



**EXAMINING THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATIONS (NGO) IN GHANA.**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA ARTS AND
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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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28/11/2024

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC-IJ).

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28/11/2024.

Supervisor

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

This work is foremost dedicated to the Almighty God for his Grace, favour and blessings throughout this master's program.

Secondly, I dedicate this work to my guardians, family members and individuals who supported me with their finances to be able to do this master's program successfully.

Finally, I dedicate this project work to the Faculty of Public Relations, Advertising and Marketing (FOPAM) of the Institute of Journalism at the University of Media Arts and Communications (UniMAC-IJ) to be used as reference and for other academic purposes.

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the study was to examine the strategic role of Public Relations in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The study was underpinned by the excellence and systems theory which helped to understand the nuances of the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The study used the qualitative approach and employed interviews to gather data from fifteen Senior Public Relations Practitioners from selected nonprofit organizations in Ghana. It was revealed from the study that, the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana includes, building relationships and reputations, forming strategic alliances and partnerships, fundraising and resource mobilization, effective media relations, research and evaluation. The study also found that Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana adopt two-symmetrical communication model in their practice and the Senior Public Relations Practitioners within these nonprofit organizations are positioned within the dominant coalition or the strategy formulation machinery.

Finally, the study found organizational culture and budgetary constraints as major factors that affects the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

The study recommended that for Public Relations practice to be strategic, management of nonprofit organizations in Ghana should embrace Participative cultures and structures that values and support PR practice as well as provide budgetary support to Practitioners to be able to undertake research and other strategic activities.

Keywords: Public relations, Excellence theory, Non-profit, Systems theory, PR practitioners

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter opens the entire thesis by providing background information on the study. Aside from the background, the main problem that the research aims to solve is also discussed. It also provides justification for the research by enumerating the objectives and key research questions that the study aims to answer, the significance of the study, as well as the scope of study and the organisation of the entire study.

1.1 Background of the study

Globally, Public Relations praxis as an industry and a Profession has experienced tremendous transformation in terms of respect, recognition and development since the beginning of the 21st century. This is because, the Profession has developed to the extent of becoming an intrinsic and integral part of businesses, organisations, governments, private and even nonprofit organisations globally. Today, Public Relations is no longer regarded as an industry which was formerly practised and based in the United States of America (USA) but rather, a profession practiced globally (Anani-Bossman, 2020). The Profession now spans countries with diverse cultures, political and economic systems and levels of development (Curtin and Gaither, 2012; Gulbertson, 1996:1). Public Relations is a management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationship between an organization and its publics on whom its success or failures depends on (Cutlip et al, 2009; Broom & Sha, 2012). The discipline involves a planned communication and relationship-building activity with strategic and deliberate intent (Lamme

&Russel,2015). These sustained and planned efforts are geared towards building goodwill and mutual understanding between organizations and its publics (CIPR, 2015).

Globally, Organizations use Public Relations as a means of enhancing reputation, building and maintaining relationships to achieve goals and objectives as a fiber of every organization. PR through its boundary-spanning role provide organizations the opportunity to monitor, dialogue and respond to issues that affect key publics of organization (Lamb & Mckee, 2015), supports the development and maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships between the organization and the groups with which it is interdependent (Cornelissen, 2020). Public Relations Practitioners do not only manage information flow, they actively engage with key publics, establish strong relationships and strive to maintain sound reputation at all times, in all circumstances and through PR measurement help organizations achieve strategic organizational goals (Public Relations Society of America-PRSA, 2012). From the above definitions and roles of PR, it is clear that the contributions of PR profession to organizational success and growth cannot be over emphasized. For this reason, several scholars have argued that the discipline, considering its enormous contributions to organizational success, should be made to play managerial or strategic roles in organizations across the globe (Adjei et al, 2021; Anani-Bossman, 2020; Tench & Yeomans, 2012; Cutlip et al, 2009; Seitel, 2006). However, in Ghana, although there is increased growth in the industry, studies have revealed that in most organizations, the Profession is not held in high esteem such that Practitioners are not involved in strategic management roles, accorded their correct positions or even recognized and their roles are assigned to other management functions like marketing or Human Resource Management to perform (Adjei et al, 2021; Anani-Bossman, 2020; Tetteh; 2020). This is an affront to the excellence practices of Public Relations postulated by Grunig et al (2000). Nonprofit organizations play crucial roles in society by providing services to people

and communities and improving quality of their lives (Tetteh, 2020). Nonprofit organizations are able to provide these services to people and communities through funds sourced from donor agencies, volunteers among several others. Also, there is an increasing growth in number of non-profit organizations in Ghana hence in order for these organizations to continue to exist, it is crucial for them to communicate strategically and effectively to their funders and beneficiaries, create awareness about their goals and objectives in order to maintain credibility, visibility and accountability on how they are putting these funds to good use. This is what Public Relations Practitioners in their strategic role perform to help organizations achieve its goals. There have been several studies conducted on Public Relations practice in Ghana, however the literature on the standard of Public Relations practice in terms of models used in practice and strategic roles of practitioners in nonprofit organizations is scarce. Also, these studies widely concentrated on profit-making organizations such as the financial sector, government institutions leaving an equally important issue as the strategic role of PR in nonprofit organizations (Anani-Bossman, 2020: Best-Gavi, 2020: Tetteh, 2020).

Therefore, the overall aim of this study is to better understand how Public Relations is practiced in Ghana in terms of the models that influence the practice and the strategic roles of Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Public Relations over the years, has been the pillar for the successful growth of most organizations, institutions and firms across the globe. Contemporarily, PR has become an intrinsic and fundamental part of every organization be it corporate, governments and even non-profit organizations globally (Adjei et al, 2021; McEllrath et al, 2001: 665). This is because Public Relations Professionals provide organizations the opportunity to monitor, dialogue and respond to issues that affect their strategic publics and the organization in terms of its operation and profits through its environmental scanning and boundary spanning role (Cornelissen, 2020; Gregory, 2017; Lambe and Mckee, 2005), supports the development and maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the group with which it is interdependent in terms of its success and failure (Cornelissen, 2020; Cutlip et al, 2009), helps an organization to achieve strategic organizational goals and ensuring that organizations constantly engage with key stakeholders to maintain favorable reputation (CIPR, 2015; PRSA, 2012). Despite these enormous contributions of the PR Professionals to organizational success across the globe, the Profession is undervalued such that Practitioners within organizations in certain countries especially Ghana are not given necessary recognition, accorded their rightful place or held in high esteem in the organization and even involved in strategic decision making as accorded to other management functions like marketing, Human Resource among several others (Adjei et al, 2021; Anani-Bossman 2020; Adeniji 2015). As a result of these treatments to Professionals, their value is often not felt within organizations nor their contributions to effectiveness within these organizations. This boils down to how the profession is practiced in different context worldwide.

There has been much literature and studies on the effective Public Relations practice worldwide since the beginning of the 21st century but these have been particularly in the developed world. According to Sriramesh and Vercic (2009), the focus of theory building and models as a way of studying how the Profession is practised globally has widely been restricted to the USA and some few western European countries. This is to say that empirical evidence on the growth and standard practice of Public Relations in different parts of the world especially in Africa and Ghana precisely is scarce in the sense that very little research has been conducted in these areas on the practice (Ming-Yi & Baah Boakye, 2008: 2). The practice in Africa and Ghana has been fashioned out of Western models and theories, making these non-western based Practitioners to often struggle in their attempt to implement such models and theories in their daily operations due to cultural, political, economic and social differences. For this particular reason, several scholars have suggested the need for an African body of knowledge on Public Relations Practice models and theory based on African worldview (Anani-Bossman, 2020; Skinner & Rensburg, 2011).

Studies have proven that there has been an increased growth of PR practice in Ghana yet there is very little information about the standard of practice in terms of strategic roles of Practitioners and the model ideal for the practice of Public Relations in the country. A search through literature for instance, indicates that there are very few publications on standard PR practice in Ghana (Anani-Bossman, 2020; Thompson, 2018; Wu & Baah Boakye, 2008; Kwansah-Aidoo, 2008). Even these few publications have predominantly focused on PR practised in profit organizations like the financial services and businesses outside the country rather than the strategic role of PR in nonprofit organizations in Ghana (Tetteh, 2020; Thompson, 2018). The purpose of this study is to examine how PR is practised in Ghana, with a particular focus on the strategic role of Professionals

in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. This is in line with the call by Anani-Bossman (2020) for Practitioners in Ghana to conduct research on how PR is practised in the country.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study aims to achieve the following objectives

1. To examine the strategic roles of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.
2. To determine where PR Practitioners are positioned in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.
3. To ascertain which model of PR is adopted by Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.
4. To explore factors that affect the application of strategic PR practices in non-for-profit organizations in Ghana.

1.4 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following questions

1. What are the strategic roles of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana?
2. Where are PR Practitioners positioned in nonprofit organizations in Ghana?
3. Which model of PR is adopted by PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana?
4. What factors affect the applications of strategic PR practices in non-for-profit organizations in Ghana?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study on examining the strategic role of Public Relations practices in nonprofit organisations in Ghana will be significant to most organisations and institutions in Ghana because the findings of this study will enable management of nonprofit organizations to understand the strategic roles of Public Relations in improving organizational reputation, fundraising and stakeholder engagement thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness. The study would also highlight the critical and strategic role of Public Relations in promoting social change, advocacy and public education in Ghana enabling non-profit organisations to be more effective in improving the societies by addressing pressing social needs and empowering non-profit organizations in Ghana to prioritize Public Relations Practitioners in Strategic roles within the organization.

It will also provide helpful information for policymakers to develop and implement sound and supportive policies that would ensure the proper allocation of resources recognising the strategic value of Public Relations in the nonprofit sector. The study will add to a body of existing literature and contribute to scholarly conversation on excellent Public Relations in nonprofit organizations in the Ghanaian context providing evidence on the strategic role of Public Relations in non-profit organizations in Ghana and improving Public Relations practice in Ghana.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study examines the strategic role of Public Relations Practitioners in non-profit organisations (NGO) in Ghana. It focuses on role of Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in terms of their involvement in strategic management, models and the standards of practice in Accra, Ghana.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters

The first chapter discusses the Background of the study, Statement of problem, Research objectives, Research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and the organization of the study. Chapter two reviews literature on related studies and outlines the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study. Chapter three is focused on the Research methodology comprising the research approach, design, paradigms, population, sample size, sampling technique and data collection methods and instruments. Chapter four deals with Data analysis and findings of the study.

Chapter five provides a summary of the entire work, the conclusions and Recommendations made for consideration.

1.8 Definition of Operational terms

The meaning of some salient concepts and terms that is used often in the course of this study has been defined to ensure proper and easy understanding of the study.

Strategic role: refers to PR roles focused more on managerial than technical

Nonprofit organizations: refer to organizations that are not in business to make profit

Publics are group of people who have a common interest or common values in a particular situation.

Public Relations Practices: are the various activities carried out by Public Relations professionals to ensure the successful growth of the organizations.

1.9 Summary of chapter

This chapter sets the scene for this study. Examining the strategic role of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations resulted in the research objectives and subsequent research questions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews earlier works by others, including theoretical frameworks, concepts and a review of related literature as carried out by different authors and experts. Their views would direct the course of this study and make known the trend of research. In essence, the review is intended to provide a foundation for the present work and serve as literature for further academic studies.

2.1 Overview of Public Relations Practice in Ghana

The British Colonial administration was the first to introduce modern Public Relations practice to Ghana (Thompson, 2018). However, Watson Commission report in 1984 resulted in the establishment of an Information Bureau (currently, the Information Services Department) for the newly elected government of Dr Kwame Nkrumah in 1957 (Amoakohene, 2015). Practitioners were mostly journalists with no formal Public Relations background. According to Amoakohene (2015), PR at the time was not viewed as a profession and those who practiced were from several backgrounds. Civilian and military rules marked the period between 1966 and 1992. This was a period of political, social and economic instability; hence, PR was stifled as a result. The transition to full democracy and the liberalisation of the airwaves in 1992 led to the emergence of Public Relations as a profession. Public Relations has since become fully established, with many organizations now having PR departments. Ghana also has a well-established umbrella body, the Institute of Public Relations (IPR, Ghana) that organizes professional courses for practitioners. Many educational institutions are also operating departments of communication studies with Public Relations as a core aspect of their programmes.

There is a very little information about the standard of Public Relations practice especially in terms of nonprofit organization despite the increasing growth of Public Relations Profession in Ghana. For instance, a search through literature indicates very few publications on standard Public Relations practice in nonprofit organizations in Ghana (Tetteh, 2020; Thompson, 2018; Anani-Bossman &Tella, 2017,). In the known studies on Public Relations and communication in achieving core mandate of international Non-Government Organizations in Ghana, Tetteh (2020) asked respondents to identify the obstacles that international organizations were likely to face when entering Ghana and how Public Relations agencies can help international clients to overcome the obstacles. Respondents mentioned obstacles such as cultural differences, economic differences, language, understanding of the Ghanaian market, among several others. It is worth noting that their research did not focus on Ghanaian-established nonprofit organizations, but rather on international non-governmental organisations operating in Ghana. The current research, therefore, focuses on how Public Relations is practised in Ghana especially among nonprofit organisations.

2.2. Public Relations as practiced in nonprofit organizations (NPO's)

Public Relations is a strategic communication process that establishes mutually beneficial relationship between an organization and its publics (PRSA,2012). This means that within nonprofit organizations, Public Relations strategies serve as a vital tool for nonprofit organization because it establishes and maintain a climate conducive for an organization to communicate, understand and cooperate with its strategic publics and the broader community. Public Relations in nonprofit organizations play a crucial role in shaping perceptions and building relationships with stakeholders by influencing their reputations and success in achieving their goals. Public Relations Professionals employ effective strategies comprising of a wide range of communication activities aimed at building and maintaining positive relationships with the media, sponsors,

donors, like-minded organizations and beneficiaries (Kyalo, 2024). According to Duhalm et al (2010), Public Relations activities within nonprofit or non-governmental organizations differs from other sectors but regardless of the operating field, issues of promoting and maintaining social trust are major targets for nonprofit organizations in order to achieve their goals. Public Relations Practitioners therefore set up objectives for nonprofit organizations such as developing communication channels between the organization and beneficiaries in order to win public acceptance for its mission, to create and maintain favorable climate for fund raising, ensure and maintain public interest in the organization towards its mission and to motivate volunteers. Public Relations creates the need for non-profit organizations to maintain close relationship with the public in order to gain social license and to achieve its objectives (Cornelissen, 2020). Public Relations Practitioners serve as the bridge between nonprofit organizations and their publics and since nonprofit organizations are increasing everyday across the globe, it is important for these organizations to differentiate itself from others by building targeted strategies featuring community engagements events like charity gala, health screening exercises, cleaning exercises among several others which helps to create opportunities for meaningful interaction and participation and also, strengthens the bond between NPO's and their stakeholders driving long term engagement and support (Smith & Scott, 2018). This therefore requires Public Relations Practitioners within nonprofit organizations to have a thorough understanding of the organization they work for so that they can assist in drafting communication strategies to targeted stakeholders. Nonprofit organizations rely largely on fundraising and donations to operate or undertake their initiatives. This therefore means that, for donors and like-minded organizations to assist with funds, there should be a strategic communication appealing to these organizations, individuals, businesses and

donors on the organizations mission and vision and the need to invest in that vision to be able to undertake its projects and activities and also to ensure its continuous existence.

In situations like this, Public Relations Practitioners play a huge role in helping organizations raise funds by developing strategic and well-tailored messages to targeted donors and partners to assist the organizational cause through strategic partnership, effective storytelling and media relations leveraging on shared resources and expertise, amplifying their impact and reach. This is because the primary goal of nonprofit organizations is to uplift society and raise awareness about a serious cause to serve the public interest, members, recruiting volunteers, fostering goodwill and fundraising (Page & Parnell, 2019). Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations undertake community engagement campaign to dialogue with communities and identify their most pressing needs that affects them and design measures to address these needs. This helps the organization to build good relationship with these communities gaining their acceptance and deepening bond with both sponsors and beneficiaries and garnering their support for their cause (Austin & Pinkleton, 2015). The discussion so far makes it clear the value and numerous benefits Public Relations Practitioners contributes to organizational effectiveness especially in nonprofit organizations and the need for managers within these organizations to give Practitioners their maximum support, respect and empower them to be part of strategic management decision making in order for Practitioners to contribute their value to organizational success.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

According to Austin and Pinkleton (2006: 271), theories are essential in generalizing the way people think and behave. It also assists in determining the most suitable goals and objectives of a communication programme. Different theories have attempted to explain the practice of Public Relations however, for the purpose of this study, two main theories namely the Excellence theory and Systems theory will be used to underpin the study. It is believed that these two theories will enable the researcher to adequately put the investigation into its pro per perspective particularly on how nonprofit organisations in Ghana utilize Public Relations and the models employed in these practices. These theories are considered fundamental to determining the strategic roles and effective practice of Public Relations and hence its essence in underpinning the study.

2.4 Excellence Theory of Public Relations

The Excellence theory is a general theory of Public Relations that resulted from a 15-year study of best practices in communication management field funded by the International Association of Business Communication (IABC) Research Foundation. The Excellence theory first explained the value of Public Relations to organization and society based on the social responsibility of managerial decisions and the quality of relationships with stakeholder publics. The core of the excellence theory is to build quality long-term relationships with strategic publics and to demonstrate what makes PR practices most effective and ethical (Grunig & Dozier. 2002, p.57). According to the theory, Public Relations contributes value to an organization by developing and maintaining healthy relationships between organization and their publics. These relationships produce good image and reputations and these impressions of organization's stakeholders are influenced more by organizational behavior than by mere dissemination of messages about the organization. The theory further argues that Public Relations managers who are empowered by

organizational leaders can add value to an organization by bringing information into the organization that enhances decision making. This is because internal information programs for employees and other stakeholders can be strategically planned, managed and evaluated to determine effectiveness. For Organisations to be effective and excellent, they must communicate symmetrically with the public taking the interest of both the organization and the public into account to cultivate high-quality, long-term relationships with them. Participatory organizational cultures which are part of an organisational structure chosen by senior leadership also contribute to employee satisfaction. Diversity contributes to organizational effectiveness however, barriers to women's ability to assume top communication manager roles often inhibit effectiveness. The most excellent PR departments are integrated with other organizational functions through a senior manager who has a background in and formal knowledge of PR; however, PR is not subsumed under any department in that PR roles are kept separate from other management functions such as marketing.

Finally, activism or external pressure on an organization creates the need for excellent PR and organizations with excellent PR are able to reduce costly conflicts and external control. This theory therefore states that, organizations that employ these principles are practicing excellent Public Relations.

2.5 Systems Theory

The systems theory developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1986 is one of the renowned theories that has been used in the field of PR. The systems theory is premised on the belief that organizations consist of subsystems that depend on each other for survival. It views organizations as having different but interconnected parts which adapt and adjust to changes in their environment, be it political, economic, or social (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman & Toth, 2012: 52; Tench & Yeomans, 2006: 27). Broom and Sha (2012: 151) define systems as consisting of various “interacting units which endure through time within an established boundary by responding and adjusting to change pressures from the environment to achieve and maintain goal stated.” The systems theory provides a context within which an organization and its relationship with the environment can be assessed. In the view of Mehta and Xavier, the purpose of an organization is to create and achieve goals that will benefit both the organization and the environment it operates in. Such goals can consist of growth in profits and sales, gaining investor confidence/support, improving employment ratio, creating new products, or a lower carbon footprint (2009: 194). Within the systems theory, PR Professionals are regarded as boundary spanners acting as a link between the organization and its environment. PR professionals provide important information to the organization’s stakeholders and interpret the environment to the organization’s decision makers by constantly providing information about the problems and opportunities in the environment and help the decision makers respond to such changes (Mehta & Xavier, 2009: 195).

2.6. Relevance of the theories to the study

The excellence and systems theories reviewed above are theories selected for this study. These theories are selected to underpin the study because in practicing excellent PR, there is a need for Practitioners within organizations to perform strategic or managerial roles, be positioned within the dominant coalition, be separated from other managerial functions and use the two-way symmetrical communications as guidelines, principles and standards for building quality long term relationships with their stakeholders which is crucial for the survival of organizations. It is based on these practices and principles PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana can be strategic and contribute value to the overall success of the organization. These principles outlined by the theories provides benchmarks to determine whether PR practice in nonprofit organizations in Ghana are strategic hence its selections and relevance to underpin the study.

2.6.1 Strategic roles of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana

Strategic Public Relations roles are a number of communication activities undertaken by practitioners on daily basis in an organization or institution to build and grow relationships between an organization and its publics, to strengthen and maintain reputation that an organization has among its stakeholders (Gregory,2017). Public Relations is a strategic communication function which builds mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics (PRSA, 2012). Cornelissen (2020) argued that in NPO's PR Practitioners creates the need for their organizations to maintain close relationships with their strategic stakeholders in order to gain the social license to achieve organizational goals. In support of this, Igben &Darko (2024) also mentioned that, PR plays a pivotal role in NPO's by serving as a crucial function that helps to build and maintain positive relationships and reputations with various publics on whom their survival heavily depends on. The discipline has been thought of to be very tactical in the past as

Practitioners were used mainly as technicians performing tactical duties such as writing press releases, memo among several others. However today, Public Relations Practitioners play strategic roles in shaping the perceptions and relationships of nonprofit organizations with their stakeholders by influencing their reputations and success in addressing their goals (Kyalo, 2024).

It is for this important reason, Culbertson & Chen- Ning-Yueh (2019) have advocated that PR Practitioners should make building relationships with their organization's key stakeholders their primary aim which is essential to their survival because nonprofit organizations who have strong relationships and reputations with their stakeholders are more likely to earn their loyalty and retain their donations (Kottler & Pfortch, 2009). One of the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners is forming strategic partnerships or alliances where nonprofit organisations collaborate with like-minded organizations, businesses and government agencies which enables these organisations to leverage on shared resources and expertise amplifying their impact and their reach. Through strategic alliance or partnerships, nonprofit organizations would tap into new audiences, access funding opportunities and scale their programs more effectively (Austin & Pinkleton, 2015). In the opinion of Kim et al (2020), PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations organize campaigns as part of their strategic roles to raise funds and mobilize resources for their activities. Tetteh (2020) in her study of the role of Public Relations and communication in achieving the core mandate of international non-governmental organizations (NGO) in Ghana, found that the strategic roles of PR Practitioners in NGO include environmental scanning where practitioners monitor their environment, anticipate issues and their consequences and develop appropriate strategies and policies to ensure they live up to societal expectation. By so doing PR Practitioners are able to keep management informed of what is happening in their environments and how stakeholders are been affected by such happenings so that this is taken into account as

decisions are made. Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations also play strategic role of counseling management on the implications of its decisions taking into accounts the reaction of key publics and society whose actions directly affect the wellbeing or otherwise of the organization. This particular finding is consistent with Gregory (2017) who found same role in her study of strategic roles of PR Practitioners in organizations. Best-Gavi (2020) also found that PR Practitioners in non-profit organizations perform strategic roles such as research, measurement and evaluation where Practitioners measure the success of their activities in the organization to see if results were achieved, development of policies and strategies to address societal needs and problems, campaign planning and boundary spanning where Practitioners act as central intelligence-gathering engaging with external publics by explaining the organization to them and providing management information on their needs and problems. Research and evaluation are very essential to the work of PR Practitioners and their organizations because through research Practitioners inform management of happenings in their environment presenting organizations opportunity to dialogue, monitor public opinion and respond to issues that affect key stakeholders (Seitel, 2017; Gregory, 2017; Lamb & Mckee, 2015). According to Lee & Kim (2020) research and evaluations enables PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations to demonstrate transparency, accountability and fosters stakeholders trust in the organization (Kyalo, 2024). However, Bowen et al (2012) stated that Practitioners often face the challenge of convincing senior management about the need to fund research and in support of this, Smith (2017) attributed the lack of research by PR Practitioners to budgetary constraints. Mcnamara (2020) underscored the essence of research and evaluation stating that it provides roadmap for organizations hence undertaking PR and communication activity without research and evaluation is like a pilot taking off in an aircraft without a flight plan and then flying blind. For this reason, scholars have stated that for PR

Practitioners to be able to perform the boundary spanning and environmental scanning role effectively, Senior PR Practitioners should be part of the dominant coalition in order to have direct access to decision makers (Grunig et al, 20002; Cutlip et al, 2009). Effective media relation is another important strategic role performed by PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations. Effective relationship with the media would provide coverage that would enhance the organizational brand awareness (Li & Yi, 2019). Also, effective relationships with media personalities like journalist, bloggers and influencers helps NPO's to garner support from donors, secure free or discounted coverage and the impactful storytelling from the media would foster donor engagements and bolster organizational fundraising success (Garcia & Martinez, 2019; Harrison & Shiroma, 2018). Effective relationship with the media is essential for nonprofit organizations to raise and shape public perception and garner support for their cause (Smith & Scott, 2018). In view of this, Cornelissen (2020) underscored the relevance of nurturing and creating effective relationships with media practitioners arguing that their coverage of news has direct influence on how their publics will perceive these organization. Upon all these strategic roles mentioned and the contributions of PR to the success of NPO's, Tetteh (2020) explained that PR practice in most nonprofit organizations in Ghana is not fully strategic because Practitioners performs more of tactical or technician roles than the strategic roles as stated by the generic principles of excellent Public Relations because they are mostly not involved in strategic management decision making process. Anani-Bossman (2020) argued that, although in some organizations, PR practitioners hold the titles as managers which suggest they are performing strategic roles, they rather perform more of technician roles in the organization such as writing press releases, sponsorship letters, grants letters among several others. Again, in his study on an exploration of strategic Public Relations management in Ghana, Anani-Bossman (2020), found

that PR in Ghana is seldom managed strategically and it is more practiced at the technician level than managerial and it is bound by cultural norms. This means that if the Senior PR Managers are part of the strategic management of these organizations, PR Practitioners are likely to perform strategic roles by undertaking research and counseling which would help build good relationships with stakeholders and organization will gain social legitimacy that is the support and acceptance from the society, volunteers and funders in order to be able to carry out its humanitarian services and projects successfully. This is mostly accomplished through well devised Public Relations strategies such as strategic storytelling which help nonprofit organizations to cultivate empathy and drive support from their supporters and beneficiaries (Kyalo, 2024). This is because the authors of the excellence theory (Grunig et al, 2002) believe that for Public Relations to be strategically managed, Practitioners must have a say in the strategic management process of the organization since their involvement in strategic planning process would enable Practitioners to develop programs that communicate with both internal and external strategic publics who pose a risk or provide opportunities to the organization. This enables organizations to achieve its goals. It is therefore prudent for non-profit organizations in Ghana to empower Practitioners to perform more of strategic roles than the tactical roles as that would be beneficial to organization because at such roles, Public Relations Practitioners are able to help non-profit organizations to build reputation and establish lasting relationship with Stakeholders, gain and maintain social legitimacy through their environmental and boundary spanning roles and community engagement events such as health screening, community clean up exercise and charity programs because such events strengthen the bond between NPO's and their stakeholders driving long term engagement and support (Smith &Scott, 2018).

2.6.2 Position of PR Practitioners in Nonprofit Organizations in Ghana.

There have been serious debates over the years concerning the position of Public Relations Practitioners in organizations across the globe with many scholars advocating for managers of organizations to place Senior Public Relations Practitioners within the dominant coalition which is the group within an organization that makes decision, considering their enormous contributions to organizational success globally (Cutlip et al,2009; Grunig et al 2002; seitel; 2017). However, despite the tremendous growth of the Profession, PR in Ghana still suffers from negative perception from the Ghanaian public and organizations as Practitioners in most organizations are not empowered to be part of the dominant coalition or the strategy formulation machinery, are not accorded their right status, held in high esteem and their roles are often assigned to other management functions such as Marketing and Human Resource to perform (Anani-Bossmann, 2020: Adjei et al, 2021). According to Tetteh (2020) in her study of the role of PR and communication in achieving the core mandate of international non-governmental organization in Ghana expressed that, Public Relations in nonprofit organizations is not fully strategic. This is because, Senior PR Practitioners were not part of the dominant coalition or strategic management decision making process and the role performed by Practitioners are mostly tactical rather than strategic. This is against the generic principle of excellent Public Relations practice which states that, organizations would be more effective if the senior Public Relations Manager is empowered in the dominant coalition such that they have direct reporting relationships with management because when such happens in the sense that they have enough access to management, PR Practitioners after their environmental scanning and boundary spanning can directly report to management and counsel them on strategies and policies to develop in order to address problems and needs of their strategic publics. Adjei et al (2021) found in their study that, only few

Practitioners perform managerial roles or are part of the dominant coalition because in most organizations, they are either placed or positioned under other management function such as Marketing and Human Resource reporting to these managers under which they serve and therefore not getting direct reporting relationship with or access to management and hence their contributions to overall organizational success is often not felt. In addition to this, the role Public Relations Practitioners are assigned to other management functions to perform. This finding is in line with other studies (Adjei et al, 2021; Anani-Bossman, 2020; Amoakohene, 2018; Gyan, 1999). In the opinion of Best-Gavi (2020) in his study of the contribution of PR to organizational effectiveness, found that in some organizations in Ghana, Public Relations Practitioners were part of the dominant coalition as opposed to earlier submissions that Practitioners were left out of the strategy formulation machinery or the dominant coalition. Public Relations Practitioners were senior managers performing functions such as campaign planning, fundraising, research and evaluation, boundary spanning, PR practitioners were treated as a management function separated from other management functions like marketing and Human resources because there were units and departments within these organizations for PR Practitioners. In support of this assertion, Tandoh et al (2022) in their study to examine the perceptions of PR practice among selected chief executive officers (CEO) in Ghana, found that the impression of PR practice is positive implying that the Profession is deemed to be important role in strategic management because of its contributions to business strategy however, it was also mentioned that some CEO's lack deep understanding of PR hence they are not supportive of Practitioners in their organizations. Vercic et al (1996:37) argues that when PR Practitioners are part of the dominant coalition or strategic management, it allows them to develop programs that build relationships with publics which help the organization to save money that might have had to be spent on litigation, regulations,

legislations or boycotts which mostly results from poor relationships with the publics. The involvement of PR in the dominant coalition or strategic decision-making process enhance the status of Practitioners in the organization by gaining substantial influence in contributing to organizational operations. From the literature reviewed, it is very clear how some Managers of organizations do not value PR Practitioners hence they do not give their full support to them as well as the few organizations that place little value on the practice and Practitioners. It is therefore imperative for nonprofit organizations in Ghana to empower Public Relations Practitioners in their organizations to be part of the dominant coalition or decision-making process if the organization wants to build positive relationships with their strategic publics by addressing their diverse needs. This is important because when PR Practitioners are empowered in the dominant coalition, they would provide contextual intelligence to management of the organization on issues and opportunities identified in the scanning and spanning of the environments and boundaries and counsel them on how to address their strategic publics.

2.6.3 Models of PR adopted by Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

PR models provide the means for identifying the central ideas that guide the practice and how these ideas relate to each other (Anani-Bossman, 2020). Extensive research has been conducted on the extent to which organizations practice the four models of public relations first identified by Grunig and Hunt (1984). According to the excellence theorists, communication activities should be based on two-way symmetrical communication since it leads to a better and long-term relationship between the organization and its publics. These models include press agency, Public Information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical communication models. Two-way symmetrical models are perceived as balancing the interests of both publics and the organization and ethical in nature hence it is deemed the ideal model that Practitioners within organizations

across the globe should employ in their practice. Grunig and Hunt (1984) recognized that regardless of the differences in cultures, PR practices in most countries contains elements of two-way symmetrical model however, the only thing has to do with how differently they are applied. In Ghana, Anani-Bossman (2020) found in his study exploring strategic management in Ghana that organizations in Ghana employs two-way asymmetrical and sometimes press agency model when engaging with their stakeholders. With this, organizations take feedback from their publics but it is not meant for the organization to adapt it ways of doing things rather to further manipulate their publics. The Proponents of the four models mentioned that, the model is not ideal for maintaining mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its public which is the core of Public Relations practice because the model is organization-centered focusing on the interest of the organization only and ignoring that of their publics. This particular finding supports findings from other scholars (Tetteh,2020; Adjei et al, 2021; Adenij, 2015). According to Best-Gavi (2020), some organizations in Ghana employ the two- way symmetrical communication when communicating with their publics. Consistent with this finding, Boateng (2015) also found in his study of the contribution of PR value to organizations in Ghana that some organizations employ the two-way symmetrical communication in engaging with their publics. It is imperative for nonprofit organizations in Ghana to employ the two-way symmetrical communication model in communicating with their publics such as beneficiaries, volunteers and funders because it would help the organization to dialogue with these publics, take their feedback and address it thereby strengthening the bond between organization and its stakeholders, garnering their support towards the organization and gaining the social legitimacy (Smith & Scott, 2018). This would intend help to resolve conflicts and save money that would will be lost as a result of litigation, pressures and

boycotts because two-way symmetrical communication model helps organizations to build quality long term relationships with their publics (Vercic et al, 1996).

2.6.4 Factors that affects the application of strategic PR practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations just as any other organizations in the world have their own challenges in the day-to-day performance of their task. Public Relations is a strategic communication process which is aimed at establishing mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics (PRSA, 2012). In addition, the generic principles of excellence has advocated that PR can contribute to organizational growth when Senior PR Practitioner is empowered to be part of the dominant coalition such that he has direct relationships in terms of reporting to management directly, PR is involved in strategic management planning, PR department is separated from other management function, organization practice two-way symmetrical communication among several other principles necessary to determined excellence in organization (Vercic et al, 1996). Anani-Bossman (2020) found in his study, exploration of PR in strategic management that practitioners faced a number of challenges which compromised the effectiveness of their work. This involves management's value and perception of PR work in terms of the fact that management in organizations does not see the value of communication and they perceive PR to be a marketing tool, lack of in-depth knowledge about the Profession itself, budgetary constraints in the sense that management does not fulfil PR budgetary allocation arguing that their contributions do not have direct effects on the sales of the organization and inability to sometimes influence decision because of their absence in the dominant coalition where major policy decisions are made. According to Tetteh (2020), one of the factors that affect the application of strategic PR practices in nonprofit organization is culture of the organization where there is lack

of support and recognition from management because they lack knowledge of the purpose of Public Relations which limits the ability of Practitioners to contribute to the overall success of the organization improper positioning and allocation of roles of PR Practitioners within organizations and the fact that most organizations do not have departments for PR as other management functions like marketing and Human resource and also the issue of Practitioners not being recognized, respected and valued by organizations in the sense that Practitioners are not involved in decision making can limit the ability of Practitioners to perform the strategic role because it is only when they are involved in strategic management that they can excel and add real value to organizations as outlined by the excellence theory of Public Relations practice(Addo-Brown, 2021; Asare, 2021; Anani-Bossman, 2020). Another factor that affects the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organization is the organizational culture (Igben &Darko, 2024; Alaimo, 2017; Hofstede, 2010; Sriramesh, 2009). According to Sriramesh (2009), strategic Public Relations practices can only thrive in an organization culture and structure that is participative and supportive. This is because within such cultures and structures, PR is valued in the sense that Practitioners are involved in strategic decision making and public opinion is highly encouraged thus two-way symmetrical communication influences PR practice in this organization. This supports the excellence theory of Public Relations that says that, Public Relations is best practice in an organization with participative and organic structure (Grunig et al, 2002). This underscores the essence of culture to the practice of strategic public Relations.

2.7 Empirical Review on the strategic role of PR in nonprofit organizations.

The landscape of non-profit organizations (NPOs) is vast and varied, encompassing entities dedicated to addressing a myriad of social, environmental, and humanitarian issues (Kyalo, 2024). A review of literature shows that there is little literature or lack of publications when it comes to the strategic role of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. According to Vericic et al (1996) in their generic principles of excellence, stated that PR should be involved in the strategic management planning of organizations, Senior PR Practitioners should be empowered to be part of the dominant coalition such that they have direct reporting relationships or access to management and that PR units be headed by a manager rather than technician. This means that PR practitioners should perform strategic roles rather than technician roles. Cornelissen (2020) explained that, one of the key strategic roles of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organization is building relationships and reputation for their organization. He further stated that, Practitioners do this by maintaining close relationships with their strategic stakeholders in order to gain social license to operate because this strong relationships and reputations would help earn their loyalty and donor retention (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2009; Igen & Darko, 2024). In the opinion of Kim et al (2020) Practitioners in nonprofit organization also play a strategic role of fundraising and resource mobilization by organizing campaigns. Other scholars have mentioned that, Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana also build effective media relations as this helps them to earn coverage on discount or free to create awareness and engage public support for their cause through storytelling which resonates with the public (Li & Yi, 2019; Harisson & Shiroma, 2018). Tetteh (2020) in her study of the role of PR and communication in achieving the core mandate of international non-governmental organizations in Ghana found that PR performed roles such as environmental scanning, fundraising and community engagements. However, she also found in

her study that, PR practice in non-profit organizations in Ghana is not fully strategic meaning that Practitioners do not belong to the dominant coalition and hence they were not involved in strategic management planning, PR in nonprofit organization is shaped to a large extent by western ideology and it is greatly influenced by interpersonal relationships which is largely premised on culture of the country. In nonprofit organizations, PR Practitioners perform strategic roles through strategic alliance by collaborating with like-minded organizations, businesses and government agencies which enables them to leverage shared resources and expertise, amplifying their impact and reach. It also allows NPO's to tap into new audiences, access funding opportunities and scale their programs more effectively (Austin & Pinkleton, 2015). Kyalo (2024) mentioned that by joining forces, NPO's can achieve greater outcomes that they could not alone, driving meaningful change in their communities and beyond. Public Relations Practitioners cultivates relationships with donors, volunteers and many organizations that help support their cause. Public Relations Practitioners run special events, devise fundraising strategies and lobbying efforts to advance the organization's goals, networking with partners and sponsors building trust and loyalty (Page & Parnell, 2019). Consistent with this finding, Garcia and Martinez (2019) highlighted in their study that, PR Practitioners performing strategic roles in non-profit organizations deploy strategies such as donor engagement which helps in fundraising for these organization. Also, through personalized communications, donor recognition events and impactful storytelling, PR Practitioners foster lasting relationships and bolster fundraising success. This is because PR Practitioners at their strategic role, cultivate authentic relationships with donors and tailor communication strategies to resonate with their individual preferences. According to Harris & Shiroma (2018) non-profit organizations rely on PR to raise awareness about their causes, promote their programs and services and build partnerships with other organizations. Wang &

Chen (2017) in their analysis to scrutinize the efficacy of corporate partnership as strategic PR tool for nonprofit organization found that, despite the increasing importance of PR in today's fast-paced and digitally driven world, many organizations struggle to effectively integrate PR into their overall communication activities mainly due to the fact that PR roles in these organizations are often misunderstood, underutilized or overlooked. This is to say that, all these roles performed by Practitioners to help their organizations to achieve its goals, there are numerous organizations who do not involve practitioners in strategic decision making and planning because in nonprofit sector, PR is often seen as a secondary function to fundraising and programmatic work despite its critical role in building support from donors, volunteers and broader community (Igben & Dorka, 2024). In addition, Gregory (2017) argued that in organizations where PR is seen as a lower order activity and the practice is often reactive, certain tell tale will be evident. Practitioners will not hold a senior management role and hence would not be involved in strategic decision-making. Practitioners will not also feel valued or in control of activities. However, in organizations where PR is taken seriously and proactively, it is normally found that the senior Practitioner holds an influential position in the organization and hence, perform the strategic role rather than tactical because Practitioners at this role have direct reporting access to management in terms of decision making and planning. In the opinion of Igben and Dorka (2024), for PR Practitioners to perform strategic roles more in the organizations depends largely on the organizational culture and structure (Tetteh, 2020; Hofstede: 2010). This is because, when the culture of organization is participative such that, management values communication and empowers employees to be part of decision making and planning, it is obvious practitioners would be performing strategic roles than tactical. Sriramesh (2010) also explained that, in organizations where there are high power distance cultures, it is likely that PR Practitioners would not be part of the dominant coalition because premium is placed

on hierarchy and therefore two-way symmetrical communication which is essential to the profession is not valued. Vercic et al (1995), mentioned that although the generic principles of excellent PR will apply worldwide, contextual variables such as political, economic, socio-cultural and media systems can limit the strategic practice of Public Relations. Therefore, for non-profit organizations to survive amidst the rapid growth of several organizations in Ghana today, they must involve Public Relations Practitioners in strategic roles.

2.8 Summary of chapter

This chapter discussed the overview of public Relations practice in nonprofit organizations, theoretical (Excellence and Systems theory) underpinning Public Relations practice. The discussion reviewed literature on the objectives of the study which includes the strategic roles of PR in nonprofit organizations, the position of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations, the models of PR practice adopted by nonprofit organizations and the factors that affects the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. It concluded with an empirical review on the strategic role of Public Relations in nonprofit organizations.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological approach used to address the research questions. It discusses the research paradigm (Interpretivists/Social Constructivist Paradigm), ontological and epistemological rationalisations, research design, research approach and Subsequent sections discusses the data sources and collection methods, research population, sample size and sampling technique. The final sections present data processing and analysis procedure and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Paradigm: Interpretivists/Social Constructivist Paradigm

A research paradigm refers to a way of examining or assessing social phenomena from which a particular understanding of this phenomenon can be gained and explanations attempted (Suander et., al 2009). It provides a pattern of beliefs and understanding from which the theories and practices informing the study operate and guides the process of conducting research to generate scientific knowledge in a given discipline (Creswell, 2018; Newman, 2014). It is an all-encompassing system made up of interconnected practice that explains the nature of an enquiry, based on three fundamental dimensions, namely: epistemology, methodology and method(s) (Creswell, 2014). A researcher's philosophical stance is central to the choice of methodology, since research involves looking for new knowledge (Creswell, 2014). The philosophy which underpins this study is the interpretivists/social constructivist paradigm since it relies on human participants providing their views of the situation which they form in their own mind. The study

seeks to understand the subjective meanings of experiences of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations on their strategic roles in these organizations.

3.1.1 Ontological and epistemological rationalizations

The ontological view of interpretivists is that truth is constructed in different ways based on context, subjects, and interpretations rather than a sole truth to be known by all. The worldview of the interpretivist is that reality is multiple based on the realities socially constructed by individuals and societies lived or shared experiences and how they view what is reality (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Epistemologically, the interaction between researcher and the researched is vital in the creation of knowledge or truth, which must occur in a natural setting. In view of this, the researcher cannot separate him/herself from the research process (Creswell, 2014). Methodological approaches for interpretivism is qualitative.

3.2 Research Approach

This study adopted the qualitative research approach which is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The research process with this approach involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants setting, data analysis inductively built from particulars to generating themes and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Cresswell, 2018; Brymans, 2008). Qualitative research approach enables researcher to observe, analyze and interpret attributes, patterns, meanings, and characteristics of specific contextual of the phenomena under study (Silverman, 2013). These characteristics include face to-face research conducted in naturalistic settings, emphasis on in-depth description and the understanding of participants' points of view or meanings and the researcher as the primary data collection instrument (Creswell, 2014).

It provides a holistic approach to understanding meaning achieved through the collection and analysis of multiple sources of data and perspectives (Silverman, 2013). The choice for this research approach is appropriate since this study aims to gather an in-depth understanding of the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana and to offer explanations on what factors affect the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organizations. A qualitative research approach is suitable when researching a human phenomenon that cannot be reduced to a few isolated variables. The holistic approach correspondent with qualitative methodology aims to establish a better understanding of the people or events in their social setting (Creswell, 2018). The importance of the individual experience is incorporated by the philosophy and characteristics of qualitative research as to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people give to them within their social setting (Silverman, 2013).

A qualitative approach was chosen for this study because the philosophy of qualitative inquiry is consistent with the aims. A Qualitative approach was also used because little research has been conducted on the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

3.3 Research design

Research design is a comprehensive plan for conducting empirical research or a blueprint for addressing the research questions (Creswell, 2018; Polit & Beck, 2012). This plan enables the researcher to develop a plan on how respondents would be sampled, data would be collected, instruments to employ in collecting data and how data would be analyzed after collection in order to answer the research questions. Qualitative research designs allow respondents to speak for themselves or provide their perspectives on issues or phenomena. This is because the designs are

in-depth and purposeful and seeks information about complicated issues and emotions of people. According to Creswell (2018) the selection of a qualitative research design is based on factors such as the research problem or issue being addressed, researcher's personal expertise and experiences, the audience, type and source of data, availability of time and money. The researcher adopted a phenomenological design which looks at capturing participants lived experiences which influence their construction of meaning (Creswell, 2014). The choice of phenomenological design is based on the premise that the study intends to collect the views or perspectives of participants in their natural settings (Creswell, 2014). Thus, it is exploratory in nature.

3.4 Data collection methods

Data collection methods refers to the tools used in gathering information on a subject of interest. It allows the researcher to learn about a phenomenon by gathering information from individuals, groups, and text in any medium (Biber et al 2011: 5). The researcher adopted the interviewing technique to gather data from research participants. Interviewing involves a process of communication between a researcher and a respondent. It is a 'conversation with a purpose' whereby the interviewer adopts a plan of action consisting of areas of conversation, direction of the interaction and a set of questions which are not necessarily followed in any particular order (Babbie, 2008: 335). This data collection technique is chosen because it enables researcher to obtain detailed information from respondents, overcome resistance from participants due to the face to face interaction provided by this technique. Interviews can be conducted over the telephone, via email or in person. For the purpose of this study, interviews will be held with Senior PR Practitioners in the nonprofit organizations understudy to determine the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners, the models that influence their practice.

3.5 Data collection instrument

Data collection instruments are specific tools and devices that are used in obtaining data in order to answer a given research question. This study employs the interview guide as an instrument for data collection particularly for the purpose of this research, the semi-structured interview guide was used. This is because the semi-structured interview guide allows the interviewer to use an interview guide with specific questions but not necessarily in the same order. It allows the interviewer to diverge in order to pursue a detailed response by probing for further elaboration (Heath, 2005: 446).

3.6 Research population

The target population for the study were the Senior Public Relations Practitioners and employees of the selected nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

3.7 Sample Size

Sampling refers to the process used in selecting a sub group from a research population to represent the entire population (Hammond, 2015). To determine the sample size in qualitative studies, Edwards and Holland (2013) note that the concept of saturation should be the best guide for deciding on the number of interviews. This implies that the interviewer must continue sampling and identifying cases until their interviewees are no more providing new rich information (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Hence when participants are not providing any new information saturation has been achieved (Mason, 2010). Saturation is achieved when all questions have been thoroughly explored in detail and no new concepts or themes emerge in subsequent interviews (Trotter, 2012). Various numbers of sample sizes have been proposed by different authors. Mason (2010) recommends from five (5) to fifty (50) interviews as being adequate for qualitative studies.

For the purpose of this study, ten Public Relations Managers from selected nonprofit organizations in Ghana were sampled for interviews.

3. 7.1 Sampling technique

Sampling techniques refers to the principles and procedures used to identify, choose and gain access to relevant data sources from which a researcher will be able to generate data using the chosen method(s) (Mason, 2010). There are two main types of sampling techniques which are probability and non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling technique is a sampling technique used for qualitative research which involves a deliberate selection of participants to reflect features of or groups within the sampled population (Ritchie et al., 2014). This study adopted the purposive sampling technique to sample participants. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases (Patton, 2014). According to Edwards & Holland (2013), information-rich cases are cases from which a researcher can learn a great deal about issues of importance to the purpose of the inquiry which provides insights and in-depth understanding. It also involves the identification and selection of participants having knowledge and or experienced with a phenomenon under study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In purposive sampling, respondents are selected deliberately from the population since they have unique features and information to address the study objectives. It is for this reason Public Relations Practitioners from selected nonprofit organization are purposely sampled for interview because they have the knowledge and information required by the researcher that would help address the research objectives of the study.

3.7.2 Data Processing and Analysis Procedure

Qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. Audio recordings would be transcribed verbatim to enable coding. Qualitative data would be analyzed using the software. Coding involves assigning thematic descriptions to words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs (Saldana, 2009). This analytical tool enables open and methodical discovery of emergent concepts and themes by applying principles of inductive reasoning to generate themes.

3.7.3 Ethical Consideration

Ethics of research are the guidelines, standards and principles for the responsible conduct of research. It concerns itself with moral obligation, principles or values that govern the actions of a researcher regarding how research should be conducted ethically and responsibly (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011: 65; Babbie, 2008: 66). The notion of ethics, especially in qualitative research, has been discussed at length by researchers. Questions about ethical issues in research have assumed a very important dimension in recent times. Issues of ethics are regarded as essential to the research process from its inception stage to the publication of findings (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 59). An important ethical element is informed consent, which deals with ensuring that the subjects under investigation are notified about the nature of the research project and permission sought prior to their participation in the study. This is usually done through a letter which details all that the respondents need to know in order to make up his or her mind. This protects the individual from harm and protects the researcher from being sued or having his or her research considered invalid or unethical. To address this, a letter will be sent to the various respondents spelling out the nature of the research and seeking their consent to interview them. Regarding confidentiality, respondents will be assured that information given by them will be used strictly for academic purposes. Also, their names will not be used in any written document concerning the

project and interview materials will not be exposed to any third party. This is in line with the views of Babbie (2010: 67) who believes that confidentiality is assured when the researcher identifies a person's responses but promises not to do so publicly. The study will also work with the ethical guidelines of the University of media Arts and Communications (UniMAC-IJ) by complying with the code of conduct of the university. Finally, all sources consulted and used in this research will be duly acknowledged.

3.74 Summary of chapter

This chapter discussed the paradigm underpinning the study with its philosophical rationalizations, research approach and design selected for the study, the methods and instruments for gathering data, the research populations, sample size and techniques employed for the study. Finally, the chapter discussed the plan that would be employed in analyzing data and ethical issues considered to ensure responsible conduct of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research data collected and the findings in a detailed and in-depth manner. This is in line with Brennen's (2017) argument that qualitative research offers the researcher the opportunity to interpret and discuss the data collected in a way that is deep and rigorous. Data was generally collected through interviews using a semi-structured guide and analyzed thematically to answer the research questions. For the purposes of ensuring anonymity of the research participants, and in line with Creswell (2014) argument that researchers must make efforts at respecting the privacy and anonymity of the participants, the researcher assigned codes to the interview participants. The first interviewee is referred to as P1, the second is referred to as P2, and the third participant is referred to as P3 and so on.

4.1 Findings and Discussions

This section discusses in detail the findings from the interviews held with participants. These findings are outlined according to how the interview guide was structured.

4.1.1 RO. 1 To examine the strategic roles of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

Research objective one sought to examine the strategic roles Public Relations Practitioners perform in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The following themes were generated from the data gathered from the interviews held with participants. Strategic alliance, Relationship building, fundraising and resource mobilization, research and evaluation. These themes are explored below in detail.

4.1.2 Strategic Alliance/Partnership

One major theme that was present in the responses of the participants in the interview when asked about their strategic roles in nonprofit organization was that, Public Relations Practitioners build strategic alliances and partnerships with key stakeholders such as likeminded organizations, businesses, donors and the broader communities in order to enable the organization to achieve its goals and objectives. Participants expressed that it is important because through the formation of these alliances and collaborations, it enables the organization to access funding and other resources from their partners, create awareness needed for the organization and also increase their reach. This was echoed in the statements of some respondents that:

“As PR Practitioners in nonprofit organization, we channel more efforts in building strategic partnerships or alliances especially with like-minded organizations, donors, businesses and government agencies. By doing this, we are able to increase awareness about our organization and also access resources which would help us undertake our intended projects and activities in a swift manner”.

Other participants also shared that:

“these collaborations we build with our strategic stakeholders enable us to mobilize funds and other useful resources to be able to achieve our goals as organization. Further comments from participants were that: “PR in my organization work so hard on building partnerships because we are not a profit-making organization hence there is no funding available, so we collaborate with partners such as likeminded organizations, businesses, government agencies and donors because without them we cannot undertake projects and therefore we may not be able to achieve our goals. I must say these alliances helps us to do a lot of things we cannot do alone. The partnership really helps because partnering with an already established organization helps to increase your awareness and further earn your organization some level of reputation and as such, more of such organizations will want to form alliances with your organization.”

This present finding is consistent with Austin & Prinkleton (2015) who found that, PR Practitioners perform strategic roles by ensuring their organizations form and build strategic alliances where nonprofit organizations collaborate with businesses and likeminded organizations and donors which helps them to leverage on shared resources and expertise, increase their reach and impact. They further argued that, through strategic alliances and partnerships, nonprofit organizations are able to tap into new audience, access funding and scale their programs effectively. Also, Harrison & Shiroma (2018) opined that nonprofit organizations rely on Public Relations Practitioners to create awareness about their causes and build partnerships with other organizations. From these findings, it is clear that by performing this strategic role of building strategic alliances, PR Practitioners enable their organizations to increase its awareness and access numerous funding benefits and resources which would help them undertake their intended projects and in essence achieve organizational goals and objectives.

4.1.3 Positive Relationship and Reputation Building

Another theme that was present in the responses of participants when it comes to the strategic roles, they perform in nonprofit organizations is positive relationship and reputation building. Participants stated that in nonprofit organizations, PR Practitioners have a core mandate of building and maintaining positive relationships and reputations for their organizations. This is because the success or failure of every organization particularly for nonprofit organization whose existence depend largely on continuous donations, volunteerism and likeminded organizations to be able to undertake its activities and achieve its goals. Therefore, Practitioners have as their main aim to build relationships with these stakeholders to be able to continually receive support and needed resources from them to undertake their activities.

This was highlighted in the submission of some participants that:

“The primary goal of PR in reality is to build and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders with the intention of earning positive reputation because the survival of every organization heavily depends on this. So as PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations, we have made it our daily practice to always communicate our values with already existing stakeholders (donors and sponsors) and also in a way to attract new ones’.

In support of this statement, other participants (P3 and P4) also expressed that:

” we as PR Practitioners value relationships because it through this organizations can continue to exist especially in contemporary times when nonprofit organizations have grown in numbers in Ghana and competition has been fierce for funds and sponsorships. Therefore, the sure way to beat this competition is to build relationships with these sponsors and donors by communicating our values and living up to it because it is only through this, we garner support and of course set ourselves apart from other nonprofit organizations.

This current finding supports that of Cornelissen (2020) that in nonprofit organizations, PR Practitioners creates the need for their organizations to maintain close relationships with their strategic stakeholders in order to gain the social license to achieve organizational goals. Similarly, Agben and Darko (2024) also mentioned that, PR play a vital role in nonprofit organizations by serving as a crucial function that helps to build and maintain positive relationships and reputations with various stakeholders. PR Practitioners mostly craft compelling messages purposely tailored to specific stakeholders through social media platforms, grant letters and email. Smith and Scott (2018) also mentioned that in building these relationships, PR Practitioners garner support from stakeholders towards the organization through community engagements events like charity gala, health screening and cleaning exercises among several others. Austin and Prinkleton (2015) argued that at the heart of many successful campaigns organized by NPO’s is strategic storytelling through social media platforms to cultivate relationships and garner support form stakeholders towards the organization. For instance, studies show that, 75% of nonprofit organizations use social media to engage with stakeholders. It is indeed important to build positive relationships with

stakeholders as an organization because organizations that do that, earn the support and positive reputation in the sight of their various stakeholders. Kottler&Pfortsch (2009) found that, nonprofit organizations with strong relationships and reputations with their stakeholders are more likely to experience in their stakeholder's loyalty and donor retention. For this reason, Culbertson and Chen-Ning-Yueh (2019) have advocated that PR Practitioners should make it their primary aim to build relationships with key stakeholders using multiple channels to reach diverse audience because it is through this organization's reputation and positive stakeholders support would be earned. Grunig et al (2002) in their excellence theory stated that Public Relations contributes to effectiveness by building quality long term relationships with strategic constituencies. They argued further that, good relationships were of value to organization because they reduce the cost of litigation, regulation and negative publicity caused by poor relationships. This therefore shows that as part of their strategic roles, it is crucial for PR Practitioners to build relationships which is the bedrock and foundation for earning public support and positive reputation for their organization.

4.1.4 Fundraising and Resource Mobilization

In nonprofit organizations, PR Practitioners also perform strategic roles by raising and mobilizing funds to be able to undertake their programs and activities successfully. Participants further explained that, nonprofit organizations are organizations that work for the benefit of society without the intention of making profits hence without donors and sponsors supporting their cause, they may not be able to provide these humanitarian services to society. Therefore, as part of their strategic roles, PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations solicit support from donors, volunteers and the broader community through fundraising activities. Participants explained that mostly PR Practitioners in nonprofit organization organize fundraising campaigns through social media

platforms, sending grant letters among others to solicit for funds and mobilize resources to be able to undertake their activities successfully.

This was made clear in the submissions of some participants that:

“one major strategic role we perform as Practitioners in nonprofit organizations is to raise and mobilize enough funds to be able to undertake our activities and programs successfully. We contact governmental agencies, donors and corporate organizations through grant letters and emails to ask for financial assistance to aid our programs.

Other participants shared that:

“We as PR Practitioners depend largely on funds and support from donors and sponsors because we are not profit-making organizations therefore without soliciting for funds and mobilizing needed resources, it would be very difficult for us to offer the humanitarian services to society and individuals so we go the length of seeking these supports from stakeholders.”

Further comments were that:

“We establish strong relationships with these likeminded organizations and donors to solicit their support and assistance to embark on our projects. We mostly dwell on sending personalized messages and strategic storytelling to secure funding and mobilize resources to fulfil our objectives.

This finding is consistent with Austin and Pinkleton (2015) that, in soliciting for funds, PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations weave narratives or tailor messages that would resonate with their audiences’ values and experience and would make people favour their cause. Kyalo (2024) also argued that at the heart of many successful nonprofit campaigns, PR in nonprofit organization weave stories or narratives that humanizes the organization’s mission by putting their faces and voices to their causes. It is very important because donor stewardship is a critical component of successful fundraising efforts ensuring that supporters feel valued, engaged and invest in their mission. Kim et al (2020) revealed in their study that PR Practitioners in nonprofit

organization organize campaigns to raise funds for their activities because their existence depends on it. For instance, hosting community engagement and donor recognition events serves as a powerful way for the nonprofit organization to deepen their connections with supporters and donors. This shows that the strategies deployed by Practitioners in nonprofit organizations are vital because they serve as the linchpin between their mission and the broader community driving support toward their cause.

4.1.5 Effective Media Relations

Effective media relation is one of the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. According to participants, PR Practitioners build effective relationships with the media essentially to raise awareness, shape public perception and also garner support for their cause. This is mostly possible by establishing good relationships with journalist, bloggers and influencers to secure media coverage that amplifies their message and give them the chance to reach new audiences.

This statement was made clear in participants (P1 and P2) submission that:

“media relations as a strategic role of Public Relations is very imperative, why do I say this? media helps us to create needed awareness and to reach out to millions of people out of our physical reach with our message within a short period of time. For example, a good relationship with the media would enable journalist to publish our programs in the dailies, broadcast it on Tv and radio and sometimes on their online platforms. Through the media, people become aware of our organization and programs and would want to support us. This is possible based on the level of relationship you build with the media”

Other participants also shared that:

“Without the media, I think our work as PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations would be extremely difficult because how are we going to reach out to all these millions of Ghanaians and

even donors outside the country? Effective relationship with the media specifically journalist, bloggers and influencers help to do this.

Further comments were that:

“we build relationships as PR Practitioners with journalist, bloggers and even influencers and through this we are able to garner support for our activities. Also, through these relationships we build with the media, we are able to secure media coverage that helps to send our messages to key stakeholders and reach out to new audiences as well.”

This present finding is in line with findings from Smith and Scott (2018) that effective media relations is essential for nonprofit organizations to raise awareness, shape public perception and garner support for their cause. Garcia and Martinez (2019) argued that through effective media relations, nonprofit organizations can have personalized communications, donor recognition events and impactful storytelling which would foster donor engagement and subsequently bolster fundraising success. For instance, a study by Li and Ye (2019) revealed that media coverage can increase brand awareness by up to 20%. In the opinion of Harrison and Shiroma (2018), an effective relationship with the media personalities such as journalist, bloggers and influencers would help in building support from donors and sponsors through effective storytelling. Kyalo (2024) added that an effective relationship with the media would also provide nonprofit organizations several benefits such as secure either a free coverage or coverage on discount and the media would rally support for the organization through the dissemination of messages that would arouse the emotions of donors to support their cause. The media disseminates information and create content about the organization on its social platforms as well create awareness and solicit for sponsorship. Edelman Trust Barometer in a study found that 64% of people trust content created by nonprofit organization more than any other type of content (Edelman, 2019). This shows that media relation is an important component of any Public Relations outfit in

organizations. As Cornelissen (2014) argued that organizations ought to create and nurture relationships with media practitioners because their coverage of news has a direct influence on how their publics will perceive them. This underscores the relevance of building effective relationships with the media as nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

4.1.6 Research and Evaluation.

Critical to the work of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organization is research and evaluation. This is because research enables Practitioners to identify problems to address and opportunities to leverage on to achieve their objectives. Research and evaluation are the grounds on which all organizational decision making, planning and activities are based on. Participants shared that, through research, they are able to learn about issues affecting societies and communities and making these issues known to management and counselling them on how they can be addressed. Practitioners also shared that, they evaluate their communication campaign programs and activities to determine whether set objectives were achieved. According to participants, they put their evaluations in a report and present to management which is also distributed widely to donors and sponsors informing them of what their support has helped solved. This ensures transparency and accountability to stakeholders. This is made clear in the statements of some participants that:

“One important aspect of our work as PR Practitioners is research” Yes, this is because, everything we do as Practitioners is grounded on research and evaluation. Public Relations activities begins with research and ends with research. It is through research we are able to learn of societal problems, monitor public opinions, identify opportunities and how we can tap into it. So, what it means is that, without research, an organization cannot identify a problem or an opportunity and even how to address it and without evaluation, an organization cannot know what was achieved or what needs to be worked on. That is whether objectives were met or not so future

intervention can be put in place. This shows how relevant research and evaluation are to PR Practitioners.”

Other Participants also shared that:

“Yes, Public Relations practice is grounded on research and evaluation because our duty is to cultivate relationships and identify societal problems and how we can solve it. We do all these through research called formative research. Some people even call this role we play as environmental scanning or boundary spanning because, this role helps us to identify issues and opportunities and then what to do to address them” we also conduct research called summative research (evaluation) which informs us on how our programs and activities fared in terms of whether objectives were achieved or not. This provides direction to us.”

Further comments were that:

“Ermm to say, Research and evaluation are two critical roles of Public Relations Practitioners in any organization. This is because Public Relations activities like campaigns are intentional and therefore are planned through research. Again, evaluation is a form of research which is normally called summative by some Practitioners because it helps to assess the impact of PR activities. It is through evaluation we tell how our campaigns and programs fared, whether they yielded desired results or not. So, research and evaluation provide organization useful information on their programs or activities and what they need to do. This is why PR Practitioners cannot do without research and evaluation because it informs decision making, provides a platform for organization to give account of their activities. Today, the communicators in the whole world have come to a consensus on a common framework which guides how PR Practitioners evaluate their communication activities known as the Barcelona Principles which we are using as a guide for the measurement and evaluation of our activities here in this organization.”

Most Participants further expressed that:

“In our various organizations, management demands reports from areas that needs attention and immediate response. They also demand reports on the activities and campaign programs we hold. Based on these, management is able to determine whether organizational goals were achieved. Again, we are tasked to present evaluative reports on our campaign programs which is sent to

donors and sponsors to tell them how the funds given were put to use. This ensures transparency and trust in our organization leading to continuous donor support and retention. Research and evaluation, I must say, helps us to demonstrate the value for the money given to us by donors and accountability as well”

This finding agrees with (Best-Gavi, 2020: Gregory, 2015: Seitel, 2017) that research is very essential to the work of Public Relations Practitioners and their organizations. This is because through research, PR Practitioners are able to scan their environment internally and externally and provide contextual knowledge to management on areas that have social problems to be addressed and opportunities that can be leverage on to the benefit of the organization. They further argued that, through the environmental scanning roles played by PR Practitioners in their various organizations, they are able to monitor public opinion and counsel their organizations on what strategies to adopt in solving societal problems. Similarly, Lamb and Mckee (2015) argued that through environmental scanning role, PR Practitioners provide organizations the opportunity to monitor, dialogue and respond to issues that affect key publics of the organization. In support of this, Grunig et al (2002: 25-26) have argued that, an excellent organization is the one whose programs are grounded on research and evaluation. They further explained that for PR to be described as excellent, it must also be premised on research and evaluation because it allows Practitioners to show the overall value for their programs and their contributions to organizational success and bottom line. This is to say that excellent PR department has PR Practitioners with research and management skills and knowledge. For instance, PR Officers must understand research to use the models and management concepts to serve in managerial roles. Lee and Kim (2020) underscored the importance of research and evaluation as a strategic role of PR Practitioners in an organization arguing that it demonstrates transparency, accountability and fosters stakeholder trust in an organization.

According to Macnamara (2008 :1), PR Practitioners of organizations should employ formal and informal methods to evaluate their communication activities. Li and Ye (2019) also argued that conducting research to gather feedback from stakeholders would assist in assessing the impact of PR efforts and campaigns. In the opinion of Kyalo (2024), it is through research and evaluation reports, that nonprofit organizations can build trust and confidence among their supporters ensuring continued success of their mission driven-work. Despite the fact that a review of academic and industry studies worldwide, shows a growing recognition of the need for research and evaluation, research also shows that, many Practitioners continue not to research and evaluate their activities (Grunic et al, 2002: Anani-Bossman, 2020 Tetteh, 2020). This has been attributed to budgetary constraints and inability of Practitioners to convince management to fund research (Bowen et al, 2012: Smith, 2017). Therefore, it has being advocated that PR Practitioners should conduct research before a communication campaign because this informs effective planning and after their campaigns, conduct research to measure and evaluate program effectiveness. Macnamara (2020) opined that, to plan and undertake PR and communication without research and evaluation is like a pilot taking off in an aircraft without a flight plan and then flying blind. That is to say, with no instrument data or map. This underscores the essence of research and evaluation as a critical strategic role of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organization because it helps to demonstrates effectiveness, facilitates accountability, demonstrates value for money, informs future interventions and decision making.

4.2 RO 2. To determine where PR Practitioners are positioned in nonprofit organization in Ghana.

Research objective two sought to determine the value of PR with regards to where Public Relations Practitioners are positioned in nonprofit organizations in Ghana focusing lens on their involvement in decision making and their reporting relationship with management.

4.2.1 Involvement of Senior PR Practitioners in the dominant coalition.

The debate from different scholars over the years is that, Public Relations practice is a management function and for that reason, in every organization, the Senior Public Relations Practitioner should be empowered to be part of the dominant coalition, a decision-making body in the organization so that Practitioners can have direct access to report to management during decision making (Grunig et al 2002: Vercic et al, 1996). However, literature has revealed several cases where in certain countries especially Ghana where the profession is not recognized as a management function and Practitioners are not involved in strategic management planning and decision making.

Majority of the Participants shared that Public Relations Practice in their organization is strategic such that Senior Practitioners are part of the dominant coalition and have direct relationship with management. This was made clear in the submissions of some participants that:

“Yes, here in my organization, I am part of management or the dominant coalition. This means that, we make decisions and policies for the smooth running of the organization. I am placed within management because I am the Director of communications and campaign planning in my organization overseeing an entire department made of Marketing and Public Relations Practitioners. As a Director of communication, I attend management meeting every quarter on behalf of my department to partake in decision making and planning”

Other Participants added their comments in support that:

“I am the Public Relations Manager in my organization overseeing events like community engagements, campaign planning, research, donations among several others. I am part of management and I take active part in decision making and planning during meeting. Mostly during management meeting, my opinion is sought on issues and I am mostly made to report and inform management on issues that needs immediate attention”

Others shared also shared views that:

I am always part of all decisions making and planning of activities in my organization. Anytime there is a management meeting, I attend the meeting and take part in decision making. For instance, we have a community outreach program every quarter so we have started planning. I have been at the first meeting and the second meeting is next month.

This finding agrees with the generic principles of excellence by Grunig et al (2002) which states that PR Practitioners are likely to contribute to effectiveness when the Senior PR Manager is a member of the dominant coalition where he or she is able to shape the organizational goals and help determine which external publics are most strategic. They argued further that, this is important because strategic management of PR must be an integral part of the strategic management of the overall organization and the PR unit has to practice according to professional principles. Also, this finding agrees with the generic principle five of the excellence theory which states that excellent PR unit should be headed by a Manager rather than a Technician so that PR Practitioner would be part of the dominant coalition. This means that PR Practitioners in nonprofit organization have direct access to management and take part in decision making as prescribed by the generic principle of excellent PR by Grunig et al (2002). This present finding is also consistent with Best-Gavi (2020) and Tandoh et al (2022) who found in their studies that, PR Practitioners are involved in management decision making as well as planning in organizations in Ghana.

Others however shared varied views that:

“I am not part of management or the dominant coalition in my organization but during certain meetings, I am invited to management meeting to take part in decision making and planning”

I am only invited to management meeting after decisions have been taken and I am needed to provide guidelines on how those decisions can be executed or put in to action. For instance, when management wants to embark on campaign, they would invite me to that meeting to provide direction on how the campaign can be executed successfully”

This finding clearly showed that in these organizations, PR is not valued because Grunig and Hunt (1984) argued that, the position of PR Practitioners in organization determines the value management places on Practitioners. This is against the excellence principle of PR which states that organizations should empower PR Practitioners to partake in decision making process or have direct reporting relationships with management.

4.2.2 Involvement in strategic management planning

Public Relations scholars have argued that the discipline is a management function that builds and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics (Grunig et al, 2002: Seitel, 2017: Cutlip et al: 2009). PR Practitioners should be involved in strategic management because they develop programs to communicate with strategic publics both external and internal who are affected by the consequences of organizational decisions and behaviors and who either demand a voice in decisions that affect them. Participants shared that in their organizations they are involved in planning of activities such as campaigns and they conduct regular scans and research in their environment to identify what issues need to be addressed as well as opportunities the organization can tapped into to achieve their long-term goals.

Participants shared that:

“In here, we are involved in the strategic management planning especially campaigns and donations events. Anytime management wants to embark on any project, we are the first point of call when it comes to planning the project and executing it successfully”

Other participants further commented that:

“we planned the donation activities and community engagement together with management. We also plan campaign activities where necessary. As a strategic leader in my organization, I am involved in organizational decision making. Management seeks our opinion on programs before they are executed”

This particular finding is in alignment with the generic principle of excellence which states that PR Practitioners should be involved in strategic management due to the fact that they organize programs to communicate with organizations strategic stakeholders within or outside the organization who are affected by the effects of an organizations decision who deserve a voice on decision that affect them (Grunig et al, 2002). It also disagrees with studies from Tetteh (2020) who found that in nonprofit organizations in Ghana, PR Practitioners are not involved in strategic management planning. This also means that over these few years the status quo, when it comes to the recognition given and the value place on PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana has increasingly improved.

However, Further comments were that:

“Ermm as for my organization, we are only tasked to implement the activity or organize after management has planned and taken decisions on what needs to be done.”

This is against the generic principles of excellence which states that PR should be involved in the strategic management of every organization such that, Practitioners will be at lead front in planning organizational activities. This therefore means that management in nonprofit organization must do their best to involve Practitioners in strategic management planning as that would enable them to develop programs that would help to communicate with their strategic stakeholders.

4.2.3 PR as a management function separated from other functions

The excellence principles of Public Relations practice by Grunig et al (2002) advocates that, PR in every organization should be treated as a management function separated from other management functions so that Practitioners can execute their duties as expected. Studies have shown that, in some organizations, Public Relations is treated as a secondary discipline normally subsumed under other management functions or departments such as marketing and human resource management (Anani-Bossman, 2020: Tetteh, 2020: Adjei et al, 2019). However, majority of the participants shared that in their organization, public relations is treated as a management function separated from other functions such that, a whole unit is allocated for Public Relations.

This was highlighted in the submissions of participants that:

“In my organization, there is a department called Public Relations and communications department which is separated from other departments like operations, marketing and HR. we normally planned organization activities such as campaigns, outreach programs and donation events”

Another participant also shared that:

“As for our organization, there is a whole department of communications and community engagement with our head being the communications Director. Practitioners are assigned different roles in the department. So, we have communication Professionals responsible for social media, community outreach, events organization among several others. We are not under any other department like marketing or HR. we are a department on our own”

This particular finding is consistent with the principle of the excellence theory postulated by Grunig et al (2002) which states that, an excellent organization is the one where Public Relations is not sublimed or subsumed to other departments arguing that it allows Practitioners more freedom and independence in executing their activities and communicating with various publics. On the other hand, the theorist argued further that, when PR is sublimed or subsumed under other management

functions, they may lose their unique roles in the strategic management. This finding also disagrees with findings from other scholars (Adjei et al, 2021: Anani-Bossman, 2020: Tetteh, 2020) that PR in most organizations are subsumed under other departments like marketing and Human resources and even their roles are assigned to these departments to perform which is not a trait of excellent organization and PR practice as prescribed by the excellence theory. From the discussions so far, it could be seen clearly that in majority of the nonprofit organizations in Ghana, management value the contribution of Public Relations Practitioners to the overall success of the organization. This is evident in the strategic roles they play as Managers in their various organizations, their involvement in strategic management planning among several others agree to some extent that, they are practicing strategic Public Relations.

4.3 RO3. To ascertain which model of PR is adopted by Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

Research objective three sought to ascertain the model of PR practice adopted by Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

Extensive research has been conducted on the extent to which organizations practice the four models of PR practice identified by Grunig and Hunt (1984). This is because PR models provides platform to identify the main ideas that guides the practice of PR in a particular jurisdiction. Scholars advocate that, among the four models identified by the scholars such as press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical communication model, organizations should use two-way symmetrical model when engaging their stakeholders because it is the ideal model that promote mutual understanding between an organization and its key stakeholders because it provides a platform for feedback. Participants expressed that in nonprofit organization, the purpose of their communication is to build long term relationships with their

strategic stakeholders through effective dialogue in order to retain donations hence they communicate in a transparent and honest manner their activities and intention so as to get positive feedback from donors and sponsors.

This was highlighted in the statement of some participants that:

“Dialogue and building mutual understanding are what influences our communication here in the organization. This is because, as a nonprofit organization that depends on donations and sponsorships, we have our purpose of building long lasting relationships with these stakeholders by engaging them and taking their feedback and working on these feedbacks because without that, we may not get their donations and sponsorships again”

Other participants also shared that:

“Erm the purpose of Public Relations in my organization is to build mutual understanding between management and our key stakeholders such as donors, sponsors and the broader community so that these stakeholders would retain their funding and support to us. You see, we try to engage communities to find out their problems and what they may need. So, these engagements allow stakeholders to share their opinions on what needs to be addressed. These feedbacks help us to develop programs that would be accepted by the broader communities.”

Further comments from participants were that:

“our goal and purpose here as PR Practitioners in my organization is to disseminate transparent and accurate information to our stakeholders and also expect their feedback. This helps us to build trust and loyalty in our donors and sponsors”

In support of this, other participants also shared that:

“In my organization, we as Public Relations Practitioners project the image of our organization through strategic storytelling in a way that would resonate with the emotions of our stakeholders and cause them to support our programs. We also communicate in a way that would change the attitude and touch the emotions of our stakeholders and earn their support”

This finding agrees with the generic principles of excellence postulated by Grunig et al (2002) which states that the two-way symmetrical communication is the appropriate or ideal model for PR practice because the model is based on research and uses communication to effectively promote understanding and resolve conflict with strategic publics. Anani-Bossman (2020) found that organizations in Ghana employ both the symmetrical and asymmetrical model in their practice. In another study to develop a framework for Public Relations practice in Ghana, he found that, Practitioners in the financial sector employs Publicity and at times two-way asymmetrical communication model in their practice. Similarly, Tetteh (2020) also found in her study that PR practice in Ghana is largely influenced by interpersonal relationships. This essentially means that, in some nonprofit organizations today, Public Relations Practitioners are employing both symmetrical and asymmetrical communication model in engaging their stakeholders. It has also been argued that the purpose of the organizations communications determines which of the models to be employed in their engagement with their publics. For instance, if organization seeks to only create awareness and cause stakeholders to act, the way they want, the press agency model, if the purpose of the organization is to gather feedback not so they can further cause stakeholders to behave the way they want, then the two-way asymmetrical model. However, if the organization intends to establish mutual understanding with its stakeholders, then it's obvious they would adopt the two-way symmetrical communication model (Cutlip et al, 2009; Seitel: 2017).

4.4 R.O 4 To explore the factors that affect the application of the strategic Public Relations in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

Research Objective four sought to explore the factors that affect the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The following themes were generated as factors that affect the application of strategic Public Relations in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. Organizational culture, leadership commitment and support, Budgetary constraints. These themes are explored below.

Public Relations profession has gained increasing recognition and respect globally but studies have indicated that, it is valued more especially in the America and Europe where the profession is taken more seriously such that scholars have prescribed certain practices Practitioners globally should follow to ensure excellence in their practice (Vercic et al, 1996: Grunig et al, 2002). For instance, the 15-year study conducted by Grunig et al (2002) in collaboration with the International Association for Business communication (IABC) on excellence communication management produced the excellence theory, a theory which proposed guidelines on how Practitioners and their organizations can be excellent in their communication activities. However, extant literature indicates that, these guidelines are not applicable in all context because the profession is practiced differently in various locations. Therefore, the context in which PR is practiced coupled with other factors to some extent affects the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organization.

4. 4.1 Organizational culture.

One major theme derived from the data as a factor that affects the application of strategic Public Relations practice in nonprofit organizations in Ghana is the culture of most nonprofit organizations. Studies have shown that, the application of excellent or strategic Public Relations practices in most organizations globally depends largely on the culture of the organization (Alaimo, 2017 Hofstede, 2010: Sriramesh, 2009). The culture of an organization denotes the beliefs, norms and values that unite the members of the organization and differentiates them from others. This is to simply say that; the culture of the organization refers to its ways of doing things which sets it apart from others. Participants mentioned that, in their respective organizations, the culture sometimes does not appreciate public opinion and also does not include Practitioners often in strategic decision making and planning in the organization thereby influencing the practice of Public Relations.

This was made evident in the submission of participant 1 that:

“In my organization for instance, I am only invited to add my opinion to a project during the time of execution. The actual planning and decision making are made by management or a few people and then when it is time to executive the plan in terms of campaign, we come in.”

In addition to this submission, other participants also shared that:

Erm, I am also supposed to present my communique about the organization to management for proper scrutiny, that is whether it is in line with the organizational norms and values. Sometimes, I am asked to alter certain part of my communication which to me is against my profession. Also, I am not part of the decision-making body of the organization, I mostly act on what management wants me to do in regards to communication.

These findings are concurrent with other studies from (Anani- Bossman: 2020: Tetteh, 2020 Alaimo, 2017: Adeniji, 2015) who also found that, one of the factors that confronts the effective

application of strategic Public Relations in organizations is the organizational culture such that, when the culture is not supportive and participative as proposed by the excellence theory, Practitioners are usually not involved in strategic planning and management decision making meaning when it comes to contributing to policy making, Practitioners are left out. This is against the generic principles of excellence which states that, for an organization to be described as practicing excellent Public Relations, Senior PR Practitioners within these organizations must be empowered to be part of the dominant coalition or have direct reporting relationship to management. Also, PR Practitioners must be involved in strategic management planning because they develop programs that would help engage strategic stakeholders whose actions can make or unmake the organization (Grunig et al, 2002: Vercic et al 1996). Sriramesh (2009) argued that, organizations with unsupportive culture where there are high hierarchical gaps between management and employees, PR Practitioners may not be part of the dominant coalition. This is to say that; Public Relations Profession thrives better under a participative and supportive culture where Practitioners are empowered to take part in decision making because when such autonomy is given to Practitioners, it will enable them to provide contextual knowledge to management on issues that needs attention and for this reason, Grunig and Hunt (1894) argued that, PR can perform their boundary spanning role effectively when they are part of the strategy formulation machinery because it is by this, they can keep management informed on what is happening in their environment in terms of problems and opportunities and counsel them on the implications of its decisions, taking into account the likely reactions of key publics who directly affects the wellbeing or otherwise of the organization by responding to these changes (Gregory, 2015). Wilcox et al (2015) further argued that, the primary indicator of the PR department's influence and power in an organization however, is whether the top communication officer has a seat at the management

table. In relations to this, Grunig and Dozier (2002) also mentioned that, the placement and position of Public Relations Practitioners within an organization shows the value management places on the profession. This means that, it is prudent for nonprofit organizations to adopt cultures that are supportive and participative enough because it provides a conducive environment for PR Practitioners to function effectively by contributing value to the organization. Also, strategic Public Relations practice can thrive in an organic, supportive and participative culture primarily due to the fact that such cultures provide a favorable context in which Practitioners work most effectively because they have the freedom of being involved in the strategic management planning and decision making which are indications of excellent organizations.

Other participants also stated that:

“As PR Practitioners in our organizations, our opinion is never sought when it comes to planning and decision making in the organization. we are only informed when there is a need to communicate on behalf of the organization even with that, based on the directives of management. Management has a way they want us to communicate to stakeholders which often is not ethical to our profession but as I have said, our opinion is not sought on such matters. For instance, sometimes we have to respond quickly to certain issues raised by our stakeholders but we are told not to until management gives approval to do so. In PR practice it is unethical and not effective.”

This finding also agrees with Tetteh (2020) who also found that, in most nonprofit organizations in Ghana, PR Practitioners opinions are not sought when it comes to decision making and planning. Strategic Public Relations practice would thrive or be effectively applied in organizations whose culture supports and values public opinion and feedback because this would enable dialogue and for that matter enhance two-way symmetrical communication, an essential generic principle of excellence on which PR practice is effectively established (Alaimo, 2017: Grunig and Hunt, 1984: Vercic et al, 1996). This is because the primary aim of PR is to build mutually beneficial

relationships and understanding between an organization and its strategic publics (PRSA, 2012: Cutlip et al, 2009). Therefore, quality long-term relationships are built through dialogue or two-way communication where organizations take feedback from its stakeholders in efforts to adjust its ways of doing things. It is therefore important because it is through public opinion and feedback organizations monitor public mood in terms of their attitudes and behavior towards the organization and try to address their problems. Grunig et al (2002) argued that, good relationships were of value to organizations because they reduce the cost of litigation, regulation and negative publicity which is often caused by poor relationships and decisions that affect different groups. On other hand, organizational systems that do not place relevance on public opinion normally adopt one-way communication which defeats the real purpose of Public Relations as a strategic communication and management function that mainly aims at gaining public understanding and acceptance by building mutually beneficial relations between an organization and its publics (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). This means that, public Relations practice in these rigid hierarchical structures will not contribute to organizational effectiveness because such structures discourage symmetrical communication therefore there is a need for an organic structure to be formed in nonprofit organizations where strategic Public Relations practices can be smoothly applied (Grunig et al, 2002: Grunig & Dosier, 2002). The discussion points to the fact that, some PR Practitioners are practicing in organizations whose cultures are mechanic and therefore not supportive and participative enough to embrace and promote the application of strategic Public Relations practices and empower Practitioners to take active part in organizational decision making and planning, solicit their opinions and involve them in strategic management planning. This means that, if nonprofit organizations want to succeed and be excellent, there is a need to

embrace organizational cultures supportive and participative enough for effective application of strategic Public Relations practices.

4.4.2 Budgetary constraints

Public Relations Practitioners across the globe face different challenges within their respective organizations which to a large extent affect the effective application of strategic Public Relations practices. Existing literature has revealed that, managers of organizations who have little or no value for Public Relations practice tend not fulfil or at times, delay the approval of budgets presented by Practitioners to management to undertake their activities. In some context, Participants stressed that whenever budget for their activities such as research and campaign planning is presented to management, it is overlooked and not fulfilled because their contribution to the organizational bottom line is not seen.

This was made clear in the statement of some participants that:

“One major issue that affects strategic Public Relations practice here is that, whenever we present our budget to management for our programs and activities they are mostly not provided as we presented it. We are either given half of the budget and sometimes approval delays. This normally affects how we plan to executive those activities.”

Other participants also expressed that:

“I do not always get funds approved for research activities which is very critical to our profession and practice as Practitioners in nonprofit organization. Anytime I present budget for research I am told the budget is too much and that management do not have funds to support that. Go and trim the budget down so sometimes we do not conduct the research we intend due to management’s inability to provide the budget needed for that.”

Further comments from participants were that:

“When it comes to approval of funds for PR department to undertake our campaign activities, there is always back and forth because management feels our activities do not provide monetary value to the organization and that rather we are spending too much money we cannot make up for the organization.”

These findings corroborate with Tetteh (2020) who found that one of the challenges that confronts the application of strategic and excellence Public Relations practices is budgetary constraints where Practitioners are not given budgets they table before management for their activities. In support, Bowen et al (2012) stated that, one challenge PR Practitioners face is being able to convince management to fund their research hence Smith (2017) attributes lack of research by Practitioners to the issue of budgetary constraints. Similarly, Anani-Bossman (2020) also found that budgetary allocation impedes the application of strategic public Relations practices within organizations because most Practitioners are unable to undertake strategic activities such as research and campaigns which are critical to excellent PR practices espoused by the excellence theory proposed by Grunig et al (2002). This is because without undertaking research, Practitioners will not be able to gauge public opinion and monitor their mood regarding the organization nor the happenings within its social environment and inform management about how to respond and adapt to these changes. Also, without budget to conduct research and campaign activities, Practitioners may not be able to plan its programs effectively because sound research provides roadmap or direction for planning organizational activities. Excellent theory stated that effective and strategic Public Relations is grounded on sound research because it enables Practitioners to develop comprehensive programs that would build trust, mutual satisfaction and commitment (Grunig & Dozier, 1995). Also, for organizations to be effective and strategic according to the theory, it must behave in ways that solve problems and satisfies the goals of stakeholders as well as management. This therefore means that, organizations must scan their environment to identify publics who are

affected by potential organizational decision and who want decisions to be made by the organization to solve problems that are important to them. Environmental scanning and evaluation research are very relevant to building quality long-term relationships and allow Practitioners to determine consequences of organizational action or stakeholder behavior and communicate this back to management (Le Roux, 2013: 2010: 120) which is the core of the excellence theory of Public Relations. All these are possible through sound and thorough research hence when management decides not to provide the needed funds or approved budgets of Public Relations Practitioners in the organization, they would lose the insights Practitioners would bring to strategic planning and development during decision making (Wilcox et al, 2015). Anani-Bosssman (2020), argued that, the reason why management do not mostly approve and provide Practitioners the funds to undertake their activities like research and evaluation and also campaigns because, they perceive PR efforts do not generate income or contribute to the bottom line. Therefore, for nonprofit organization to be strategic, management of these organizations should approve and provide Practitioners the funds they need to undertake strategic activities.

4.5 Summary of Chapter

The chapter discussed and interpreted the research findings that were analyzed thematically from the interviews conducted with ten Public Relations Practitioners within the nonprofit sector in Ghana. The findings were discussed under the four research questions set out in chapter one to help attain the objectives of the study and in relations to existing literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of key findings, conclusions drawn from the data analysis and recommendations made to improve strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

5.1 Summary of key findings

The goal of the study was to examine the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. In this regard, the study set out four research objectives to achieve at the end of the study.

Research objective 1 sought to examine the strategic roles of PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The data revealed that, PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana perform strategic roles such as building strategic alliances and partnerships with likeminded organizations, government agencies and private companies to be able to create awareness for their organizations and also to access resources to undertake their activities, Practitioners also build positive relationships with their strategic stakeholders like donors and sponsors which helps the organization to attain the social license and support for their cause, Practitioners build effective relationships with media personnel such as journalist, bloggers and influencers who help these organizations by raising awareness about their activities through media coverage and crafting messages that resonates with the emotions of the public to shape their perception and garner their support for the organizational cause. This helps nonprofit organizations to reach wider audiences within a short period of time.

The study also found that, PR Practitioners raise funds and mobilize resources from donors, sponsors and other stakeholders through sponsorship and grant letters and also campaign activities to undertake their activities. They also conduct research and evaluation to identify problems affecting societies which Stakeholders want organization to solve as well as opportunities the organization can take advantage of. They also conduct evaluation to determine how their programs and activities fared in terms of whether desired results were achieved. The study found that in nonprofit organizations, Practitioners perform strategic roles which the excellence study advocated for.

The second objective sought to determine where PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations are positioned or placed within the organization. The study found that most of the Practitioners were part of management of their organization or the dominant coalition, a group that makes decisions for the organization however, some of the Practitioners were not part of the decision-making body of their organization nor had a direct relationship with management. Those Practitioners who were part of the dominant coalition were Senior Managers actively involved in strategic decision making within the organization. They assumed roles like Communication Manager heading their departments and planning programmes and activities for the organization. So, this shows that, in such organizations where Practitioners were involved in strategic management, management of such organizations have knowledge about the Profession and appreciates the value of communication as contributing to organizational success. This organizations can be said to be adhering to excellence Public Relations practices.

The third objective was to ascertain the model of Public Relations practice adopted by Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The study found that the purpose of Public Relations practice in nonprofit organizations is to build mutual understanding between an organization and its

stakeholders and also disseminate transparent and accurate information to stakeholders. The study also revealed that Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana places so much value on feedback which is crucial in building good relationships with stakeholders in order to retain their donations and sponsorship. The model which influences PR Practice or is adopted by Practitioners in nonprofit organization is two-way symmetrical communication as Practitioners wants to build quality long term relationships with strategic stakeholders so as to continue receiving donations and sponsorships from them.

The fourth and last objective was to explore the factors that affects the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The study revealed that one factor that affects the application of strategic Public Relations practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana is the culture of the organization. This because the culture of their organization influences the way Practitioners communicates within and outside of their organization and even their involvement in strategic decision making in the organization. It was also found that the culture of most of these nonprofit organizations does not value public opinion a crucial element that determines strategic Public Relations practice because it helps organizations to dialogue and for that matter if not valued, the two-way symmetrical communication would be defeated limiting Practitioners effectiveness in organization.

The study also found budgetary constraints as another factor that affects the application of strategic Public Relations practice in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The study further revealed that in nonprofit organizations, Practitioners are mostly not provided with the budget they table before management for strategic activities such as research and campaigns which are crucial to organizational effectiveness. This was attributed to managements lack of support and commitment to PR activities as having monetary contribution to organizational success.

5.2 Conclusion

The study examined the strategic roles of Public Relations Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. The findings of the study have revealed how Public Relations is practiced in nonprofit sector in Ghana. Based on these revelations, for Public Relations Practitioners and organizations to be effective, it is important for management of nonprofit organizations to empower Public Relations to perform strategic roles and take part in decision making. For Public Relations to excel in nonprofit organizations in Ghana, it must be practiced strategically.

5.3 Recommendation

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study. Following these recommendations will lead to effective and strategic PR Practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

- Managers of nonprofit organizations should involve PR Practitioners in strategic decision making in their organization.
- Managers of nonprofit organizations in Ghana should provide Practitioners financial or budgetary support to be able to undertake research and other strategic activities.
- Nonprofit organizations in Ghana should embrace cultures and structures that values and support Public Relations practice and activities.
- Nonprofit organizations in Ghana should adopt strategic Public Relations practices in their organizations.

5.4 Recommendations for future studies

This present study showed that much can be done on how strategic Public Relations practices is employed in nonprofit organizations in Ghana.

Future researchers can broaden their knowledge on the strategies employed by PR Practitioners in nonprofit organizations in Ghana. Also, an interesting area that future researchers can look at is a comprehensive research on measurement and evaluation research and the methods Practitioners in nonprofit organizations used for such research. Finally, this study employed a qualitative research approach, future researchers can employ a quantitative research to study same phenomenon or a mixed method.

5.5 Limitations of the study

The major limitation of the study was gaining access to participants from nonprofit organizations on time so it took a long period for the interview to be conducted. Also, the number of participants used for the study was small therefore results cannot be generalized. Therefore, future studies have to expand the scope and conduct it on a broader scale making use of different methodology.

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APPENDIX

Interview Guide

I am Emmanuel Anyetei Adjei, a student of the University of Media Arts and Communication (UniMAC IJ), pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Strategic Public Relations Management. I am undertaking this project to examine the strategic role of Public Relations Practitioners within nonprofit organizations in Ghana. Your organization has been chosen for this study therefore I humbly request that you provide answers to these questions during the interview. Please be assured that any information you provide will be kept confidential, anonymous and it will be used for academic purposes only.

Strategic role of PR in nonprofit Organizations in Ghana.

1. What strategic roles do you perform as PR Practitioner in this nonprofit organisation?
2. Is the Senior Public Relations Practitioner in your organisation involved in strategic planning?
3. Does management seek the opinions of PR Practitioners in decision making?

Position of PR Practitioners in Nonprofit organizations in Ghana

4. Where is the senior PR Practitioner placed within your organization?
5. Which role among the technician and managerial does PR Practitioner perform?
6. Does PR have a direct relationship and access to management of the organization?

Model of PR practice adopted by nonprofit organizations

7. What model of PR is adopted by this organisation?
8. What is the purpose of PR in your organisation?
9. How does your organisation communicate with stakeholders?

Factors affecting the application of strategic PR practices in nonprofit organizations in Ghana?

10. What value does the management of your organisation place on communication?
11. What are some of the factors that affect the application of strategic PR practices in nonprofit organisations?