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**AN ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES IN PERCEPTION  
MANAGEMENT**

**BY**

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**MAPR19062**

**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF  
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AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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**STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the work presented is the result of my own initiative, original study and performance, and that no portion of it has been presented at this university or elsewhere for another degree or diploma. All references to the work of other people have been properly recognized. Therefore, I am liable for any mistake that may be found in this research work.

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**SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the preparation of this paper was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for the supervision of dissertations as laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

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**DR. ESTHER DARKU**

**DATE**

(Supervisor)

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to everybody who helped me in my journey pursue this degree.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Esther Darku, who directed me to complete this study. She also helped me develop a better understanding of academic writing and study, which I am grateful for.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CEOS - Chief Executive Officers

ICC - Internal Corporate Communication

MTN - MTN-Ghana

PR - Public Relations

## **ABSTRACT**

The study was focused on analysing PR strategies in perception management. The study then set the following objectives in conducting the study. The first was to determine PR strategies that can be used to manage perceptions. The second was to explore how public perception can affect an organization's reputation and the third was to find out way(s) of attaining a favourable public perception. The findings of the study indicates that community relations, CSR, social media management, media relations and others are among the PR techniques that could be used to control perception while social media management and community relations could be used to garner favorable public perception. The study recommended that individuals and organizations alike should take note of the concept of perception management if they cared about their public image.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

A positive corporate image provides organizations with individual features that lead to brand recognition (Lizarraga, 2010). Worcester (2009) notes improves consumer and employee loyalty as well as corporate reputation that corporate image consists of product image, brand image and brand consumer image. Perception management at the individual level as stated by Kellison and Mondello (2012) has been the focus of scholarship. However, it was not until the 1980s that perception management was first explored as an organisational apparatus used to influence public sensitivity (Elsbach, 2012).

Salancik and Meindl (1984) as cited in Kellison and Mondello (2012) studied the language of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in the messages that appeared in annual stockholder reports to determine how organisations attributed credit and blame for positive and negative events. When a positive outcome occurred, the CEOs were more likely to praise the organisation for positive events. By contrast, when a negative event occurred, blame was placed on environmental (or external) influencers.

Based on these findings, Kellison and Mondello (2012) notes that Salancik and Meindl (1984) hypothesised that organisations engage in presentational biases in “attempts to enhance management’s esteem or strategic efforts to present management as being sufficiently in control of organizational outcomes” (p. 251). This form of strategic communication was employed at the organisation level in order to influence the perceptions of the stakeholders, a notion further detailed by Elsbach (2012).

Benthaus, Risius and Beck (2016) argue that companies engage in social media in order to get in contact with the public in a positive way. The concept of self-presentation describes how individuals play conscious or unconscious roles in everyday life to positively influence other people's impression of oneself (Goffman, 1959: Benthaus, Risius and Beck, 2016). Hence, self-presentation is a self-centred concept dealing with what an individual does in its own interest (Benthaus, Risius and Beck, 2016).

Yeo and Youssef (2010) in line with this argument asserts that corporate image could be present a source of competitive advantage. This assertion is made in light of the argument that corporate image can only be formed over a long time, it becomes difficult to imitate. Besides corporate image creates consumer trust and deters competitors from entering the market.

Positive image according to Flavian, Guinaliu and Torres (2005) as cited by Virvilaite and Daubaraite (2011) empowers the company to attract new customers and increase stakeholders' trust in the company. Lindgreen and Swaen (2010) emphasize that image of a socially responsible company creates and strengthens competitive advantages, improves brand reliability, enforces corporate image, raises customer loyalty, creates emotional bond between the company and consumers. This goes to buttress the objective of this study to analyse Public Relations (PR) strategies in perception management.

## **1.1 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The Institute of Public Relations (2020) suggests that threats should be measured chronologically in order to be seen as successful in crisis management efforts. The primary concern in a crisis therefore has to be public safety. Failing to address the concern of public

safety intensifies the damage from a crisis. Reputation and financial concerns are considered after public safety has been remedied.

Management consulting according to Adizes, Cudanov and Rodic (2017) is operating primarily through the analysis of perceived and existing organizational problems, but on the other hand it could be considered as a creation of value for organizations through the application of knowledge, techniques and, assets to improve organizational performance which is in the unknown and hidden potential part of organizational Johari window. Perceptions of organization are shown through managers and consultants perceptions survey in southeast Europe region (Adizes, Cudanov and Rodic, 2017).

Yeo and Youssef (2010) stress that corporate image is influenced by information provided by the company itself and other groups. Virvilaite and Daubaraite (2011) suggest that corporate social responsibility is part of company's individuality. Individuality forms corporate image meaning corporate social responsibility has influence on corporate image. Corporate image is influenced by planned and accidental activities of the company.

Bearing these various arguments in mind, this study will attempt to analyse PR strategies in perception management. This is necessary because a number the literature reviewed, affirm the notion that having a good image is essential to an organization's success. The gap however arises in the breath where even though the literature touches on perception and PR separately, there appears to be little work done exploring the two concepts. This study will thus fill the gap by matching public perception to the practice of PR so as to help generate discourse on the effects, advantages and disadvantages among others.

## **1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study will be:

1. To determine PR strategies that can be used to manage perceptions
2. To explore how public perception can affect an organization's reputation
3. To find out way(s) of attaining a favorable public perception

## **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In line with the objectives set for the study, the researcher will attempt to answer the following research questions.

1. What PR strategies can be used to manage perceptions?
2. How public perception can affect an organization's reputation?
3. What is/are the way(s) of attaining a favorable public perception?

## **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study envisages being an essential source of acquiring information on appreciating how public perception is formed and plays out in relation to the practice of PR. This study will thus help understand this phenomenon and how to harness its advantages while serving as a means of equipping organizations with strategies which can help deal with the disadvantages of a negative perception. This study will be an add-on reference material for scholarly discourse on the subject matter appreciating the role PR in perception management.

## **1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This study will be organized into four (4) parts namely Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4. Chapter One will be the introductory part. It will focus on the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions and the significance of the study. In the second part, Chapter Two, the theoretical grounding of the study will be given. This will comprise of conceptual and theoretical framework and an empirical review. The third Chapter will deal with the research methodology. This will include population, sampling techniques, methods of data collection and the research instruments employed. Also, the data analysis methods will be discussed here. The fourth part, Chapter Four, will provide details on how the study will contribute to research. This will cover the summary of findings conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reviews literature related to this study. The study sought to assess the public perception of the practice of PR. This was done with the expectation that relevant information would be obtained to help shape and enrich the study. Knowledge of what has been done on this topic is important in helping to clarify issues. This chapter is organised under theoretical framework and related studies.

##### **2.1.1 Relevance of PR Organizations**

Investing in PR helps organizations accomplish their goals easily and effectively, according to Daft (2015). To inspire and draw the public to their services, organizations need efficient PR campaigns, even though their services may be good. The picture of an entity or an institution or a nation could be generated and developed by an efficient PR program. Even during adverse periods of advertising and crisis in an organization, successful PR could reduce misunderstandings and establish mutual understanding between the organization and its audiences (Harrison and Galloway, 2005). The Public Relations Society of America (2020) for instance notes that;

...by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions, PR helps our dynamic, pluralistic society to make decisions and work more effectively. It helps to put into balance private and public policies.

PR represents a wide range of social groups, such as corporations, trade unions, government agencies, charitable associations, charities, hospitals, schools, universities, and religious institutions. These organizations need to create successful relationships with several different audiences or publics, such as workers, stakeholders, clients, local communities, shareholders and other organizations, and with

society as a whole, in order to achieve their objectives (Public Relations Society of America, 2020a).

In order to achieve institutional objectives, the management of organizations needs to consider the views and beliefs of their populations. The external world forms the targets themselves. The PR professional serves as a management counsellor and as a mediator, helping to transform private goals into sound policy and action that is socially acceptable (Public Relations Society of America, 2020b).

Essentially, through its behaviour and its communication, the PR sector has evolved from its less illustrious history to involve the building of essential relationships between a company and its main audiences. This viewpoint describes the field as a feature of management and provides insight into the responsibilities and duties of PR practitioners.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.2.1 Hypodermic Needle Theory**

Hypodermic Needle Theory, also known as *Magic Bullet Theory* (hypodermic syringe model or transmission-belt model) was promulgated by Harold Lasswell in the 1920s. It was discussed in the book “Propaganda Technique” in the World War. The theory is a linear model of communication and talks about media’s power on its audience members. The message, in this theory, is said to be like a magic bullet which enters the minds of audience and injects a particular message. The theory explains how media controls what the audience views and listens to and the effects, which can be immediate or later in future (Bajracharya, 2016). The words *bullet* and *needle* are used to depict the powerlessness of the audience as media impacts public opinion and behaviour change. The theory was also influenced by media behaviourism of 1930s (Bajracharya, 2016).

Naveed (2016) posits that early mass communication theorists who saw the media as an external influence which triggered immediate responses frequently used behaviourist notions. This can be seen in how the Nazi propaganda films depiction of Jews triggered negative response in their German audiences. Repeated exposure to these images continuously conditioned them to have negative responses when they came into contact or thought about Jews. Naveed (2016) suggests that, these behavioural notions is what informed theorists to develop the Magic Bullet Theory.

The popularization of mass media along with the increase in advertising industry or propaganda has affected, both positively and negatively on audience. It is dangerous, as a huge mass is influenced directly and at the same time. Messages 'injected' can have the desired response which can cause problems and destruction or rule and uniformity.

This suggests that the audience cannot resist the received message from media which creates a uniform thinking amongst people. Through this means, a fixed mind-set and perception is created. To the extent that even a single piece of information can cause many brain alterations and change opinions subconsciously (Bajracharya, 2016).

In this theory, the public is presented as being vulnerable to message which is always infused and the media is tremendously strong. The theory believes that there are no other sources of media or alternative media to compare the media's message to. Media is the strongest at the time of crisis and in the time of war people depend on them for all the information. The theory was said to be used in Second World War by Germany and United States of America (USA) (Bajracharya, 2016).

### ***2.2.1.1 The Present Study and the Hypodermic Needle Theory***

The fact that the media is a key channel of communication cannot be underestimated. This information in this sense is one that favours organizations' interests. Day in and out, organizations make use of this theory by disseminating their various strategies through the media in forms of advertisements for instance. Carefully crafted messages are released and with time, an agenda is set, masses follow the band-wagon and it becomes more like a public opinion.

Xiao and Teng (2015) claim that positioning is a notion that attempts to paint an image in the minds of potential future customers. The purpose of advertising placement is to find the right and precise place in the minds of these customers. Ad positioning is also a way of helping the business or brand assess its place in the minds of customers through promotional activities (Xiao and Teng, 2015).

### **2.2.2 The Excellence Theory**

The Excellence theory is the first general theory of PR (Littlejohn, 2009). The theory was as a result of a 15-year study of best practices in communication management (Grunig, 2000) known as the Excellence Study. The Excellence Theory is a theory of excellence and effectiveness in PR and communication management. The theory specifies how PR makes organizations more effective, how it should be organized and managed in order for it to contribute to organizational effectiveness, and how to determine the monetary value of PR (Grunig, 2002).

The Excellence Theory first explains the value of PR to an organization and the society in which it operates. This value is based on the quality of Relationships an organization has with its stakeholder publics (Grunig, 2002). The theory asserts that in order for PR to make a contribution in an organization it must be part of strategic management (Grunig, 2008).

According to the theory, for an organization to be effective, it must solve the problem and satisfy the goals of both the manager and stakeholders. Organizations must identify their various publics who are affected by the decisions taken by the organization or those who want the organization to solve a problem important to them. To identify these publics, the organization must scan the environment. This is PR's contribution to strategic management (Grunig and Grunig, 2008).

The theory also suggests that organizations must communicate symmetrically with their publics. This facilitates the cultivation of quality, long-term Relationships with them. Through symmetrical communication the organization is likely to set and achieve goals desired by both the organization and its publics (Grunig and Grunig, 2008), since a good Relationship is essential and crucial to the survival of the organization. Grunig and Grunig (2008) explained that this is because a good Relationship reduces cost incurred in unfavourable circumstances like litigation, regulation, legislation and negative publicity. It also reduces the risk of making decisions which may have adverse effects on different stakeholders and increase the chances of the organization producing goods or services needed by various stakeholders and ultimately its base.

In addition to explaining the value of communication to an organization, the Excellence Theory provides four broad categories of the characteristics of an Excellent PR function that is how the PR function should be organized to attain maximum value (Grunig and Grunig, 2008). These characteristics are in the broad areas of PR as a management function, roles, models and the organization of the communication function.

#### ***2.2.2.1 The Present Study and the Excellence Theory***

Maintaining an excellent PR apparatus as an organization has become relevant over the past years. PR has a number of functions which comes in handy in stirring the affairs of

organizations. Unlike in recent times where the mass media was not as wide spread, often, what was known in one part of the country, did not reach other areas. However with the evolution of communication, being able to manage information has become very important. A PR function like research, social media management and environmental scanning are activities organizations can harness in their communication efforts.

Though the use of rhetoric and other forms of PR has almost always played a role in politics, it has become more systematically entrenched. Organizations not only need PR experts now to help manage their reputation, but to help them connect with the common man while they focus on the more important task of seeing their organizations attain higher feats in the business environment.

### **2.3 RELATED STUDIES**

Several researchers have done work on PR but this research will look at some which are in line with the work. The study reviewed works done by Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2012) and Kim and Lee (2010). The objective of the Sharma and Kamalanabhan's (2020) study was to model an internal corporate communication (ICC) process in the context of an Indian petroleum public sector undertaking. The study set to examine internal corporate communication and its impact on internal branding with a focus on the perception of Indian public sector employees.

An exploratory methodology capturing the perceptions of employees on internal brand communication practices prevailing in the organization with an ambition of becoming a leading employer brand was adopted. Interviews were the data collection instrument used to

undertake the study. The transcripts of interviews were analysed, coded thematically and the essences of experiences were jointly combined into one description (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2020).

Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2020) found out that there was relationship between ICC dimensions and internal branding outcomes. Secondly, this relationship recognized that ICC practices and brand training had a positive impact on communication satisfaction that further promotes a sense of brand identification, loyalty and commitment among the employees.

Kim and Lee (2010) also sought to undertake this study to examine the relationships among corporate image, brand awareness, service price, service quality, customer support services, and customer loyalty and investigate the key drivers that establish and maintain customer loyalty to mobile telecommunications service providers. This study was situated and organized in Korea.

In this endeavour, the study sampled four hundred and sixty-nine (469) participants. The study was a web-based survey which was analysed using multiple regression analysis techniques. The results of the study showed that corporate image, brand awareness, service price and service quality were strong antecedents for establishing customer loyalty in mobile communications service markets. Also, the empirical findings showed that corporate image played the most important role in establishing and maintaining customer loyalty in the markets. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers discussed possible strategies for marketing success in high-tech service markets (Kim and Lee, 2010).

### **2.3.1 How public perception affects PR practice**

Perceptions about PR affect the perceived credibility of the profession and influence whether people see PR as valuable to society (White and Park, 2010). White and Park (2010) notes that even though PR is of value to society, academic studies have found that the media have

consistently used the term PR in negative contexts. Regardless of the article's subject, PR is commonly used as an adjective (White and Lambert, 2006). Kinsky and Callison (2008) also found the word was used as an adjective in an examination of evening news broadcasts, and sometimes used as a pointless cliché or platitude with negative connotations. Scrimger and Richards (2002) found in another study of Canadian newspapers that the word PR was always provocative, and more than half the time used in the lead paragraph of the articles, likely to provide drama, regardless of the story's issue or news subject.

In line with the hypodermic needle theory, this notion has thus continued to influence people's minds regarding PR procedure, as Jones (2019) suggests. White and Park (2010) asserts that it is maybe time to stop thinking about how the media view PR and put those studies to rest in order to salvage the problems. To boost the reputation of the profession, it may be more important to think about how organizations represent PR and how strategic roles that support society can be made more visible.

### **2.3.2 How to attain favourable public image**

Bartleby (2020) argues that the definition of public image or credibility, in other words, is created by the general public's idea and opinion of a corporation. Public image is the interpretation of an organization and the credibility it retains in the society (Bartleby, 2020). As it is closely connected to corporate image, corporate branding is the secret to a good public image. Tench and Yeomans (2017) describe the idea of corporate image as how people (stakeholders) view an individual or an organisation. This further develops to establish a reputation that is again described by Tench and Yeomans (2017) as a picture created as a result of the interaction of the values, thoughts, feelings and experiences of an object of an individual. Virvilaite and Daubaraitė (2011) found that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) had a positive effect even though it was not the most significant factor that indicating potential

variables could influence the corporate picture. Kim and Lee (2010), however, clarified that corporate reputation was a major factor in creating customer loyalty, among other variables. In this regard, the need to consider the corporate brand crisis is highlighted by Balmer and Greyser (2009). In the view of Bartleby (2020), it is advantageous for an organization to continue maintaining a good public image as it helps them build an opinion as loyal and trustworthy regarding them. It will help you stand out from the rivalry of other rivals and ensure an outstanding public profile.

## **2.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter reviewed literature related to this study. This was done with the expectation that relevant information would be obtained to help shape and enrich the study. Knowledge of what had been done on this topic was important in helping to clarify issues. This chapter was organised under discussion of theories and related studies. The next chapter discusses the research methodology this study adopted.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the research methodology this paper adopted. This will include discussing the various research designs which will then narrow in on the approach this study adopted.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Kothari (2008) is of the opinion that research design is a way to solve the problem of research systematically. It includes the various steps taken in the analysis of the problem. In line with this, Creswell (2011) indicates that there are three ( 3) methods of study, namely qualitative , quantitative and mixed approaches to methods. The research design provides an overview of how the research is conducted; it provides an overview of the methods used and the procedures followed, as well as explanations or justifications for selecting particular methods and or procedures.

##### **3.1.1 Quantitative Research Design**

This research will employ the quantitative approach which Creswell (2011) notes that quantitative research is the process of collecting, analysing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study. Matthews and Ross (2010) also back this argument by suggesting that quantitative research methods are basically applied to the collection of data that is structured and which could be represented numerically. Generally quantitative data is collected when

researcher has adopted the positivist epistemological approach and data is collected that can be scientifically analysed.

### **3.1.2 Content Analysis**

This study will employ the content analysis method. Columbia University Libraries (2019) defines content analysis as a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within some given data. This method helps researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such certain words, themes, or concepts. This then gives researchers the opportunity to make inferences about the messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of surrounding the text. The study will in extension mainly explore the use of secondary data.

### **3.1.3 Secondary Data**

As cited by Martins and Serra (2018), Boslaugh (2007) describes secondary data as any dataset that is not collected by the author. Secondary data may include previously collected data that is being considered to be reused for new issues for which the data collected was not originally intended (Vartanian, 2010). Martins and Serra (2018) propose that the use of secondary data in research has proven to be a valuable approach to identifying relevant data and allowing it to be used in research more regularly. Through this, study can be conducted at a faster pace without loss of quality (Martins and Serra, 2018). This research will focus principally on secondary data as a result of the methodology adopted. Such secondary data will be used to cover books, journal articles, online / internet content, and other publications on PR and its practice in general.

### **3.2 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

It was very important to ensure the reliability of this document, since it was, among other things, a fundamental basis for replication. The study thus worked closely with the supervisor over the entire duration of the paper for guidance. The researcher also made sure that the paper was reviewed by colleagues in order to obtain multiple viewpoints.

### **3.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

In ensuring ethical research ethics, the researcher adopted a strict policy of citing all scholarly work or materials used for this paper. This was done in an attempt to refraining from committing academic plagiarism and intellectual theft.

### **3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The study methodology this paper adopted was discussed in this chapter. Where content analysis was used, the paper followed a quantitative methodology. In order to analyse the phenomenon at hand and for the purposes of research, this approach was limited to using only secondary data. The next chapter explains the study's outcomes and describes the analysis as well as, among other items, suggesting suggestions and pointing out limitations.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SUMMARY**

#### **4.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The study was focused on analysing PR strategies in perception management. The study then set the following objectives in conducting the study. The first was to determine PR strategies that can be used to manage perceptions. The second was to explore how public perception can affect an organization's reputation and the third was to find out way(s) of attaining a favourable public perception.

In this regard, the study found that for public perception management, PR techniques may be important. The study found that among the PR strategies that could be used to influence perception are group relations, CSR, social media management, media relations and others. Travis (2020) notes that with organizations that are important to your company, PR operations are intended to help build trust and credibility. Public relations may be used, for instance, to pitch stories to journalists as well as answer inquiries. As part of the role of media relations, news monitoring and analyzing news can also be used to gauge public sentiment from time to time. In addition, Travis (2020) argues that the organization can also be motivated by active PR operations, help communicate during a crisis, or defend its reputation against attacks on it by individuals in the media.

Fearn-Banks (2009) is of the view that because an organizational crisis represents a break from routine operations, such critical incidents tend to attract media attention due to their newsworthiness. In fact, organizational crises may arise from the media attention given to otherwise minor organizational events of which the public was unaware (Crandall Parnell and Spillan, 2013). On exploring how public perception can affect organizational reputation,

Adjei (2018) notes that perceptions of individuals in relation to organizations is one of such important variables that is worth discussing in the light of the success of organizations. Clarkson (2009) in furthering this line of argument notes that it is important for manager to avoiding errors in person perception but rather put in more time to collect and consciously use more information about people and avoids snap-judgments about people. Also, they should check their assumptions and develop self-awareness of personal biases and preferences (Clarkson, 2009). Travis (2020) asserts that PR professionals could resort to their social management by establishing, monitoring or growing the organization's online presence. This could be in form of creating or updating Facebook pages, tweeting information and keeping an eye on what others are saying in cyberspace about an organization.

Holbrook and Kisamore (2018) espouse the view that the portrayal in the media and the organization's response impact the organization's reputation affecting the public perception of the organization. It is therefore imperative to find out way(s) of attaining a favorable public perception. A tarnished image requires dedication and resources devoted to rebuilding client trust and loyalty therefore the need to develop clear steps and intentions to help the organization make positive impressions and convey thoughtfully crafted messages to the public is very important (*AxiaPR, 2020*). PR functions such as social media management can be used to attract positive public perception. *AxiaPR, 2020* notes that organizations need to ensure that when potential customers search for them on the internet and through social media, they see them in a positive light. Again, Boatemaa (2011) observes organizations which are socially responsible citizens and contribute to the growth and development of good causes tends to have a positive corporate reputation. Therefore embarking on strategic community relations endeavors could help in garnering a positive public perception. In Ghana, MTN-Ghana (MTN) for instance approaches this by investing in initiatives as Heroes

of Change through its CSR wing, MTN Ghana Foundation. In 2016, MTN provided over 300 scholarships to students across Ghana, constructed, furnished and equipped a 40-bed maternity block for the Tema General Hospital and again constructed and equipped a processing plant for women in oil palm production at Juaso in the Ashanti region (*Graphiconline*, 2020).

#### **4.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study set out to conduct a thesis however due to complications resulting from COVID-19, data collection was not possible because of the health implication attached. The researcher had to resort to secondary data as the main source of data. The study thus was converted into a desk research. This therefore infers that the findings and conclusion made by the study is to some extent hypothetical and not new knowledge.

### **4.3 RESEARCHER'S REFLECTION**

The researcher in seeking to analyse PR strategies in perception management discusses the various concepts to help appreciate them individual. After this, the researcher then synergized both concepts to propagate the relationship between the concepts as well as short comings. The study then proposed PR strategies that could be used to manage perception. A better understanding and adoption of this will in effect equip organizations to position or reposition themselves in order to stay on the right side of the image building ladder. Based on the findings of this study, further work can be done to properly contextualise the concept of perception management from a Ghanaian perspective. From this initiative, a Perception Management Model can be developed to guide academia and the corporate world on how to manage perception. Also, this study could help organizations to draft policies that would specifically fit to manage their corporate image. For academia and the discipline as a whole this study helps sow the seed of developing a branch of PR focused function of perception management.

### **4.4 RECOMMENDATION**

The study recommends that individuals and organizations alike should take note of the concept of perception management if they cared about their public image. Also, future studies should strive to replicate this study with the aim of generating primary data. This endeavour could result in the introduction of different perspective on the findings and conclusion made.

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