GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

PUBLIC RELATIONS (PR) PRACTICES AND THE MANAGING OF CRISIS AND REPUTATION PHENOMENA IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA: ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT TOOLS FOR MANAGING CRISIS AND REPUTATION IN METHODIST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE GHANA AND CENTRAL UNIVERSITY IN THE 2016-2017 ACADEMIC YEAR.

By

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(MAPR16080)

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DECLARATION

I certify that this research is my own original work undertaken by me under the supervision of Dr. Collins Adu-Bempah Brobbey. Where other people's references are made full acknowledgement had been given. I wish to state that all omissions and shortfalls in this work are entirely mine.

I do declare that this Dissertation has not been presented in whole or in part to any other institution for the award of a degree.

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the presentation of this long essay supervised by me is in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the School of Graduate Studies and Research, Ghana Institute of Journalism.

DR. COLLINS ADU-BEMPAH BROBBEY .... August 31, 2017

(SUPERVISOR) **SIGNATURE** **DATE**

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God for how far He has brought me, and to my lovely mother, Madam Ernestina Serwaa Bamfo for her support and prayers throughout to come this far. The steps of a good woman are ordered by the Lord. And He delights in her way. (Psalm 37:23)

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ACRONYMS

CMRM- Crisis Management and Reputation Management

PR- Public Relations

PRM – Public Relations Management

PRO – Public Relations Officer

MUCG –Methodist University College Ghana

CU – Central University

CIPR – Chartered Institute of Public Relations

E.G. – Example

USA – United State of America.

SCCT – Situational Crisis Communication Theory

CEO - Chief Executive Officer.

ABSRACT

This study focused on Crisis Management and Reputation Management by Public Relations (PR) outfit in Private Universities in Ghana and it case studied the Public Relation outfits of the Methodist University College and Central University, all in Accra, a suburb of the Greater Accra Region. This study interrogated four research questions in attempt to achieve four research objectives which included, to identify success stories of reputation management and crisis management for private universities and to examine public relations tools utilized by public relations in private universities in handling reputation management and crisis management. Also, to ascertain whether or not public relations in private universities have succeeded in building good corporate image and handling crisis; and to investigate the challenges faced by public relations unit of private universities in managing the reputation and handling crisis of their universities. This research employed the Excellent Theory in Public Relations practices to elucidate the comprehensibility of crisis and reputation management in private tertiary institutions in Ghana. It also, reviewed concepts and literature on the crisis and reputation management and its implication for building corporate image in organizations. . This study adopted a case study strategy or this study. Particularly, it deployed quantitative research design with a sample size of one hundred (100) respondents made up of management members, private universities, the PR practitioners selected from the private universities and students of the two private universities. Convenient and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the respondents. Secondary data was derived from articles, journals, magazines, websites and other literature on the subject matter. Primary data was collected from

the field using survey questionnaire. Findings of this study revealed that PR outfit of the private universities are poorly resourced though; they have chalked some remarkable success with regard to branding of the corporate image. It concluded that the PR success story is a function of the effectiveness of the PR tools used. It therefore recommends that the PR outfit should be well-resourced to enable the outfit sustain the success story.

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CHAPTER ONE
GENERAL OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Developed and developing societies need universities because they provide the necessary skills for economic development. They are not an added extra but an essential part of the fabric of civilization. The traditional functions of universities are teaching and research. In their teaching activities, universities provide the professional training for high-level jobs, as well as the education necessary for the development of the personality. At the universities and other tertiary institutions, the Public Relations (PR) Unit handle both organizational and societal functions. The organizational functions that are handled by public relations professional within a university set up include media relations, employee relations, corporate relations, community relations, public affairs, and financial relations. This agrees with the views of (Well et al, 2005).

Societal functions of PR are reated more toward establishing and maintaining effective relationships with the general public. Societal public relations goals are to promote a positive image to its public. In trying to promote a positive image, public relations unit focuses on presenting an image of being trustworthy to society, disseminating favourable news about the university, and creating high level of students and staff satisfaction through students and staff achievements and publication in newsletters and magazines. This also agrees with the views of (Clow and Baack, 2007; National School Public Relations Association, 2010; Palmer, 2000; White and Park, 2010; Well et al, 2005).

Public relations practitioners within an institution have many tools that they employ in their day to day activities. The tools include various activities such as, speeches, sponsorships, events, corporate advertising, and in-house publications, visual presentations that create company publicity, press releases, press conferences, seminars, media tours, corporate websites, internal publications and notice boards within the universities. These are channels used to deliver public relations messages to both internal and external publics of the universities and in line with the views of (Belch and Belch, 2001; Lancaster, 2005; Moore and Kalupa, 2007; Palmer, 2000; Well et al, 2005).

The impact may take the form ranging from corporate image building, Positioning or repositioning of the university, changing stakeholders' attitudes, opinions, or behaviours, building trust as well as managing misconception about university's programs. This view is supported by (Clow & Baack, 2007; Jobber, 2001; Wells et al, 2005). This places the private universities in the eyes of both internal and external publics as an avenue for academic and social development (Kotler & Mindak, 2000).

The PR Unit must act proactively to stop any issue from developing into a crisis, which must be managed at the end of the day. It is one of the areas that, can affect the organisation's reputation, its credibility and ultimately the number of students who enrol at the university. The challenges of public relations in the university stems from a lot of areas and involves budget to run public relation activities, qualified personnel to man the unit, office space and recognition. Kotler et al (2005) and Lancaster and Jobber (2006) in their view sees budget and personnel as paramount in public relations activities such as reputation management and crisis management. The

challenges have limited the ability of the PR Unit's strategic role to select the right tools to manage the organization's reputation and crisis management as well.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Today, the increasing number of private universities in the country is seen by many Ghanaians as a blessing for helping the nation to train qualified students who could not gain admission to the public universities. This has helped to produce manpower to spearhead the nation's socio-economic and technological development. The university, just like any organization, is also interested in its reputation and it is therefore not surprising that, most of the private universities have set up an internal PR Unit. The purpose or functions of public relations in the administration of universities is to communicate with its publics (internal and external), build and maintain good image and reputation that can attract students and investors. Lastly, the PR Unit is tasked with identifying crisis at its beginning stages and addressing it and managing the crisis, if it should go out of hand.

Despite its important, in the views of Bruning & Ralston (2001), the practice of public relations at most universities has been relegated to a single office concerned primarily with managing institutional reputation. In spite of its key functions especially that of reputation management and crisis management, PR units in private universities in Ghana have been relegated to the background and worse still, it has very little or no budget to undertake its planned programme of activity.

As it is to be expected, the side-lining of the PR units has generated a number of polemics. There is a school of thought which sees the PR units in the private institutions in Ghana as making some strides in building the reputation and managing the institutional crisis while the other school of thought is of the view that PR units have failed to manage the reputation and crisis in the private universities in Ghana, largely, because they are poorly resourced. In view of these polemics, this study raises the following empirical questions.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What does reputation and crisis management mean in PR practices? Are the PR units in the private universities in Ghana effectively carrying out their core function of reputation and crisis management?
2. Why the need for reputation and crisis management in the private universities in Ghana? Which PR tools do PR units in private universities in Ghana use in managing reputation and crisis?
3. Given the increasingly challenged nature of PR practices, how successful have the PR units in the private universities in Ghana been in building good corporate image through reputation and crisis management?

Meanwhile, the above questions do not only help to unearth the dynamics and trajectories of the nuances of reputation and crisis management by the PR units at the private universities in Ghana, but also constitute the reason d'etre for this study and hence contributing to the construction and realization of the following objectives.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study has two-fold objectives, namely broad and specific. From the Broad perspective, this study interrogates the extent to which the PR units in the private universities in Ghana have effectively managed reputation and crisis for corporate image building. However, specifically, it intends to:

1. Ascertain the meaning of reputation and crisis management in PR practices in the private universities in Ghana and examine the effectiveness of PR units in carrying out their core function of reputation and crisis management.
2. Examine the relevance of reputation and crisis management in the private universities in Ghana and explore PR tools employed by PR units in private universities in Ghana in managing reputation and crisis
3. Unearth the challenges of PR practices and analyse the success stories of the PR units in the private universities in Ghana with regards to building good corporate image through reputation and crisis management.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of the study will be of benefit to the management of private universities and other tertiary institutions by way of sharing good practices in handling reputation and crisis. The study will also enable management of the private universities to understand, support and appreciate the unique role of public relations units in the private universities and also help resource the units to play its role effectively.

Additionally, the results of the study will add up to the body of knowledge and used as a reference for future research.

The topic was chosen as the issue of Crisis and Reputation Management in Private Universities has become a topical issue. It is anticipated that, the findings will not only be of interest to PR professionals working in Private Universities but also those in Public Universities so that, the many crisis that confront these educational institutions could be averted.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study will look study the crisis and reputation management in private universities, with Methodist University College and Central University College, as case studies. The study will be limited to the research design, such as the sample size, sampling technique among others. The researcher will list other challenges encountered during the course of the study.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One entails the general overview and background to the study, introduction, statement of problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and organization of the study. In Chapter Two reviews the relevant theories such as the Uses and Gratification theory and the empirical literature which provides a framework for discovering the knowledge gap(s) in the study. After the data has been analysed, the researcher will draw conclusions with the results vis-à-vis the literature that has been

reviewed. Chapter three will examine the general design of the study, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection instruments as well as method of data analysis. For the fourth chapter, the data gathered from the field will be presented in this chapter. The researcher will make use of tables and charts in presenting its data gathered from the field. This will be followed by interpretation and analysis vis-à-vis the literature review. The final chapter which is chapter five will present a summary of the findings and conclusions of the study. It will be followed by recommendations as well as areas for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literatures on PR practices and the management of reputation and crises by PR units in private universities in Ghana as well as the concepts and theories that underpin the relevance of PR practices and the reputation and crisis management. The literatures on the discourse on PR practices and reputation and crisis management are legion. And so, this study is limited to the related and relevant works on PR practices in the PR units in the universities of Ghana. In what follows, this study provides the theoretical framework which underpins the nuances of the PR practices in the PR units in the universities and the reputation and crisis management for building the corporate image of the private universities in Ghana.

2.2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study will make use of the Excellence Theory in Public Relations which has been presented as follows:

2.2.2 The Excellence Theory

Grunig, (1992), Dozier, (1992) and Grunig, (2002) are the leading lights of the Excellence theory in Public Relations which states that there is a set of characteristics of an excellent public relations function and that the Excellence theory in public relations explained the value of public relations to organizations and society based on

the social responsibility of managerial decisions and the quality of relationships with stakeholder or the publics. For an organization to be effective, according to the theory, it must behave in ways that solve the problems and satisfy the goals of stakeholders as well as of management.

Grunig (1992) suggested that the most effective public relations practice requires excellence in practice. The author described it as Excellent Public Relations. According to him, there are four levels analysis of excellent public relations and they are: The theory states that at the programme level, public relations department should know why, when and how individual communication programmes are implemented. That is, there is a conscious effort to have in place, a public relations plan that is strategically geared towards the attainment of organizational goals.

To Grunig (1992), again, the theory explains at the departmental level, how the public relations department operates and fits in with other departments and the organisation as a whole. At this level, there is a single or integrated public relations department separate from marketing. The department's head assumes a managerial role and reports directly to top management. The head and those who work under him have academic qualification in public relations or the field of communication are professionals. Two-way symmetric model of communication is also promoted.

Grunig (1992) argues that a two-way symmetric model of communication is one in which employees are provided mechanisms for dialogue with each other and with supervisors and top managers. Two-way symmetric communication as a result contributes to organizational effectiveness. This model helps to improve morale of employees and is more likely to enhance rather than to constrain the organisation. Two-way symmetric communication is necessary for the organisation to coordinate

the behaviour of its relatively autonomous subsystems. Such coordination is necessary for the organisation to be effective.

Grunig (1992) maintains that a two-way symmetric model of communication also helps to increase employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. The organizational level also talks about the understanding of and respect given to communication processes and audience feedback by the organisation and its staff.

This study posits that the head of public relations usually has a strong voice within the organisation and that attempts should often be made to promote participative rather than authoritative organizational culture. In this way, the head of PR unit could facilitate effective internal communication dynamics not only to promote interpersonal harmony but also control and ensure effective crisis and reputation management.

Weaknesses and Strengths of the Excellence Theory

Many scholars have questioned the possibility of the two-way symmetrical model in real-life context (Grunig & Jaatinen, 1998; Grunig & Grunig, 1998; Rhee, 2002; Luo & Yi, 2005). The critics of Excellence theory argue that different researches have revealed that a need exists for different context study to be conducted to test the excellence theory in public relations and extend its application. For instance, Van der Meiden (1993) observed that the two-way symmetrical model is unrealistic since it suggests that organizations should value the interests of their publics more than those of the organization. Similarly, Murphy (1991) rejects the excellence theory and rather proposes that the concept of symmetrical communication works along a continuum from pure conflict to pure cooperation, which is based on mixed motives. On the contrary, Leichty (1997) argues that completely collaborative public relations is not

feasible in some situations, and points out that public relations practitioners' lack of power within an organization further increases the limitation of collaboration.

Accordingly, Canel (1997) and Cameron et al (2007) have developed the contingency theory of accommodation, which represent the stance movement of an organization toward a given public at a given time and in a given situation and suggests that the true excellence in public relations may result from picking the appropriate point along the continuum that best fits the current need of the organization and its publics.

On the contrary, this study argues that effective PR practice is rather contingent upon the resource capacity of the organization and that poorly resourced organizations tend to lack the ability to implement policies as those policies are instrumented or cushioned by basic financial prerequisites. It maintains therefore that private universities in Ghana are poorly and that explains why PR units are ineffective in their crisis and reputation management. Indeed, this is the gap which this thesis is attempting to resolve or fill.

2.2.3 Review of Related and Relevant Literature

This review of the literature intends to explore the knowledge gap which, of course, is central to this study. In the meantime, it is important to do some overview analysis of PR practices to elucidate the comprehensibility of the effectiveness of PR tools for crisis and reputation management in the private universities in Ghana.

2.3 Overview of Public Relations (PR)

Public Relations (PR) practice is the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics (Chartered Institute of Public Relations, CIPR). PR consists of all forms of planned communication, outwards and inwards, between an organisation and its publics for the purpose of achieving specific objectives concerning mutual understanding (Jefkins, 2006). The literature presents public relations as a management function, which uses the attributes of management (e.g., planning, collaborative decision making, and research) to foster the organization's ability to build mutually beneficial relationships on which the corporate vision and mission depend (Grunig, 2001).

The second stream in the literature presents public relations as communication management, which focuses on the flow of communication between an organization and its publics to achieve effective relationships (Grunig, 2001). The third stream of literature presents public relations as relationship management, so that communication is a property of those relationships rather than the conduit between organizations and publics (Ferguson, 2004; Broom, Casey, and Ritchey, 2007).

As already indicated, the literatures on the discourse on the crisis and reputation management by the PR units in the private universities in Ghana is legion and so this study limits the scope of the review of literature to relevant studies with the intention to establishing the knowledge gap, which of course, this study attempts at filling it. In reviewing the literature, this study adopted the conceptual scheme as explained below.

2.4 Conceptual Scheme

The purpose of a conceptual scheme in the context of this study is to assist in answering the research questions. The existing literature in the area of public relations practices in private universities is not thoroughly researched. Therefore, models and theories from existing literatures are hard to find.

Therefore this study provides a scheme which served as the basis for the construction of interview guide to collect relevant data for this thesis. The scheme helps to ascertain the meaning of reputation and crisis management in public relations in private universities in Ghana, and to elucidate the understanding of the strategic role assigned to public relations, the tools employed, the impact of the public relations activities, examine the relevance of reputation and crisis management in private universities in Ghana and the challenges faced by public relations. Here, it is important to take a cursory look at the role of PR practices in the tertiary educational institutions.

2.4.1 Role of Public Relations in Tertiary Educational Institutions

The role played by Public Relations in tertiary educational institutions is to also manage the flow of both internal and external communications. Public relations departments in tertiary educational set up do manage their organisation's reputations with various groups including internal and external publics. Seitel (2009) mentions that "Public relations practice is based on two-way communication facilitated through a multimedia approach." In reference to public relations practice in the USA, Seitel

(2009) writes that Public Relations is therefore accorded a prominent role in management from a position as a Vice President with board representation. The Executive Vice President presides over specialized functional areas headed by highly placed directions that handle specific activities and publics.

In a study on "Public Relations Functions in a Higher Education Setting: An Examination of Communication Management in Two Eastern U. S. Universities" by Luo & Yi (2005) revealed the need for tertiary institutions to have a fully-fledged public relations department. In Luo & Yi's study, nine participants working at two Eastern institutions (distinguished as state university and University College in this research) in the U. S. were recruited and interviewed. The study discovered that in both institutions, the senior communication executives actively participated in the decision-making process. The vice president for communications at the local college noted that he reported directly to the president and was a member of his cabinet. He cited his professional knowledge as the reason why he was included in cabinet level decision making (Luo & Yi, 2005).

In the area of public relations practitioners assuming managerial role, the study found out that the senior executives in both institutions assumed the managerial role by participating in decision making at the organizational level and program planning at the departmental level, also media relations was a prominent part of public relations activities at both institutions and the public relations office is the office charged with telling the university story to external audiences through the media. The study further

found that the public relations units at the state university and university college were decentralized.

In both cases, different sections handled different public relations functions. What this study suggests according to the authors is the need for tertiary institutions to help extend the Excellence theory in public relations (Grunig, 2002) by applying the theory to public relations in a higher education setting. This research is significant to this study because it clearly shows a perfect practice of public relations in tertiary institutions in the Ghana

Historically, the practice of public relations within universities has been one-way, asymmetrical (Pirozek & Heskova, 2003). In the past, practitioners have engaged in public relations practice that placed a great deal of emphasis on media relations. In recent years, however, scholars have advocated a strategic approach to university public relations that moves beyond media relations and embraces strategic management, two-way symmetrical communication, and various other Excellence principles. This strategic perspective is evident in recent studies of public relations in the university setting. Samsup, Brunner & Hon (2002), for example, examined how practitioners can measure relationships in a university setting.

DeSanto & Garner (2001) recommended that university public relations practitioners set synchronized goals, identify stakeholders, and conduct evaluations. Grillis (1997) argued that it is critical for public relations practitioners to have access to the top leaders within a university. Henderson (2001) proposed a four-step process for

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

Universities in former Soviet-bloc are facing complex environments. The introduction of capitalism has meant that old state-owned universities, which never had to compete, now find themselves losing students to new private universities that offer attractive packages Public Relations in Higher Education Institutions to students (Neculau, 1997; Stanciulescu, 2002).

This competition has prompted both state-owned and private universities to seek to utilize public relations as means of getting an edge. In the past, public relations practice at these universities was a mixture of marketing, advertising, and lobbying (Coman, 2003).

Recent studies, however, have advocated a move away from one-way asymmetrical methods and toward practices that resemble the characteristics conceptualized in the Excellence study. Pirozek and Heskova (2003), for example, examined the public relations practice of a university in the Czech Republic. They showed how the two-way symmetrical tactics of research and feedback systems helped the university gain a better understanding of the attitudes of its key publics. Kaverina's (2003) study of a state university in Russia showed how two-way symmetrical efforts to initiate dialogue (e.g. radio call in shows, open house functions) helped strengthen the relationship between the university and its key publics. Popular publications aimed at

university public relations practitioners have also advocated practices that are similar to the Excellence characteristics.

Schoenfeld, Wiemer, & Lang (1997) encouraged practitioners to embrace strategic planning and outcome evaluation. Jarrell (2003) encouraged universities to involve public relations in decision making because practitioners can lessen risk by forging good relations with publics and can scan for emerging issues. Simpson (2002) advised university communicators to build strong community relationships, take local concerns seriously, and attend to internal and external constituencies. Ross & Lindenmann (2002) suggested that practitioners clearly define their goals and measure output, outgrowth, and outcomes. Ross (2004) urged Public Relations in Higher Education Institutions practitioners to utilize external research resources (e.g., consulting firms) to enhance their practice. The above studies and articles illustrate that practitioners are being encouraged to practice public relations in a strategic, two-way symmetrical manner. However, more studies need to be done to see if practitioners are following those recommendations.

However, the case is different in Ghana. Public Relations do not have that opportunity Contrary to what exist in the USA, Public Relations practice in Ghanaian educational institutions are founded on disseminations of information usually coming from management of which the Public Relations practitioner is not part. A Public Relations Practitioner reports through a bureaucratic process as he or she is not accorded management status. In the case of Methodist University College, the Public Relations officer reports through the Registrar to the Vice Chancellor.

2.5 Crisis and Reputation in the Domain of Academic Institutions

Reputation is a key resource to higher institutions of learning in all parts of the world. It is an important asset because with a good reputation, an educational institution can attract significant endowment, reputable sponsors, and bright scholars, among other incentives, which could boost its educational, economic, and other development programs. Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) offers a framework for using crisis communication to protect reputations in organizations (Coombs, 2004), including higher educational institutions. In the past few years, several researchers have proposed alternative approaches to crises management in order to safeguard organizational reputation (Walton; Cooley; Nicholson, 2012; Thiessen; Ingenhoff, 2011; Kriyantono, 2012).

However, the SCCT model has been validated and found to be relevant in several studies on crises and post crises reputation management in many instances. Unfortunately, most of the evidence provided in the extant literature is in business organizations, where maintenance of reputation capital and bolstering of the stakeholders' values were essential (for example: Coombs; Holladay, 2002; Blaney; Benoit; Brazeal, 2002; Coombs, 2007; Fussell; Collins; Zoch, 2009; Cooley; Cooley, 2011). Moreover, despite its importance, very few organizations seem to understand the processes and implications of adopting and applying the SCCT model for managing crises and maintaining corporate reputation in times of conflict (Kriyantono, 2012; Gallagher, 2013).

Then it comes to higher academic institutions, which are non-profit-oriented educational, training, and research organizations, the situation may not be different in most developing countries. The application of SCCT model has either been

overlooked or probably misunderstood as a crisis and reputation management strategy by most institutions. As Gallagher (2013) also reveals, diversity in socio-cultural norms and political orientation could impact on the application of the SCCT model in some organizations. That proposition seems to portray the prevailing situation in many higher academic institutions in some developing countries.

While crises in higher academic institutions appear to be a universal phenomenon, Nyamnyoh, Nkwi & Konings (2012) have revealed that most African colleges and universities have been victims of crises and violence emanating from peculiar factors associated with post-colonial changes. Most of the crises are embedded in the internal and external initiatives that have triggered activism and militancy among students.

In recent years, some of the violence could also be associated with socio-political changes and economic situations that spell negative impact and uncertainties on the living and study conditions of students. Most universities also experience crises resulting from stampedes due to overstretched infrastructures and the struggle to extend opportunities to a larger student population with very limited resources (Nyamnjoh & Jua, 2002). The need to examine crises and their impacts on the reputations of African colleges and universities should therefore not be under estimated.

In an academic institutional context, reputation could be enhanced or eroded by the nature of information disseminated and the perception of the stakeholders, which include members of the faculty, students, concerned parents, government agencies, and others in the relevant task environment, who have relationships and interests in

the activities of the institution. Reputation may be developed through good relationships and the nature of information which flows internally and externally to stakeholders and the general public. The contents of such information could reveal the effectiveness of management in handling crisis, and the interactions of other members of the institution with their immediate and remote constituencies. Information in times of crisis could be communicated through verbal, written, or the electronic media, amongst other means (Adeyemi, 2009).

It could convey positive or negative meanings depending on the contents, the mode of transmission, and how it is interpreted by receivers. Positive interpretation of information about an institution by the stakeholders and the general public could enhance the reputational assets, which include sustained business relations, customer retention, loyalty, and goodwill, while negative interpretation can cause an extensive damage and losses to the image of an institution and erode the reputational capital, which Fombrun & van Riel (2004) have also revealed, "can have a negative impact on organizations' stakeholders' value" (Adeyemi, 2009; p.32).

Reputational capital of an institution could therefore be conceptualized as difference between the sum of the inventory of goodwill plus the accumulated value of relationships (reputational assets), minus the total liability incurred by an institution through losses in reputation, and the negative brand image in times of crisis and beyond. Crises in higher academic institutions in most developing countries could take several forms, like: (1) vandalism, (2) workers' strikes, (3) lockouts by employers, (4) non-commitment to contracts, (5) students' cultism/terrorism, and (7)

boycott of classes, amongst others. For the purpose of the research, crisis in institutions of higher learning was defined as, any non-routine event or conflict that can create interruption and uncertainty; thereby affecting the realization of defined priority goals. Uncertainty about the attainment of established priority goals can lead to loss of confidence and trust, which are key elements of goodwill and reputational assets; whilst business interruption can result in significant losses that could increase an institution's liability and consequently, erode the reputational capital and stakeholders' value (Adeyemi, 2009).

In a study by Baah-Boakye and Ming-Yi (2007) on the topic "A profile of public relations practice in Ghana: Practitioners roles, most important skills for practitioners, relationship to marketing and gender equality", highlighted that "Steyen (2005) did a database search of African Theses and Dissertations (a Project of the Association of African Universities). Only one master's thesis (Gyan, 1991) in public relations was found. Gyan (1991) discussed public relations practice in Ghana and argued that public relations have received little attention in Ghana. Public relations practitioners also played insignificant roles in their organizations. Gyan's (1991) thesis provided some preliminary information about public relations practice in Ghana. However, her study was conducted 16 years ago. Ghana has gone through dramatic political, societal, and economical changes after Gyan's (1991) study was conducted.

In Baah-Boakye and Wu's (2007) study, it was revealed that the majority of Ghanaian organizations have now seen the importance of public relations and have given it the necessary support. The study showed that 84.4% of the participants who were public

relations practitioners answered "yes" to a question asked in relation to whether the participants have decision making power in their various organisations. On specific functions and most important skill for public relations practitioners in Ghana, the study showed that, eight (12.5%) participants chose writing. Forty-nine (76.6%) participants chose interpersonal communication. Seven (10.9%) participants chose speaking different languages. It was obvious that interpersonal communication skill was the most important skill for public relations practitioners in Ghana then. The significance of this study, according to Baah-Boakye and Wu (2007), was that it discussed various contemporary research issues, including the roles that Ghanaian public relations practitioners perform, the most important skills for public relations practitioners, among few others. This work is relevant to this study because it provides an overview of how organisations practiced public relations in Ghana in 2007.

2.6. Evolution of Public Relations

According to Moore and Kalupa (2007) public relations as practiced today is a twentieth century American phenomenon and its fundamental elements of informing people, persuading people and integrating people were basic to earliest society just as they are today. Lancaster (2005) also postulates that public relations is not new and its modern day origins in the United States can be traced as far back as 1807 with President Jefferson's address to Congress.

The First World War helped stimulate the development of public relations as a profession. During War, government propaganda agencies showed the power of propaganda over people. Witnessing this demonstration, industrialists generally undertook to create a favorable content of public attitudes and business associations; they also planned and executed large-scale programs of public education. Public relations specialists began to come into their own. The need for public relations thinking and skills was developing fast (Moore and Kalupa, 2007).

Edward Bernays was considered self-appointed Father of Public Relations. Bernays drew many of his ideas from Sigmund Freud's theories about the irrational, unconscious motives that shape human behaviour. Bernays authored several books, including Crystallizing Public Opinion (1923), Propaganda (1928), and The Engineering of Consent (1947). He saw public relations as an "applied social science" that uses insights from psychology, sociology, and other disciplines to scientifically manage and manipulate the thinking and behavior of an irrational and "herdlike" public. Bernay's contribution to public relations was in the area of assisting the Committee on Public Information.

During the economic depression of the early 1930s, the understanding and goodwill toward business, were developed by early public relations counsellors during the booming 1920s. This phenomenon turned into distrust of business and the free enterprise system. Business management realized the need to regain public confidence lost during the depression and established public relations departments and employed public relations managers to improve the public image of business.

Paul Garrett was one of these early managers of public relations and in 1931; he was employed by the General Motors Corporation as a one-man public relations department. When he joined the corporation, he was asked by the directors, "How do you make a billion-dollar corporation look small?" Garrett, who had left his position as financial editor of the New York Evening Post to pioneer in the field of public relations management, said that he did not know and that he did not think it was his job. In his opinion, public relations was not a defensive device to make a corporation seem to be what it is not, but a continuing effort on the part of management to earn the goodwill of the public by acting so as to win public respect (Moore and Kalupa, 2007) .

2.7. Factors Accounting for the Growth of Public Relations

Public relations tell an organization's "story" to various publics. Every action taken by an organization communicates an image to its audience. Public relations practices cover a spectrum of activities, ranging from broad corporate activities to promote or reinforce a favourable public image. The growth of public relations has become very important in recent years in the following areas as asserted by (Moore and Kalupa, 2007).

The communications gap: According to Moore and Kalupa (2007) the need for communication between organizations and their publics is attested to by the fact that public relations occupy a dominant role in the economy today. It exists as an essential middleman between the corporation and its publics with a basic function to perform.

This function, simply expressed, consists in the development of informed and understanding publics in a complex society where communication tends to break down and, simultaneously, in the development within the organization of an understanding of its publics. In order to perform these functions effectively, it must utilize certain instruments available to it, including the mass media and publicity; advertising, and public speaking as well as persuasion.

Population growth: A significant factor contributing to the development of public relations has been the increase in population and the resulting expansion of all types of business, social, and political organizations. As the number of corporate employees, customers, and stockholders increased, good communication from management to these publics was no longer possible. People were often unaware of what management was doing that affected their interests. As a result, serious misunderstandings occurred and goodwill was sacrificed. To explain corporate policies and actions and bring about better understanding, organized public relations communication is essential (Moore and Kalupa, 2007)

Recognition of social responsibility: Public relations have grown in importance as corporations recognized that they have a social responsibility to serve the public. Public services of corporations include financial contributions to community, social welfare, health, and youth organizations; participation by employees in local government and education; and sponsorship of cultural education (Moore and Kalupa, 2007)

Development of communications media: Society is in a massive electronic surge, with a tremendous growth in video and cable system, leading to a fragmentation of television as a mass medium. Not only do that but people today not like to read. Therefore, although unprecedented developments are being made in the media of communication, making possible rapid and wide spread transmission of information, it will become increasingly difficult to find a mass audience, and communicators will have to be more adept at targeting their messages. New challenges and new responsibilities will accordingly fall on public relations (Moore and Kalupa, 2007).

New standards of ethics: Higher moral standards and ethical conduct in business have contributed to the development of public relations. Management must speak truthfully, act fairly, and deal honourably with the public in order to enjoy good public relations. As Robert Heilbroner has written: "Good public relations has come to be something very much like the corporate conscience – a commercial conscience, no doubt, but a conscience nonetheless. If the public relations profession can bolster this role, if it can become the corporate conscience openly, fearlessly, and widely, speaking not only for business but to business, then it will have more than redeemed its name." (Moore and Kalupa, 2007)

Education in public relations: The growing emphasis on public relations education has helped to increase the prestige of the public relations industry. There are twenty six public relations institutions currently accredited by the American Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication with several other excellent institutions that may eventually apply for accreditation in the near future (Moore and Kalupa, 2007) .

2.8. Tools of Public Relations

According to Belch and Belch (2001), public relations uses variety of tools including special publications, participation in community activities, fund-raising, sponsorships of special events, advertising and public affairs activities to enhance an organizational image. Palmer (2005) also emphasize that a wide range of public relations tools are available and suitability of each tool depends on the promotional objective. Well et al (2005) describe categories of public relations tools and stressed that the tools are best suited to create awareness of an organization and its services depends on the amount of control the company has in its communication. The tools are described below.

Controlled Public Relations: When a company controls the use of placement of their public relations tools, they are utilizing controlled channels. Examples of tools in this type include the below:

- House ads
- Public service ads
- Corporate or institutional and advocacy advertising
- Publications: Brochures, Flyers, magazines, Newsletters
- Annual reports
- Speakers
- Photographs
- Films, videos, CD-ROMs
- Displays, exhibits
- Staged events

Uncontrolled Public Relations: When a company relies on the use and placement of their public relations to media, they are using uncontrolled channels. Examples of tools in this category are: The news release (print, audio, video, e-mail, faxes)

- Features (pitch letters)
- Fillers, historical pieces, profile
- Press conferences and media advisory (media kits, fact sheets, background information)
- Media tours
- Bylined articles, letter to the editor
- Talk and interview shows
- Public service announcements

Semi-Controlled Public Relations: Whiles some aspects of the public relations tools are controlled and some uncontrolled by the company, there are other channels being utilized by public relations which are semi-controlled channels. Examples of tools in this category are:

- Electronic communication (web sites, chat rooms)
- Special events and sponsorship
- Word of mouth (buzz)

Lancaster (2005) also identifies the following as the media used by the public relations practitioner in communicating as well as disseminating information to the public. The media used are personal communication, press release, sponsorship, visual communication, literature, television, film and exhibitions. This agrees with

the views of (Belch and Belch, 2001; Lancaster, 2005; Palmer, 2005; Well et al, 2005):

Personal Communication: According to Lancaster (2005) personal communication is one of the means by which the public relations practitioner communicates with the public. The author was of the opinion that personal communication creates an opportunity for the practitioner to persuade its public to either adapt or accept the message being putting across. In addition, this kind of communication enables the practitioner to adapt both matter and manner to the reactions of his or her audience. The public relations officer is not expected to appear personally at organized functions but rather to get an appropriate representative of the organization to address the audience.

Press Release: Press release is considered by public relations practitioners as the most important form of medium of communication (Lancaster, 2005). He indicates that regarding press release, the practitioner needs to ensure that the information is released at the appropriate time and also it gets to the targeted public otherwise its desired impact would not be achieved. He pointed out that the aim of press relations is to ensure that organization's information are given the needed attention either by publishing or broadcasting it through newspapers, magazines, radio and television to enable the organization.

Press Conference: Press conferences according to Belch and Belch (2001) are held by politicians while used less by organizations and corporations and can be very effective. The authors argue that usually major accomplishments, major

breakthroughs, emergencies and catastrophes warrant a national press conference. Companies often call press conferences when they have significant news to announce, such as introduction of a new product or advertising campaign. In the words of Palmer (2000) press conferences are used where a major event is to be announced and an opportunity for two-way dialogue between the organization and the media is considered desirable.

Sponsorship: Another media used in public relations is sponsorship. Lancaster (2005) believes that sponsorship has a strong public relations component to it and firms can use it in a variety of ways. He claims that important clients and other key individuals can be invited to artistic events such as concerts, plays or opera. Such key individuals who have been targeted for such promotion can be contacted, entertained and long term relationships built and maintained. In the view of Palmer (2005) sponsorship involves investment in event or cause in order that an organization can achieve objectives such as increase in awareness level, enhanced reputation and help enhance the image of an organization.

Visual Communications: Visual communications is considered by Lancaster (2005) as a medium of communication. He is of the view that information with pictorial representation can create the desired impact needed to change the perception of targeted public. He argued that providing photographs of an event which has already happened serves as evidence in the minds of the public that the event actually occurred and has the potential of influencing the impressions of the public. Moore and Kalupa (2007) also were of the view that events play an important part in changing

attitudes and opinions. The authors further assert that events provide information that often induces a change of mind. Therefore, public relations practitioners must recognize the importance of events in transforming passive attitudes into positive opinion on controversial issues.

Literature: Additionally, medium of communicating issues of an organization to its public by the public relations officer is through the use of literature in the form of leaflets, folders, booklets, books and other media including wall charts, diaries, postcards and pictures, and this is often used to target certain desired audience. Lancaster (2005) was of the opinion that this medium of communication provides the necessary information that can inspire confidence and trust in an organization.

2.9 Types of Public Relations Programmes

The term public relations refer to relationship with various stakeholders. In public relations, there are different types of relations which are referred to as relationship with various stakeholders. Wells et al (2005) described the different types of public relations. The key publics addressed by relationship management are the following:

Media Relations: This focuses on developing a relationship with the media and finding out if the media is interested in the organizations story. The term "public relations" is sometimes associated with the term 'publicity', which indicates the importance of this media function. The organization initiates publicity and provides relevant information to media. A successful relationship between a public relations

person and the editor is built on public relations professional's reputation for honesty, accuracy and professionalism. When these qualities are tarnished or lost, the public relations professional cannot function effectively as a liaison between a company and the media (Wells et al, 2005). White and Park (2010) revealed in their study that public relations was perceived positively as against the negative perceptions portrayed by the mass media.

Employees Relations: Most corporations place heavy emphasis on externalities such as marketing, branding and image management, and lesser attention on internal communications (Chong, 2007). It is crucial to pay more attention to employees as they are considered one of the "most trusted information sources about an organization (Dortok, 2006). Therefore, Employee's relations programs should be organized to communicate information to employees. The function of employee relations is both public relations and human resource management function. Employees' relations also involved internal marketing which communicate an effort aimed at informing employees concerning marketing programs as well as encouraging their support. This is because this goes a long way to affect the image of the organization (Wells et al, 2005).

Corporate Relations: Corporate relations programs focus on organization's image and reputation. The purpose is to persuade the public to perceive the company in a positive light. According to Wells et al (2005) the public relation expert Fraser Seitel has stated in the practice of public relations, that "it takes a great deal of time to build a favourable image for a corporation but only slip to create a negative public

impression." The goal of reputation management in a corporate relations program is to strengthen the trust that stakeholders have in the company. Therefore, corporate reputation is a perception; it is earned through deeds, not created by advertising.

Public Affairs: Focuses on corporate communication with governments and with the public on issues related to government and regulations. Public affairs include both lobbying and communication efforts. Issue management is another term for this function. In addition to government relations, public affair programs also monitor public opinion about issues central to the organization's interest and develop programs for communicating to, and with the public on these issues.

Community Relations: Organizations have obligations to their communities through various kinds of support including encouraging employees to do voluntary work, providing a grant to the local band or art museum, donating needed equipment to local schools and hospitals. Leeper (2004) notes that recognizing community as the context within which organizations operate, and recognizing the importance to organizations of establishing strong communities, is a good backdrop for realizing idealistic role of public relations. Wilson (2004) indicates that participation in a community is both a right and a responsibility. Therefore, active and continuing participation within a community helps to maintain and enhance cordial relationship to the benefit of both the institution and the community at large. Post, Preston, and Sachs (2002) pointed out that a company's wealth and its license to operate are influenced by its relationship with stakeholders. In this case, it is influenced by the company's

relationship with communities. In this view, relationship building approach becomes very important in public relations activities.

2.9.1 Misconceptions about Public Relations

Misunderstanding and ignorance as to the nature of public relations has led to it being confused with other disciplines and activities. The terms publicity, advertising and public relations are often thought of being synonymous. Publicity is often called 'free advertising'. Also confusing is when publicity professionals give publicity the alias of public relations and vice versa. Many authors contributing to the growing body of public relations concept have emphasized that the profession is often viewed as, or confused with other communication practices. In the search for understanding of public relations, it is crucial to at least acknowledge such misconceptions and explain what public relations is not (Lancaster and Jobber, 2006).

Clow and Baack (2007) believe that public relations focuses on a variety of internal and external stakeholders including employees, stockholders, public interest group, the government and society as a whole. Although both professions rely upon similar means of communication it would be quite incorrect to view them as having the same objectives.

Propaganda and Public Relations

Moore and Kalupa (2007) assert that propaganda is a major instrument of international conflict; it is employed in television and radio broadcasts, newspapers, magazines, and motion pictures to influence public opinion throughout the world. The authors state that growing literacy has made it possible for unscrupulous governments and social propagandists to influence the opinions of people of underdeveloped countries through periodicals and pamphlets in many languages. They further emphasize that public relations is sometimes referred to as propaganda. Since they are deliberately designed to influence public opinion, public relations programs may be considered as propaganda in the best sense of the efforts to influence public opinion.

In the view of Lancaster and Jobber (2006) propaganda is designed to indoctrinate to attract followers. It does not necessarily call for an ethical content, so facts can be distorted or falsified for self-interest. Public relations on the other hand seek to persuade by securing the willing acceptance of attitudes and ideas. Propaganda has come to be known as an evil force through its wide spread use in creating hate and fear in time of war by means of atrocity, stories, brainwashing, brutality, and barbarism. It has been used to further aggression by subverting public opinion at home and abroad (Moore and Kalupa, 2007). It must be deduced that not only are the two activities different but they are opposing forms of communication in their objectives and goals.

Publicity and Public Relations

According to Jobber (2001) publicity is the communication about a product or organization by the placing of news about it in the media paying for the time or space directly. Publicity is a result of information being made known. The result may be uncontrollable and either good or bad. Public relations are concerned with the behaviors of an organization, product or individual that leads to publicity. This means that publicity is a major element of public relations. It clearly seeks to control behaviour in such a way as to attempt to ensure that the publicity is good (Lancaster and Jobber, 2006). Flodin (2003) agreed that the majority of the general public only views public relations as an art of publicity in all its entirety. This is a misunderstanding that has grown in strength due to the fact that publicity cannot be distanced from public relations in the way that other misconceptions can. Public relations activities are therefore performed through publicity.

2.9.2 Public Relations in Higher Education

In recent times, the competition among universities has made marketing educational institutions to the outside world very important. Therefore, public relations units of institutions need to position universities to be viewed as one of the best in the system. Newson and Carrell (2001) emphasize that public relations personnel for the local schools district must be aware of the feelings of students, parents, voters and the regional accrediting agency. The authors further opined that any institution has many publics and the public relations director must be able to advise management about the possible impact on those publics of various plans, policies and actions.

Mu-Li and Wen-Bin (2010) reveal that organizational factors have significant influence on public relations performance than individual factors on the higher educational institution. Wilcox et al (2001) believe that the practice of public relations is indeed a process, one that utilizes frequent and concentrated communication. Communication is vital part in almost every educational institution. A lot of early practitioners of public relations contributed to the growth of educational public relations. Therefore, university public relations professionals should build strong community relationships, take local concerns seriously, and attend to internal and external constituencies.

It is worth noting, however, that Kotler and Mindak (2000) argued that public relations play a greater role in academia, but a relatively reduced role in commercial organizations. In their view, Pirozek and Heskova (2003) examined public relations practice of a university in the Czech Republic and found that two-way symmetrical tactics of research and feedback systems helped the university gain a better understanding of the attitudes of its key publics. Another study by Kaverina (2003) of a Russia state university also showed that two-way symmetrical efforts helped strengthen the relationship between the university and its key publics. It implies that public relations in higher education must rely on a comprehensive two-way communications process involving both internal and external publics, with a goal of stimulating a better understanding of the role, objectives, accomplishments and needs of the institution.

In the same vein, Henderson (2001) proposed a four-step process for managing communication in universities: research, planning, communication, and evaluation. According to White and Park (2010) public relations is important in providing positive information to the society. In the words of 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. Therefore, in the practice of public relations, a lot of tools are employed within the universities to communicate with the various publics.

2.9.3 Operational Definitions

Public Relations: The relationship that one develops with its stakeholders so as to help achieve the organisational's objectives and goals.

Reputation: This is the image of the organisation and how it can be affected by the actions and inactions of the internal publics of the organisation

Management: How an organisation is coordinated to achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation

Issues: These are concerns and challenges that needs to be addressed, before they generate into crisis

Crisis: These are issues that were not addressed at the teething stage. They have potentials of destroying the reputation of the organisation

2.10 Importance of the study

This study highlights the relevance of Public Relations practices and brings to the fore the important of PR in all organizations. It provides the PR Practioners basic understanding of PR practices and shows them how PR practices help to manage misconception so that unfounded opinions do not tarnish the image or operations of the organization. It elucidates the comprehensibility of Public Relations practices in terms of the design and implementations of PR policy by planners so as to be able to make changes in the public's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours related to a company, brand, or organization. It brings into limelight the ideal structure of the public relations department as independent and directly responsible to the chief executive officer (CEO). It makes recommendation regarding the expansion of the Public Relations officer tasks to include the marketing advertising and/or sales promotion department such that the functioning of the public relations officer should no longer be strictly limited.

This study provides basic education about the positioning of Public Relations officer as part of the management team or discipline and thereby widening the communication techniques and/or specialized program such as media relations. This study also shows important of mastering the technical skills to know why and when to use them. As noted by Well et al (2005) public relations objectives focus on creating credibility, delivering information, and building positive images, Changing stakeholders attitudes, opinions, or behaviours about a brand or company and Creating stronger brand relationships with key stakeholders, such as employees, shareholders, and financial community, government, associations and the media.

Finally, this study provides a framework which served as the basis for analysing relevant data for this thesis. The framework helps to ascertain the meaning of reputation and crisis management in public relations in private universities in Ghana and also shows the need to understand the strategic role assigned to public relations, the tools employed, the impact of the public relations activities, examine the relevance of reputation and crisis management in private universities in Ghana and the challenges faced by public relations for policy actions.

2.11 Research Assumptions

The guiding assumptions of this study are that;

H1 the side-lining of the PR units has generated a number of polemics.

H2 the PR units in the private institutions in Ghana as making some strides in building the reputation and managing the institutional crisis

H3 the PR units have failed to manage the reputation and crisis in the private universities in Ghana, largely, because they are poorly resourced.

2.12 Conclusion

This study designed a conceptual framework for to assist in exploring the research questions, explaining the challenges facing PR unit of the private universities in Ghana. The review of the existing literature in the area of Public Relations practices in private universities revealed that the area is not thoroughly researched. Therefore, models and theories from existing literatures were hard to find.

And hence this study provided a framework which served as the basis for the interview guide developed in order to collect relevant data for this thesis. The framework assumes that in order to ascertain the meaning of reputation and crisis management in public relations in private universities in Ghana, one needs to understand the strategic role assigned to public relations outfit, the tools employed, the impact of the public relations activities, examine the relevance of reputation and crisis management in private universities in Ghana and the challenges faced by public relations.

Meanwhile, the side-lining of the PR units has generated a number of polemics. There is a school of thought which sees the PR units in the private institutions in Ghana as making some strides in building the reputation and managing the institutional crisis while the other school of thought is of the view that PR units have failed to manage the reputation and crisis in the private universities in Ghana, largely, because they are poorly resourced. In view of these polemics, and hence this study raised a number of empirical questions in the previous chapter, chapter one.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research design, data collection and analysis. It details out how the researcher selected the participants, as well as types and sources of data that were employed in this study.

3.2 Research Design

According to Yin (2003) there are five different strategies for research. These are experiments, surveys, archival analysis, history and case studies. But some of these strategies are better studied than other for dealing with specific issues, and a crucial thing for good research is that strategy choices are done rationally. This study will adopt the case study. Usually, there are two main research approaches which have widely been used among researchers. These are quantitative research and qualitative research (Malhotra, 2007). The distinction can be made between a quantitative and a qualitative research method. In most situations, numbers describe the quantitative data, and words describe the qualitative data.

Quantitative research is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in many forms. It tends to focus on exploring in detail, which provides more precision. Qualitative research on the other hand tends to offer more detail about the subject,

with data on large scale, which is often perceived as "facts'. Furthermore, qualitative research method is employed to create a deeper understanding of the studied problem by gathering relevant data, analyzing and interpreting the data which are difficult to represent in numbers. The researcher adopted the quantitative research method. The sources of data for this study were primary and secondary data. The primary data was represented by the information gathered from the respondents whilst the secondary data was sourced from previous research work, annual reports of the two private universities, and theories among other materials which were all duly referenced.

3.3 Target Population

The population for this study included all the Public Relations Practitioners in all the Private Universities in the country. However, for the purpose of this study, Public Relations Practitioners in two private universities were selected. These were Central University and Methodist University College.

Methodist University College was chosen because it has successfully operated a PR Unit for the past eight (8) years. The University has for more than past ten years offered both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Therefore, its views and approaches would be influential to the study. Central University College was chosen for this study because it has a very active PR Unit. The PR Unit which had operated for more than ten years can give a good insight to PR practices within the Private Universities.

3.4 Sampling Procedures (Sample(s) Size and Method(s) of Sampling

The researcher used Non-Probability sampling techniques, specifically, Purposive and Convenience sampling techniques to select the one hundred participants for the study. The Purposive Sampling technique used in selecting the top management and members of the Public Relations Units of the two universities, whilst the Convenience Sampling technique, will be used in selecting students from the two universities. The researcher used a sample size of one hundred (100) responses. The sample size was made up of ten (10) management members of the two private universities, (10) members of the PR units of the two private universities and eighty (80) students of the two private universities.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

The main instrument for collecting data from the field was a survey questionnaire. A survey questionnaire contain written questions that people respond to directly on the questionnaire form itself, without the aid of an interviewer (Monette et al, 2002). According to Leary (1995), there are distinct advantages in using a questionnaire vs. an interview methodology: questionnaires are less expensive and easier to administer than personal interviews; they lend themselves to group administration; and, they allow confidentiality to be assured. The rationale for using a questionnaire is this study is that the respondents are literate and could therefore read and understand the questions asked in the questionnaire and respond appropriately.

3.6 Administration Procedures

The research went through the following administrative procedures:

1. Phase one dealt with literature search, review and composition. The literature review also looked at the theoretical hinges of the research work.

2. Phase two is the development of the questionnaire. This includes the piloting and retest of the developed questionnaire for the study. The methodology for the research is developed at this stage taking into cognizance the objectives of the research. This stage will also deal with the data collection methods.

3. The phase three included the retrieval of the questionnaire and the attendant problems. In this case, the interviewer's administered questionnaire was retrieved with ease since the researcher was present during the response generating process. The challenge however came with the retrieval of the self-administered questionnaire.

4. Phase four is the level when data was presented and analysed. The researcher presented the data gathered from the field, together with analysis. This was supported by the use of statistical tools like graphs, bar charts, pie charts and frequency tables.

3.7 Data Analysis

The responses from the questionnaire gathered from the field were analyzed by tallying the responses and synthesizing them. Presentation of the analysis will be made using Excel and presented using graphs, tables etc. The analyzed data formed the basis for discussions and conclusion as well as the recommendation of the study. The chapter ended with an organisational profile of the two private universities.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Introduction

Analysis of the Effectiveness of Public Relations Management Tools for managing Crisis and Reputation in the PR outfits of the Methodist College and Central University in 2016-2017 Academic year.

This chapter presented the data analysis and discussion of findings of this research which was to understand the extent to which the Public Relations Units in the private universities in Ghana have effectively managed reputation and crisis for corporate image building, an Assessment of the Effectiveness of Methodist University College and Central University Public Relations Management Tools for managing Crisis and Reputation, 2016-2017.

Following the previous chapters which discussed the background of the study, literature review and research methodology, this chapter provides information on data gathered from the field as well as the characteristics of the respondents. Data gathered on the field through the questionnaire has been analysed and interpreted. The following were data gathered.

4.2 Analysis of Data

4.2.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The following sections present the demographics of the one hundred respondents who took part in the study

4.2.2 Composition of Respondents

Out of the one hundred (100) respondents who took part in this study, here is a break-down of the composition of the respondents:

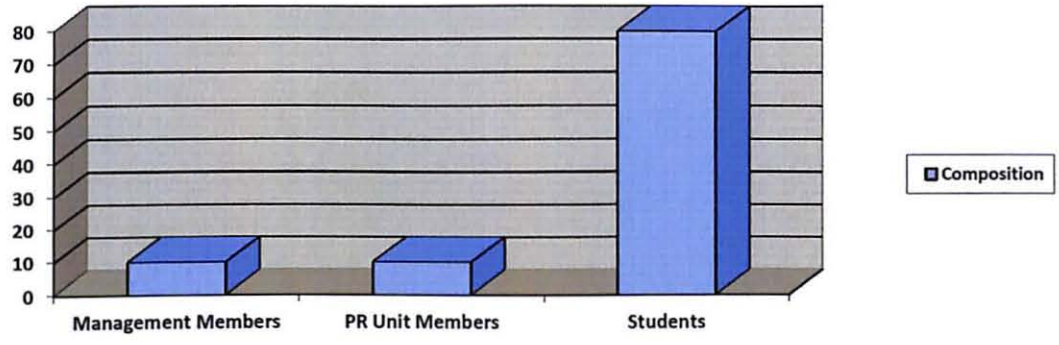

Figure 1: Composition of Research Respondents

Source: Field Data, 2017

From Figure 1, it can be realised that, out of the one hundred respondents, ten (10) were management members of the two case study universities, ten (10) were members of the Public Relations Units of the two institutions under study and eighty (80) were students pursuing different programmes at Central University and Methodist University College.

4.2.3 Gender of Respondents

Out of the 100 respondents who took part in the study, 59 (representing 59%) were females. The remaining 41 were males and they represented 41% of the research population. This has been captured in the graph below:

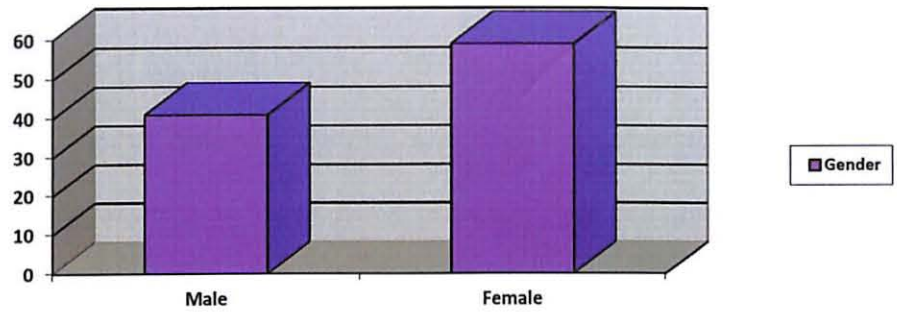

Figure 2: Gender of Research Respondents

Source: Field Data, 2017

Age Range of Research Respondents

Table 1 below shares the age range of the one hundred respondents who took part in the study:

Age Range	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
20-25	14	14
26-30	26	26
36-40	24	24
40-45	21	21
46-50	10	10
50 and above	5	5
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 1: Age Range of Research Respondents

Source: Field Data, 2017

From table 1 above, it can be noted that, out of the one hundred research respondents who took part in the study, a majority of 26 were aged between 26-30years. They represented 26% of the research population. This was followed by a set of 24 research respondents who were aged between 36-40, representing 24%. Another set of 21 research respondents, representing 21% were aged between 40-45 years. Moving on, 14 research respondents were identified to be between the ages of 20-25 years. With the remaining 15 respondents being aged between 46-50years (10 respondents, representing 10%) and 50 and above (5 respondents, representing 5%) respectively.

4.3 Discussion of Key Findings

It is important to note, that in the preliminary chapters, i.e. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 this study diagnosed the problem under review and in Chapter 4, here, it is only appropriate to provide the prognosis in the light of the objectives and assumption of this study, as follows:

The guiding assumptions of this study are that

H1 the side-lining of the PR units has generated a number of polemics.

H2 the PR units in the private institutions in Ghana as making some strides in building the reputation and managing the institutional crisis.

H3 the PR units have failed to manage the reputation and crisis in the private universities in Ghana, largely, because they are poorly resourced.

However, this study sets out to achieve two-fold objectives, namely broad and specific. Broadly speaking, this study interrogates the effectiveness of PR tool in managing crisis and reputation in the private universities in Ghana and specifically, it

sought to ascertain the meaning of reputation and crisis management in PR practices in the private universities in Ghana and examine the effectiveness of PR units in carrying out their core function of reputation and crisis management. The second objective was to examine the relevance of reputation and crisis management in the private universities in Ghana and explore PR tools employed by PR units in private universities in Ghana in managing reputation and crisis.

The third and last objective was to unearth the challenges of PR practices and analyse the success stories of the PR units in the private universities in Ghana with regards to building good corporate image through reputation and crisis management. The findings of the study have been presented based on the three research objectives as follows:

4.4 Objective 1: Ascertain meaning of Reputation and Crisis Management and Effectiveness of PR Units in carrying out Reputation and Crisis Management Function

4.4.1 Three Crises that had affect any Private University in the past 10 years

The research respondents were asked to list three (3) crises that have affected any private university in the past ten (10) years. Thirty seven respondents (representing 37%) noted that, some private universities in the past 10 years have had to deal with financial crisis. A set of 42 research respondents, representing 42% of the research population, identified leadership crisis as one of the three crises that has affected any private university in the past 10 years. The remaining Only 21 said, enrolment crisis

has been one of the crises that have confronted some private universities. The responses have been captured in the graph below:

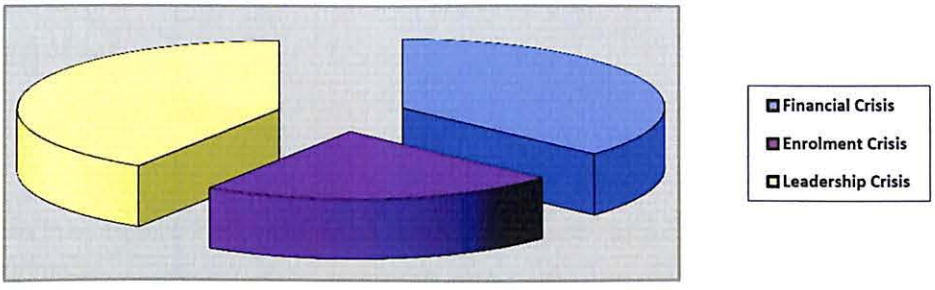

Figure 3: Three Crisis that affect any Private University in the past 10 years

Source: Field Data, 2017

These findings have been supported by a study by Nyamnyoh, Nkwi & Konings (2012). They noted that, while crises in higher academic institutions appear to be a universal phenomenon, have revealed that most African colleges and universities have been victims of crises and violence emanating from peculiar factors associated with post-colonial changes. Most of the crises are embedded in the internal and external initiatives that have triggered activism and militancy among students. In recent years, some of the violence could also be associated with socio-political changes and economic situations that spell negative impact and uncertainties on the living and study conditions of students. Most universities also experience crises resulting from stampedes due to overstretched infrastructures and the struggle to extend opportunities to a larger student population with very limited resources (Nyamnjoh & Jua, 2002).

Also supporting this finding is a study by Adeyemi (2009) who stated that, crises in higher academic institutions in most developing countries could take several forms, like: (1) vandalism, (2) workers' strikes, (3) lockouts by employers, (4) non-commitment to contracts, (5) students' cultism/terrorism, and (7) boycott of classes, amongst others.

4.4.2 Role of Public Relations in Crisis Management and Reputation Management

Respondents were asked if they think that, Public Relations has any role to play in crisis management and reputation management. A majority of 89 research respondents, representing 89% said, indeed Public Relations has a role to play in crisis management and reputation management. The remaining 11 research respondents, asked in the negative when they were asked if Public Relations has any role to play in crisis management and reputation management. They represented 11% of the research population. The graph below presents a pictorial representation of the responses:

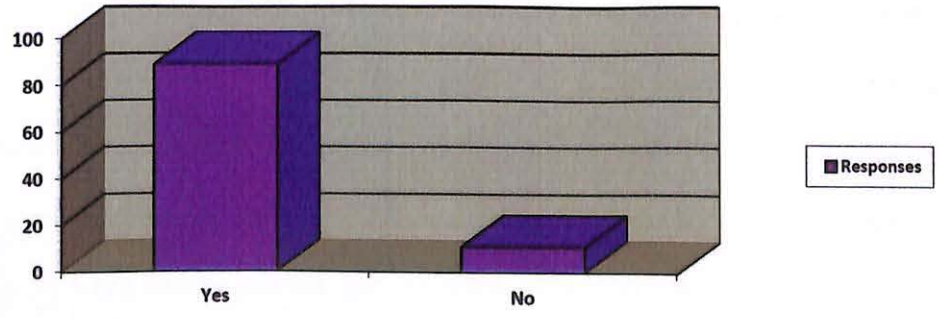

Figure 4: Role of Public Relations in Crisis Management and Reputation Management

Source: Field Data, 2017

In providing answers to support their responses, majority of the respondents, noted that, during crisis, PR units help to rely timely information to stakeholders as well as express the concern of the university as well as indicate that, something is being done about the crisis. PR Units helps maintain communication between the university and its stakeholders and identify ways of turning the crisis into an opportunity to project the image of the university. The minority 11 research respondents also noted that, to prevent crisis, one has to do the right thing always.

The findings has been supported by a study by Seitel (2009), who noted that, the role played by Public Relations in educational institutions is to also manage the flow of both internal and external communications. Public relations departments in educational set up do manage their organisation's reputations with various groups including internal and external publics.

Also supporting these findings is a study by Adeyemi (2009). He noted that, in an academic institutional context, reputation could be enhanced or eroded by the nature of information disseminated and the perception of the stakeholders, which include members of the faculty, students, concerned parents, government agencies, and others in the relevant task environment, who have relationships and interests in the activities of the institution. According to Adeyemi (2009), reputation may be developed through good relationships and the nature of information which flows internally and externally to stakeholders and the general public. The contents of such information could reveal the effectiveness of management in handling crisis, and the interactions of other members of the institution with their immediate and remote constituencies.

Information in times of crisis could be communicated through verbal, written, or the electronic media, amongst other means (Adeyemi, 2009).

Another study that corroborates, the findings is a study by Newson and Carrell (2001). They noted that, in recent times, the competition among universities has made marketing educational institutions to the outside world very important. Therefore, public relations units of institutions need to position universities to be viewed as one of the best in the system. Newson and Carrell (2001) emphasize that public relations personnel for the local schools district must be aware of the feelings of students, parents, voters and the regional accrediting agency. The authors further opined that any institution has many publics and the public relations director must be able to advise management about the possible impact on those publics of various plans, policies and actions (Newson and Carrell, 2001).

4.5 Objective 2: Relevance of Reputation and Crisis Management and PR tools used to manage reputation and crisis

4.5.1 Relevance of Crisis and Reputation Management

The research respondents were asked to indicate if Public Relations has any role to play in crisis management and reputation management. Eighty three research respondents (representing 83% stated that, PR has a key role to play in crisis management and reputation management. The remaining 17% noted that, PR has no role to play in crisis management and reputation management. Their responses have been captured in the graph below:

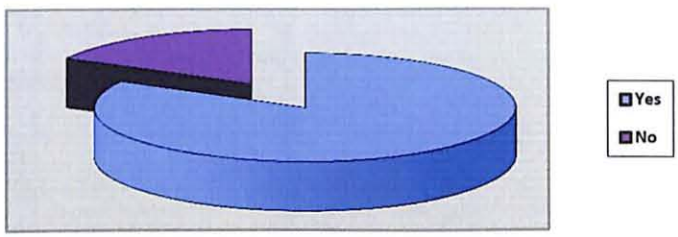

Figure 5: Relevance of Crisis and Reputation Management

Source: Field Data, 2017

Supporting this finding, Pirozek and Heskova (2003) examined public relations practice of a university in the Czech Republic and found that two-way symmetrical tactics of research and feedback systems helped the university gain a better understanding of the attitudes of its key publics.

4.5.2 PR Tools for Reputation and Crisis Management

Next, the research respondents were given several PR tools and were asked to pick four of the tools that, PR units in private universities use in handling reputation management and crisis management. Their responses indicted that, PR Units at privates universities were likely to use Media Relations, which is made up of press conference, press release (53 respondents, representing 53%) and Social Media (21 respondents, representing 21%). The other two PR tools likely to be used by PR Units of Private Universities in the area of Reputation and Crisis Management were Speaking Events (19 respondents, representing 19%) and Newsletters (7 respondents, representing 7% of the research population). The response of the research respondents have been captured in the table below:

Table 2: PR Tools for Reputation and Crisis Management

PR Tools	Frequency	Percentage
Media relations (press conference, press release etc)	53	53
Speaking events	19	19
Newsletters	7	7
Social media platforms	21	21
Total	**100**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2017

A study by Belch and Belch (2001) supports the findings. They noted that, public relations practitioners' uses variety of tools including special publications, participation in community activities, fund-raising, sponsorships of special events, advertising and public affairs activities to enhance an organizational image. Well et al (2005) describe categories of public relations tools as including house ads, Public service ads, publications (Brochures, Flyers, magazines, Newsletters), annual reports, Press conferences and media advisory (media kits, fact sheets, background information), Media tours, articles, letter to the editor, Talk and interview shows , Electronic communication (web sites, social media platforms) among others (Well et al, 2005).

Lancaster (2005) also identifies the following as the media used by the public relations practitioner in communicating as well as disseminating information to the public. The media used are personal communication, press release, sponsorship,

visual communication, literature, television, film and exhibitions. This agrees with the views of (Belch and Belch, 2001; Lancaster, 2005; Palmer, 2005; Well et al, 2005):

4.6 Objective 3: Challenges of PR practices and Success Stories on Building Good Corporate Image through Reputation and Crisis Management

4.6.1 Success of PR Units in building good Corporate Image and Handling of Crisis

Research respondents were asked to rate the success of PR Units of private universities in building good corporate image and handling of crisis. In response, a large number of 71, representing 71% noted that, the PR Units of private universities have been successful in building good corporate image and in handling crisis. Sixteen respondents, representing 16% stated that, PR Units of Private Universities have been very successful in building good corporate image and handling crisis. The remaining 13 respondents, representing 13% said, PR Units of Private Universities have not been successful in building good corporate image and handling crisis. The responses have been captured in the graph below:

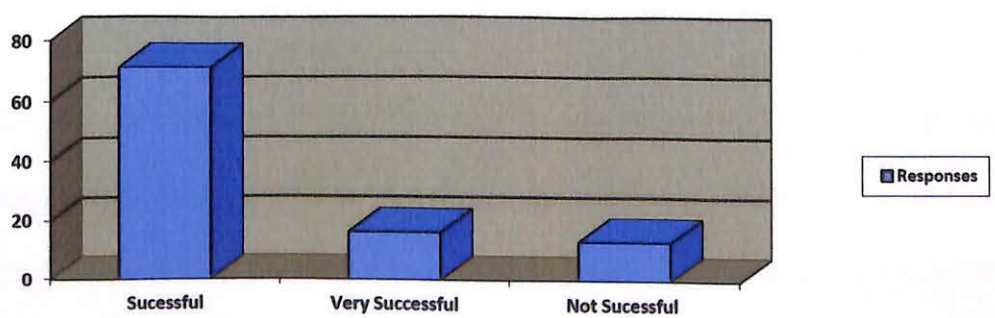

Figure 6: Success of PR Units in building good Corporate Image and Handling of Crisis (Field data, 2017)

These findings are supported by a study by DeSanto & Garner (2001). They recommended that university public relations practitioners set synchronized goals, identify stakeholders, and conduct evaluations. Grillis (1997) argued that it is critical for public relations practitioners to have access to the top leaders within a university. Henderson (2001) proposed a four-step process for managing communication in universities: research, planning, communication, and evaluation. This emphasis on strategic public relations management is clearly evident in research done by scholars studying the practice of public relations by universities in the former Soviet-bloc countries (Hall, 2002; Hall & Baker, 2003; Pabich, 2003).

Universities in former Soviet-bloc are facing complex environments. The introduction of capitalism has meant that old state-owned universities, which never had to compete, now find themselves losing students to new private universities that offer attractive packages Public Relations in Higher Education Institutions to students (Neculau, 1997; Stanciulescu, 2002). This competition has prompted both state-owned and private universities to seek to utilize public relations as means of getting an edge. In the past, public relations practice at these universities was a mixture of marketing, advertising, and lobbying (Coman, 2003).

Jarrell (2003) encouraged universities to involve public relations in decision making because practitioners can lessen risk by forging good relations with publics and can scan for emerging issues. Mu-Li and Wen-Bin (2010) reveal that organizational factors have significant influence on public relations performance than individual factors on the higher educational institution.

Wilcox et al (2001) believe that the practice of public relations is indeed a process, one that utilizes frequent and concentrated communication. Communication is vital part in almost every educational institution. A lot of early practitioners of public relations contributed to the growth of educational public relations. Therefore, university public relations professionals should build strong community relationships, take local concerns seriously, and attend to internal and external constituencies.

4.6.2 Challenges of PR Units of Private Universities

Next, the researcher asked the one hundred research respondents to choose from a list of options, the key challenges faced by public relations unit of private universities in managing the reputation and handling crisis of their universities. The responses of the research respondents have been presented in the table below.

Table 2: Challenges of PR Units of Private Universities

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of funding	30	30
PR is only relevant during crisis	21	21
PR is not a management function	36	36
PR is not recognised at the Institution	13	13
Total	100	100

Source: Field Data, 2017

Thirty six (36) research respondents noted that, the main challenge confronting PR Units in Private Universities was the fact that PR was not a management function. These respondents represented 36% of the research population. This was followed by a set of 30 research respondents who said, lack of funding, was a key challenge confronting PR Units in Private Universities in managing the reputation and handling crisis of their universities. Twenty one research respondents noted that, their main challenge on the issue was that, Public Relations was only relevant during crisis. The remaining 13 respondents, representing 13% said their main challenge was that, Public Relations was not recognised at the institution. The respondent suggested that, PR Units should be given the due recognition, PR should be given the managerial status and the PR Unit should be well resourced.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study was conducted to interrogate the extent to which the Public Relations Units in the private universities in Ghana have effectively managed reputation and crisis for corporate image building, an Assessment of the Effectiveness of Methodist and Central University Colleges' Public Relations Management Tools for managing Crisis and Reputation, 2016-2017. The research design adopted for this quantitative study was the survey. Two probability sampling technique, simple random sampling was used to select the sample size of one hundred (100) made up of Management members of the two universities, officials from the PR Units of the two universities and students from the two institutions. Using a self-administered questionnaire, primary data was collected from the research respondents. The data was then coded, edited and analysed using the Excel software, which also helped to determine the frequencies and percentage of responses. These responses were later on presented using tables, pie charts and graphs.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

It is important to note, that in the preliminary chapters, i.e. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 this study diagnosed the problem under review and in Chapter 4, it provided the prognosis in the light of the objectives and assumption of this study, however, here, it is only

appropriate to summarize the key findings to see whether the findings corroborated the objectives and the guiding assumption of the study or not.

Meanwhile, this chapter summarizes the key findings, draws conclusions and makes some recommendations for policy decision and future research and praxis. It highlights the key findings and provides brief details for better understanding of the crisis and reputation management phenomenon in the private universities in particular and generally, the tertiary institutions in Ghana.

Further, conclusions are drawn to reflect the contribution made by this study to the existing knowledge and to satisfy the research objectives and questions using the data recorded and suggestions made by the participants and other researchers.

As already indicated, this thesis has been undertaken based on the three main research objectives that guided the study. The study's objective was to ascertain the meaning of reputation and crisis management in PR practices in the private universities in Ghana and examine the effectiveness of PR units in carrying out their core function of reputation and crisis management. The second objective was to examine the relevance of reputation and crisis management in the private universities in Ghana and explore PR tools employed by PR units in private universities in Ghana in managing reputation and crisis. The third and last objective was to unearth the challenges of PR practices and analyse the success stories of the PR units in the private universities in

Ghana with regards to building good corporate image through reputation and crisis management. The findings of the research have therefore been discussed based on the research objectives of the study.

The thesis' first objective was to ascertain the meaning of reputation and crisis management in PR practices in the private universities in Ghana and examine the effectiveness of PR units in carrying out their core function of reputation and crisis management. The research respondents were asked to list three (3) crises that have affected any private university in the past ten (10) years. Thirty seven respondents (representing 37%) noted that, some private universities in the past 10 years have had to deal with financial crisis. A set of 42 research respondents, representing 42% of the research population, identified leadership crisis as one of the three crises that has affected any private university in the past 10 years. The remaining Only 21 said, enrolment crisis has been one of the crises that have confronted some private universities. Respondents were asked if they think that, Public Relations has any role to play in crisis management and reputation management. A majority of 89 research respondents, representing 89% said, indeed Public Relations has a role to play in crisis management and reputation management. The remaining 11 research respondents, asked in the negative when they were asked if Public Relations has any role to play in crisis management and reputation management. They represented 11% of the research population.

In providing answers to support their responses, majority of the respondents, noted that, during crisis, PR units help to rely timely information to stakeholders as well as express the concern of the university as well as indicate that, something is being done

about the crisis. PR Units helps maintain communication between the university and its stakeholders and identify ways of turning the crisis into an opportunity to project the image of the university. The minority 11 research respondents also noted that, to prevent crisis, one has to do the right thing always.

The second objective was aimed at examining the relevance of reputation and crisis management in the private universities in Ghana and explores PR tools employed by PR units in private universities in Ghana in managing reputation and crisis. On the relevance of Crisis and Reputation Management, the research respondents were asked to indicate if Public Relations has any role to play in crisis management and reputation management. Eighty three research respondents (representing 83% stated that, PR has a key role to play in crisis management and reputation management. The remaining 17% noted that, PR has no role to play in crisis management and reputation management.

Next, the research respondents were given several PR tools and were asked to pick four of the tools that, PR units in private universities use in handling reputation management and crisis management. Their responses indicted that, PR Units at privates universities were likely to use Media Relations, which is made up of press conference, press release (53 respondents, representing 53%) and Social Media (21 respondents, representing 21%). The other two PR tools likely to be used by PR Units of Private Universities in the area of Reputation and Crisis Management were Speaking Events (19 respondents, representing 19%) and Newsletters (7 respondents, representing 7% of the research population).

The third objective was to unearth the challenges of PR practices and analyse the success stories of the PR units in the private universities in Ghana with regards to building good corporate image through reputation and crisis management. In identifying the challenges of PR practices in Building Good Corporate Image through Reputation and Crisis Management, the research respondents stated that the main challenge confronting PR Units in Private Universities was the fact that PR was not a management function, lack of funding, PR Unit only relevant during crisis and the non-recognition of the PR practice.

Research respondents were asked to rate the success of PR Units of private universities in building good corporate image and handling of crisis. In response, a large number of 71, representing 71% noted that, the PR Units of private universities have been successful in building good corporate image and in handling crisis. Sixteen respondents, representing 16% stated that, PR Units of Private Universities have been very successful in building good corporate image and handling crisis. The remaining 13 respondents, representing 13% said, PR Units of Private Universities have not been successful in building good corporate image and handling crisis.

5.3 Conclusion

The findings have established that, Public Relations Units in the private universities in Ghana have effectively managed reputation and crisis for corporate image building. To enable the PR Units to continue to effectively manage the reputation of the private universities as well as crisis, the PR units must be well resourced, PR be given a

management position and PR Units should be given the necessary recognition so as to enable the Unit play its role of ensuring goodwill between an organisation and its stakeholders are effectively achieved.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations have been made:

PR Units should be well resourced: Management of Private Universities would be urged to well-resource the PR Unit technical, logistical, human and financial resources. These would include the state of the art technology, laptops, internet facilities, softwares etc and also the needed human resource. When the Unit is well resource, the Unit would have different staff members focusing on media relations, community relations, stakeholder relations etc.

PR should be given the due recognition and placed at management level: The PR Unit must be given the needed recognition and a seat at management meetings. The presence of the PR person at management level, would draw management's attention of the implication of their actions to the institution's stakeholders, damage to the institution's reputation and what can be done to help improve the corporate image of the institution. At the management level, the head of the PR Unit can counsel management on which tools and medium are available for maximum impact.

Usage of Social Media to Project Reputation of Private Universities: PR Units will be encouraged to take advantage of the enormous of social media and position its

universities to derive some of these benefits. The Unit should choose the right social media for the right purpose. An example is Facebook for announcements on admission and sale of admission forms etc. These social media platforms should be regularly updated, more interactive, make more use of info graphics, videos, audios, pictures, etc. Online managers should be readily available to respond to enquiries, questions etc. during working hours of the PR Unit and sometimes, during non-working hours of the institution.

PR Units should be more proactive: PR units of private universities would be encouraged to be more proactive by conducting research, counselling management on issues, and establishing warning systems to be able to detect a crisis, at the issues level, so that it can be addressed before it generates into a crisis.

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APPENDIX I

GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH (SOGSAR)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PR STAFF AT METHODIST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a Master's Student from the Ghana Institute of Journalism and I am conducting a thesis on the topic "***Public Relations (PR) Practices and the Managing of Crisis and Reputation Phenomena in Private Universities in Ghana": An Assessment of the Effectiveness of Methodist University College and Central University Public Relations Management Tools for managing Crisis and Reputation, 2016-2017.***

I assure you of strict confidentiality and also want you to know that, any information provided will be solely used for academic purpose. Please provide the appropriate information by ticking the appropriate box or writing your response by each question in the space provided. Thank you.

Please answer all questions

PART I

PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender: ☐Male ☐Female

2. Age: ☐20-25 ☐26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐36-40 ☐40-45 ☐46-50 ☐50 and above

3. Which category do you fall in? ☐Management Member ☐ PR Unit ☐Students

PART II

TOOLS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR HANDLING REPUTATION AND CRISIS

4. Do you think that Public Relations has any role to play in crisis management and reputation management? ☐Yes ☐ No

5. Kindly tick four public relations tools that PR units in private universities use in handling reputation management and crisis management

☐Media relations (press conference, press release etc)

☐ Newsletters

☐ Purchase of company vehicles

☐ Speaking events

☐ Social media platforms

☐ Employing a new CEO

PART III

CORPORATE IMAGE BUILDING

4. Do you think Private Universities have been successful in reputation management and crisis management? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. List any three (3) crises that have affected any private university in the past 10 years?

   a. .....

   .....

   b. .....

   .....

   c. .....

   .....

6. The core role of public relations unit is reputation and crisis management in private universities in Ghana?

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

☐ Disagree

9. How will you rate the success of private universities PR unit in building good corporate image and handling crisis? ☐Very successful ☐ successful ☐Not successful.

PART IV

CHALLENGES

10. Kindly choose from the options below, the key challenges faced by public relations unit of private universities in managing the reputation and handling crisis of their universities ☐Lack of funding ☐PR is only relevant during crisis ☐PR is not a management function ☐PR is not recognised at the Institution

THANK YOU!