared to other occupations through 2012 Ibid.

Likewise, the public service traces its origin to the colonial period reforms, during that time the major aim was to establish a service with a main task of maintaining law and order while providing the necessary framework for the opening up and exploitation of the Gold Coast as stated by (Boachie-Danquah, 2006). With the inception of independence, the public service of Ghana has played varied roles at various times in responding to the visions and efforts of different governments to achieve a rapid development Ibid. For example, in the 1960s, the public service of Ghana was actively involved in the accelerated provision of socio-economic infrastructure in education, health, transportation, telecommunications, electricity, insurance, etc while the 1970s witnessed expansion and the practicalization of government's vision of capturing the commanding heights of the economy, Ibid. During the 1980s, there was a fundamental change in approach of roles that the public service play to accommodate the imperatives of economic recovery and adjustment programs which were introduced at the time, resulting among others was the restructuring and

cutting down on the size of personnel of the public service as well as the privatisation of some State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) which were involved in production, manufacturing and commerce Ibid., 3. During the early 1990s till now the political environment in Ghana has changed greatly and has affected the public service in several ways but the missing link is, what position has public relations played in all the issues that have happened to the public service since its inception?

Moreover, public relations has been with us since creation and has only become a profession in 1903 as Ivy Lee, one of the founding fathers of modern public relations, defined public relations as the actual relationship between the organisation and the people which involves more than a discussion. The relationship between the organisation and its publics must be mutually beneficial based on two-way symmetrical communication model introduced later by Grunig and Hunts in 1984.

However, studies made in the area of public service by some international organisations like the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations (UN) and the World Bank (WB) have revealed that developed countries like Australia, France, Canada, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States of America have revealed bottlenecks in public administration and that public reforms are needed to meet ever changing trends. Though organisational change is not a new concept, it is very important and inevitable because all organisations introduce change from time to time in line with economic trends and other environmental changes according to Oluwanisola (2010). During the industrial revolution which was developed in Europe between the 1750s and 1880s, the rate of change accelerated faster than previously thought possible, other economies followed and the rate of change has never declined up till now (Thomas and Christopher, 2009).

The public service needs to embrace public relations practice to streamline its activities for a positive change in its operations. Since the public service already has a structure that it follows, it is necessary to modify it according to the current trends in the job market. The modification of the structure of a system may be good or bad. The impacts of these changes could either be radical or slow on the organisation. As Thomas Christopher (2009) stated, changes disturb the status quo in organisations and so heavy demands are therefore placed on the management of the organisation to take radical, innovative thinking and disciplined actions in response to the challenges. This is when public relations become very relevant as a management tool in strategically positioning itself with management's goals and objectives by playing its boundary spanning roles effectively to investigate and examine both the internal and external environments of the organisation to inform policy formation and implementation which will be mutually beneficial to both parties involved. Public relations activities seek to bridge the gap between an organisation and its publics through the use of a two-way symmetrical communication in a mutually beneficial manner. If PR is neglected, it may affect other parts of the organisation because, organisations work within a planned system with reference to the nature of the business they engage in whether public or private. So what affects one department has a rippling effects on others.

Theoretically, the systems theory in PR aids in justifying why public relations as a management tool is the most effective tool organisations must use in this 21<sup>st</sup> century since information communication technology (ICT) and globalisation has turned the world into a global village where goods and services can be accessed anywhere. This calls for organisation to run with the trend if they want to remain relevant and keep their bottom line in mind.

A change in any part of an organisation may affect the whole organisation or parts of the organisation in varying degrees of speed and significance. This may affect staff, structure, technology and other elements of an organisation. Change according to (Thomas and Christopher, 2009) may be reactive or proactive in nature. When change takes place due to external forces it is referred to as a reactive change whilst proactive change s initiated by a management of an organisation to promote its goals and objectives. Currently, organisations are challenged by technology leaps, slides in socio-cultural values and globalisation. Change occurs for a number of reasons such as, new staff roles, increase and decrease in funding, acquisition of new technology, new missions, visions or goals and how to get it to reach the various publics. Public relations play a critical role in all this situations towards achieving the overall

## **2.3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE**

### **GENERAL HISTORY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE**

The practice of using communication to influence the public is hundreds of years old, with its roots in ancient civilizations, including the Greek and Roman Empires. Throughout history, governments, monarchs and powerful institutions such as the Roman Catholic Church have used communication and information to generate support for their cause among the populace (Grunig and Hunt 1984; Cutlip et al. 2006) cited in (Tench and Yeomans, 2009). Leaders in virtually every great society throughout history understood the importance of influencing public opinion through persuasion. For example, a planned persuasion is to reach a specific public for a particular purpose.

In ancient Greece, a great premium was put on communication which is the central nervous system of every sound society. Early days in Greece, the services of Sophists were employed to assist in communication related issues from interpretation, fighting of verbal battles, and lobbying with effective communication techniques. The Catholic Church is one of the main architects in the creation of public relations. This is because during the 1600s, under the leadership of Pope Gregory XV, it established a College of Propaganda to enable them spread the catholic faith. In those days, propaganda did not have a negative connotation. To date, the Catholic Church and other religious bodies employ communication experts to assist in the relations with their publics.

Similarly, in America, public relations practice dates back to the founding of the republic, influencing public opinion, managing communications and persuading individuals at the highest levels which were the core of

the American Revolution. The growth of PR reached its height in America after Ivy Lee, the father of modern public relations helped to open the gates by establishing the idea that high-powered organisations and individuals should take up the responsibility of informing their publics about their activities.

Dovetailing into the century, all elements of society, companies, non-profit organisations, governments and other institutions are wrestling with constant shifts in technology, economics, politics, security and popular opinion, the public relations profession is expected to thrive because increasing numbers of organisations are interested in communicating their stories due to the complexities in the global world. The emergence of the concept of public opinion formed the scientific justification for using public relations to inform, educate, persuade and change attitudes and behaviour in our societies. Meanwhile, the practice of public relations has become the most important communication tool driving the world's economy through the concept of globalization and liberalisation of products and services. Meanwhile, the practice of public relations is all about earning credibility based on doing the right thing or acting ethically.

As a professional public relations practitioner, it is proper to know the facts about what to communicate bearing in mind your time lines; this involves research, analysis, judgment, decision making power, counselling and planning. Public relations in its modern form originated from the United States of America (Seitel, 2007), because the developmental history was first discussed with reference to the United States of America. Thereafter an overview of international development follows which included most African countries. The western world has well established public relations departments in most of its organisations be it public or private. The definition above covers both public and private sectors, notwithstanding the differences within the two sectors in practice. Public corporations aim to serve the public by providing

products and services to serve it better. The public service PR does not rely on profit making but rather on image and reputation building.

Public relations management cannot be effective without communication. Communication is at the centre of every human activity, thus it is the oxygen of every social interaction. Communication plays a major role in the practice of effective public relations activity. The practice of PR in the public service is seen as a two-way communication which strives to benefit both the public sector organisations and their publics. Though the practice of PR is relatively young as compared with other professions like marketing, advertising, human resource, the 21<sup>st</sup> century government PR practitioners need new tools to address the changing context of government communication.

Nowadays, PR activities are dominated by information communication technologies. The need to understand the importance of media relations as part of the profession is necessary since PR itself is an act of communication. PR is a vital tool that helps all public sector agencies to implement their missions and increase accountability. For example, PR can be used to educate, inform and persuade the citizenry on new programs and services and is cheaper than regulations. In most situations, people mistake public relations for protocol services especially in the public service. PR practitioners usually use external communication tools such as press releases, press conferences, letters etc to report to the citizenry on the accomplishments and stewardship of public organisations or agencies. Social media has become a powerful modern communication tool at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which has dominated a lot of interactions among PR practitioners who want to become relevant and successful with their interactions between their organisations and publics.

### **2.3.1 PUBLIC SERVICE OF GHANA**

The origins of the Public Services (PS) can be traced back to 1947 when the colonial government accepted the recommendations of the Haragin Committee for the establishment of public services commissions in the colonies, including the Gold Coast, Nigeria, the Gambia and Sierra Leone. The objective for the establishment of the Commissions in the colonies was to effect a desirable consolidation and extension of existing arrangements regarding human resource and other associated matters in order to secure the confidence, fairness and impartiality of the general public and government appointees.

In 1948, the Coussey Committee, which was appointed in the aftermath of the 1948 riots to draft a constitution for the country, recommended a full-fledged Public Services Commission (PSC) that would resort to a more rigorous policy of training and appointment of Africans to all Classes of Posts in the Public Service and give preference to African candidates in all appointments, persons with the requisite qualifications. The 1951 Constitution (Order-in-Council) of the Gold Coast Created for the first time, the PSC to advise the Governor on issues relating to Appointments, Transfers and Disciplinary control of the public officers. However, the Governor was not required to necessarily act in accordance with the advice given him by the commission. In 1954, the G.C. Order-in-Council (Constitution) of 1954 made the exercise of the governor's powers, in relation to the Public Service, subject to the recommendation of the PSC – except when the Governor in any particular case directed the contrary.

At Independence, the Governor-General was to act on the advice of the PSC in similar matters as in 1954. In the case of “Special Posts”, i.e. Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department, the Governor-General acted on the advice of the Prime Minister, given in consultation with the PSC. The PSC was made fully independent of the Executive.

Indeed, the noble objective for the establishment of the PSC for the Gold Coast, now Ghana has not changed. However, it is important to note that the periods immediately after independence up to 1979, the management of the public services human resource was marked with the struggle for identification and emphasis of source of control over the public servant. During these years, the executive authority in the state was much prominent in all matters relating to public or civil servant promotion, transfers and discipline.

However, the third Republican Constitution of 1979 restored the position of the PSC in the scheme of managing human resource within the public sector. The drafters of the 1979 constitution reported that “We remain convinced that the only dependable way of guaranteeing the independence and integrity of the Public Service is to remove them from the direct or indirect control of the Executive.

We, therefore, propose that the Public Services Commission should be retained in the constitution as the controlling authority of the Public Services, with the responsibility and power to advise on the appointment of persons to hold offices in the Public Services, except in case where the power to advise is entrusted by the constitution to another authority.” they emphasized as that “the only way of getting the Public Services back to the required level of efficiency is to propose that the Constitution should state firmly and unequivocally that no member of the Public Services shall be victimized or discriminated against, for having discharged his duties faithfully in accordance with the Constitution.

Today, Article (1) of the fourth Republican Constitution of 1992 states that “there shall be a Public Service Commission which shall perform such functions as assigned to it by this Constitution or by any other law. Article 196 of Constitution of 1992 further states that “The Public Services Commission shall have such powers and exercise such **SUPERVISORY, REGULATORY AND CONSULTATIVE** functions as

Parliament shall, by law, prescribe, including as may be applicable, the supervision and regulation of entrance and promotion examinations, recruitment, appointment into or promotions within the Public Services and the establishment of guidelines on the terms and conditions of employment in the public services”.

The PSC Act, 1994 (Act 482) giving effect to the above constitutional provisions, provides details of the composition of the Commission, its functions and the secretariat that supports the functions of the Commission.

## **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

The Commission consists of a two-tier structure. At the apex of the structure is a nine- member Commission, comprising a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and three other members appointed on full-time basis and four part-time members, one of whom is ex officio, namely the Chairman of the National Council for Tertiary Education. The other three part-time members are persons, with extensive experience in the operation of the public services, appointed in their personal capacities.

All Members of the Commission are appointed by the President, on the advice of the Council of State, in accordance with Article 194 of the 1992 Constitution and Section 1(3) of Act 482. Supporting the Commission is a secretariat made up of the office of the Secretary, three main functional divisions, and one support division, Finance & Administration.

### **i) The Office of the Secretary**

It consists of the following Units:

- Coordinating
- Corporate Affairs
- Internal Audit

### **ii) The Divisions**

There are four (4) Divisions which include:

#### **Finance and Administration (F&A) Division, comprising**

- Human Resource Management Unit
- Finance (Accounts, Planning and Budgeting) Unit
- Administration (Stores, Procurement, Estate, Security and Transport)Unit

#### **Human Resource Policy Division (HRPD), which is made of the following Units:**

- Petitions, Appeals & Grievances
- Appointments, Promotions and Discipline
- Benefits and Conditions of Service
- Human Resource Development & Examinations

#### **Management Services Division (MSD), consisting of:**

- Organisational Systems Reviews and Development Unit
- Manpower Planning and Deployment Unit
- Performance Management Unit

## **Research, Information, Monitoring & Evaluation (RIME)**

Division, which is made up of the following Units:

- Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Information Management
- Human Resource Information Management

### 2.3.2 PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN GHANA

The emergence of Public Relations (PR) in Africa and Ghana in particular dates back five decades ago. The application of certain PR techniques originated at the dawn of African civilization. According to Nartey (1988), the concept of PR was practiced in Africa long before colonialism. He drew parallel ideas between the task of a PR practitioner and that of a spokesperson (linguist) at the chief's palace in traditional African villages. No person spoke directly to the chief, nor had the means to speak directly to the chief. He emphasised that, the concept of PR is neither alien nor a practice that arrived with colonialism, commercialisation and neither through Western media because it existed in the African continent in a different form. In Africa, PR is expressed in the form of music and the beating of drums in communicating messages from the chief to his subjects in the traditional African setting Ibid.

Otchere-Daflagbe (2004) on the other hand, stated that, the Ghanaian PR industry employs practices aligned with the Western techniques of PR practice. This can be seen in terms of the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana (IPR, Ghana) using a universally recognised definition of PR: "Public Relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organisation and its publics on whom its success or failure depends" as asserted by Cutlip, Center, & Broom (2000). Also in its code of ethics, IPR Ghana employs the International Code of Ethics known as the "Code of Athens;" this code was adopted by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) General Assembly in Athens on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 1965 (Otchere-Daflagbe, 2004).

Otchere-Daflage (2004) states further that the PR industry in Ghana supports a cross section of staff from highly educated professionals to quack practitioners. To distinguish between practitioners and quacks, a group of practitioners came together in 1972 to establish the Public Relations Association of Ghana (PRAG).

In the latter part of the 1980s through to the early 1990s, a series of meetings, seminars and fora took place and PRAG metamorphosed into the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana. PRAG was re-organised by some cohorts of PR practitioners and a new Constitution and Code of Ethics was adopted on December 6, 1991 which transformed PRAG into the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana Ibid.

In summary, IPR Ghana was consequently registered as a professional body under the Professional Bodies Registration Decree, (NRCD 143) of 1973 Ibid. Even though Odedele (2010) asserts that the development of Public Relations is more noticeable in Nigeria and Ghana, the following is the account in his write up on the history of Public Relations practice in Ghana:

‘Public Relations is developing in Ghana. There is a national professional body. The Institute of Public Relations, Ghana was established in 1972 as the Public Relations Association of Ghana (PRAG). PRAG was re-organised and a new constitution and code of ethics were adopted on December 6, 1991 which transformed PRAG into the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana (IPR) after it had registered with the Ghanaian Professional Bodies Secretariat’ ([www.iprghana.com.gh](http://www.iprghana.com.gh)). This is actually the account of the history of Public Relations as displayed on the website of the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana.

Another account on the practice of Public Relations in Ghana is an outline provided by Joseph Emmanuel Allotey-Pappoe (JEAP) at a public lecture in September 2009. Allotey-Pappoe (2009) divided the practice of Public Relations into four periods. These were:

*Pre-colonial Traditional Society up to 1482*, an era dubbed as the initial creation of a 'system of Public Relations consciousness.' The culture was understood by use of proverbs, drum language, traditional protocol, festivals and a traditional conflict resolution system.

From 1482 to 1956 was the *Colonial/Pre-Independence period*. It was dominated by the Nationalist Protest Movements, the setting up of the Information Services Department, the emergence of indigenous private newspapers and the establishment of Public Relations Units by multinationals operating in the country.

The period from 1957-1990 was called the *Post-Independence era*. This period was characterised by the active role of the External Service Unit of the Ghana Broadcasting Service in Kwame Nkrumah's Africanisation policy, the growth of Public Relations units in state institutions such as the Ghana Publishing Corporation, GOIL, State Farms and the formation in 1972 of a loose association of Public Relations practitioners known as the Public Relations Association of Ghana (PRAG).

The final era spanned from the period 1990 to the present and was aptly captured as the *Growth of Public Relations*. The Public Relations Association of Ghana was reorganised into a professional body, adopted its own Code of Ethics and Constitution in 1991 and was renamed the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana. Public Relations education evolved from being pursued at the Diploma level to be read at the degree, post-graduate diploma and master's level as Communications training institutions began to spring up.

The Institute of Public Relations, Ghana, hosted the continental body of Public Relations practitioners in 1994, 2003 and 2008. The Institute is affiliated to international bodies such as the International Association of Business Communicators and the Global Alliance for Business Communication.

### **2.3.3 BACKGROUND OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (MESTI) - GHANA**

The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), which forms part the Government machinery was established in 1993 as the Ministry of Environment and Science. In 2006, the Ministry was dissolved. Its portfolios on Environment and Science were therefore added to the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Education respectively. In January 2009, the Ministry was reconstituted and named the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (MESTI), under Executive Instrument (E.I.) 7 Civil Service (Ministries) Instrument, 2009. However, in 2013, the Ministry was renamed the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), under Executive Instrument (E.I.) 1 Civil Service (Ministries) Instrument, 2013.

Guided by the vision of attaining sustainable development through the utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation for wealth creation and sound environmental governance in a modern and competitive economy, the MESTI wishes to create an enabling system between the Ministry, its clientele and the general public. The MESTI also promotes sustainable development by deepening and strengthening market driven Research and Development through intensive awareness creation, collaboration and partnership towards achieving a common objective.

MESTI derives its mandate from the Civil Service Law 1993 (PNDC Law 327) as well as Executive Instrument (E.I.) 1 Civil Service (Ministries) Instrument, 2013 which governs the establishment, operations and internal structure of Government Ministries and Departments. It is also mandated to advise the Minister on adjustments in policy direction, planning objectives and operational strategies.

## **Mission**

The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) exists to promote sustainable development by deepening and strengthening market driven Research and Development (R&D) for sound Environmental Governance, Science, Technology and Innovation through intensive awareness creation, collaboration and partnership.

## **Vision**

The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) envisages to attain sustainable development through the utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation for wealth creation and sound environmental governance in a modern and competitive economy.

## **Sector Goal**

The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) seeks to ensure accelerated socio-economic development of the nation through the formulation of sound policies and a regulatory framework to promote the use of appropriate environmentally friendly, scientific, and technological practices.

MESTI is located in the Government Business Area opposite the SSNIT Pension House, Accra.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE MESTI**

Generally the Ministry has the mandate to perform the following functions;

Provide leadership and guidance for the Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation within the broad sector of the economy through sound policy formulation and implementation.

- Ensure the establishment of regulatory framework and setting of standards to govern the activities of science and technology and the management of the environment for sustainable development.
- Promote activities needed to underpin the standards and policies required for planning and implementation of sound scientific and technological development activities.
- Ensure the coordination, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of activities of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation while fulfilling national benefits-sharing commitments.
- Set out the parameters required for programmes on environment, science, technology and human settlement in consultation with the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) in guiding the District Assemblies as planning authority at the local level.
- Analyse and coordinate all planned programmes as well as budgets in the environment, science, technology and innovation sector of the economy for the purposes of achieving a single integrated management system.
- Initiate, stimulate and coordinate research including the continuous development and review of policies, laws, rules and regulations in the environment, science, technology and innovation sector of the economy;
- Ensure effective environmental management and governance, in line with the functions of Act 490, with the EPA as the main implementing agency and the MESTI playing an oversight, coordination and facilitating role.

The MESTI has six (6) Agencies through which it carries out its mandate, these are;

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Act 521, 1996

• The Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC), Act 588, 2000

• The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Act 490, 1994

• The Town and Country Planning Department (TCPD), Act 30, 1958

• The National Biosafety Authority (NBA), Act 831, 2011; and

• The Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NRA). Act 895, 2015.

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A theory is a prediction of how events and actions are related. Theories in the public relations largely come from the communication field. For example, from the point of view of Lattimore et al., (2004) the approach to PR theories come from mass communication, psychology and sociology. They asserted that, PR theories are categorised under sociological theories. This chapter brings to light two theoretical framework that underpin the study. These include the Systems and Roles theories which orient on relationships and complement each other to put this study in a fuller perspective and understanding.

### **THE SYSTEMS AND ROLES THEORIES**

Organisational systems are significantly challenged due to the increasing complexity in today's organisational environment. One hallmark of effective public relations is integrating the communicative sub-system into the stated goals of an organisation. Theory explains how to make public relations most effective for organisations and society and predicts the way things work or happen. They provide an understanding of the relationship between actions and events. As a public relations practitioner, you must be able to explain why and how your plans and proposals work so that your supervisor and co-workers will be more convinced to support your opinions if you have theories and evidence to back them up. There is no one theory that explains all public relations practices. Public relations practitioners consider several theories when making decisions about how to build successful relationships with their publics. As a PR practitioner, the value your employer or client place on you is directly related to how well you use theory in your work. The systems and roles theories form part of the theories PR practitioners use on daily basis. This study turns to systems and roles theories to inform the relationship between the organisational systems, its internal

and external sub-systems, the various roles they play in complimenting each other and the work environment.

The systems theory describes how an entity possesses interrelated and interdependent parts together. Due to its knitted nature, a change in one part of the unit or sub-system will definitely affect the operations and output of the others as well as the whole. The systems theory was first founded in the fifties by a biophysicist called Ludwig Von Bertalanfly. He named it the General Systems Theory which basically attempts to tackle things in a holistic manner. Fast-forwarding this ideology to modern day issues, scholars in natural sciences say this theory helps to understand sets of objects, the relationship between those objects and their environments. It further explains that, once an interrelated and interconnected elements are put together, they make the behaviour of the whole a little different and distinct from the behaviour of its individual parts.

Systems theory is useful in public relations because it gives PR practitioners a way to think about relationships. This is because organisations have recognisable boundaries within which there must be a communication structure guiding its parts (various departments) to achieving organisational goals. It is in this gesture that Grunig, Grunig and Dozier stressed that the interdependency of organisations with their environments, both internal and external are crucial. According to them, organisations depend on resources from the environment such as raw materials, employees, clients or customers for the services and products they produce. Reciprocally, the environment also needs the organisation for its produce to survive. This is where PR practitioners come into the picture. The said organisation uses public relations people to feed them with information on how productive their relationships are with the organisation's clients, customers and other stakeholders. In turn, the publics or stakeholders through the PR practitioner

wants to know how the organisation thinks about them. In the course of exercising this practice and managing these relationships, one can confidently say the systems theory is at work.

The above are some of the reasons why it is critically important for the head of public relations in an organisation to be represented within the power of elites. Education in the field of public relations and professionalism suggest routes by which PR practitioners can become highly valued by top management and thus part of the managerial decision-making process. In addition to setting goals, members of an organisation's dominant coalition typically determine the organisation's critical publics and the strategy for dealing with those publics.

Similarly, the roles theory has been in existence since the 1920s and 1930s and became prominent in a sociological discourse through the theoretical works of George et al. (European Journal of Business and Social Science, 2015). This theory considers the everyday activities as being the acting out of socially defined categories such as mother, manager, teacher, sister, fireman etc. It further explains that each social role is a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms, and behaviours that a person has to face and fulfil which is why most role theorists see this theory as most compelling because bridges individual behaviour within a social structure in an organisation.

Dozier and Broom (2006) describe organisational roles as “abstractions, conceptual maps that summarize the most important features of day-to-day behaviours of organisational members”. In their research, Broom and Smith (1979) and Dozier and Broom (1995) identified two broad roles which were consistently used in public relations: the communication manager role and the communication technician role.

**The communication manager** is responsible for planning and management of PR programmes, advises management, makes communication policy decisions and oversees their implementation.

**The communication technician** is not involved in organisational decision making but implements PR programmes, such as writing press releases, organising events, producing web content. These activities focus on the implementation of the management's overall communication strategies.

The communication manager role divides itself into three identifiable types:

- **The Expert prescriber:** acts as a consultant, researches and defines PR problems, develops programmes to tackle these problems and oversees their implementation.
- **The Communication facilitator:** acts as a communication broker by maintaining two-way communication between an organisation and its publics, liaising, interpreting and mediating. This is to say he/she performs a boundary spanning role between the organisation and its environment.
- **The Problem-solving process facilitator:** is the PR person who partners with senior management to identify and solve communication problems by acting as a counsellor on the planning and implementation of programmes. This role is usually fulfilled by specialist consultancies as well as the in-house person.

There are two other roles which sit between the manager and the technician roles. The *media relations role* and *the communication and liaison role*.

**Media relation role**, it is a highly skilled job requiring profound knowledge and understanding of the media. It is not just about the dissemination of messages, but crucial function where the needs of the media are met in a sophisticated way. The best practitioners who perform this role effectively are journalists who have made a crossover to public relations.

• **Communication and liaison role**, this role is performed by individuals who represent an organisation at events and meetings and creates opportunities for management to communicate with internal and external publics.

The classification of PR roles into manager and technician does not mean that there are fixed lines between them. Most PR professionals perform a mix of manager and technician jobs but the point is that, one role usually predominates and is economical in today's world.

The usefulness of the Roles Theory in PR practice has to do with the roles that PR practitioners play in an organisation's life cycle either as managers or technicians. By these roles the PR practitioner produces the right programmes, influences strategic planning, affect the short range (bottom-line) and long-range (survival) goals of the organisations they work with. In exhibiting the true managerial role, PR practitioner's advice senior managers about communication needs, define problems, suggest opinions and oversee that a good solution is implemented. In the case of technicians, writing, editing, taking photos, handling communication production, running events and media management are some of the core duties. All these activities described above fit into an overall communication strategies of an organisation. These are the basic reasons why PR practitioners cannot be ignored at any level in an organisation.

In summary, the systems theory in particular integrates other theories (Roles theory and other relationship management theories) to get an over-arching theoretical perspective of how theories relate in practice. The connection between the above theories, its discussions, explanation and this study is that, the researcher wants to test their claims on a public service organisation like the MESTI, to see whether the management of MESTI is practising or operating the right mix of what the PR profession stands for.

## **2.5 DEFINITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

### **2.5.1 WHAT IS PUBLIC SERVICE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS?**

#### **PUBLIC RELATIONS DEFINED**

It is difficult to arrive at a common definition on PR because it has a wide application field and to be implemented with different objectives in public and private sectors. According to Edward Bernays (1928), the public relations practitioner is the agent working with both modern media of communications and group formations of society in order to provide ideas to the public's consciousness.

In 1982, Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) defined public relations as “an organisation and its publics adapt mutually to each other.” In 2012 the PRSA developed a crowd-sourced definition “as the practice of managing communication between an organisation and its publics.” Grunig and Hunt (1984:25) defined PR as “A practice of managing the spread of information between an individual or an organisation (such as a business, government agency, or a nonprofit organisation) and the public.”

In short, it may be defined as the establishment of a two-way communication system in a planned manner with the purpose of gaining the community's understanding and support. The aim of public relations is to inform the public, prospective customers, investors, partners, employees, and other stakeholders and ultimately persuade them to maintain a certain view about the organisation, its leadership, products, or of political decisions (Seitel, 2007). In other words, purpose of public relations is to impress the audience and to make them accept a certain belief and action.

Public relations, is commonly defined as an organisational subsystem which helps the organisation to define and maintain its boundaries. With reference to Edward Bernays, PR in this study refers to “information given to the public, persuasion directed at the public to modify attitudes and actions, and efforts to integrate attitudes and actions of an institution with its publics and of publics with those of that institution”. It is a planned process to influence public opinion through sound character and proper performance based on mutually satisfactory two-way communication.

Many authors have maintained that public relations is about building and maintaining relationships between organisations and their publics. This makes PR the central nervous system and potentially the most powerful tool for successful large-scale organisations and increasing number of small individual enterprises. Good public relations bring social change, improves business, interpersonal relationships and transforms organisations. So it makes sense to know exactly what PR is.

According to Grunig 1992 and L’Etang 1996, public relations (PR) is used in a huge range of industries and in each one there is a slight difference in skills and competencies which have emerged among PR practitioners. As a result, renown theorists asset that there is no universally accepted definition of public relations. Public relations has both academic and practitioners definitions (Cutlip et al. 2006). Edward Bernays sees public relations with regard to businesses and organisations as “information given to the public, persuasion directed at the public to modify attitudes and actions, and efforts to integrate attitudes and actions of an organisation with its publics and of publics with those of that organisation”. Today, although there are various definitions of public relations, one of the universally accepted definitions was coined by Harlow out of 472 different definitions between 1900 and 1976 from his findings as follows:

“Public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communications, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organisation and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilise change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools” (Harlow 1976:36, cited in Tench and Yeomans, second edition, 2009).

Public relations (PR) is the art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organisational leaders and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organisation and the public interest (Newsom et al. 2000:2 cited in Tench and Yeomans, second edition, 2009). Public relation helps an organisation and its publics adapt mutually to each other (Public Relations Society of America 2004).

## **PUBLIC SERVICE DEFINED**

In general terms, the public service consists of governments and all publicly controlled or publicly funded agencies, enterprises and other entities that deliver public programs, goods and services. It is not clear what organisations qualify to be included under the umbrella of public service because the President holds the final authority in determining such issues.

The concept of the public service is broader than simply that of core government and may overlap with the not-for-profit or private sectors. For the purposes of this study, public service consists of an expanding ring of organisations, with core governments' activities at the center, followed by ministries agencies and public enterprises.

Public sector organisations exist in four levels, these are:

- International (multistate entities or partnerships)
- National (an independent state)
- Regional (a province/state within a national state)
- Local (a municipal-level body such as a city or country)

At any of these levels, the public sector generally consists of at least three types of organizations.

**Core government** consists of a governing body with a defined territorial authority. Core governments include all departments, ministries, or branches of the government that are integral parts of the structure,

and are accountable to and report directly to the central authority — the legislature, council, cabinet, or executive head.

**Agencies** consist of public organizations that are clearly a part of the government and deliver public programs, goods, or services, but that exist as separate organizations in their own right — possibly as legal entities — and operate with a partial degree of operational independence. They often, but not necessarily, are headed by a board of directors, commission, or other appointed body.

**Public enterprises** are agencies that deliver public programs, goods, or services, but operate independently of government and often have their own sources of revenue in addition to direct public funding. They also may compete in private markets and may make profits. However, in most cases the government is the major shareholder, and these enterprises partly follow the acts and regulations that govern the core government.

## 2.5.2 PUBLIC RELATIONS FUNCTIONS

There is a fundamental difference between the functions of public relations and the functions of marketing and advertising. Marketing and advertising promote a product or a service. Public relations promotes goodwill, products, services, corporate image and reputation, corporate communication, lobbying and repairing of negative publicity in an entire organisation. The functions of public relations are numerous, among them are the following:

- **Writing:** This is the fundamental public relations skill. Examples are news releases, speeches, brochures, etc.
- **Media relations:** This deals with the press and social media.
- **Planning:** This deals with special events, media and management functions.
- **Counselling:** This deals with management and its interactions with key publics.
- **Research:** This deals with investigation issues about attitudes and opinions that influence behaviour and beliefs.
- **Publicity:** This is a marketing related function most commonly misunderstood as the “only” function PR performs in generating positive publicity for its publics.
- **Marketing communication:** This is another marketing-related functions which deals with creation of brochures, sales literature, and promotion items etc.
- **Community relations:** This deals with positively putting the organisation’s messages and images before the community.
- **Consumer relations:** This deals with interactions through verbal and written communications with consumers.

- **Employee relations:** This deals with communicating effectively with internal publics of the organisation, i.e. managers and all other employees of the organisation.
- **Government affairs:** This deals with legislator, regulators and local, state, and federal officials and all of those who have governmental interface with the organisation.
- **Investor relations:** This deals with companies communicating with stockholders and those who advise them.
- **Public affairs and issues management:** This deals with public policy and its impact on the organisation as well as identifying and addressing issues of consequence that affect the organisation.
- **Web site development and web interface:** This is done by creating what often is the organisation's principal interface with the public: its website. It is also important to monitor the World Wide Web and respond when appropriate to organisational challenge.

This is but a partial list of what public relations practitioners do. However, the public relations practitioner is a manager, orchestrator, producer, director, writer, arranger and an all-round general communications counsel to management in organisations be it public or private. It is in this regard that the PR practitioner must be part of the dominant coalition or management for him or her to be well informed on issues and how best he/she can perform in the interest of the organisation and its publics.

### 2.5.3 PR TOOLS

While devising a PR plan for an organisation, the following PR tools are used in telling the organisation's story to its publics through various media channels.

- Media relations (press conference, press release, articles and features, interviews, websites, emails, etc.)
- Print Media (newspaper, magazines, press releases, fliers, handouts, leaflets etc.)
- Advertising (PR led. Corporate and Product)
- Direct mail (PR led. Annual report, brochures, customer reports, external newsletters, general literature and multimedia)
- Exhibitions (Trade and public, demonstrations, literature etc.) It is an important medium to project an organisation's materials and products on its activities, services and ideas to the public. It offers an excellent opportunity for personal interaction with both existing and prospective publics.
- Community relations (Direct involvement, sponsorship, donations, etc.)
- Internal communication (videos, briefings, newsletters, email, intranet, TV, etc.)
- Research (organisations, PR programmes, issues monitoring and results monitoring)
- Issues and crisis management (planning and implementation)
- Financial relations (annual report, briefing materials, internet, hospitality etc.)
- Government relations (regular information on policy plan, various activities and achievements of the MDAs, etc.)

## 2.6 PR PUBLICS

The term stakeholder and publics are often used interchangeably, but they should not be. Stakeholders have been identified in the business literature according to their relationships to organisations. Publics, in the public relations and other mass media literature, are often identified according to their relationship to messages.

“Publics” is the term used for stakeholders in the public relations literature because the public relations evolved from journalism, the term has frequently been related to the recipients of messages from organisations. The publics are segmented into more homogenous subsets that help communicators to choose appropriate channels for reaching them. For example, publics can be employees, shareholders, political leaders, consumers, etc. Publics are often segmented further by demographics, geographics, psychographics, etc. Recently however, research in public relations has turned to value the relationships these publics have with organisations. This emphasis has encouraged the adaptation of the term “stakeholder” in both practice and scholarship. It is justified because the publics have a stake in the organisation’s life cycle.

According to James Grunig the terms “stakeholder” and “public” are different in the following ways: organisations choose stakeholders by their marketing strategies, recruiting and investment plans, but publics arise on their own and choose the organisation for attention. Grunig did this by relying on John Dewey’s writings to develop a definition of a public: “a public is a group of people who face a similar problem, recognise the problem, and organise themselves to do something about it”. So, publics organise from the ranks of stakeholders when they recognise an issue and decide to do something about it.

According to existing literature, publics are defined in a variety of ways. During the early parts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Dewey (1927) defined publics as groups of people with a common purpose who are organised to act on an issue. Publics are more social and personal than abstract markets. Dougall (2005) also described publics as a person or group of people who have a stake or interest in an organisation's future. James Grunig identified four (4) steps method for stakeholder analysis which entails:

- a. Identifying Stakeholders
- b. Prioritising Stakeholders According to Attributes
- c. Prioritising Stakeholders by Relationship to the Situation
- d. Prioritising Publics By Communication Strategy

According to Harrison and St. John, the first three steps of the stakeholder analysis are to identify stakeholders, classify them into meaningful groups, and prioritise them. So when you put together the stakeholder relations and public relations literature, a more comprehensive process for prioritising the stakeholder groups, particularly those that become active publics has been provided.

It is very important for every organisation to develop positive relationships with its stakeholders as it helps in improving the organisation's goals and objectives. If the organisation has not properly prioritised its stakeholders and their relationships, the squeaky wheel stakeholder may get more attention than is deserved. This model prevents that from occurring and the squeaky wheel stakeholder may not get the greatest priority. By following the steps outlined in this study, organisations can take a more systematic and comprehensive approach to managing their publics.

Grunigs (1989) excellence study asserted that, the two-way symmetrical communication between an organisation and its publics is more ethical than the one-way communication, yet some other public relations scholars observed that organisations with more power than their publics do not have interest in practicing the two-way symmetrical communication. That notwithstanding, the best PR practice is to provide enough room for feedback from the publics to inform the organisation about issues going on in its external environment.

According to management scholar Jim Miles (1987), a study of insurance companies found that collaborative problem-solving was the first strategy of firms aiming to develop long-term relationships with their publics or stakeholders based on trust and communication (positive relationships). Focusing on publics is significant in understanding the concept of relationship management in public relations practice. It is important to analyse the variety of publics that an organisation must manage and advocate the use of building positive relationships as an effective way public relations practitioners can engage with their publics. One of the ways in which organisations build relationships with their publics is through effective communication efforts.

The study had two major objectives: (1) To identify the role of public relations in promoting the image of private universities in Ghana and (2) To identify the challenges public relations managers face in private universities.

Meanwhile, Peyronel and Lawniczak's (2000) literature on higher education in public relations affirms that senior public relations practitioners should be involved in strategic decision making in colleges and universities. It was stated that public relations practitioners should be part of the dominant coalition to enable them get first-hand information in managing the organisation's communication and public relations activities. This shows that public relations is a basic requirement of every modern organisation which seeks to excel in the global economy. Ideally, public relations should be practiced using the two-way symmetrical tactics to get feedback from the external environment to affect policies and programmes of the organisation.

However, with regard to the challenges public relations practitioners face in the private universities, a research into literature showed that the major challenges public relations departments face in a lot of organisations are (1) lack of qualified personnel, (2) operational space, (3) recognition and (4) budget. Jefkins (2000) argued that the best practice of public relations department is that, it should be on its own and directly responsible to the chief executive officer (CEO). If public relations is integrated into other departments, it limits its roles and functions and prevents it from being managed strategically. According to Kotler et al., (2005) public relations still captures only a small portion of the overall marketing budgets of most firms though public relations is considered as an important brand building tool. This is so because a lot of managers perceive public relations as a spending department rather than contributing to the bottom line of the organisation's equity.

Bruning and Ralston (2001) on the other hand wrote that, the practice of public relations at most universities has been relegated to a single office concerned primarily with managing institutional reputation. With regard to this assertion, it is clear that public relations practices will be limited in accomplishing its basic objectives especially in private universities which rely solely on internally generated funds (IGF) to run the institutions. It was further remarked that, the functions and roles of public relations will be more effective if management understands its benefits and how it can impact the bottom line of their overall budget, then these roles and functions will gain recognition and a strategic position in the dominant coalition. So as part of the challenges, public relations was not recognised and as such, resources were not allocated for effective operation of its activities.

With regard to the exploratory nature of the study, a multiple case study approach was used to answer the research objectives. Yin (2003) supports this stand and argues that a case study is more convincing because it enables the researcher to gather larger amounts of data to strengthen the basis of the study.

General finding in the study revealed that public relations in private universities were expected to perform certain roles for effective functioning of the universities. The following were some of the major issues identified.

The first objective was to identify PR roles or practices in private universities in Ghana. According to the first objective, below are the main findings:

- Public relations managers were part of management but are not represented at the university council which forms the dominant coalition (the highest decision making body of an organisation).

- The roles and of public relations in communicating with their various publics are similar in all the universities which participated in this study. The roles and functions include, media relations, management of positive image and reputation, organisation of events such as matriculation and graduation ceremonies and building of mutually beneficial relationships among internal and external publics.
- The study brought to light the cordial relationships that exist between the public relations department and other departments in the universities studied. The mutual relationship between the public relations department and its internal publics has enhanced internal communication especially among the employees and students of the various universities which participated in the study. It is believed that the employees and students hold the universities' image outside and must be given newsworthy information which the media and the general public may feed on.
- There are a number of tools available to PR practice but mostly the choice of tools depends on the objectives and goals of the PR department involved. The second objective identified PR tools used by PR departments in private universities. With regard to the second objective, below are the main findings:
- The study revealed that all the universities which participated used their various websites in communicating with both internal and external publics. The study observed that, the websites were updated as and when the need arises.

- The study showed that the PR tool which was not used regularly is community relations. It was observed that the effective use of community relations would have helped the private universities in a lot of ways in improving their communication with the external publics which will enhance their image and reputation.
- It was revealed in the study that the following PR tools were not used by all the private universities which participated in the study: press conference and exhibition. The study found that, if necessary attention is paid to these tools, it could improve the relationship the universities have with their external environments.
- The third objective was to identify if PR in private universities has succeeded in building corporate image for the universities. The main role of PR is to build mutually beneficial relationships with its various publics. The following are the issues that came to light after the study:
  - It was revealed that lack of community support services has worked against the image of the private universities studied.
  - The study refuted the perception that private universities are avenues for income generation, employment of unqualified labour and students. This is so because the National Accreditation Board as a regulatory agency, oversees the activities of all tertiary institutions in Ghana.

- Trust is a very important tool in building sustainable relationships. The study revealed that the PR department has built a mutually beneficial relationship between the private universities and their various publics which has influenced most of its activities.
- The fourth objective was to identify the challenges public relations departments face in private universities. According to Kotler et al., 2005, public relations requires a lot of resources to function effectively as brand building tool.
- It was revealed that the PR departments in the private universities studies were not adequately resourced with regard to staff and logistics issues to enable them function effectively. It was a serious limitation on the effective performance of the various PR departments of the private universities which participated in the study.

In summary, although PR practices are recognised in the various universities, they are not accorded the needed recognition they deserve because they are not represented at the universities' council (the highest decision making body of the universities), to enable them to be part of the decisions made and to effectively communicate such decision among the various publics of the universities in order to build mutual relationships between the universities and their publics. Lack of proper recognition and resources affected the functions and operational activities of the PR departments in the various private universities studied.

## SUGGESTIONS

With reference to the findings, some suggestions made to advice the private university authorities to adopt best practice. The following are some of the suggestions recommended.

- Adequate resources in terms of staff, logistics and proper recognition as part of the dominant coalition (highest decision making body of organisations).
- The universities are advised to support community programmes in aid to build mutually beneficial relationship with their external environment to influence policy formulation and implementation.
- It was also noted that the internet, exhibition, press conference and other outdoor programmes should be part of the private universities' PR activities to allow free flow of information to the various publics to build trust and acceptance.

In another study undertaken by Markus Mykkanen M.A. and Marita Vos Ph. D. in 2015 on the “The Contribution of Public Relations to Organisational Decision Making: Insights from the Literature”, some PR peer-reviewers have over the past 10 years researched on the contributions of public relations practitioners to organisational decision making. This research covered the period of 2002 and 2012. The main literature that was researched was based on the roles public relations practitioners perform in the decision making process and the effect it has on their understanding of the communicative aspects of the decision making process. With regard to the specialist literature on corporate social responsibility, the strategic management of public relations was often addressed. In 2006, the roles PR practitioners play in facilitating the decision making process and implementation of the decisions taken have received much recognition.

This work done by Markus and Marita offered a broader view of the several ways in which PR practitioners contribute to organisational decision process. It showed the combination of roles of those who participate in decision making, counsellors, facilitators and disseminators of organisational decisions. The identification and description of the roles helps practitioners to reflect on their own roles in organisational decision making.

Organisation decision making as asserted by Vroom and Jago (1974), is a social process which determines the best mechanism in solving a problem. The decision making process involves a lot of participants with varied levels of knowledge, ideas, skills and abilities which adds a higher quality to the information available for the decision making process. There must be active communication throughout the decision making process to enable each member to be on the same page. Moreover, in the past decisions were taken traditionally by the leadership and employees were expected to implement them.

According to literature, Dozier conceptualized the public relations function as one that facilitates communication between management and publics of an organisation by contributing to organisational effectiveness. So PR practitioners are expected to participate and have great influence in the organisational decision making process. In practice a range of positions exists although different practitioners may hold different positions on this scale, they are often not seen as formal members of the management team in strategic decision making.

Ruth-McSwain (2011) emphasized that, the general roles PR professionals play have been extensively covered in literature in recent decades. Other studies investigated the impact of PR practitioners' roles on decision making by clarifying the conditions under which PR practitioners gain access to the decision

making process. Moreover, only a few studies sought to find out what contributions PR practitioners have made to strategic organisational decision making. Choi and Choi (2009) stated that, the influence on and participation in decision making by PR practitioners merits further research. PR practitioners serve so many roles in organisations because, communication is the value that guides the decision making process.

With regard to PR practitioners' impact on decision making processes, Desanto and Moss (2005) examined what PR managers do in organisations and what managerial behaviour mean in public relations context. Their findings revealed that a PR perspective is a major element of a manager's role in making communication policy decisions and they also act as facilitators in implementing management decisions. They also argued that, top management is now recognising the value of PR though it does not mean PR practitioner have become part of the dominant coalition. It was concluded that, it is not all PR practitioners who are involved in the decision making process.

A further interview by Reber and Berger (2006) revealed that some PR practitioners lack influence in strategic decision making and struggle to gain recognition. It argued that, it is important for PR practitioners to be ready to make use of opportunities to earn respect and the right to participate in decision making processes. According to Meng, Berger, Gower and Heyman (2012:33) as an effective PR practitioner, one should have a unique understanding of the communication process both with the internal and external publics to be able to connect the organisation to the people and society.

In summary, to effectively enhance the communicative aspects of decisions, PR practitioners must perform their boundary spanning roles more efficiently to bring about a mutual understanding between the organisation and its publics. This is done through monitoring and evaluation of the issues and trends within

the internal and external environments. It was further stated that the kind of education, experience, temperament, management orientation and job design PR practitioners possess enables them to become respected members of the dominant coalition within their organisation and thereby contributing to the strategic decision making processes of the organisation and its social environment. The contributions of PR practitioners solidifies their strategic position in organisational decision making.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is concerned with the data gathering processes and how it relates to the topic of the study. It is specifically composed of the research design, population, sampling and data collection and data analysis.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The selected design for this study is the mixed method. This is because it involves the combination of multiple research designs where the researcher hopes to overcome the weaknesses or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single method studies. The purpose of using the mixed method in this study is to obtain confirmation of findings through convergence of different perspectives. It enables easy description of the findings and the generalization of qualitative data to a degree and validates the data collection instruments.

In summary, the research design will take a sequential explanatory form where collection and analysis of quantitative data will be followed by collection and analysis of qualitative data. The purpose is to use qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a quantitative study.

Research can be categorized into different types depending on the nature or the purpose or the research problem. The purpose of an academic research can be exploratory (an ambiguous problem), descriptive (aware of problem) or explanatory (clearly defined problem), according to (Yin, 1994 and Zikmund, 2000).

Saunders et al. (2000) stated that, more than one purpose can be employed in a study, Yin (1994) highlights that the boundaries between the categories are not always clear.

There are three major approaches for conducting research or gathering data; quantitative, qualitative and mixed method approaches. The quantitative design is the one in which the investigator primarily uses positivist claims for developing knowledge (i.e., cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables, hypotheses and questions, use of instruments and observation, and the test of theories), employing strategies of inquiries such as experiments, surveys and collecting data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative research on the other hand is multi method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings and attempt to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Newman and Benz, 1998).

Interviews provide basic understanding of the organisation, the way it uses language and how staff understand issues. Surveys through questionnaire use provide a lot of understanding not available through a face to face interview. The mixed method approach, though more time-consuming, provides a richer interpretation of the phenomena being studied due to the complementarity use of the qualitative and quantitative approaches. The various approaches are discussed below beginning with the qualitative approach to research.

## **Qualitative Research**

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world which consists of a set of interpretative material practices that make the world visible. They stressed that value is placed to know how participants make meaning. This approach is significant in order to understand the importance of communication, trust and commitment which are not easily identified through quantitative analysis. On the other hand, Geertz (1973) explained that the strength of qualitative research is getting a vivid description or better understanding of the context of issues. Also, qualitative research is very useful for theory building prior to theory testing with surveys (pilot studies) (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003).

## **Quantitative Research**

According to literature, quantitative research is used to test existing theory. It has the strength of asking quality and consistent set of questions from each respondents. Surveys are used effectively to understand attitudes, behaviours and beliefs of respondents. There is flexibility in distribution without any geographical restrictions. Also, surveys allow the collection of large amounts of data at relatively cheaper costs. Meanwhile, surveys have some limitations and weaknesses which includes lack of flexibility in questions asked, ambiguity of understanding by the respondents and difficulty in locating the right or appropriate respondents among others as explained by (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003).

## Mixed Methods Research

Mixed methods is a research approach which is popular in the social, behavioural, and health sciences, in which researchers collect, analyse, and integrate both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a sustained long-term program of inquiry to address their research questions.

The rationale for using the mixed methods are:

- The need for different, multiple perspectives, or more complete understandings.
- The need to confirm quantitative measures with qualitative experiences.
- The need to explain quantitative results.
- The need to better contextualize instruments, measures, or interventions to reach certain populations.
- The need to gather trend data and individual perspectives a population.

According to (Creswell, 2003), there are six strategies used in designing the mixed method approach to research, these are:

1. Sequential explanatory
2. Sequential exploratory
3. Sequential transformative
4. Convergent Design
5. Intervention Design
6. Multiphase Design

## **Triangulation Research Method**

Triangulation in social science research basically refers to a process by which a researcher verifies findings by showing that independent measures of it agree with or, at least, do not contradict the actual findings. Moreover, some social scientists have suggested that validation in social sciences might be achieved by the collection of verified findings from the same respondents and on the same topic, by using different methods. It has been argued that the deficiencies of any one method can be overcome by combining methods by taking advantage of their individual strengths. One of such method is known as '**triangulation**'.

Social realities are very difficult to understand in its entirety with one method of investigation. Its complexity makes it impossible to be captured by a single means of data collection or technique. All social research method have advantages and disadvantages, in other words, each method contains strength and weakness. No single one can solve all the required problems. So it is necessary to triangulate in order to compensate the weaknesses of other methods so as to have a true view of social realities.

The study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (mixed method) to examine the research questions. The researcher used in-depth interviews with the focal person (PR Practitioner of MESTI) and some top-management members to better understand the current level of PR practice within the MESTI and the public service in general. Questionnaires were also administered to selected staff of the MESTI to sample their views on the role of public relations as a management tool in a public service organisation and MESTI in particular.

### **3.3 RESEARCH POPULATION**

A population for a study is defined as a group or class of subjects, variables, concepts or phenomena (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006). According to Babbie (2005), the population for a study is a group (usually made of people) about whom conclusions are drawn in research. The Public Relations Officer, Top Management and staff of the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) specifically formed the sample unit for my study.

### **3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

Since it was impossible to study the entire population, it was imperative to select an aspect of the population to study. A sample is derived from the main population. In other words, the sample is a subset of the population and it involves the actual participants or respondents in the study. There are two broad categories of sampling; probability and non-probability sampling. The probability sampling uses mathematical guidelines where each unit's chance of being selected is even, while the non-probability sampling does not follow any mathematical guideline.

Based on the aims and objectives of my study, the probability sampling technique which allows for generalization was used for part of the study and non-probability sampling technique which is based on the subjective judgement of the researcher were used for specific investigations. These two were used because the researcher wanted factual, precise, statistical and description of the larger population on the general perception of public relations and specific information from the PR Officer and Management with regard to policies and regulations governing the practice of PR in the public service and MESTI in particular.

According to Sparks (2013), the probability sampling technique is the most effective method for selecting study elements within populations; it minimizes a researcher's biases and permits estimation of sampling errors. Likewise, non-probability sampling are done based on the subjective judgement of the researcher and can be used as a cornerstone of probability sampling technique. The non-probability sampling technique does not allow all individuals in the population an equal chance of being selected. It reflects a wide-range of research specific factors in each case. Some advantages of the non-probability sampling technique are, the possibility to reflect the descriptive comments about the sample. It is also cost and time effective as compared with the probability sampling technique which makes sure all the units of the population are given equal chances of being selected. Nevertheless there are some considerations about the minimum sample size in non-probability sampling.

Specifically, my study adopted the stratified and the purposive sampling techniques. In this case, the researcher broke the population into strata, applied the simple random method to some and to the remaining structured interviews aimed at gathering specific results from the respondents and participants. For my study, the population was divided into three different strata – the Public Relations Officer, Top Management and Staff of MESTI. The division was proportionate because it gave each stratum a fair representation. This method was useful for my study because it resulted in a greater degree of representativeness.

The purposive sampling technique which is a non-probability sampling technique was used based on based on the characteristics of my research population and the objectives of my study. The stratified sampling technique on the other hand, was used because there were varied subpopulations within the overall population size and I wanted to allow every strata to be sampled independently so that the results could be compared.

### **3.5 SAMPLE SIZE**

Fifty (52) top management members and staff were selected for the study.

- Forty-Seven (50) usable questionnaires, to be answered by selected staff members of MESTI for the quantitative aspect of the study.
- Two (2) structured interviews (PRO and One Top Management Member of MESTI) to represent the qualitative aspect of the study.

**NB: The triangulation method will be used during the analysis for verification purposes.**

### **3.6 SOURCE OF DATA AND INSTRUMENTS USED**

A structured interview in its simplest form involves one person asking another person a list of predetermined questions about a carefully selected topic. The person asking the questions (“the interviewer”) is allowed to explain issues to the interviewee or respondent (the person responding to the questions) to avoid misunderstandings or confusions. This enables the researcher to examine the level of understanding a participant has about a particular topic, usually in a slightly more depth than a questionnaire. It made it easy to identify participants who had more detailed information the researcher needed (the focal persons). A structured interview guide was used All the participants were asked the same questions which made it easy for the researcher to repeat the interview. It provided a reliable source for a quality data.

On the other hand, a questionnaire was also administered to selected number of general staff to sample their views on public relations as a management tool in the public service and MESTI in particular. A questionnaire is a set of questions that are answered directly on paper by respondents. Here questions can

be listed with highly structured responses (closed form) or may be unstructured (opened form) which allows for additional comments. Questionnaires with opened and closed ended questions were administered to the selected population and responses were compared and analysed.

A number of factors greatly affected the preparation of the questionnaires in order to source effective results. Some of these factors include; the level of understanding about the topic of the study among some of the respondents, sensitivity of the information being gathered as well as confidential issues. The questionnaire was framed short and concise in order to save time and not bore the respondents which might affect their level of responses.

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION, HANDLING AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURES**

The questionnaires were distributed to carefully selected respondents who belonged to the accessible population per the sample size. The respondents were given enough time to answer the questions after which the questionnaires were taken back. The data was collated, coded and presented using interpretations, frequency tables and pie charts. The researcher used SPSS to analyse and interpret the data, paying particular attention to patterns and relationships. The findings will be represented using frequency tables and pie charts. Also, structured interview guides were used to interview the focal persons (the PRO of MESTI and some management team). Data was collected for classification, interpretation and inductions.

The next chapter covers the presentation and analysis of data obtained from participants and respondents and the findings using interpretations, explanation, frequency distribution tables and pie charts.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the output and the analysis of the data collected from the study. Here, empirical data collected from the sampled population for the study are presented. The main goal of this study is to answer to the question as to whether public relations is a management tool in the public service with particular attention to the MESTI. This chapter provides an insight into the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data including data screening and cleaning, demographic profile of respondents, reliability of the various scale items and the descriptive statistics.

## 4.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

### THE PR PRACTITIONER OF MESTI

The PRO of MESTI in his response to whether PR is a management tool in the public service noted that, *“in practice PR is a management tool in the public service although there is no empirical research to support this assertion”*. According to him PR is a management tool within the MESTI and is represented at top management as a member of the dominant coalition and aids in decision making and implementation not only of communication and public relations issues but with technical issues as well. He went further to state that, *“though there are some misgivings among some top management members as to why PR should be part of the dominant coalition, the Public Service organogram places it as a management function in coordinating communication activities with its various stakeholders”*. He attributed the misgivings of some members of the dominant coalition to the fact that they do not really understand the role communication plays in coordinating the affairs of organizations in general.

In finding out whether the PR department is on its own or linked to another department, the PRO said, *“with the current organogram at the MESTI, the PR department is on its own and reports directly to the Chief Director Administration but in practice, it is linked to the Research, Statistics and Information Management Unit (RSIM) due to financial and management structure of the MESTI”*. The PR practitioner of MESTI feels different about the structure since PR issues are diverse and the right order is to allow the PR practitioner to touch every aspect of the Ministry’s activities to give expert advice and to coordinate all communication activities to protect the image and reputation of the Ministry.

The PRO of the MESTI, further noted that in practice, the PR practitioner reports directly to the Chief Executive Director of the organisation where he or she works but with particular reference to the MESTI,

the PR practitioner reports directly to the Chief Director Administration although he is not prevented to meet the Minister and other officials directly. The PR practitioner of MESTI commented that the current structural arrangements need to be re-examined to position PR at its rightful place.

To satisfy the second objective of interrogation, the PR practitioner at the MESTI performs the following roles and functions among others: ***“writing of all forms of documents, media relations, client relations, employee relations, government affairs, public affairs and issues management and web site development and management”***. With regard to the PR roles and functions the PR practitioner of the MESTI performs, he acts as the communication manager responsible for planning and management of all PR programmes, advises management, develops communication policy decisions and oversees their implementation. Aside this, there are some technician duties that the PR department performs.

The core activities that the PR practitioner of MESTI engages in are management of all communication related issues and media relations since most of their work is activity based. At MESTI, top management considers PR as a management tool which is the responsibility of the PRO as a management member. It was noted that management meetings are held on Monday every week to deliberate on issues affecting the Ministry and the way forward. When it comes to decision making with regard to public relations and communication, the PRO of MESTI said, ***“I am the expert and the focal person who is responsible for such issues”***. The PRO of MESTI confirmed this as he noted that when it comes to communication and PR issues, it is a bottom-up approach since the procedure originates from the PR department and submitted to top management for discussion and approval before implementation.

The PRO also noted that there are few occasions that he will have to act on the directives from other members of the dominant coalition with regard to existing policies and strategies within the Ministry. He lamented that in practice, *“Usually when it comes to technical documents, the technical members of the dominant coalition step me aside during the initial stages of the policy planning so when it comes to implementation, it becomes a bit complicated as to how to communicate such a policy which I have no background knowledge about”*.

According to the PRO, *“though I see myself as a member of the dominant coalition, I have some reservations as to how PR should be practiced within the public service”*. The PRO noted that the dominant coalition and staff at the MESTI need some enlightenment of PR related issues for them to understand the values and benefits PR brings to the decision making table towards the improvement of communication in general and PR in particular.

According to the PRO of the MESTI, *“the PR department formulates its strategies and policies in line with the overall goals and objectives of the Ministry emphasizing on the fact that most of their activities are events based”*. The PRO retreated that, without the policy direction of the MESTI, its PR department cannot function properly since the circumstances under which PR operates differ and the PR department usually follows the policy direction of the Ministry through its activities to designs PR programmes to sync with it.

To satisfy the third objective of interrogation with regard to how issues are communicated to the various publics within the public service of Ghana, the PRO of the MESTI noted that communication within the public service in general is weak as compared with the private sector. He further noted that *“communication*

*between top management and general staff is not effective*". The PRO emphasized that with the MESTI communication with the internal publics is particularly weak but was quick to state that the PR department is putting up strategies to resolve it. He stated that the management of the Ministry has been informed about the issue and corrective strategies have been submitted to management for approval and implementation.

According to the PRO, *"currently the PR department has conducted a communication audit among the employees of the Ministry to find out the actual issues to inform the final implementation of the strategies which have been submitted to the management"*. Some of the strategies developed to improve internal communication are monthly departmental meetings by the various heads of departments (HODs) to inform staff on the policy direction of the Ministry and other matters. Bi-weekly newsletters, staff meetings (to build amicable relationships between management and employees of the Ministry), intranet system, WhatsApp platform and the website.

The PRO further noted that communication with the external publics is more effective as compared with the internal publics since most of the activities are event-based such as Meet-The-Press, press releases and other media related events. With regard to how the MESTI gets feedback from its publics, the PRO noted that, *"usually it is through personal interviews with the Minister and members of the dominant coalition for clarification on issues, media monitoring, personal reports and the official website but these means are not effective since they are not interactive enough to access the actual feedbacks the Ministry needs to improve on its delivery"*. To confirm the fact that the feedback channels the MESTI's PR department uses is not interactive, the researcher tried to log on to the Ministry's website but could not access any information since there was none.

The PRO noted that, *“practically the nature of communication between the Ministry and its publics is asymmetrical (one-way) since most of the channels used are not interactive to allow the publics to also bring their views on board”*. Most of the time, the Ministry only feeds the publics with the policies and information it wants them to know about. On few occasions during public forums, questions and answers are allowed but these do not go far in informing the policy direction of the MESTI.

The PRO further noted that the MESTI’s PR department interacts with the external publics more than the internal publics due to the nature of activities it undertakes. The PRO of the MESTI retreated that, *“dealing with the external publics is more like firefighting because they have the potential of bringing down the image and reputation of the Ministry and therefore needs more attention”*. This is a major reason why internal communication is not effective at the MESTI and needs immediate attention.

To find out if there is any communication policy that underpins the practice of public relations in the public service, the PRO of the MESTI noted that, *“actually I have not sighted any in my practice as a public service PRO and cannot say for a fact as to whether there is or not”*. He recommended that the Information Services Department (ISD) should be the right agency to contact and find out if there is any such policy concerning communication in general or public relations in particular.

The study further enquired about who was responsible for the development of communication strategies and policies within the MESTI in particular. The PRO stated that, *“each Ministry, Department and Agency (MDA) is responsible for its communication strategy and policy which must sync with the goals and objectives of the Ministry involved and as such, the PR department of the MESTI is responsible for generating all communication and PR related strategies and policies which needs approval from the*

*dominant coalition before implementation*". The approval of the dominant coalition is very important because the PR department is not autonomous from the MESTI. The PR department at the MESTI plays a very important role in communicating the Ministry's strategies, policies and other information. In summary, the actual Ministry in charge of government communication is the Ministry of Communication and the Information Services Department (ISD; a department under the Ministry of Communication).

According to the PRO of the MESTI, *"PR in the public service is a strategic management tool because without communication, the government officials may not be able to interact with the various publics to inform and educate them on the various strategies and policies the government wants to implement and how beneficial it will be to both the government and the public's as well"*. The PRO of the MESTI, emphasized that communication and public relations are the baselines against which the government's successes and failures are measured and so must be done well. He added that in the MESTI in particular, most of the successes they have achieved are through the activities of the PR department.

Furthermore, the PRO of the MESTI stated that, formal education plays a major role in becoming a proactive and efficient PR practitioner. In his explanation, he noted that, *"without formal education, it will take a genius to survive in the PR profession, between the scale of 1-10, only 1/10 (one out of ten) person can make it since it will be difficult for anyone without professional knowledge to combine theories, models and practice which are the main keys every PR practitioner must possess to be successful and proactive"*. This supports the fact that without a professional background in PR anyone performing the role of a PR practitioner will not be acting in the right direction.

The PRO of the MESTI lamented that, *“the public service in general is not using the PR practitioners to their full potential due to the structural arrangements which exist on the public service organogram”*. He further noted, *“That previously, PR was not part of the dominant coalition and was only responsible for protocol services and other assignments as the dominant coalition determines”*.

Currently, with regard to the MESTI in particular, he said on the scale of 1-10, he will say 4/10 (the current rate at which MESTI is using its PR practitioner’s potentials). This means if he is given the opportunity there are a lot of potential in him to be tapped. The PRO of the MESTI noted that if given the opportunity, he will come up with a workable strategy to improve communication with the internal publics (employees of the MESTI) with the aim of creating an amicable working environment within the Ministry. He supported this by emphasizing the point that, **“education in the professional field of PR has improved and that today’s PRO is well positioned to handle the challenges that lie ahead”**.

In finding out about PR’s contribution to the public service in general, the PRO of the MESTI reiterated that, *“without communication all human activities will be in total confusion and at the MESTI communication and public relations for that matter is given a very important place”*. The PR department is involved in every activity the Ministry undertakes in relating with both internal and external publics to get them informed on the various policies and information they need to know about. The PRO reiterated that, *“PR has been very useful in development, management and protection of the Ministry’s image, reputation and adds value to the bottom line in sync with the goals and objectives of the MESTI though these were not without challenges”*.

As the PRO noted, *“though the dominant coalition appreciates to a great extent the activities of the PR department, I hold some reservations as to the need to brief the dominant coalition on the actual benefits*

*and values of PR and how it will help in improving the Ministry's image and reputation among its publics".* This is necessary since some departments sometimes do not involve PR during the initial stages of their activities but when there is a difficulty, PR has always been there to exhibit its wealth and give professional advice.

The PRO of the MESTI was not so happy with how other staff of the MESTI relate with the PR department, the reason being that, *"PR is not seen as a revenue generating department so why should it be given financial allocation"*? According to the PRO, *"the perceptions of other staff of the Ministry are more of envy than appreciation since they do not understand the nature of the profession"*. The PRO was quick to also note that, *"I have to plan ahead all the time to make sure all programmes and events are successful but others think I make money out of it which is not true"*. He attributed it to the fact that, there is a need for some education to correct their perceptions about PR for it to be accepted so that together both management and staff will work in promoting the goals and objectives of the Ministry. Notwithstanding the above, there are few staffs who also appreciate what PR does as they involve PR in their activities.

According to the PRO of the MESTI, *"there are lots of logistical issues constraining the delivery of PR activities at the MESTI"*. Some of the constraints are as follows, insufficient office space, no official printer, camera, recorder, scanner, projector and limited financial assistance. For example, *"the PR department is organizing an event which needs media coverage to spread the information to their various publics, usually what happens is that the budget allocated for media is not enough to take care the media houses that can spread the information"*. So in this regard, it becomes so difficult for the PR department to work effectively in dissemination of information to the general public.

However, the PRO of the MESTI noted that there are two major challenges the PR department is struggling with, these are *“budgetary constraints and lack of confidence in the PR’s potentials by some staff members”*. With reference to budgetary constraints, top management and the finance division have some difficulty in understanding why PR should be given enough financial support for its activities. The PRO supported this fact by noting that, *“PR is everyone’s business since without communication none of the programmes the Ministry undertakes will reach the intended stakeholders.”* Secondly, some staff members do not involve the PRO during the initial stages of their activities, the reason being that their activities are so technical in nature and that they do not know what the PRO will be contributing. Meanwhile, when it comes to implementation of such activities then the PRO is called upon to communicate the issues that have been put together without his involvement. The PRO lamented that, *“this is quiet problematic since it becomes very difficult to read and understand a whole document within a short period which affects the implementation with regard to how such policies will be communicated”*. He also noted that communication must be symmetrical so that the sender and the receiver will be on the same level of understanding regarding the issues or information that needs to be disseminated.

### 4.3 TOP MANAGEMENT MEMBER

#### DIRECTOR, RESEARCH STATISTICS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (RSIM) OF THE MESTI

Basically the interview with the top management member was to re-examine the answers the PRO (Focal Person) gave in response to the interview the researcher conducted and to find out whether top management of MESTI recognize PR as a management tool or not.

According to the Director/RSIM, the MESTI has an operational PR department which has been in existence since the establishment of the Ministry. He further explained that, *“the MESTI forms part of the Central Management Agencies of the government machinery. He noted that the Ministry was created in 1993 as Ministry of Environment and Science and has evolve through the years with additional names until 2013 when it was renamed Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) under an Executive Instrument (E.I.) 1 Civil Service (Ministries) Instrument, 2013”*. He agreed to the fact that, communication in general forms the basis of public service administrative machinery since it is used in disseminating all policy directives to its various stakeholders and publics.

With regard to whether PR is seen in the public service as a management tool, the Director/RSIM, noted that, *“within the public service, I cannot say for a fact that it is, since there is no document to prove it but with MESTI in particular, he can say PR is treated as a management tool since the PRO is a top management member who is involved in all decision made in the Ministry especially with issues concerning communication in general and public relations in particular”*.

The Director/RSIM further stated that, ***“PR is considered one of the most relevant management tools used by the Ministry since without communication none of their strategies and policies could be transmitted to their various stakeholders for effective implementation of government initiatives and policies”***. He also emphasized that, ***“public relations is a strategic management tool without which management decisions and the Ministry’s policies for that matter cannot reach the intended stakeholders and publics towards the achievement of government initiatives and innovations”***.

With regard to the specific roles and functions the PRO of the MESTI performs, the Director/RSIM noted that, ***“basically the PRO is responsible for all communication related activities the Ministry undertakes including development of communication strategies and policies, the channels of sending messages and assessment of feedback”***. Moreover, he further explained that, ***“the actual activities he undertakes are stipulated in the job description for Communication Officer/Public Relations Officer”***. On the other hand, the Director/RSIM noted that, the PRO can be given directives from other members of the dominant coalition with regard to the policy direction of the Ministry.

The Director/RSIM was so emphatic concerning the need for formal education in public relations for anyone who will be recruited for the position of a Public Relations Officer with the Public Service. He added that, ***“recruitment of all PROs is done by the Public Services Commission (PSC) which makes sure the right caliber of professional are recruited into the public service”***.

The PRO of the MESTI was praised by the Director/RSIM for his competence and call for duty at all times. The Director/RSIM added that, ***“the PRO has prerequisite knowledge and understanding of his profession and delivers to the satisfaction almost everyone”***. He also noted that, ***“since the Ministry is a human***

*institution, one cannot get everyone to like him or her but to the best of my knowledge the PRO of the MESTI is doing his best in using public relations to coordinate the various activities of the Ministry”.*

According to the Director/RSIM, the PRO of the MESTI reports directly to the Chief Director Administration although in practice the Director/RSIM has an oversight responsibility over the PR department with reference to financial management structure of the MESTI. The Director/RSIM also noted that, *“the PR department at MESTI is responsible for the development and implementation of all communication related activities”*. The strategies and policies originate from the PR department and are sent to management meeting for discussion and approval before implementation. He emphasized that, the way communication issues are handled within the Ministry is the Bottom-Up approach.

The Director/RSIM also noted that with regard to how other departments perceive PR within the Ministry, *“by and large, it is a cordial relationship although a few staff do not really understand why public relations should be everyone’s business but retreated that it is one of the challenges the dominant coalition and the PR department are working on to find a lasting solution for PR to be a more effective management tool”*. On the other hand, the Director/RSIM recommended that, *“PR in the public service in general needs to be reconsidered in terms of how education and information are passed on to the various publics about the benefits and value of PR in image building and reputation management”*.

Notwithstanding the above, PR has greatly contributed to the achievement of MESTI’s goals and objectives on policy directions.

In finding out whether top management appreciates PR activities, the Director/RSIM stated that, *“top management greatly appreciates PR activities the PR department of MESTI undertakes which are usually in sync with the overall management plan of the Ministry”*. He further noted that, *“about 70% of other*

*staff give much recognition to PR as a management tool since the PRO is a top management member and participates fully in decision making and implementation at the MESTI”.*

The Director/RSIM in his comments on the major challenges PR is facing in the public service and MESTI in particular noted that, *“the PR department is not properly resourced to enable it to perform effectively”.*

He added that, *“lack of proper logistics and budgetary allocation to the PR department are the two major challenges the department is facing currently”.* As to how top management can help in resolving the challenges, the Director/RSIM recommended that, *“the Ministry must re-examine the needs of the PR department and allocate the necessary logistical and budgetary requirements to enable it perform to expectation”.*

In summary, the Director/RSIM in his opinion believes that the PRO shares similar understanding with him regarding the PR department’s challenges, performance and expectations.

#### 4.4 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

##### NON PR PRACTITIONERS

##### Personal Data

**Table 4.4.1 Gender of Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages %</b>
Male	37	74
Female	13	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

The table above (Table 2) depicts the response by gender. It shows that 74% of the respondent were males while 26% were females.

**Table 4.4.2 Age**

<b>Age of respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responses in Percentage %</b>
21-30 Years	8	16
31-40 Years	18	36
41-50 Years	20	40
51 and above	4	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, October 2017

From the table above (Table 4.4.2), it shows that majority of the respondents who responded to the questionnaires were between 41 to 50 years. They contributed to a total of 40% of the respondents. This is followed by respondents between the ages of 31 years to 40 years with a total of 36%. 16% of them were 21 to 30 years and the remaining 8% were 51 and above.

**Table 4.4.3 Level of Education**

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages%</b>
Degree	41	82
Masters	8	16
PhD	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

On accessing the level of education by the respondents in **table 4.4.3** it was found that majority of the study respondents were Degree holders and this was indicated with 82% of the total responses. Also, it is shown in the table that 16% and 2% of the respondents also hold Masters and other PhD certificates respectively.

**Table 4.4.4 Duration with MESTI**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages%</b>
1-10 Years	26	52
11-20 Years	8	16
21-30 Years	16	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Table 4.4.4 above indicates how long respondents have worked with the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (**MESTI**). Out of the 50 respondents of this characteristic, 52% and 32 % have been with **MESTI** for 1-10 years and 21-30 years respectively. Also, it was shown that only 8% of the respondents have been with **MESTI** between 11-20 years.

**Table 4.4.5 Marital status**

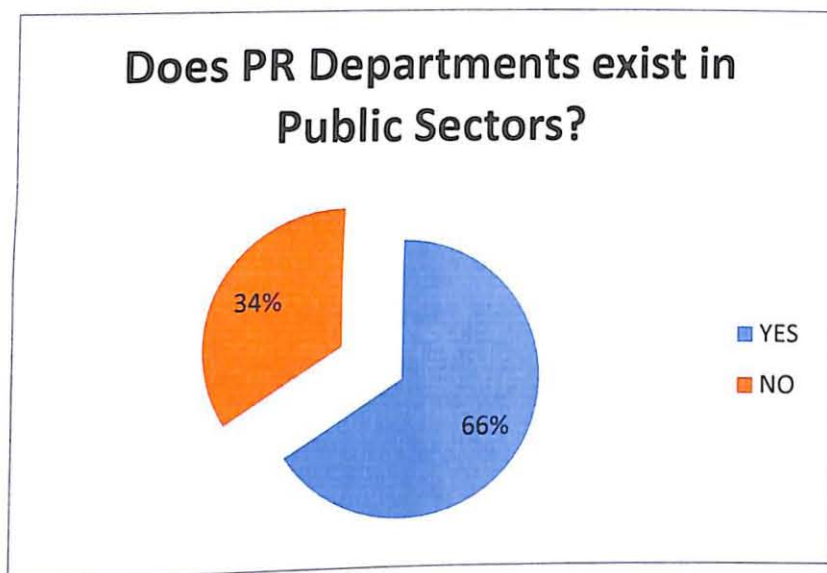
<b>Years</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages%</b>
Married	44	88
Divorced	4	8
Single	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

From table 4.4.5, 88% of the respondents were married, 8% were divorced and 4% were single. This shows that majority of respondents are married.

#### 4.5 PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT (PR DEPARTMENT)

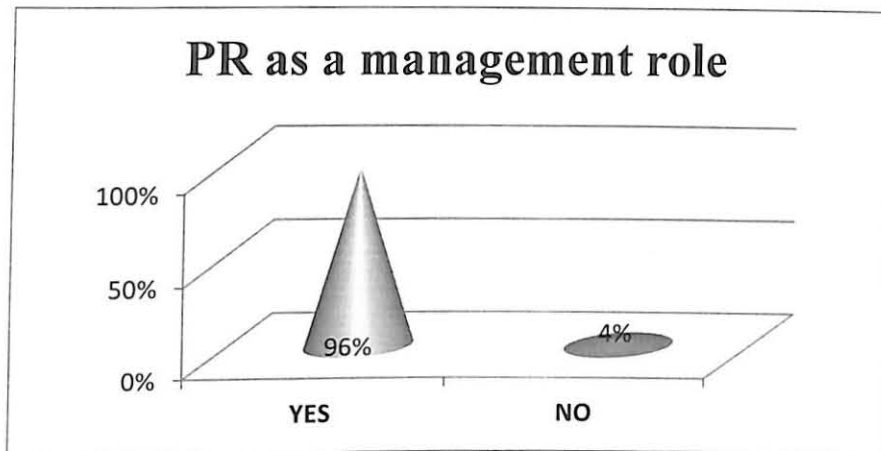
Fig. 4.5.1



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.5.1 shows that 66% of the respondents answered to indicate that, indeed PR departments exist in the public sectors where as only 34% of the respondents are of the view that, PR departments does not exist in public sectors of the economy.

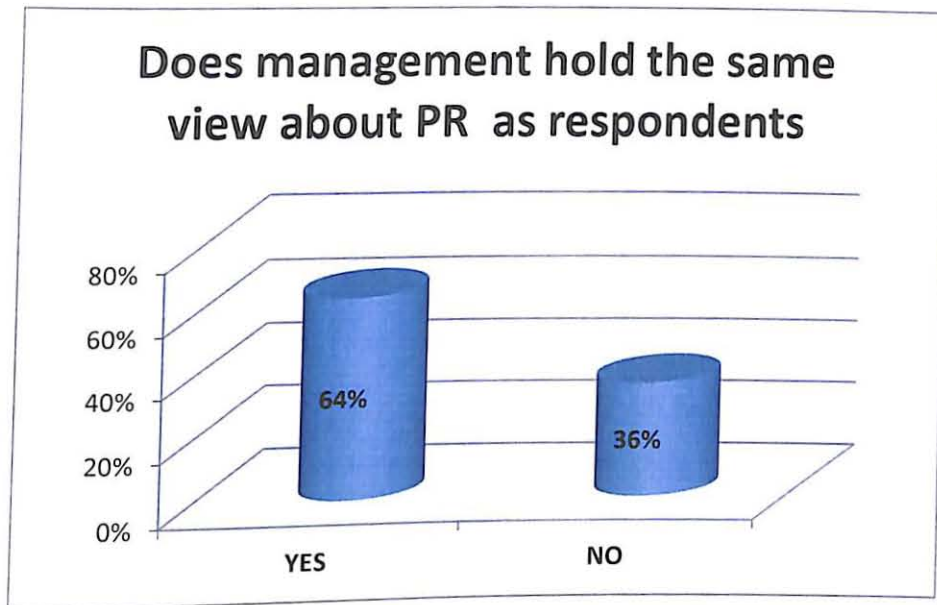
**Fig 4.5.2**



**Source:** Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.5.2 shows that 96% of the respondents are of the view that, PR is management role. Only 4% answered NO to disagree that PR is not a management role.

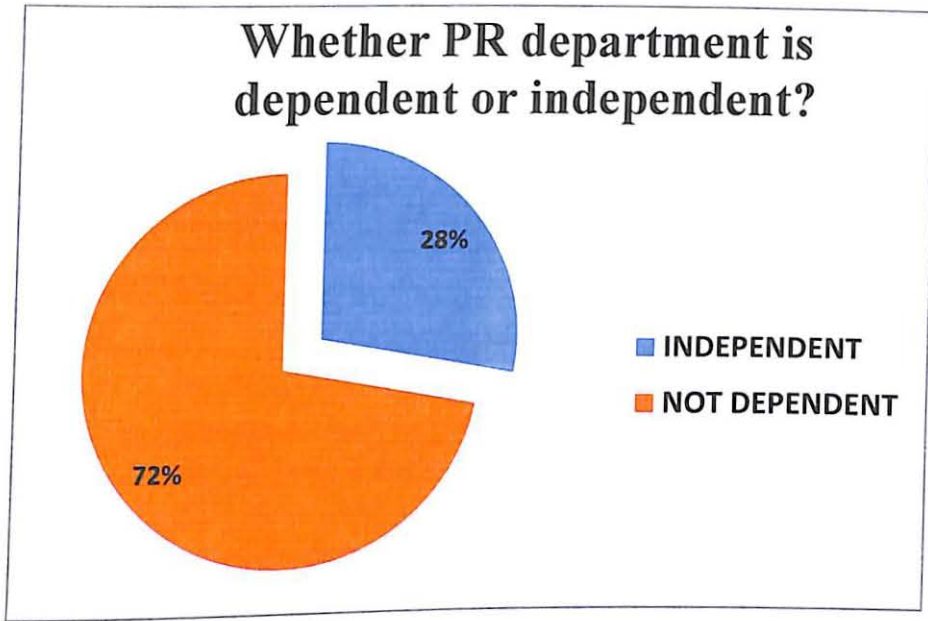
Fig. 4.5.3



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.5.3 is to elicit from the respondents if management hold the same view about PR as they do. It was found out that, 64% of the respondents said YES. 36% of the respondent disagree by saying no.

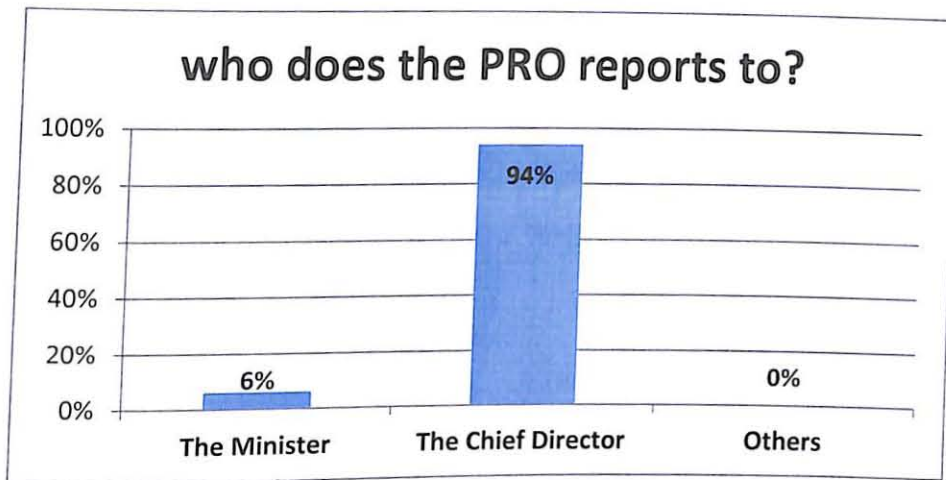
Fig.4.5.4



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.5.4 sought to know if PR department at METSI is independent or dependent. It was deduced that, 72% of the respondent said PR department at METSI is dependent. Only 24% said it is independent.

Fig. 4.5.5

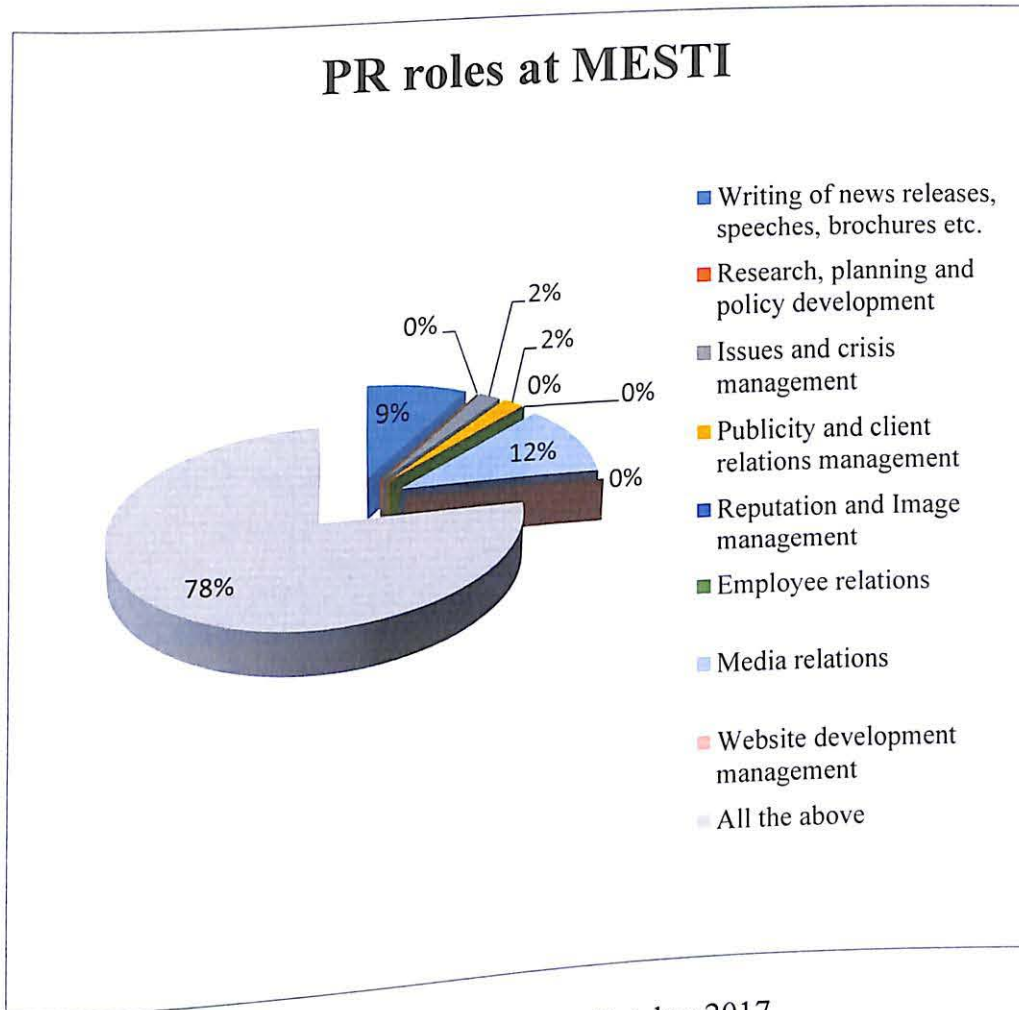


Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.5.5 sought to know if the respondents know who the PRO reports to. It found out that, 94% of the respondent said the PRO reports to the Chief Director while 6% said the PRO reports to the Minister.

## 4.6 PUBLIC RELATIONS ROLES

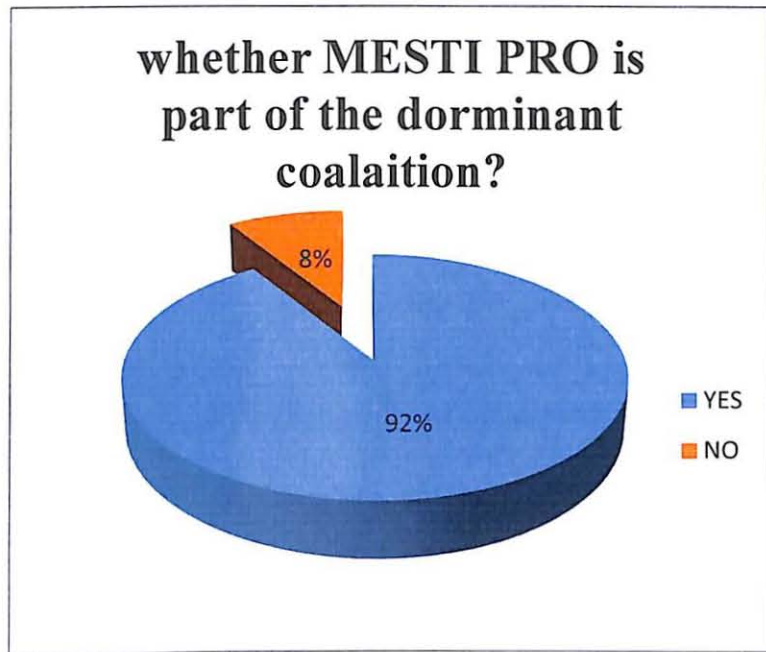
Fig. 4.6.1



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.6.1 sought to know if the respondents know the PR roles at MESTI. A lot of PR roles were provided for respondents to identify the roles being practiced at MESTI. It was found out that 78% of the respondents said almost all the alternatives provided as PR roles are practiced at MESTI, 9% of the respondents said MESTI only perform the role of writing new release, speeches, brochures etc, 2% each said MESTI perform the role of publicity and client relationship management along side issues and crisis management respectively.

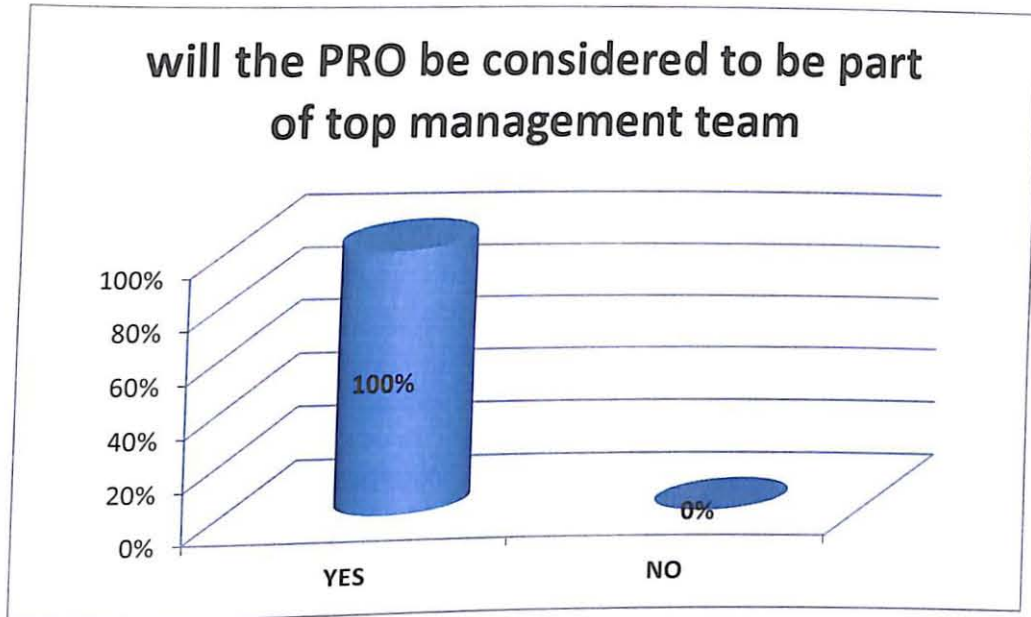
Fig. 4.6.2



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.6.2 also sought to know whether the PRO at METSI is part of the dominant coalition. That is whether the PRO is part of the management decision making. It was found out that, 92% of the respondent said YES while only 8% said NO.

Fig. 4.6.3



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

The PRO may be part of the management decision making process but may not be part of the management team. Figure 4.6.3 sought to find out if indeed the PRO is also considered as part of the management team. It was evident that, indeed, all the respondent 100% said yes, the PRO is part of the management team.

## 4.7 COMMUNICATION WITH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PUBLICS

### 4.7.1 How do PR departments in the public service or MESTI communicate with internal and external publics?

Table 4.7.1

Type of Publics	Mode of communication	Frequency	Percentage%
Internal Publics	(notice board, intranet, letters, memo etc)	17	34
External Publics	(press release, meet-the-press, media interview)	33	66
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Table 4.7.1 shows that PR department communicates with 66% of the respondents who are external publics through press releases, meet-the-press and media interview while 34% of the respondents who are internal publics are communicated with through the notice board, intranet, letters, memos etc.

4.7.2 Which public relations tools are used in communicating with the publics within the public service?

Table 4.7.2

Type of Publics	Mode of communication	Frequency	Percentage%
Internal Publics	(intranet, whatsAap, staff durbars and in-house newsletters)	13	26
External Publics	(press release, meet-the-press, media interview etc)	37	74
<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

In response to the above question, respondents re-echoed what was earlier said in response to the use of intranet, whatsAap and staff durbars and in-house newsletters. A majority of the respondents said communication tools used in communicating with the external publics in the public service takes 74% while 26% of the tools are used to communicate internally therefore internal communication is not effective.

**4.7.3 In what ways do the public relations department get feedback from its publics?**

**Table 4.7.3**

PR Department	Mode of communication	Frequency	Percentage%
Internal Publics	(staff durbars and in-house newsletters)	9	18
External Publics	(meet-the-press, media interview etc)	41	82
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Table 4.7.3 above shows that 82% of the respondents believe the PR department gets more feedback from its external publics through meet-the-press, media interviews etc, while 18% of the respondents feel feedback gets to the PR department through staff durbars, and in-house newsletters.

**4.7.4 Are the publics with whom you are communicating involved in the process?**

**Table 4.7.4**

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage%
YES	11	22
NO	39	78
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

According to table 4.7.4, 78% of the respondents said they are not involved in the communication process while 22% said they are involved.

4.7.5 Which of the publics does the public relations department interact with most? Internal publics (employees) or External publics (other stakeholders)?

Table 4.7.5

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage%
Internal Publics	5	10
External Publics	45	90
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

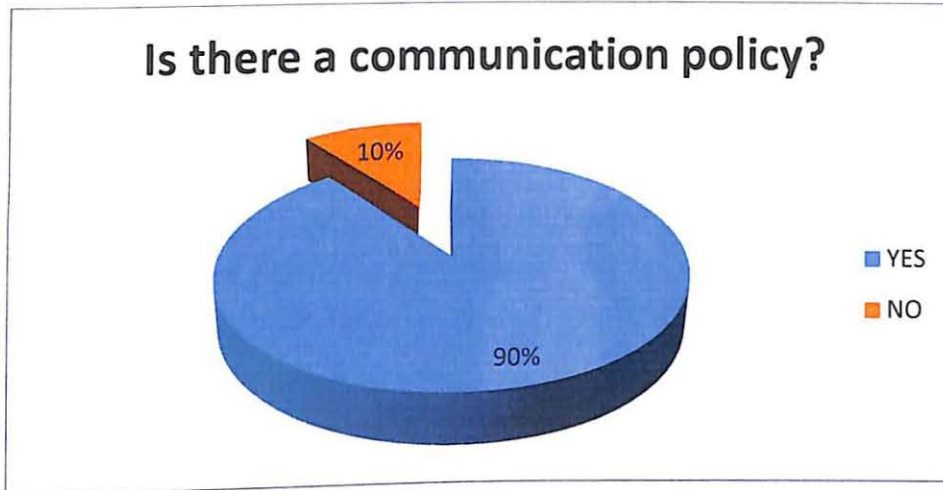
Source: Field Survey, October 2017

With reference to the table above, 90% of the respondents agreed to the fact that the PR department at the MESTI interacts more with the external publics while 10% of the respondents believe it interacts more with the internal publics.

## 4.8 COMMUNICATION POLICY ISSUES

4.8.1 Is there a communication policy which guides public relation activities within the public service?

Fig. 4.8.1



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.8.1 shows that, 90% of the respondent said yes to METSI having a communication policy. Only 10% of the respondent said NO.

**4.8.2 Who is responsible for the development of communication policies and strategies for the public service?**

**Table 4.8.2**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
PR Department	48	96
Top Management	2	4
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

From table 4.8.2 above, 96% of the respondents agreed that the PR department is responsible for the development of communication policies and strategies for the public service while 4% thinks it is top management.

**4.8.3 Would you say that public relations practice in public service is a strategic tool? Does it add value to the goals and objectives of the public service?**

**Table 4.8.3**

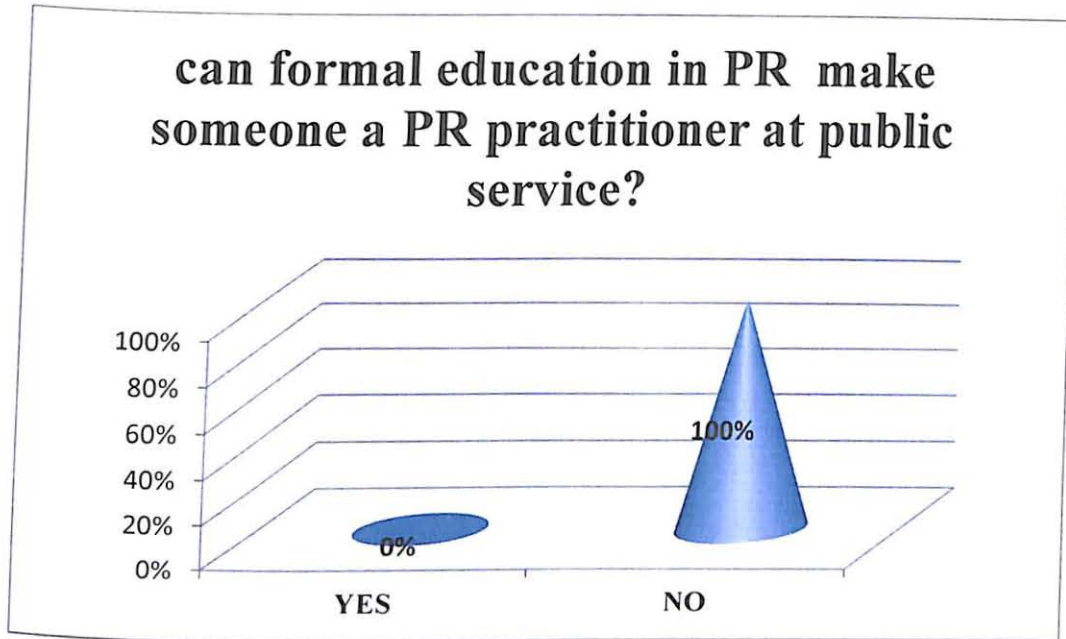
<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
YES	7	14
NO	43	86
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, October 2017

Table 4.8.3 above shows that 86% of the respondents do not believe PR practice in the PS is strategic while 14% believes it is strategic.

4.8.4 In your opinion, is formal education in PR necessary for someone to become a PR practitioner?

Fig. 4.8.4

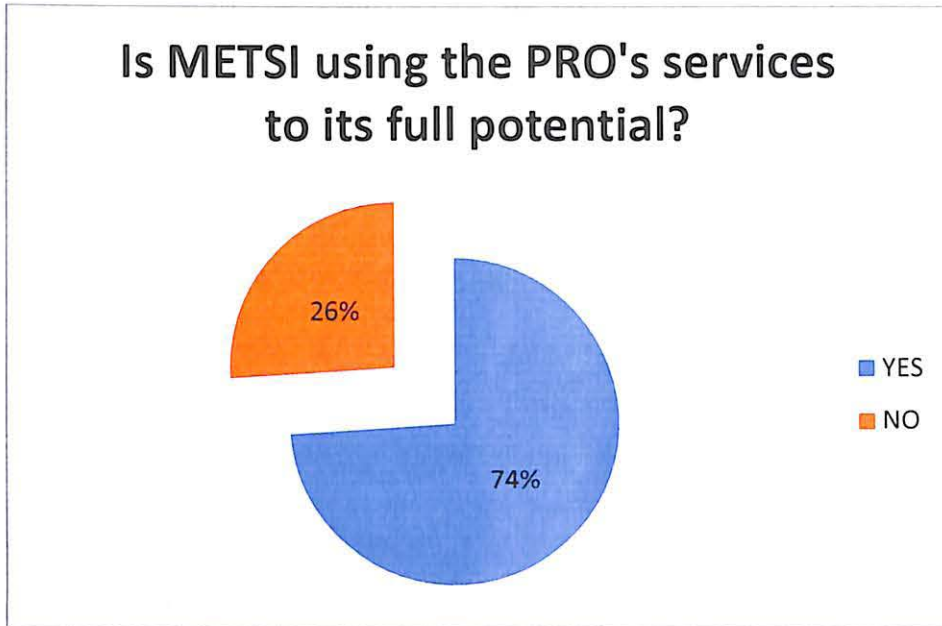


Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.8.4 shows that, all the respondents, representing 100% said formal education in PR alone cannot make someone a PR practitioner at public service with 0% saying YES.

4.8.5 Do you think MESTI is using the PRO's services to its full potential?

Fig. 4.8.5



Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Figure 4.8.5 shows that, 74% of the respondents said METSI is using PRO's services to its full potential while 26% of the respondents said NO.

## 4.9 CHALLENGES IN THE DELIVERY OF PR ACTIVITIES

### 4.9.1 Currently, what would you say is public relations' contribution to the public service?

Table 4.9.1

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage%
Good	16	32
Not Good	34	68
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

The table above shows that 68% of the respondents said PR's contribution to PS is not good while 32% said it is good.

### 4.9.2 In what ways do you think top management appreciates public relations practice?

Table 4.9.2

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage%
Participation in PR activities	45	90
Provision of Logistics	5	10
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, October 2017

Table 4.9.2 above shows that 90% of the respondents believes that top management appreciates PR practice by participating in PR activities while 10% of the respondents believe it is by provision of logistics.

**4.9.3 Would you say other staff (public servants) of MESTI appreciate the value of public relations as a profession? Please explain.**

**Table 4.9.3**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
YES	31	62
NO	19	38
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, October 2017

According to the above table, 62% of the respondents believes other staff of the MESTI appreciate the value of PR as a profession while 38% of the respondents do not appreciate PR as a profession.

**4.9.4 What do you think are some of the constraints that Public Relations Officers in the public service face? Please explain.**

**Table 4.9.4**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
Logistics	23	46
Financial Assistance	27	54
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, October 2017

The table above shows that 54% of the respondents agreed that logistics are the main constraints the PRO in the PS face while 46% of the respondents believe it is financial assistance.

**4.9.5 What do you think are the major challenges that public relations department in the public service is facing and MESTI in particular? Please explain briefly.**

**Table 4.9.5**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
Lack of recognition	13	26
Budgetary Issues	37	74
	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, October 2017

According to the above table, 74% of the respondents said budgetary issues are one of the major challenges that PR departments in the PS face and MESTI in particular while 26% of the respondents said it is due to lack of recognition given to the PR profession.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study has its spotlight on the role of public relations as a management tool in a public service organisation. In accordance with the research questions of the study, it sought to find out whether PR is a management tool in the public service, What PR roles and functions do PR practitioners play in the public service, What means does the PR department of MESTI communicate with its internal and external publics and is there any policy underpinning the practice of PR in the public service. The outline in this final chapter shall be made up of a summarization of the major findings and conclusions with some recommendations for consideration for future policy planning in PR.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS**

The study adopted the mixed method approach where fifty (50) questionnaires were distributed to the staff of MESTI and an in-depth interview conducted with the two (2) top management staff. After completing the analysis on the staff of MESTI, the research proved that, majority of MESTI staff were males (37) and close to half of the staff were between the ages of 41-50 years with 88% of the total respondents already married. It further indicated that (82%) of MESTI staff are first degree holders which explains that, majority of MESTI staff are university graduates and have been with the sector for not more than ten (10) years. This information will help MESTI to know the summary of the demographic data of their staff when it comes to implementation of policies and management decisions.

During the research, it was discovered that, greater number (66%) of the Staff at MESTI are aware of the existence of PR department at the Public Sectors with (96%) of the staff saying that, indeed, PR is a management role. Also, (64%) of the staff said, the management hold the same view about PR as they do. It was also revealed that, (72%) of MESTI staff said that, PR is not dependent on any department in execution of its roles and the chief Director is the only person the PR manager reports to.

The **first** major objective of the study is to find out whether **PR is a management tool in the public service**. It was therefore found out from the analysis that (96%) of MESTI staff alluded to the fact that, PR is a management tool and was supported by the members of the management where one claimed that *“though there are some misgivings among some top management members as to why PR should be part of the dominant coalition, the Public Service organogram places it as a management function in coordinating communication activities with its various stakeholders”*. This finding is supported by Harlow 1976:36, cited in Tench and Yeomans, second edition, 2009 that *“all commercial communications that weigh on the ultimate objective of a sale or advertising must carry a prospect through four levels of understanding. The prospect must first be aware of the existence of a brand or organization, must have a comprehension of what the product is and what it will do for him, must arrive at a mental suspicion or conviction to buy the product, and finally must stir prospect to action”*. This means that, indeed MESTI staff have agreed to the assertion made by scholars in the literature that PR is a management function.

The second objective of the study is, *“to find out what PR roles and functions do PR practitioners play in the public service”*. The study found out that, With regard to the PR roles and functions the PR practitioner of the MESTI performs, he acts as the communication manager responsible for planning and management of all PR programmes, advises management, develops communication policy decisions and oversees their

implementation. Aside this, there are some technician duties that the PR department performs. The core activities that the PR practitioner of MESTI engages in are management of all communication related issues and media relations since most of their work is activity based. At the MESTI, top management considers PR as a management tool which is the responsibility of the PRO as a management member. *“Writing of all forms of documents, media relations, client relations, employee relations, government affairs, public affairs and issues management and web site development and management”*. This finding is supported by Dozier and Broom (2006) who described organisational roles as *“abstractions and conceptual maps that summarize the most important features of day-to-day behaviours of organisational members”*.

The **third** objective of the study is to, *“find out what means the PR department of the MESTI communicate with its internal and external publics”*. It was found out that, communication within the public service in general is weak as compared with the private sector. It was also revealed that, the PR department has conducted a communication audit with the internal and external publics as to how communication should be carried out. It was revealed that, management is yet to implement though external communication has been more effective (*the management of the Ministry has been informed about the issue and corrective strategies have been submitted to management for approval and implementation*). Some of the methods used to communicate externally include Meet-The-Press, press releases and other media related events. According to Meng, Berger, Gower and Heyman (2012:33) as an effective PR practitioner, one should have a unique understanding of the communication process both with the internal and external publics to be able to connect the organisation to the people and society.

The **fourth** objective of the study is to find out, *“if there is a policy underpinning the practice public relations in the public service”*. The research found out from the interviews conducted that, *“each Ministry,*

*Department and Agency (MDA) is responsible for its communication strategy and policy which must sync with the goals and objectives of the Ministry involved and as such, the PR department of the MESTI is responsible for generating all communication and PR related strategies and policies which needs approval from the dominant coalition before implementation*". The research also found out that, the PRO of the MESTI lamented on the unavailability of a PR policy in the public sector and this has really affected the smooth operation of PR activities in the public service.

The **fifth** and the final objective of the study is, *"to find out if there are challenges the PR practitioners face in the delivery of their PR activities within the public service"*. It was evident that, there is no inter-departmental relationship especially with the PR department. It was also found out that, the PR department is seen by other departments as a department that does not generate income and should not be given much financial allocation. *"PR is not seen as a revenue generating department so why should it be given financial allocation"*? According to the PRO, *"the perceptions of other staff of the Ministry are more of envy than appreciation since they do not understand the nature of the profession"*. This is a big challenge and need to be well addressed.

However, with regard to the challenges public relations practitioners face in the private universities, a research into literature showed that the major challenges public relations departments face in a lot of organisations are (1) lack of qualified personnel, (2) operational space, (3) recognition and (4) budget. Jefkins (2000) argued that the best practice of public relations department is that, it should be on its own and directly responsible to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). If public relations is integrated into other departments, it limits its roles and functions and prevents it from being managed strategically.

### 5.3 SUGGESTIONS

This research seeks to examine whether PR is a management tool and whether PR practitioners perform modern PR roles and functions in the public service particularly at the MESTI towards achieving its overall organisational goals. The following suggestions were therefore prescribed to assist in promoting PR as a management tool within the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) and the Public Service (PS) in general.

Based on the literature review, interviews and analysis done and the discussion it is clear that employees or staff of MESTI are just aware of the fact that, PR is a management function but the reality is that, the work of PR at the public service sector is less to be desired. The management must recognize the existence of PR as it must be given all the necessary logistic to be effective on making sure the image and reputation of the Ministry is well managed.

The Top Management of the MESTI should be aware that money or financial allocation for PR programmes and activities can influence its business productivity positively. The top management have to consider other motivational approaches and factors like appreciation, recognition and management support for the PR department to excel.

Furthermore, based on the challenges exposed by PR Officer, the PR Officer must come out with a comprehensive PR plan that will be convincing enough and should be in sync with the overall goals and objectives of the Ministry. This plan should include items like issue management and crisis communication plan and how it will reduce cost and future disaster occurrence when well implemented. This will go a long

way to debunk the assertion made by other management members in respect of PR not bringing any income to the MESTI.

There should be prudent and effective means of communication between the top management of the MESTI and its various stakeholders and publics to ensure that the various policies and regulations are implemented efficiently and effectively.

## 5.4 CONCLUSION

Based on the above findings and recommendations, the researcher has concluded that, the role of public relations as a management tool in a public service organisation is very essential in the sense that Public organization that takes its PR activities serious are likely to retain and grow its internal and external publics to good ambassadors of their organization. However, it can also be concluded that, organizations that are consistent in the delivery of PR programmes can easily reduce cost of damages and always in a good position to deal with future eventualities. To add to the above, organizations can never achieve their set objectives without the total understanding of how PR is managed. The PR department should be resourced to be able to train its staff to be able to satisfy their publics in the most effective and efficient manner.

In a nutshell, effective PR management in public services will not be achieved without proper handling of both internal and external publics.

## 5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The core limitations of the study which ought to be acknowledged have to do with the scope and research process. These deficits provided the basis for further studies as follows:

- The limitation of the study to the MESTI alone may affect the generalization of the findings and the authenticity of the data gathered.
- The possibility of sampling as well as measurement errors and their effects on the data collected and analysis undertaken and conclusions drawn.

Notwithstanding these limitations, it must be noted that the weaknesses identified had no serious impact on the outcomes of this study as the strengths outweigh the limitations as exemplified by the significant findings that emerged.

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The contribution of PR to Organisationa Decision Making: Insights from the Literature

By: Markus Mykkanen M.A. and Marita Vos Ph. D.

GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
MA PUBLIC RELATIONS

TOPIC:

**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL IN A PUBLIC SERVICE**

**ORGANISATION: A STUDY OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (MESTI) – ACCRA**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Janet Akutor Asamoah, a Master of Arts in Public Relations final year student of Ghana Institute of Journalism (School of Graduate Studies and Research), Accra. I am writing a thesis on the topic “**The role of Public Relations as a Management Tool in a Public Service Organisation: A Study of the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation – Accra**”

The purpose for this study is to examine the roles public relations play and the challenges faced by PR practitioners in the public service of Ghana with special attention to the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Accra.

I shall be very grateful if you could grant me an interview on the questions listed below to enable me achieve the objectives of this study.

Confidentiality and anonymity of your response is assured.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

**INTERVIEW GUIDE**  
**(FOR THE PR PRACTITIONER)**

**SECTION A**

**PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT**

1. Is public relations a management tool in the public service?
2. Based on your professional understanding of public relations, is it a management tool at the MESTI?
3. Do you think top management of MESTI hold the same understanding of public relations as you do?
4. Is the public relations department on its own or linked to another department? Please explain.
5. To whom does the Public Relations Officer of MESTI report to?
6. Is the PR officer part of the dominant coalition?

**SECTION B**

**PUBLIC RELATIONS ROLES**

1. What public relations roles do you perform in the public service as the Public Relations Officer and at MESTI in particular?
2. Describe the core activities you engage in at MESTI.
3. Is Public Relations considered a management role by the top management at MESTI?
4. Would you consider yourself (PRO of MESTI) as part of top management team? Please explain briefly.
5. In your view, do public relations roles sync with the overall goals and objectives of the MESTI?

## **SECTION C**

### **COMMUNICATION WITH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PUBLICS**

1. How is communication done in the public service with the internal and external publics and MESTI in particular?
2. Which public relations tools are used in communicating with the publics of the public service?
3. How is feedback assessed from your publics?
4. With reference to your professional knowledge in public relations, are the communications with your publics symmetrical or asymmetrical?
5. Which of your publics do you interact with most frequently? Please explain briefly.

## **SECTION D**

### **COMMUNICATION POLICY ISSUES**

1. Is there a communication policy which underpins its public relations activities within the public service? Please explain briefly.
2. Who is responsible for the development of communication policies and strategies for the public service and that matter the MESTI?
3. Would you say public relations practice in the public service is strategic? Does it add value to the goals and objectives of MESTI? Briefly explain.
4. In your opinion, is formal education in public relations necessary for someone to become a PR practitioner? Please explain briefly.

5. Do you think the public service and for that matter MESTI is making use of your full potential? i.e. are you happy with your current performance or you think you could offer them more if given the opportunity? If yes, what more do you have to offer?

## **SECTION E**

### **CHALLENGES IN THE DELIVERY OF PR ACTIVITIES**

1. Currently, what would you say is public relations' contribution to the public service in general and MESTI in particular?
2. In what ways do you think top management appreciates public relations practice in the public service?
3. Would you say other staff of MESTI (public servants) appreciate the value of public relations as a profession? Please explain.
4. As the Public Relations Officer, what constraints do you face in carrying out your services within the public service? Please explain.
5. What are the major challenges the public relations department of MESTI is struggling with. Please explain briefly.

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Confidentiality and anonymity of your response is assured.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

TOP MANAGEMENT MEMBER

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Does MESTI have an operational public relations department?
2. How long has this office been in existence in MESTI?
3. Is public relations seen as a management tool in the public service and for that matter the MESTI?
4. Will you consider public relations as relevant management tool to achieving the organisational goals and objectives of your Ministry?
5. Do you consider public relations practices as strategic tool?
6. What are the specific roles and functions performed by the public relations officer in the public service and for that matter your Ministry?
7. What other function do you think is appropriate for the public relations officer to perform within the public service?
8. In your opinion is formal education in public relations necessary for one to be a PR officer? Please explain.
9. Do you think the PR officer at MESTI is adequately educated to take part in strategic decision making? Please explain briefly.
10. Who does the public relations officer report to in your Ministry?
11. Who is responsible for the development of communication policies and strategies within the public service and MESTI in particular?
12. Are other departments within the Ministry in cordial relationship with the public relations department?
13. What would you say generally with regard to public relations practice in the public service of Ghana? Please explain briefly.

14. Would you say public relations has contributed positively to your achievements as a Ministry? Please explain briefly.
15. In what ways do you think top management appreciates public relations activities?
16. Is public relations practice recognised by other staff of your Ministry as a management tool?
17. In your view, what are the major challenges public relations is facing in the public service in general and MESTI in particular?
18. How can you help in solving such challenges if there is any?
19. In your opinion, do you think the PRO of MESTI holds the same understanding you have with regard to your expectations?

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Your candid response would be great in the realisation of the objectives of this study.

Confidentiality and anonymity of your response is assured.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

## QUESTIONNAIRE (NON PR PRACTITIONERS)

Tick the right box like this [] OR write your response where appropriate.

**PERSONAL DATA**

1. Gender Male [  ] Female [  ]
2. Age: 21 – 30 years [  ] 31 – 40 [  ] 41 – 50 [  ] 51 years and above [  ]
3. Level of education: Diploma [  ] Degree [  ] Masters [  ] PHD [  ]
4. How long have you work with the MESTI? 1 – 10 [  ] 11 – 20 [  ] 21- 30 [  ]
5. Marital Status: Single [  ] Married [  ] Divorced [  ] Separated [  ]

**SECTION A****PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT**

1. Based on your understanding does the practice of public relations exist within the public service? Yes [  ]  
No [  ]
2. Is public relations considered a management role within the public service of Ghana and MESTI in particular? Yes [  ] No [  ]
3. Do you think top management hold the same understanding of public relations as you do? Yes [  ] No [  ]
4. Is the public relations department within the public service independent or linked to another department?  
[a] Independent [b] Not Independent. If [b], Please explain briefly.
5. Who does the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of MESTI report to? [a] The Minister [b] The Chief Director  
If others, state.

## **SECTION B**

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS ROLES**

1. What public relations roles does the PRO of MESTI perform? Please tick.
  - [a] Writing of news releases, speeches, brochures etc.
  - [b] Research, planning and policy development
  - [c] Issues and crisis management
  - [d] Publicity and client relations management
  - [e] Reputation and Image management
  - [f] Employee relations
  - [g] Media relations
  - [h] Website development management
2. What are the core activities the PRO engages in at MESTI and the public service for that matter?
3. Does the PRO participate in decision making at top management level? [a] Yes [b] No
4. Would you consider the PRO as part of top management team? [a] Yes [b] No
5. In your view, what are the benefits of public relations to the public service and the MESTI in particular?

## SECTION C

### COMMUNICATION WITH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PUBLICS

1. How do PR departments in the public service or MESTI communicate with internal and external publics?
  - A. Internal publics (notice board, intranet, letters, memorandum etc)
  - B. External publics (press release, meet-the-press, media interview)
2. Which public relations tools are used in communicating with the publics within the public service?
  - A. Internal publics (intranet, WhatsApp, staff durbars and in-house newsletters)
  - B. External publics (press release, meet-the-press, media interview etc)
3. In what ways do the public relations department get feedback from its publics?
  - A. Internal publics (staff durbars and in-house newsletters)
  - B. External publics (meet-the-press, media interviews, etc)
4. Are the publics with whom PR is communicating with involved in the process?
  - A. YES
  - B. NO
5. Which of the publics does the public relations department interact with most? Internal publics (employees) or External publics (other stakeholders)?
  - A. Internal publics
  - B. External publics

## SECTION D

### COMMUNICATION POLICY ISSUES

1. Is there a communication policy which guides public relation activities within the public service?
  - A. Yes [    ]
  - B. No [    ]
2. Who is responsible for the development of communication policies and strategies for the public service?
  - A. PR Department
  - B. Top Management
3. Would you say that public relations practice in the public service is a strategic tool? Does it add value to the goals and objectives of the public service?
4. In your opinion, is formal education in public relations necessary for someone to become a PR practitioner?  
Yes [    ] No [    ]
5. Do you think MESTI is using the PRO's services to its full potential? i.e. do you think the PRO has more to give than he/she is required of now? Yes [    ] No [    ]  
If yes, what more does he/she have to offer? If no, please explain.

## **SECTION E**

### **CHALLENGES IN THE DELIVERY OF PR ACTIVITIES**

1. Currently, what would you say is public relations' contribution to the public service?
  - A. Good
  - B. Not Good
2. In what ways do you think top management appreciates public relations practice?
  - A. Participation in PR activities
  - B. Provision of Logistics
3. Would you say other staff (public servants) of MESTI appreciate the value of public relations as a profession? Please explain.
  - A. YES
  - B. NO
4. What do you think are some of the constraints that Public Relations Officers in the public service face? Please explain.

Logistics

  - A. Financial Assistance
5. What do you think are the major challenges that public relations department in the public service is facing and MESTI in particular? Please explain briefly.
  - A. Lack of recognition
  - B. Budgetary Issues

***THANK YOU***



## GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

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GRADUATE SCHOOL SECRETARIAT

MAPR.16 2016-2017

18<sup>th</sup> August, 2017

The Chief Director  
Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology & Innovation  
Ministries - Accra

Dear Sir,

**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**  
**MISS JANET AKUTOR ASAMOAH**

I write to introduce **Miss. Janet Akutor Asamoah**, a postgraduate student of this Institute pursuing a Master of Arts in Public Relations.

As part of her course requirement for the semester **Miss Asamoah** is conducting a research on the topic **"PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL IN A PUBLIC SERVICE ORGANIZATION: A STUDY OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION"**.

I would be very grateful if you could kindly give her the needed support.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Seth Ofosu Obeng  
Snr. Asst. Registrar, Graduate School

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