

**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS A  
CASE OF ELECTRICITY COMPANY OF GHANA**

**BY**

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ARTS(MA) DEGREE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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**OCTOBER, 2020**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this Dissertation is my own in-depth research, with the exception of references to other related works which have been duly acknowledged in this project work All references to other people’s work have been properly acknowledged. The undersigned student do hereby declare that this Dissertation is the result of her own work.

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## **SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the preparation and submission of this dissertation was duly supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines for writing dissertation laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

Signed	1 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020
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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God, to my mother Madam Evelyn Ruth Kporuvu, my father Mr. Gavi Victor, my siblings, Victoria Best- Gavi and Victor Best- Gavi and to all lecturers and students of the Department of Public Relations Ghana Institute of Journalism.

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## Table of Contents

DECLARATION.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	vii
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
Introduction.....	1
1.0 Background of the Study.....	1
1.1 Institution profile.....	3
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.31 Specific Objectives.....	4
1.4 Research Questions.....	5
1.5 Significance of the study.....	5
1.6 Key words.....	5
1.7 Organization of the Study.....	5
CHAPTER TWO.....	7
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	7
2.0 Introduction.....	7
2.1 Theoretical Framework.....	7
2.2 The Excellence theory.....	7
2.3 The Systems Theory.....	8
2.31 Definition of Systems and Sub-systems.....	8
2.4 Models Of Organizational Effectiveness.....	9

2.5 Conceptual Framework.....	9
2.6 Review of Variables.....	11
2.61 Communicator Roles.....	11
2.62 Models of public Relations.....	12
2.63 Hierarchical Positioning.....	13
2.64 Organizational Effectiveness (OE).....	14
2.7 Empirical Review.....	15
2.71 Public Relations Practice in Ghana.....	15
2.72 The Excellency Study.....	16
2.8 Public Relations At Electricity Company Of Ghana(ECG).....	16
2.81 How PR is Managed at ECG.....	17
2.9 Critique of Existing Literature.....	17
CHAPTER THREE.....	19
METHODOLOGY.....	19
3.0 Chapter Overview.....	19
3.1 Research Design.....	19
3.2 Research type.....	19
3.3 Sampling.....	20
3.4 Sample size.....	20
3.5 Data Collection Instruments.....	20
3.6 Data collection procedure.....	21
3.7 Data Analysis.....	21
CHAPTER FOUR.....	22
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS.....	22
4.0 Results and Analysis.....	22

4.1 Position and Roles of PR in ECG’s Structure.....	22
4.2 Strategic plan by PR in achieving effectiveness.....	23
4.3 Challenges faced at ECG.....	24
4.4 How challenges are solved.....	24
4.5 How effectiveness is measured.....	25
4.6 Current level of effectiveness and channels used for communication at ECG.....	26
4.7 Effect of PR on the organization.....	27
4.8 How helpful the position of PR has been and the extent to which company depend on PR in achieving OE.....	28
CHAPTER FIVE.....	29
CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	29
5.0 Summary of the study.....	29
5.1 Limitation.....	29
5.2 Recommendations.....	29
5.3 Conclusion.....	30
References.....	31
APPENDIX A.....	34
APPENDIX B.....	35
APPENDIX C.....	36

## **ABSTRACT**

The goal of this study is to examine the contribution of Public Relations in organizational success at the Electricity Company of Ghana. The focus of the study was on the recent implementation of Public Relations practices and how they improve organizational effectiveness in government organizations. The researcher employed some objectives in order to: establish the effect of public relations communicator roles on organizational effectiveness at ECG; determine the effect of public relations practice models on enhancing organizational effectiveness at ECG and establish the effect of public relations hierarchical placement on organizational effectiveness at ECG.

The study was based on the Excellence and Systems theories of Public Relations and models of organizational effectiveness. The study employed the qualitative approach and data was collected through interviews. Data analysis was done, the findings revealed that Public Relations had a great positive effect on organizational effectiveness. In addition, the nature of PR practice at ECG met the requirement of the Excellence Theory and effectively played the role required by the Systems Theory. Furthermore, the two- way symmetrical model was amply applied and PR was part of Management. The researcher recommends that the practice of excellent PR should be encouraged in the Business industry in Ghana.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background of the Study

This research seeks to find out the contribution of Public relations practice to organizational success in government organizations like the Electricity Company of Ghana. All organizations are established for a motive, be it profit or non-profit-making. For an organization to continue to survive, it has to be effective. History concerning studies on organizational effectiveness started when some authors who studied organizations by trying to structure human labour to generate greater results. Effectiveness was initially understood as efficiency therefore, the traditional school made efforts to come up with general principles to improve efficiency as a way of achieving effectiveness. Ascertaining effectiveness on the grounds of efficiency was on the notion that, the only aim of organizations was the production of goods and services. But that was fallacious because organizations are to a great extent multipurpose units that continually communicate with their environment (Tosun, n.d).

After the Second World War, researchers moved away from the efficiency point of view of organizational effectiveness and paid attention to variables that connect an organization and its environment. This gave a new understanding of organizational effectiveness which did not reject the efficiency part rather, included it in the wider meaning. During this period, models to explain organizational effectiveness and how it can be ascertained and accomplished was on the rise. Definition of organizational effectiveness continued to be hard to reduce into one due to the increase in diverse points of views (Tosun, n.d.). Daft (2001) define organizational effectiveness as the extent to which an organization obtain its goals. The goals could be non-financial or financial.

In spite of the fact that there are different perspectives on what organizational effectiveness is and how it can be assessed, Oghojafor et. al (2012) suggest that the demand for effectiveness has dominated the world. Organizations, managers and employees, are always entreated to provide results. Barnard (1964), and early management thinker is of the opinion that effectiveness has to do with the attainment of collective objective that is social and non-personal in nature, maintaining that organizations cannot keep going in the absence of effectiveness and that effectiveness can easily be assessed.

Drucker was more certain that the society and individuals within it cannot satisfy their needs without effectiveness. In his own words: Only executive effectiveness can enable this society of ours to harmonize its two needs: the needs of organization to obtain from the individual, the contribution it needs and the need of the individual to have organization serve as his tool for accomplishing his purposes” (Drucker, 1967).

It is relevant to comprehend the nature of organization so as to apprehend the composition of organizational effectiveness. Organization has been defined differently by different scholars. Robbins (2003) defines an organization as a cognizant correlated social unit made up of two people that function on a relatively continuous basis to attain common goals. Robey & Sales (1994) define organization by emphasizing on the relevance of organizational system and processes in pursuing similar goals. They define organization as a system of roles and stream of activities devised to achieve common purpose. Nevertheless, no matter the variation in the definition of organization, all organizations are identified by coordination of efforts, a common goal, division of labour and a hierarchy of authority (Schein, 1980).

Imevbore (2011) views an organization in a more interesting way. He defines it as an open system that is established to transform resources into products and services which are then supplied to an external receiving system. Additionally, he argues that the existence of “organ” in organization indicates the proof of life and the need for a collection of systems and processes to maintain and better that life. An organization must be viewed as an entity that must give and receive life so as to survive and not be seen as just a part of an economic system. In respect to this, for an organization to be seen as effective, it should be bold in its feedback to internal environment and also give feedback to the external constituents.

What called for the essence of Public relations in building up organizational effectiveness is the visibility that an organization is an open system. According to Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Public Relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics (2015). What is all-important for public relations is expanding many organizations. Nearly all big organizations either have a public relations department or sub- contract their public relations needs to a company Winston (2015).

Public relations is recognized as an essential section of sustaining the image of an organization and its communication to its stakeholders and the general public. The sales of an organization can be increased by the positive perception that the public has about the organization. There are different functions and duties of a public relations practitioner. State organizations also need to be effective in the attainment of their mission, goals and objectives just as the private organizations. They must initiate suitable strategic plan and make perfect choice of message and channels of communication to secure the image and reputation of the organization. These can be to some extent met by the adoption of Public relations practice. It is in view of this that this study used the Electricity company of Ghana as a case to examine the role of public relations in organizational success and to find out whether public relations is recognized by government organizations in Ghana such as ECG as a management function and if they really include public relations in strategic management decision making.

## 1.1 Institution profile

Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) is a limited liability company entirely owned by the government of Ghana and performing under the supervision of Ministry of Energy (ME) who to a great extent is a determining factor in the strategic management of the company (<http://www.ecgonline.info>, 2020). It was embodied in 1963 and later became a firm in February 1997. ECG is a major distributor of power in Ghana which distributes and sells electricity to consumers vastly in the southern part of the country such as Central, Volta, Greater Accra, Eastern, Western and Ashanti Regions. Practically, ECG purchases energy supplies in bulk from energy providers such as Volta River Authority (VRA), independent energy generators like Bui Power and Sunon Asogli and deliver to its customers. ECG has matured and transformed to a more effective distributor largely as a result of foreign technical and financial assistance which has made it possible for the firm to invest in different areas to enhance the quality of the network. It has committed to setting up several distribution lines and the installation of prepaid metering.

The mission of ECG is “to provide quality reliable and safe electricity services to support the growth and development of Ghana” (<http://www.ecgonline.info>, 2020). The company’s vision is “to be among the leading Electricity Distribution Companies in Africa by 2020” (<http://www.ecgonline.info>, 2020). It is in view of this that the company has employed a number of both technical and administrative staff to help achieve these objectives.

Current drift in the ECG’s operations pointed to some problems which prevented them from recording ideal effectiveness. ECG faced reputation problems as a part of the public view them as money makers. This perception is expanded to include the quality of services they provide. They also face difficulties in both production and distribution of electricity due to the increasing number of people resulting in high rate of electricity consumption in Ghana. In addition, power shortage and revenue generation are challenges faced by Electricity Company of Ghana as they take most of the blames when this happens since they serve as a link or face between the power sector and the public. These challenges can partially be addressed if PR practice is adopted.

This gave rise to some questions that this study seeks to find answers to. First to know if ECG sees PR as a management function and therefore include PR in strategic management and also testify that an effective PR unit can contribute partly to organizational effectiveness.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Workers, managers, organizations are under duress to be effective because of the call for effectiveness in the world today Oghojafor et. All (2012). Studies around the world have shown that the effectiveness of an organization to a large extent can be improved by excellent practice of PR. Grunig, Grunig & Dozier (2002) proposed in their excellence study that value can be provided to an organization through PR by pinpointing the calculated publics that emerge due to the effects that both publics and organizations have on each other. This can be done by using symmetrical communication programs to plan and sustain strong relationships with these publics. ECG in their line of work encounter problems which needs the help of PR in resolving some of these problems because, ECG serves as the face of the Power Industry in Ghana and thereby are allocated most blames regarding electricity by the publics.

Notwithstanding, the role and position of Public relations in organizations and its contribution to the fulfillment of an organization have been difficult to explain by PR practitioners L. Grunig et all (2002). If these accessions are made by Western economies where PR industry is prospering, then the case in Africa preferably in Ghana where PR industry is in its growing stage should be examined.

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to examine the contribution of public relations practice to organizational effectiveness at Electricity Company of Ghana.

### **1.31 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study are:

- 1) To establish the effect of public relations communicator roles on organizational effectiveness at ECG.
- 2) To determine the effect of public relations practice models on enhancing organizational effectiveness at ECG.
- 3) To establish the effect of public relations hierarchical placement on organizational effectiveness at ECG.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

In the light of the above objectives, this study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What is organizational effectiveness from ECG's point of view?
2. What is the effect of public relations communicator roles on organizational effectiveness at ECG?
3. What is the effect of public relations practice models on organizational effectiveness at ECG?
4. How does public relations hierarchical placement affect organizational effectiveness at ECG?
5. How has PR contributed to the success of the organization with PR department on it own?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

The study will provide an in-depth understanding and underline the contribution of public relations practice to achieving effectiveness in an organization and allow extra exploration on the subject matter within Africa. In addition, the discoveries of this study will aid ECG to create powerful PR strategies for communication, image and reputation management in order to achieve optimum effectiveness in future.

Findings of this study will also highlight the importance of hierarchical placement of PR in organizational structure. Other organizations in the energy sector can as well apply the recommendations from this study to enhance their operations.

## **1.6 Key words**

Public relations, Organizational Effectiveness and Electricity Company of Ghana.

## **1.7 Organization of the Study**

This study has been organized in five chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction and background of the study and focuses on organizational effectiveness and the essence of PR in building organizational effectiveness. The institution profile, problem statement, objectives and research questions, significance of the study and key terms of the study are also indicated in this chapter.

Chapter two focuses on the conceptual framework and literature reviews related to the study; on Communicator roles, Hierarchical positioning and PR models. The systems theory and Excellence theories were also looked at.

Chapter three talks about the methodology used in the research. This chapter provided details research design, sampling procedure, sample size, research type, data collection process and instrument and data analysis.

The findings of the study are presented in chapter four while discussions of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study are captured in chapter five.

The chapter looked at the concept of organizational effectiveness, the essence of PR in building organizational effectiveness and profile of ECG. The problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study were all touched on in this chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review of the research topic under study. It presents concise information on the concept of organizational effectiveness. The concepts related to this research have been discussed in this very chapter as well as the review of theoretical frameworks to this research work. The review of the related literature would provide an insight as well as background knowledge in relation to the research topic under study.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

Tan (1985) defines a theory as a set of interrelated laws or general principles (hypotheses that have been repeatedly verified) about some aspect of reality. The function of theory is to explain, predict, and discover systematic relationships between facts. Public Relations practice is anchored on a number of theories. Some of these include the excellence theory, the systems theory and the social systems theory. Theory provides a model for the practice of public relations. (Skyttner, 2001) says, 'All who attempt to solve problems, make recommendations and predict the future, need theories, models, and as a starting point, concepts'. For the purpose of this study, the Excellency theory and the Systems theory will be used. The study will also be framed by three organizational effectiveness models: the rational goal, the system model, and the strategic constituent's model.

#### 2.2 The Excellence theory.

The excellence theory explains the value of public relations to organizations and society based on the social responsibility of managerial decisions and the quality of relationships with stakeholder publics. For an organization to be effective, according to the theory, it must act in ways that solve the problems and satisfy the goals of stakeholders as well as of management (Grunig, 2002). Based on this theoretical premise about the value of public relations, Grunig's Theory of Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management, which resulted from a study conducted by James Grunig and his colleagues (Dozier, Grunig, & Grunig, 1995; Grunig, et al., 2002), suggests that success in PR is achieved by applying the characteristics of the excellence theory of communication to organizations.

In summary, the more these characteristics are reflected in an organization's practices, the more successful or excellent that organization will be. Excellence in PR is best practiced when: PR is involved in strategic management, PR is differentiated from marketing and other management functions, internal communication is symmetrical in nature and when there is Gender balance in managerial positions.

### 2.3 The Systems Theory

Ludwig von Bertalanffy who established the field of study known as the general systems as it is known today best codified this theory Little John, (1999:41). A system consists of two or more units that relate to each other in a structural relationship and form an entity whose elements are functionally interdependent (Abraham, 1991:39). The system theory describes an organization as a set of parts or subsystems which impact on each other and which together interact with the organization's environment.

Cutlip et al (2000: 229) describe it as: "A system is a set of interacting units which endures through time within an established boundary by responding and adjusting to change pressures from the environment to achieve and maintain goal states". Systems theory provides a useful theoretical underpinning for thinking about the role of PR since it notes that the well-being or otherwise of organizations is dependent on establishing and maintaining relationships both within itself and with its environment. Organizations has to adapt and adjust to changes in its environment since they are part of a social system which comprises of individuals, groups or publics such as employees, suppliers, distributors, etc. who are involved in it. PR works to initiate and maintain relationships with these groups to enable the organization to achieve its goals.

#### 2.31 Definition of Systems and Sub-systems

The organization is a system. It is made up of several departments that are sub-units or subsystems. The departments (sub units) are interdependent and help in fulfilling the goals and objectives of organization. Organizations are adaptive systems. They make adjustments based on the response from the environment. They also spend time, resources and effort in monitoring the environment.

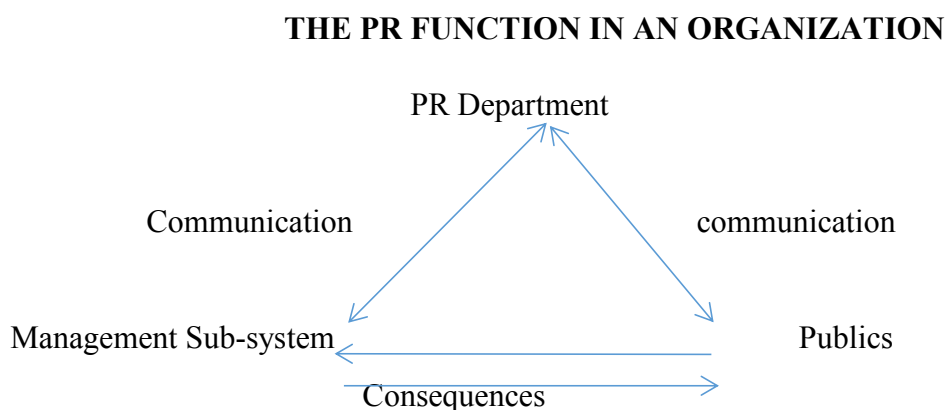


Figure 1; *The PR function in an organization as noted by Grunig & Hunt (1984)*

Due to the fact that the systems approach implies that an organization as a whole is composed of interrelated sub-systems, the performance of these sub-systems can affect the entire system or whole.

The PR sub-system in particular contributes to the success or failure of an organization. Management relies on the PR practitioner to initiate and sustain relations with all the various groups of publics.

## **2.4 Models of Organizational Effectiveness**

An effective organization is one that is able to make accounts of itself and its activities in means in which its stakeholders find acceptable. By indication, effectiveness is not a state but rather a process; it is a characteristic of relations and not outputs; it is negotiated rather than produced.

Effectiveness is the ability of an organization to account successfully for its outputs and operations to its various internal and external stakeholders.

Several models have been developed to show the richness of the organizational effectiveness construct. The traditional model relies on a vision of the organization as a rational set of arrangements oriented toward the achievement of goals (Goodman et al. 1977). Effectiveness is measured in terms of accomplishment of outcomes (Etzioni 1960). The focus is exclusively on the ends: achievement of goals, objectives, targets, etc. The system model, while not neglecting the importance of the ends, emphasizes the means needed for the achievement of specific ends in terms of inputs, acquisition of resources and processes (Yuchtman and Seashore 1967).

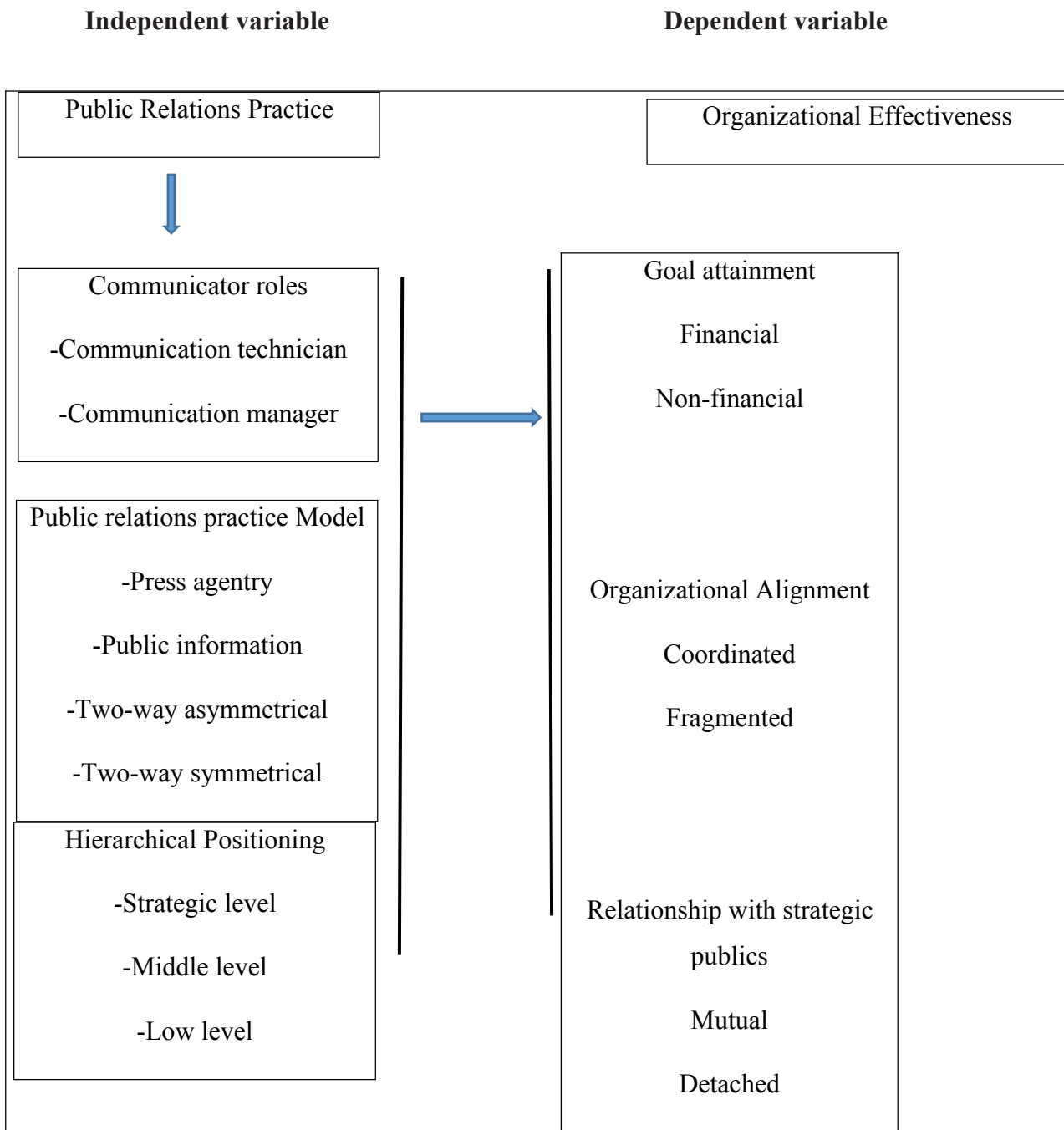
The conception of the organization is grounded in the open system approach whereby the inputs, transformation process and outputs are considered part of a whole and not independent components. The strategic constituent's model broadens the scope of the two previous models by adding the expectations of the various powerful interest groups that gravitate around the organization Connolly, Colon and Deutch (1980). Thus, the organization is perceived as a set of internal and external constituencies that negotiate a complex set of constraints, goals and referents Goodman et al. (1977). That is, the owners, employees, customers, suppliers, creditors, community and government represent interest groups that must be satisfied in order to ensure the effectiveness and survival of the organization.

## **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

The supporting variables in this research are Public relations practice on one hand and Organizational effectiveness on the other as both independent and dependent variables respectively. The work of Broom, Dozier, and their colleagues provides the foundation for much of our understanding of public relations roles. In a series of studies, they identified four primary roles as Communication Technician,

Expert Prescriber, Communication Facilitator, and Problem-solving Facilitator (Broom 1982; Broom & Smith 1979; Broom & Dozier 1986; Dozier & Broom 1995).

There are many ways to measure the effectiveness of an organization borrowing from the different models, organizational effectiveness is indicated by among others: goal attainment, organizational alignment, and relationship with key publics (Friedlander and Pickle, 1967). Based on the elaboration above, the two variables of the study can be conceptualized as below:



Public relations can contribute to organizational effectiveness in the areas given in the above diagram. A well performed PR communication roles will result in effective planning, formulating and dissemination of information. An improper implementation of the roles will lead to communications lapses which will result in ineffectiveness in the organization. Alignment of different units in the

organization is strengthened by the roles. This will ensure smooth orchestration, getting things done faster and yielding good results and that is achieving effectiveness. In addition, if a two-way symmetrical communication is adopted by the PR department, there will be a strong relationship bond with key publics while relationship with key publics is weak if two-way symmetrical communication is not adopted by PR. Achieving organizational goal is up to a point dependent on the existence of PR at the strategic management level.

## **2.6 Review of Variables**

### **2.61 Communicator Roles**

Roles are abstractions of behavior patterns of individuals in organizations. Roles guide actions of individuals, such that actions mesh with repetitive activities of others to yield predictable outcomes. (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p.189). According to Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven, “roles are the collection of daily activities that people do.” According to Steyn (2000), the concept of roles refers to the standardized patterns of behaviour required of individuals in specific functional relationships. The groundbreaking work by Katz and Kahn (1978:186) gave the role concept a central place in the theory of organizations. Glen Broom fathered roles research in communication and PR. The following four roles, first conceptualized by Broom and Smith (1979) dominate practitioner roles studies: Communication Technician, Communication Facilitator, Problem Solving Facilitator, and Expert Prescriber. Later, Dozier (1983) argued that the last three roles were similar and he combined them to form the communication manager role.

Communication Technician; Practitioners in this role do not partake in management decision-making, but carry out the low-level mechanics of generating communication products that implement the policy decisions made by others. They provide the communication and journalistic skills such as writing, editing, audio-visual production, graphics and production of messages needed to carry out programs. This role linked to the press agency and public information models.

Communication facilitator serves as the go-between, interpreter or link between management and stakeholders/publics Broom and Smith (1979). Role is that of boundary spanning and can be linked to the public information and two-way symmetric models.

Problem Solving Facilitator works with top management and others in defining and solving communications problems, becoming part of the strategic management team. This role is in contrast to the expert prescriber, and can be linked to organizations practicing the two-way symmetric model.

Expert Prescriber is seen as the authority on communication problems and solutions, best informed about communication issues and best qualified to answer communication questions. This role leads to passive management involvement and practitioners are held responsible for program results. The Expert prescriber role can be linked to two-way asymmetric and publicity or press agency models.

Dozier (1983) researched on the four original public relations roles by Broom (1979) and found that the PR roles of Communication Facilitator, Problem solving facilitator, and expert prescriber were highly correlated, but the role of communication technician was not correlated with them. Because of this, Dozier simplified the roles and combined the three to become what is known as the manager role, and the technician role he found to remain separate.

If it follows that using the original four roles, or the two-role dichotomy, no practitioner will fall into a single role at all times (Broom, 2009; Dozier & Broom, 1995; Moss, Newman, & DeSanto, 2005). However, practitioners do tend to have a dominant role they often implement (Broom, 2009).

## **2.62 Models of public Relations.**

In the early centuries, there were no public relations theories so the early practitioners had little or no guidelines that will direct them to making communications, plans, tactics, strategies or programs. James Grunig who is widely regarded as a PR authority and practitioner for over 20 years and Todd Hunt suggested models that have helped tremendously to create advances in the field of public relations. Grunig's research on models of public relations revealed four ways in which public relations was practiced. The four models in Grunig's and Hunt's theories are; the Press Agency Model, the Public Information Model, the One-way Asymmetric Model and the Two-way Symmetric Model Grunig and Hunt (1984) .

First, was the Press Agency Model which is also known as the publicity model was based on the view that any publicity was good publicity. No publics were identified, no goals were established, and no evaluation occurred. This was a communication method used to sell products or services without any quantitative analysis of the results. It came from the press agents to their publics by using persuasion and manipulation to influence behaviour of their audience. This model is characterized by exaggeration, lies and manipulation.

Second was the Public Information Model which sees accuracy of the message as more vital. It does not have any methods for quantitative analysis of result rather, practitioners are less interested to gather feedback from their audience. This is because it does not open communication in a any way to

generate feedback. A little research was involved in the process. However, Huang (1997) noted that the organizational goal of this model was to adapt or cooperate with its environment.

Third was the Two-way Asymmetric Model asymmetrical model which involved research however, the research was performed primarily for persuasion goals for the good of the organization. Information was used by organizations to coordinate and direct campaigns to convince publics to think or behave in certain ways. its aim was to influence attitudes of their audience therefore, practitioners hardly thought about balanced communication.

The last approach was the Two-way Symmetrical model. The basic difference with the two-way asymmetrical approach was the recognition that information can and should flow both to and from the organization to its environment. It generates feedback on the part of the audience and the feedback the organization gathers is used to change organizational practices. This model proposed that organizations should be adaptable to change as stakeholders. Thus, this perspective is the best normative model of all the four models. Professionals use a technique known as Environmental Scanning that helps them monitor the environment for possible issues that might result in involvement before a particular public relations model is employed.

### **2.63 Hierarchical Positioning**

Hierarchy is a way to structure an organization using different levels of authority and a vertical link, or chain of command, between superior and subordinate levels of the organization. Higher levels control lower levels of the hierarchy. Hierarchical positioning is the level a particular unit is placed in an organizational structure. i.e whether the unit is placed at the top level, middle level or the lower level.

You can think of an organizational hierarchy as a pyramid. This positioning shows the division of responsibilities within a department. Public Relations department work apace with other departments such as Marketing, Human Resource, Accounting, Legal, Operations and Research. The departments are organized by a decision making system that is referred to as the dominant coalition. The dominant coalition is the management of an organization which comprises of the governing board/council and the management members of an organization. Sometimes depending on the needs, culture and the person who practices PR in an organization, he/she may be part of the dominant coalition or not (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier 2002). These key decision makers (dominant coalition) have great effect on organizational structure and process.

The involvement of a public relations voice in the dominant coalition can help avert crises and reputational damage by considering the interests of publics Bowen, Rawlins, & Martin, (2010).

Organizations whose public relations functions are commended have less difficulty in stabilizing its needs with that of their publics. Dominant coalition refers to “the group of senior managers who control the organization” J. Grunig, (1992:5). The excellence theory supports that the senior public relations practitioner must have a place/position in top management or have uninterrupted relationships with senior managers in an organization since the dominant coalition are responsible for making key strategic decisions (J. Grunig, 1992). PR will not be able to perform its roles as adviser who helps the organization to examine the issues of the organization’s strategic publics until it is part of the dominant coalition Grunig, Grunig & Dozier (2002).

## **2.64 Organizational Effectiveness (OE)**

Gaertner & Ramnarayan(1983) in their study on how organizations account for the work they do define effectiveness as the ability of an organization to account successfully for its outputs and operations to its various internal and external stakeholders. Effectiveness is the achievement of identified goals of cooperative effort Bernard (1938). In addition to this definition, he says the level of accomplishment is the level of effectiveness. However, there are times that these objectives become difficult to define and measure, viewed by differently by various organizational members and used as a cover up for the secret agenda of the powerful forces within the organization. Organizational theorist Daft (2001) defined organizational effectiveness as the extent to which an organization realizes its goals.

From the early development of organizational theory Organizational effectiveness (OE) has been one of the most widely researched issues (Rojas 2000). It is problematic to define organizational effectiveness because it is relative to people depending on their perspectives. There are no definitive theories that has been brought forth so whichever definition is a justification of how different people assess and define effectiveness. Steers (1991) draws our attention to the difference between official goals(what organizations profess they do) and operative goals (what they do in actual fact) and what is important are the operative goals. In order to tackle some of these limitations, Zamuto (1984) embraces a stakeholder approach where organizational effectiveness is defined as human judgement about the eligibility of the outcomes of organizational performance from the point of view of the different stakeholders who directly or indirectly affect the organization. Whichever way effectiveness is measured or defined, it must take into consideration that the wishes or desires of stakeholder and the society change over time, and this is why it is a multidimensional activity.

Friedlander and Pickle (1967) express this succinctly when they assert that effectiveness criteria must take into account, the profitability of the organization, the degree to which it satisfies its members and

the degree to which it is of value to the larger society. These three perspectives involve system maintenance and growth, subsystem fulfillment and environment fulfillment. Management accounting scholars also agree that organizational effectiveness is vital for the organization's survival and cannot be ignored by managers that put pressure on the performance measurement systems and implicitly expand the boundaries of the performance definition and criteria.

## **2.7 Empirical Review**

### **2.7.1 Public Relations Practice in Ghana**

There are studies on PR so far conducted in Ghana. The starting point of public relations in Ghana is strenuous to point out. Gyan(1991) observed that efforts at made to discover when public relations started in Ghana are mostly face with dissatisfaction apparently because of lack of knowledge and appreciation of the field. Further, she argues that the inception of public relations in Ghana cannot be separated from the colonial history of the country since the essential positions were occupied by emigrants during that period. Nukunya (1992) suggested that the inability of Ghanaians to occupy such positions during that period was because many Ghanaians had not acquire enough education and training at that time to qualify them for the position. However, after Ghana gained independence, the foreign-led administration changed because it started to employ Ghanaians as principal secretaries in the ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) Gyan(1991).

This action was accompanied by the multi-national enterprises and presently many companies realized how important it is to have Ghanaians as intermediaries to connect them with people in authority and in the ministries. Gyan foregrounds that it was the pursuit for a communications connection between the big multi-nationals and the public and government agencies that brought about public relations practice in Ghana. Meanwhile, public relations in the ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) was managed by Information Services Department (ISD) before this time, according to Gyan (1991). The ISD employed public relations practitioners predominantly from the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) and some press houses, and further trained them. As at that time, Public relations was recognized as media relations and always compared to journalism. Gyan argues that "it was thus the period when public relations' fluid functions and octopus nature of its responsibilities was either unknown or ignored"(1991, p. 25).

## **2.72 The Excellency Study**

While several studies there have been done in relation to the effects of PR on organizational effectiveness (OE), Excellence study is the most common. The study basically seeks to find out the role that PR plays in organizations and how PR contributes to OE. To answer the question “effectiveness”, first, the Excellence research team pinpoint the four avenues to OE : the goal attainment approach, the systems approach, the strategic constituencies approach and the competing values approach from organizational theory (J. Grunig and Huang, 2000). After the identification of the four approaches to organizational effectiveness, the research team continued and conducted both quantitative and qualitative research across various countries and derived factors that contribute to effective public relations and that is the answer to the “Excellence” question.

Hon and J. Grunig (1999) suggested based on the discoveries of the excellence study that, the benefit of public relations is in “relationships” that an organization establishes and maintains with strategic publics. This is because organizations become effective when achieving their goals; by means of quality relationships, organization can achieve goals because they choose goals valued by strategic publics (J. Grunig & Hung, 2002; L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002).

Effective organizations can choose goals that their publics value and can achieve such goals because their publics support them and this is due to the level relationship management between an organization and its publics (Hon & J. Grunig, 1999). Just as J. Grunig and Hung (2002) indicated, “... ineffective organizations cannot achieve their goals, at least in part, because their publics do not support and typically oppose management efforts to achieve what publics consider illegitimate goals” (p. 10). Hence, J. Grunig and L. Grunig (2001) inferred that, in order to be effective as an organization, you should behave ethically and be socially responsible, which also means that an organization should engage in “quality relationship management” with its publics. J. Grunig and Repper (1992) proposed that these kinds of excellent public relations features help the public relations function to be effective and as well contribute to overall organizational effectiveness. Concisely, the essential attributes of excellent public relations involve the following practices: 1) identifying “strategic publics” from the environment and 2) practicing a “symmetrical” model of public relations to cultivate quality relationships with these strategic publics (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002).

## **2.8 Public Relations at Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG)**

Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) is a limited liability company wholly owned by the government of Ghana and operating under the Ministry of Energy (ME). The company is responsible for the

distribution of electricity in the southern part of Ghana namely; Ashanti, Central, Eastern, Greater Accra, Volta and Western regions.

The PR department was set up because there is the need for someone to communicate to stakeholders, bring out the intent and purpose of the business to other people, someone to help create an environment for the business as well as someone the publics of the organization can speak to. In addition, the organization need someone to take care of the social responsibility, one who can prepare strategies, anticipate crises and find ways to manage them and also one who can consistently maintain the image and reputation of the organization and win the trust of its publics. He said the PR department has been in existence for 30years. [www.ecgonline.info](http://www.ecgonline.info)(2019).

### **2.81 How PR is Managed at ECG**

The General Manager is the one in charge of PR and Corporate communication. The sectional managers, (Manager for PR Department and Corporate Brand Identity) come after the general manager. Under the PR manager are divisions who help in the day to day running of PR activities. The PR manager is in charge of managing and enhancing the reputation and image of the company. The officer of PR (i.e. the Regional PRO) reports administratively and functionally to the General Manager while the General Manager reports directly to the CEO. PR is part of management and part of decision making process.

In a study conducted by Bosumtwi (2015) on crises preparedness of ECG, according to the PR Manager at that time, the particular communication practices used in preparing employees towards crises involve series of organizational meetings at the head office, regional, district and departmental levels. He also highlighted that ECG as an organization, believes that having frequent meetings with the staff is a major part of their crises preparation process. This is because involving employees in meetings regularly makes them feel like they are a “part of the organization, so they understand you when you get into crises”.

### **2.9 Critique of Existing Literature**

Little research has been conducted in the area of PR practice and organizational effectiveness. Traces of studies conducted in Europe. America and West Africa were made but there are no studies elsewhere. Studies were done in the practice of PR such as Onsongo et al (2017), Dornyo & Adiku(2015), Eniola(2011) mostly drew information from the educational context. The findings revealed how PR is implemented in educational institutions (universities). These studies did not look at the situation outside the educational sector. The studies done in the corporate industry such as

Omondi (2012), Grunig, Grunig & Dozier (2010), Toth (2009), were in North America and Europe. These studies revealed the contribution of PR in organization effectiveness in the corporate industry. These studies failed to paint a picture of the situation outside North America. The few studies conducted in Ghana Such as Bosumtwi (2015), Aggrey (2008) observed Internal communication in organizations and the use of research in PR. These studies failed to find out the role of PR in organizational effectiveness in Ghana.

Therefore, it was of essence that more studies are conducted in other organizations including Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) to specifically reveal the connection between public relations and organizational effectiveness in corporate institutions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Chapter Overview**

This chapter describes the methodological approaches which was used in this study. Explanation of the research design, sampling, sample size, process of data collection, data instrument used and how it was administered as well as data analysis that was used in conducting this study.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study employed a qualitative method approach. It applied a case study using in-depth interview to collect relevant data. The qualitative method is the preferred choice because In-depth interview was used to get information from key respondents concerning the PR strategies and roles employed to achieve effectiveness at ECG. An in-depth interview is defined by Wimmer & Dominick (2011) as a face to face interaction which is aimed at obtaining information or responses to a specific phenomenon. This method was applied because it had an overall focus and has helped derive rich data. In addition, Daymond & Holloway (2002) says that applying in-depth interview in a study “tends to be oriented to a wide range of interconnected activities, experiences, beliefs and values of people in terms of the context in which they are situated”.

#### **3.2 Research Type**

Institutions that are responsible for producing, transmitting, and distributing electricity power in Ghana are called the Ghanaian Electric Power Industry of which ECG is part of the distributors of electric power. They serve as a link between the power producers (Volta River Authority) and the consumers (the general public). ECG are one of the major distributors of power to consumers such as residential, commercial and large industries in Ghana. ECG is divided into Head office, Regional offices and District offices and has divisions who work collectively with the Managing Director who forms the top management. The divisions include Accounts, Finance, Operations, legal, Engineering, Audit, Material and Transport, Human Resources and Customer Services.

Administratively, ECG operates in 8 regions in Ghana namely, Central, Volta, Oti, Greater Accra, Eastern, Western, Western North and Ashanti Regions and has regional offices in each of these regions. The regional offices are headed by Regional General Managers (RGM) in each District, there is a District office and are headed by District Managers. Majority of the employees who are field

workers belong to the junior staff category and the senior category are those who play supervisory, assignment of tasks and delivering of information to the junior rank. The management staff who are responsible for decision making include top managers, directors and assistant managers.

### **3.3 Sampling**

In selecting the sample for this study, a purposive sampling was employed. This was used to gain preliminary knowledge of the respective respondents. Purposive sampling was done on the grounds of availability or firm judgment of the researcher. In addition, the researcher needed specific information for the study. In purposeful selection, the logic is that the strategy for sampling must serve the purpose of the study (Patton, 2015).

The units of analysis for this study were Electricity Company of Ghana staff each from the public education and announcement, Customer service, Operations, the Public Relations (PR) Manager and the CEO at the head office. However, the researcher could not have access to the CEO and hence replaced it with another PR officer who is a subordinate of the General Manager of PR. These respondents who are located at the head office were sampled for the interview because of their assigned roles and specialty. The General Manager of PR is represented at the management of the organization and is well informed about the subject matter.

Due to the intuitive nature of non-probability sampling, the data that was obtained with the study may not precisely represent the total population hence, results from the study cannot be generalized to other cases.

### **3.4 Sample size**

The respondents comprised of a sample size of 5 respondents for the interview. The General Manager of PR, the PR Officer, a representative from the Corporate Services, a Customer Service representative and one from connections and disconnections.

### **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

The method to be employed in this research is In- depth interview which involved making use of an interview guide as a tool. This method was suitable because, using a semi-structured interview question guide to conduct an interview with key respondents who for the purpose of this study are the The General Manager of PR, the PR Officer of ECG, served as a guideline to seek their views and

experiences on Public Relations and its role in organizational success. In addition, the interview gave room for a face to face interaction with the respondents and more in depth information was collected. The data which was collected from the interview confirms the credibility of information provided by the respondents pertaining to the study.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedure**

Collection of data for this study came from both primary and secondary sources. The General Manager of PR was given an interview request letter to be able to schedule an interview appointment to start the process. Interview was conducted on a set date with the General Manager of PR. Later, interview questions were sent to other respondents through WhatsApp and their responses were submitted in the form of voice notes through the same medium. In a situation where the CEO was not available for the interview, a PR officer was substituted. The case where a customer service personnel was not available, an additional staff from the disconnection and connection department was substituted. The responses of the interview was recorded down verbatim. The secondary sources of data collection includes journals, published sources, books, and online information.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Analysis of qualitative data was based on the three stages of data analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994). These are reduction of data, display of data and drawing conclusion. Reduction of data will be done by taking notes of important themes and patterns which have been repeated from field and summarizing them. The repeated themes were figured out by discretely going through the responses. The data was transcribed and arranged in order of relevance to the research questions. The answers provided in the interview were examined and some quotations made by the respondents were selected for discussion.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter shows the findings that were produced from the interviews used in collecting data for this study. This chapter further discussed the findings based on research questions, literature reviewed and the Excellence and Systems Theory.

#### 4.0 Results and Analysis

This part presents the result of the in-depth interviews that were conducted with the respondents at ECG head office in response to the research questions for this study. Four themes were created from the interview transcript.

#### 4.1 Position and Roles of PR in ECG's Structure

This theme indicates responses that shows the placement of PR in the organizational structure and the role PR plays in the organization. According to the General Manager of PR, the CEO comes first on the organizational structure, under the CEO is the Managing Director and all other General Managers of various department including PR fall under the Managing Director. He further stated that he reports directly to the Managing Director and he also have internal and external Managers under him. Also, he noted that every PR practitioner is more likely to combine all the roles. At ECG, the roles are played depending on the situation. I.e. He might decide to play either the technician or officer role depending on the situation though there might be a strategic plan at management. This corresponds with Broom (2009), where he stated that practitioners do not have specific roles they implement. The drive for the discussion is quoted below.

I am the General Manager of PR at ECG which is the same as the head of PR. I attend management meetings and I report directly to the managing director (MD). I have managers under me. One internal and one external. There are PR officers in the regions and they write monthly report to me. I do the thinking, play the managerial role, analyze what is going on and I give solutions. I play strategic role at the same time.

As the General Manager of PR, I play all the roles depending on the situation I find myself in and what I think will solve the problem. I can decide to play the officer role, the technician role where I can address a press conference. But I would have had a strategic plan or method at management. I am part of management. (Respondent 1, 07/09/2020).

This interview also shows the hierarchical placement of PR in the organization which paves way for the dynamic roles played by PR in the organization. PR being at management level and part of decision making has enabled practitioners to play both the managerial and technician role at ECG to help achieve effectiveness. This also corresponds with what Bowen, Rawlins, & Martin, (2010) said that involving PR in the voice of dominant coalition can help prevent crises and reputational damage in an organization. The excellence theory supports this assertion that PR must have a place in top management since they make key strategic decision (Grunig, 1992).

#### **4.2 Strategic plan by PR in achieving effectiveness**

This sub-theme shows the strategic plans put in place separately by the PR unit of ECG to help achieve effectiveness in the organization. This was a question that was asked respondent 1 (General Manager of PR) and according to him, PR has no separate strategic plan from the overall company plan. He sets targets having in mind the overall objective by looking at the tactics and evaluation. This is because he is part of management and hence PR is included in the overall plan or goal of the company. This indicates that, all managers work together to achieve a common goal. The quotation below is the force behind the discussion.

There is no separate strategic plan from the overall goal of the company. So we are part of the strategic plan for the year. Some time ago, we had a five year strategic plan, or two year strategic plan, and I am part of it. After, I set target having in mind the strategic goal of the company. The directorates synchronize for us to achieve a common goal. So I cannot run a strategic plan separate from the company.

#### **4.3 Challenges faced at ECG**

This theme shows the responses from the five respondents concerning the challenges that ECG faces in their line of work. According to the five respondents, Capital intuition, illegal connection, inadequate money to inject in the transmission lines, excessive customer complaints and inadequate resources were mentioned and the challenges they face at ECG. Some of the challenges such as inadequate money to inject in the transmission lines as mentioned are not directly caused by ECG, however, they are blamed for it. One respondent asserts that, *“Immediately there is not enough money in the upstream to inject into GRIDCO to transmit the lines. Anytime they have problems it affect us”* (Respondent 1). Another respondent commented that, *“Some of the challenges I face in my work includes excessive customer complains. As a front liner or middle person between the organization and your public, you face the challenge of having so many customer complaints at a time”*

(Respondent 2). The third respondent stated that, “Numerous complaints from the customers. The understanding of the sector by the customers”. Respondent 4 mentioned that, “When I do not have enough resources to work”. Another respondent also explained that, “Illegal connection. Sometimes we disconnect people and they go behind us to reconnect their lines” (Respondent 5).

**4.4 How challenges are solved:** This sub-theme presents how the various respondents help solve these challenges in achieving success in the organization. According to the General Manager of PR and other respondents, people have been educated on how the power system works. However, it is the duty of ECG to make sure they supply their customers with power because they pay their money to ECG and not to the other industries in the chain. Concerning the other problems, solving them depends on the type of problem it is at a particular time. If it needs campaigns, announcements, press conference or dealing with customers directly to solve the problem, the choice will be made depending on the situation. Interestingly, inability of customers to pay bills is not seen as a problem because a system has been created to solve this issue. i.e the prepaid system where the customer will have to purchase electricity before having access to it usage.

R1. “We contribute by bringing our expertise in the area of communication and relationship to work. That is how we work in achieving the goal of the company.”

R2. “I identify problems of customers and recommend them to the appropriate quarters. I will give you the assurance, forward your complaint to the officer in charge, and the officer in charge will solve the challenge and contact you appropriately. When it comes to other challenges in relation to relationships, we are able to talk to customers and calm them down.”

R3. “It depends on the department that is in line with the complaints that we forward it to and make sure we follow up when problem is solved. We make sure we are in touch with the customer who lodged the complaint.”

R4. “I manage to work with the available resources I have at the point of the problem.”

R5. “When it happen like that, we report those customers to the necessary authority to handle. But now, we have the prepaid system that is also helping to solve this problem”.

From this interview, it seems that staff from the PR department and staff from all other department work hand in hand to help solve the problems faced by ECG. This shows that all units work together to achieve a common goal. In addition, the organization consider relationship building as key hence they make sure they communicate with their clients even after solving the problem.

#### 4.5 How effectiveness is measured

This theme presents how ECG measures effectiveness. All five respondents in their responses, measure effectiveness base on the result from solving a problem or, providing service or in the case of PR, the feedback the organization receives after a campaign or project has been put in place. An example is the feedback received through the media (all social media platforms, phone calls and messages). There is no specific way of measuring effectiveness as it depends on what you want to measure. Be it perception, understanding,

R1. “It is measured based on a particular campaign or strategy. We evaluate a campaign at a given time, after we run it and have interviews. The feedback from the audience help in evaluating. There is no specific way of measuring effectiveness”.

R2. “What we use to measure effectiveness is our service delivery, prompt response to customers issues, prompt services at our service centers and having the penchant to improve on our services. We also look at customer complaints and how they are resolved”.

R3. “We make sure we follow up with the complainant to make sure the problem is solved. That is one of the main ways we measure effectiveness here. Customer feedback is also one thing we use to measure effectiveness”.

R4. “When we get good returns from field”.

R5. “When work is done and customers give us feedback, we are able to know how we worked effectively.

From the responses, effectiveness at ECG is measure based on results. This corresponds with Etzioni (1960) who says measurement of effectiveness is focused on achievement of goals and objectives of an organization. Emphasis is placed on the ends. Furthermore, Goodman et al. (1977) stated that, both external and internal are groups of interest that must be satisfied to enable effectiveness and survival of an organization. This in line with the feedback generation that ECG performs. From the responses, ECG practices the two- way symmetrical communication which have built a strong relationship bond with key publics.

**4.6 Current level of effectiveness and channels used for communication at ECG:** This themes presents findings about the current level of effectiveness and the channels used to disseminating information and generating feedback at ECG. Findings from the interviews revealed that, some respondents describe the level of effectiveness as excellent while others say the company is on course and working towards achieving 100% effectiveness. Further, the company is makes effective use of advancement in technology to communicate with its stakeholders and publics. They make use of both

old media (TV, Radio and Print) and new media (social media platforms, websites.) These channels enable the company to put important messages across to its publics as well as create avenues for receiving feedback through the same medium which as a result, helps in measuring effectiveness and creation of strong relationship between the company and its publics. Below are the responses from the interview.

R1. “Excellent. Digital: Social media, website (new media), Traditional media: radio, TV and Print. They are used depending on the audience”.

R2. “We cannot say we are there yet, but we are getting there. We have made sure we maintain some sort of good relationship with our customers by providing them excellent services are sustained. We have mostly been using the social media platform. Our website also has a feedback button, twitter account, WhatsApp, YouTube, etc.”.

R3. “We are really working towards getting to that mark of 100%. It is progressive. People are getting to understand this sector very well. Per the feedback we get, I think we are on course. Social media is key. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook are the active social media we use. Emails, Text messages, WhatsApp”.

R4. “It is going on well. Through our supervisor”.

R5. “I would say we are performing better than before. I have a supervisor that I communicate through”.

From the interview, the level at which ECG has attained effectiveness has improved looking at previous perception of ECG in the minds of the public and from the responses. Also, the key channels used in communicating with the public according to the respondents are Facebook, Twitter, Websites, Emails, Text messages, TV and Radio in order to reach a larger audience and communicate effectively.

#### **4.7 Effect of PR on the organization**

This theme shows how the practice of Public Relations has affected the organization and how it has been helpful. The results revealed that the adoption of the practice of PR in the company has helped a lot in terms of communication both internally and externally, branding, relationship with customers, image and reputation building. According to one of the respondents, the organization would have had a bad image in the eyes of the public due to the fact that majority of people do not understand how the Power sector operates. The drive for this discussion are below.

R2. “PR has greatly contributed to the vision of ECG. PR made conscious effort in communication of the company both internally and externally. PR has impressed on engineers to understand the need to inform customers on time concerning outages which previously were not publicized as

ought to be. PR has also made effort to brand the company in the eyes of the public so PR has had a very great impact on the company with this current image which is near excellence. PR has done a great job and has brought customers very close to the organization”.

R3. “PR has really save us (ECG) a lot. We turn to explain to the customers to know what is happening. We are very effective because we give prior notice when there is going to be outages that will affect some areas”.

R4. “Positively”.

R5. “PR has helped us a lot because our customers are understanding us through the campaigns, announcements and adverts”.

The responses from the interview reveal that through the adoption and effective practice of PR as a management function, there has been a great positive change in the organization. Respondents from the interview emphasized on how PR has contributed to educating customers and building strong relationship between the organization and its publics despite the challenges. In addition, the bad image of ECG in the eyes of the public, is managed with the help of PR.

**4.8 How helpful the position of PR has been and the extent to which company depend on PR practice in achieving OE:** This theme presents how helpful the hierarchical positioning of PR in the organizational structure has been and also the extent to which ECG depends on PR due to its position. It shows if the success of the organization is solely dependent on PR alone. According to the General Manager of PR, the organization cannot depend on PR alone for success because other departments have their roles to play in order to achieve a common goal. Below is a quote from his response.

It is a team work, some of the fliers are made by marketing department. There is corporate planning, and other divisions that perform stakeholder engagement. Monitoring division looks at performance indicators and alert us if someone is not performing well. PR creates the attention that convince customers to fall in love with the company but PR also need help from all the others. PR performs better when the company itself is performing very well. PR only tells people what the company is capable of doing and not what it cannot do. Hence they make use of the Asymmetric type of communication where there is a balance or the excellence theory. PR alone cannot make the organization succeed but every organization need a strong PR.

The interview revealed that, the company work as a system where all departments depend on each other. Activities are coordinated to enable smooth running of the company. This can be related to the systems theory which was propounded by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in the 1940s. The systems theory views an organization as a set of units which interact together and impact on each other. The respondent further noted the type of model that is being practiced in the organization which is the two way symmetrical model where there is a balance in communication. This corresponds with the

excellence theory according to Grunig where there is a mutually beneficial relationship between the organization and its publics.

In addition, the respondent stated that ECG is practising the right PR and the placement of PR at the management/top level is the right place where PR should be.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the concluding part of the study. The first section is the summary of the study. In addition, it involves the limitation, recommendation for further study and conclusion.

#### **5.0 Summary of the Study**

This study focused on Public relations practice to organizational success in government organizations like Electricity Company of Ghana with the main objective of examining the contribution of public relations practice to organizational effectiveness at Electricity Company of Ghana. This study was established on Excellence theory and the Systems theory. In answering the research questions, in-depth interview was conducted with five sampled staff of ECG including the General Manager of PR and the results of the responses were analyzed using themes.

#### **5.1 Limitation**

The major problem the study encountered was gaining access to respondents from the other department on time so it took the researcher took quiet a while for the interview to be conducted. The number of organizations under study and sample size is too small so the results can't be generalized to other government institutions in Ghana. Future studies have to expand the scope and conduct it on a broader scale making use of different methodology.

#### **5.2 Recommendations**

Considering the Ghanaian context and based on the findings noted in the study and the constitution of the organization, there is the need for more studies to be conducted in the Public institutions in Ghana to examine the PR practices in such institutions and how efficient it is in the public sector of Ghana.

Also, practicing the right PR in organizations should not be overlooked, rather it needs to be empowered in Ghanaian business industry.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The practice of Public Relations at Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) is well implemented when established with the Excellence theory requirement. Below are conclusions drawn from the findings.

#### **1. The contribution of public relations communicator roles on organizational effectiveness at ECG.**

The communication managerial roles (I.e. the expert prescriber, communication facilitator and the problem solving facilitator) and the technician role are highly performed with the manager at the top level. Public relations officers are to great extent allowed to perform the technician roles in the organization and as a result, these roles have contributed tremendously to the effectiveness of the organization.

#### **2. The effect of public relations models on enhancing organizational effectiveness at ECG.**

How PR communicate and receives information has had influence on effectiveness in the organization. The two-way symmetrical model is largely practiced and the channels used have very good feedback component which allows exchange of information.

#### **3. The effect of public relations hierarchical placement on organizational effectiveness at ECG.**

Head of PR is part of the dominant coalition and contributes to strategic decision making of the organization.

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## **APPENDIX A : INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE GENERAL MANAGER OF PR, ECG.**

- 1) Can you give a brief background of your organization with regards to employee, population and locations?
- 2) Where is PR located in the organizations structure?
- 3) What roles do you play in terms of Public relations here at ECG?
- 4) Which strategic plans are in place as a PR unit to contribute to the effective running of the organization?
- 5) As an organization, what are the challenges you face are part of the power industry and how you try to manage success.
- 6) What are some of the problems ECG deals with through PR? Especially when you are being blamed for some problems because you are part of the production and distribution chain.
- 7) Which specific channels do you use in disseminating information and response messages?
- 8) How do you measure effectiveness?
- 9) What is the current level of effectiveness at ECG?
- 10) What is the effect of public relations communicator roles on organizational effectiveness?
- 11) Which PR models are used here at ECG?
- 12) How has the practice of PR models affected the organization?
- 13) Would you say the hierarchical placement of PR in the organization has helped in achieving success?

## **APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STAFF OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

1. What are the challenges you face in your line of work?
2. How do you help in solving some of these challenges?
3. What role do you play in the organization?
4. Which channels do you use in disseminating information and getting feedback?
5. How do you measure effectiveness?
6. What is the current level of effectiveness at ECG?
7. How has PR affected the organization?

## APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

### RESPONDENT 1

#### GENERAL MANAGER OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

**Interviewer:** Can you give me a brief background of ECG with regards to employee, population and locations?

**Interviewee:** We have been given only the Southern sector of the country, the whole of Ashanti region, Western (now two), Volta, Oti, Eastern, Central, Greater Accra, Southern Zone. Population of employees are around 6000.

**Interviewer:** What roles do you play in terms of Public Relations here at ECG?

**Interviewee:** In most of PR practicing, it is more likely for you to combine all the roles. As the General Manager of PR, I play all the roles depending on the situation I find myself in and what I think will solve the problem. I can decide to play the officer role, the technician role where I can address a press conference. But I would have had a strategic plan or method at management. I am part of management.

**Interviewer:** Where is PR located in the structure of the organization?

**Interviewee:** I am the General Manager of PR at ECG which is the same as the head of PR. I attend management meetings and I report directly to the managing director (MD). I am practicing the right PR in terms of the structure. I have managers under me. One internal and one external. There are PR officers in the regions and they write monthly report to me. I do the thinking, play the managerial role, analyze what is going on and I give solutions. I play strategic role at the same time. From the CEO, MD, and General Manager of PR and General Managers from other departments.

**Interviewer:** Which strategic plans are put in place as a PR unit to help contribute to the effective running of the company?

There is no separate strategic plan from the overall goal of the company. So we are part of the strategic plan for the year. Some time ago, we had a five year strategic plan, or two year strategic plan, and I am part of it. After, I set target having in mind the strategic goal of the company. So I cannot run a strategic plan separate from the company. The directorates synchronize for us to achieve a common

goal. Eg. One of the company's strategic plan is to increase revenue mobilization. What is the role of PR to achieve that target? That is where I set the strategy, I look at the tactics and objectives, evaluation.

Eg. Record announcements in different languages for the customers to pay. How am I going to implement the announcement, Is it cost efficient, effective? Depending on the channels I use, be it announcement van, information service department.

**Interviewer:** What is the name given to the bigger umbrella of the Power Industry and where does ECG falls?

**Interviewee:** The name given to the bigger umbrella of Power Industry is the Ministry of Energy. ECG is part of the value chain. We have those who generate the power like VRA, independent ones like Asogli. GRIDCO is the only one in Ghana that wheels the power to ECG. ECG then add value to it and distributes to the customers. This is how the value chain is.

**Interviewer:** How do you handle blames especially when the problem is not necessarily caused by ECG?

**Interviewee:** Those who are educated and what to know that ECG is not to be blamed, they know. These people are being educated on how the structure works. How do you expect us to be explaining to everybody that we are not the cause of some problems? If the person is not ready to listen, the person will not listen. Eg. During the dumsor period, there were people who understood how the structure, value chain works yet they were still angry with ECG because it is ECG they pay their money to. We can explain but still at the end of the day, we must let the power be stable. You paid your money to ECG for prepaid and if your power doesn't come, do you go and blame GRIDCO? (Laughs) No because you did not but from GRIDCO but ECG so ECG has to be blamed. ECG can not isolate itself from the blame game because it is part of the system and you must fix it because you are at the tale end of the budgetary. Anything that happens upstream, affects downstream. If Gas is not flowing, it affects power and if power is off, it affects the whole ECG and they are right to blame ECG because they pay their money to ECG. The explanation and education will continue but that is different from the anger of the customer. Educating will not solve the problem rather fixing it will do (laughs). As compared to some years back, we are delivering a more stable power supply (smiles).

**Interviewer:** What are some of the problems faced at ECG?

**Interviewee:** \* Capital intuition. A company that gives a lot of money to meet higher demand. Lots of people are building, after building they come and pay for electricity and want it instantly. If we want to meet the demand, we need to inject a lot of capital. We are all going to the same kitty for the money for government to help and that is a problem.

\* Issue of illegal connection. In other places, the law is intense and people are arrested but here, it is seen normal and that is a major problem.

\* Immediately there is not enough money in the upstream to inject into GRIDCO to transmit the lines. Anytime they have problems it affect us.

\* Inability of customers not being able to pay on time is not seen as a problem according to him because if you as a customer say you don't have money to pay for electricity, that is why it has been changed to prepaid.

**Interviewer:** How does PR help in solving these problems?

**Interviewee:** It depends on the problem we are having. If It calls for announcement, we make the announcement. If it calls for a campaign, we run the campaign. Eg. Last year, we runned a campaign called catch them young campaign where we went to the Senior high schools to educate and engage them about illegal connection. Or branding. But such campaigns, announcements, branding involves money so when the company doesn't have money to pay for such, then you are stacked. We contribute by bringing our expertise in the area of communication and relationship to work. That is how we work in achieving the goal of the company.

**Interviewer:** How do you measure effectiveness?

**Interviewee:** It depends. It is measured based on a particular campaign or strategy. We evaluate a campaign at a given time, after we run it and have interviews. In the case of having an interview or discussion at a media house, phone lines are open and the feedback from the audience help in evaluating. It depends on what I want to measure. Do I want to measure perception, change, and understanding of what is being communicated. What am I measuring? What methodology will I use to achieve what I am measuring? I have to first know what I am measuring before I decide how to measure. There is no specific way of measuring effectiveness (Nods).

**Interviewer:** Does the company largely depend on PR practice?

**Interviewee:** It is a team work, some of the fliers are made by Marketing department (smiles). There is corporate planning, and other divisions that perform stakeholder engagement. Monitoring division looks at performance indicators and alert us if someone is not performing well. PR creates the attention that convince customers to fall in love with the company but PR also need help from all the others. PR performs better when the company itself is performing very well. PR only tells people what the company is capable of doing and not what it cannot do. Hence they make use of the Asymmetric type of communication where there is a balance or the excellence theory. You know that you are delivering on the ticket of the company. It is easier to say it because you it is something you can do. We package what we are doing and let the people know that we are doing something great. PR alone cannot make the organization succeed but every organization need a strong PR.

**Interviewer:** What channels do you use in disseminating information and getting feedback?

**Interviewee:** Digital: Social media, website (new media)

Traditional media: radio, TV and Print. They are used depending on the audience.

**Interviewer:** Has the Positioning of PR in the Organizational structure helped?

**Interviewee:** Yes that is where PR should be.

**Interviewer:** What is the current level of effectiveness at ECG?

**Interviewee:** Excellent (confident).

**Interviewer:** Do you readjust strategic plans due to circumstances?

**Interviewee:** Yes. An example is the COVID-19 where we have to review some of our plans. So we do 6 months, 1 year review of plans. We have been affected badly by COVID-19 because we spend more money in observing the protocols, we are unable to disconnect people. Consumption is not high because businesses have closed down.

## RESPONDENT 2

### PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

**Interviewer:** What are the challenges you face in your line of work?

**Interviewee:** Some of the challenges I face in my work includes excessive customer complains. As a front liner or middle person between the organization and your publics, you face the challenge of having so many customer complaints at a time.

You have to look at complaints in your email, telephone complaints. Moving from one complaint to the other. And your job is to ensure that you address every complaint. The major challenge is responding to customer complaints.

**Interviewer:** How do you help in solving some of these challenges?

**Interviewee:** I identify problems of customers and recommend them to the appropriate quarters. Eg. If you are in Accra and you stay at Teshie and your light goes off and you want service connection and you come to the customer service center, mostly if you are treated well, then that is a plus. If you don't get the service that you desire, that comes to the PR outfit. Myself as the PR technician, takes it up and recommend it to the appropriate quarters. I will give you the assurance, forward your complaint to the officer in charge, and the officer in charge will solve the challenge and contact you appropriately. That is how I help in solving customer complaints. When it comes to other challenges in relation to relationships, we are able to talk to customers and calm them down.

**Interviewer:** What role do you play in your department?

**Interviewee:** I am a PR technician. My job is not the managerial one, I facilitate the implementation of PR programs and one of them is attending to customer complaints at the office. I play the role of an event organizer when there is an event. I also play the role of an intermediate between management and some staff at my level. I get information from my boss and pass it on to the members.

**Interviewer:** What channels do you use in disseminating information and getting feedback?

**Interviewee:** We have mostly been using the social media platform. Our website also has a feedback button, twitter account, WhatsApp, YouTube, etc. We use the same channels to disseminate timely

information concerning power outages, programs and other initiatives that we have started. Recently there was a power up that was launched. During the launch, there was extensive education on our social media handles. Customers got the understanding and we got feedback (some being impressive and some a little problematic).

**Interviewer:** How do you measure effectiveness?

**Interviewee:** What we use to measure effectiveness is our service delivery, prompt response to customers issues, prompt services at our service centers and having the penchant to improve on our services. Eg. Where a customer will pay their money after their premises being visited by our officers and within 24 hours they get service connection. That is the level of efficiency. We also look at customer complaints and how they are resolved.

**Interviewer:** What is the current level of effectiveness at ECG?

**Interviewee:** ECG has moved a step from where it was very bad in the eyes of the public and where there was no interface for customers to be attended to, where there was no means of reporting outages. But now, we attend to faults promptly, owing to the new measures we have put in place. I.e. social media. Websites, they prompts us to deliver prompt services to our customers. We cannot say we are there yet, but we are getting there. We have made sure we maintain some sort of good relationship with our customers by providing them excellent services are sustained.

**Interviewer:** How has the practice of PR affected the organization?

**Interviewee:** PR has greatly contributed to the vision of ECG. ECG is a purely engineering based company and initially, HR was the functional body coordinating all the affairs of the company. Some time back, ECG had PR and PR was under HR. It was after proposals were made that it was moved to the Managing Director's office, it was after this moving that PR made conscious effort in communication of the company both internally and externally. PR has impressed on engineers to understand the need to inform customers on time concerning outages which previously were not publicized as ought to be. PR has done that and now it has brought customers up to speed. The employment of PR officers in all the regions, we are able to spread information about outages that also helped the customers to plan. This gives us a thumps up from our customers. PR has also made effort to brand the company in the eyes of the public so PR has had a very great impact on the company with

this current image which is near excellence. PR has done a great job and has brought customers very close to the organization.

### **RESPONDENT 3**

#### **CORPORATE SERVICES**

**Interviewer:** What are the challenges you face in your line of work?

**Interviewee:** Numerous complaints from the customers. The understanding of the sector by the customers.

**Interviewer:** How do you help in solving some of these challenges?

**Interviewee:** We have departments. It depends on the department that is in line with the complaints that we forward it to and make sure we follow up when problem is solved. We make sure we are in touch with the customer who lodged the complaint. A lot of calls, messages, emails, social media and exchange of messages.

**Interviewer:** What role do you play in the organization?

**Interviewee:** Customer Service operative and PR.

**Interviewer:** What channels do you use in disseminating information and getting feedback?

**Interviewee:** In this era of social media where about 2million Ghanaians log onto daily, it is a place you can't afford to use. Social media is key. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook are the active social media we use. Emails, Text messages, WhatsApp.

**Interviewer:** How do you measure effectiveness?

**Interviewee:** We make sure we follow up with the complainant to make sure the problem is solved. That is one of the main ways we measure effectiveness here. Customer feedback is also one thing we use to measure effectiveness.

**Interviewer:** What is the current level of effectiveness at ECG?

**Interviewee:** I will say we are progressing. We are really working towards getting to that mark of 100%. It is progressive. People are getting to understand this sector very well. Per the feedback we get, I think we are on course.

**Interviewer:** How has the practice of PR affected the organization?

**Interviewee:** This organization would have had bad image in the eyes of the publics because people are yet to understand fully, that sector of Power distribution. The little problem they encounter, because we are the ones they pay their money to, they come to ask questions. PR has really save us (ECG) a lot. We turn to explain to the customers to know what is happening. We are very effective because we give prior notice when there is going to be outages that will affect some areas.

#### **RESPONDENT 4**

##### **DISCONNECTIONS AND RECONNECTION.**

**Interviewer:** What are the challenges you face in your line of work?

**Interviewee:** When I do not have enough resources to work.

**Interviewer:** How do you help in solving some of these challenges?

**Interviewee:** I manage to work with the available resources I have at the point of the problem.

**Interviewer:** What role do you play in the organization?

**Interviewee:** I do disconnections, reconnection and field investigation.

**Interviewer:** What channels do you use in disseminating information and getting feedback?

**Interviewee:** We send information through our supervisor

**Interviewer:** How do you measure effectiveness?

**Interviewee:** When we get good returns from field.

**Interviewer:** What is the current level of effectiveness at ECG?

**Interviewee:** It is going on well.

**Interviewer:** How has the practice of PR affected the organization?

**Interviewee:** Positively.

## **RESPONDENT 5**

### **DISCONNECTIONS AND RECONNECTIONS**

**Interviewer:** What are the challenges you face in your line of work?

**Interviewee:** Illegal connection. Sometimes we disconnect people and they go behind us to reconnect their lines.

**Interviewer:** How do you help in solving some of these challenges?

**Interviewee:** When it happen like that, we report those customers to the necessary authority to handle. But now, we have the prepaid system that is also helping to solve this problem.

**Interviewer:** What role do you play in the organization?

**Interviewee:** I handle the reconnections and disconnections of meters.

**Interviewer:** What channels do you use in disseminating information and getting feedback?

**Interviewee:** I have a supervisor that I communicate through.

**Interviewer:** How do you measure effectiveness?

**Interviewee:** When work is done and customers give us feedback, we are able to know how we worked effectively.

**Interviewer:** What is the current level of effectiveness at ECG?

**Interviewee:** I would say we are performing better than before.

**Interviewer:** How has the practice of PR affected the organization?

**Interviewee:** PR has helped us a lot because our customers are understanding us through the campaigns, announcements and adverts.