



International Journal of Current Research and Academic Review

ISSN: 2347-3215 Volume 3 Number 5 (May-2015) pp. 272-281

www.ijcrar.com



Effects of public relations in fund raising events (A study of selected churches in Aba metropolis)

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KEYWORDS

Effects Of Public Relations, Fund Raising Events, Churches, Academic qualifications

A B S T R A C T

This study examined the Effects of Public Relations in Fund Raising Events, a study of selected churches in Aba metropolis. In carrying out this study, the researcher used survey research method in which he used to questionnaire to collect his data. The population of the study is 378 church officials of three selected churches in Aba metropolis from which a sample of 194 was drawn. The researcher asked research questions and formulated hypotheses to guide the study, relevant literatures were reviewed for the study. The data collected are presented and analysed. Hypotheses formulated and tested with chi-square scientific method, and the following findings are made: that church employ the services of public relations in fund raising activities. That public relations practitioner educates their guests on the need for fund raising activities. That public relations create an atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising events. That public relations provide useful information about fund raising events. The researcher made a number of recommendations for further studies.

Introduction

Public Relations is about communicating in order to achieve understanding through knowledge. The techniques of public relations are to do with the sending and receiving messages so that both sides understand each other, in other words, two-way education.

From the statement above, it is clear to understand that the public relations manager uses communication as a tool.

No wonder, Nwosu (1996) says "Public Relations serves as an information and communication bridge between an organization and various internal and external publics". Communication assist to promote effective church relations understanding and interpreting national aspirations and objectives of the churches by being aware of the climate in which the organization operates, be it political, economic, social, industrial, legal etc.

On the other hand, churches are made aware of people's fears, prejudices and problems regarding the operations as well as their aspirations and developmental needs.

There are many definitions of public relations as there are public relations experts themselves, and public relations covers many different fields such as public relations, consumer's affairs, international relations, industrial relations, media of communication, and statistics. The range of activities to promote public relations may vary depending on the nature and size of the interested party/parties.

According to Black (1989) "Public relations is the art and science of achieving harmony with environment through mutual understanding based on the truth and full information". Edward (1961) states that "Public relations is information given to the public, persuasion directed at the public to modify attitudes and action, and efforts to integrate activities and actions of an institution with its publics and of publics with those of that institution". The British Institute of Public Relations (IPR) defines public relations as "planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics".

According to Jefkins (1982) "Public relations consists of all forms of planned communication, outwards and inwards, between an organization and its publics for the purpose of achieving specific objectives concerning mutual understanding".

Public relations objectives often involve solving communication problems, for example, converting negative attitude into positive communication in entirety deals with society, it is the greatest force in ensuring interaction and development.

It is the part of our everyday life. All spheres of human activities involve communication. Communication has been variously defined as the exchange, transmission or transfer of information and understanding the process by which information is passed between individuals and or organizations by means of previously agreed symbols, for instance, words, signals or signs from a source to a receiver to mention but a few.

According to Black (1989) "Fund raising is an important part of public relations, along with the special event planning necessary to raise funds and to express appreciation to those who have contributed". Fund raising has become a professional activity in itself; and has made a remarkable successful campaign to the churches and other organizations. Public relations is everything from an attitude of mind to a minute detail in the successful implementation of a programme. The method and skills to develop mutual understanding can be provided by public relations activities.

Churches organize fund raising programmes and the success of any fund raising programmes depends on the pursuance of correct public relations policies, for it is necessary to secure and maintain the support of people's of varying cultural, religious and political beliefs. Public relations can assist churches to enlarge the scope of their activities and can be used to direct support of fund raising. The more you know about an issue, the more interesting it will be to you and the more involved you get to it (Okafor, 2000).

Objectives of the study

In a research of this nature, it is always necessary to define the objectives that motivated the researcher to embark on the study.

Therefore, the objectives of this study are stated here under:

- (i) To find out the effect of the public relations in fund raising if allowed to play its full part.
- (ii) To find out whether a well organized public activities can lead to a successful fund raising in the churches.
- (iii) To find out whether public relations exist in the churches.
- (iv) To find out whether the use of communication by the public relations has any effect in fund raising.
- (v) To find out how regular the churches organize fund raising events annually.
- (vi) To make a number of recommendations for further studies, and how to improve the use of PR. in fund raising.

Research questions

The following research questions were asked:

1. Do churches employ the service of public relations in fund raising activities?
2. Does public relations create an atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising event?
3. Do public relations practitioners educate guests on the need for fund raising event?
4. Does public relations provide useful information about fund raising?

Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

H₁: Churches do employ the service of public relations in fund raising activities
H₂: Churches do not employ the service of public relations in fund raising activities

H₃: Public relations create atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising events.

H₀₂: Public relations does not create atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising events.

H₃: Public relations practitioners educate guests on the need for fund raising events.

H₀₃: Public relations practitioners do not educate guests on the need for fund raising events.

H₄: Public relations provide useful information about fund raising.

H₀₄: Public relations does not provide useful information about fund raising.

Research design and methodology

Research method

Survey research method is considered appropriate for this study. This is because survey research can be extremely efficient at providing large amount of data, at relatively low cost, in a short period of time.

Okafor (2006) "Image surveys determine the institutional profile or corporate image in public mind by ascertaining the attitudes of the public towards an organization, how well they understand it, and what they like and dislike".

Survey research also makes it possible to measure knowledge or information, values and preferences, attitude and beliefs through questionnaire and interviews.

Research design

Descriptive design is also considered

appropriate for this study, since the researcher employed survey research method. Descriptive research design provides information that will answer research questions, it outlines the variables involved in a particular problem and suggests ways of dealing with them.

Since the problem deals with fund raising in churches, descriptive design can help to collect data in order to describe the existing phenomenon.

Population of the study

The populations of the study are the church officials in the three selected churches in Aba: CKC Catholic Cathedral, Assemblies of God and Mountain of Fire Churches.

Information gathered from the three churches revealed that CKC has 200 church officials, Assemblies of God has 110 church officials and Mountain of Fire and Miracles 68 church officials, bringing the population to 378.

Sampling technique

Purposive sampling technique was employed in the study. The researcher handpicked the respondents who will give him what he desires for the study. Purposive sampling technique is called judgments sampling, The researcher used his judgment to select respondents who answered his questionnaire.

Measuring instrument

Questionnaire is the measuring instrument of the study. Questionnaire is important instrument for obtaining information from people about their perceptions, opinion, attitudes, and beliefs in survey studies. They usually contain questions to be answered by

a group of people so as to get their views or opinion about a subject of a survey. The questionnaire used in this study was close ended.

Method of data collection

The data collected came from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are questionnaire answered by the respondents. The questionnaire distributed to the respondents in their churches were filled and returned after filling.

The secondary data came from already published materials in the area of mass communication. Also from magazines, newspapers and other journals in the area of study.

Method of data analysis

The methods of data analysis for the study are simple percentages and chi-square. Simple percentage is used for the analysis of the data collected. Chi-square test is a non-parametric statistical method used in the analysis of the frequencies observed and expected. It is used because it is reliable and scientific in nature.

Results and Discussion

Data presentation and analysis

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the data collected during the brief explanation following it. The simple percentages ratio will also be used for easy understanding. 194 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents and returned in the following way.

Out of the total of 194 copies of questionnaire (100%) distributed, 190 copies (98%) are returned, while 4 copies (2%) are

not returned. Thus as shown in the above table (Table 1):

The analysis reveals that 138 respondents (71%) are males while 56 (29%) are females. This is a clear indication that most of the churches are managed by the men.

The analysis above reveals that 156 respondents (80%) are married while 38 respondents (20%) are not married. This shows that they are more married people than those not married.

The analysis above (Table 4) shows that 45 respondents (23%) indicated that they are at the ages of 18 - 25 years, 48 respondents (25%) said they fall between the ages of 26 - 35 years, 49 respondents (25%) said they are between 36 - 45 years old, while 52 respondents (27%) revealed they are between 46 and above years old.

From the analysis above (Table 5), it shows that 89 respondents (46%) are civil servants, 31 respondents (16%) and farmers while 74 respondents (38%) are business people* The analysis shows that majority of the respondents are civil servants.

The analysis above (Table 6) on the educational distribution of the respondents shows that 20 respondents (10%) are FLSC holders, 32 respondents (16%) are WAEC/SSCE certificate holders, 58 respondents (30%) said they are holders of OND/HND, B.Sc. Degree holders accounted for 46 respondents (24%), while M.BA/M.Sc. and above are 38 respondents (20%).

To determine whether churches employ services of public relations in fund raising activities revealed from the analysis above that 116 respondents (60%) answered 'yes' while 78 respondents (40%) indicated 'no' as their answers.

The question: Does Public Relations creates an atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising? Shows that 118 respondents (61%) are of the opinion that Public Relations creates >an atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising activities, while 76 respondents (59%) said 'No' to the question. These answers are based on their different knowledge of what public relations practice could do in a fund raising event.

The analysis above shows that 120 respondents (62% are of the view that public relations practice can be used to educate guests on the need for fund raising events. 74 respondents (38%) said No that public relations practice cannot educate guests on the need for fund raising events. The analysis further revealed that majority of the respondents are in support that public relations practice can help in educating the guests on the need for fund raising in the church

To determine whether public relations practitioners can provide useful information about fund raising activities, shows on the table above that 121 respondents (62%) said 'Yes', while 73 respondents (38%) indicate no which means that public relations practitioners cannot provide useful information about raising activities.

4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

The four hypotheses formulated in this study are tested using chi-square scientific method. The test of hypotheses is done to determine the direction in which the solution to a problem can be found. Chi-square test is used in order to differentiate between a set of observed frequencies of a sample and a corresponding set of expected frequencies. The researcher is guided by the chi-square decision rule, which states: if the calculated value is greater than the table value, we reject the null hypothesis, but if the

calculated value is less than the table value, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. In testing the hypothesis, the researcher used 1 degree of freedom and 0.05 as the probability level, leaving 95% confidence limit.

Hypothesis one

HI: Churches employ the services of public relations in fund raising activities.

Hoi: Churches do not employ the services of public relations in fund raising activities.

In testing the above hypothesis, the data gathered, presented and analyzed in table 7 is used.

Detailed calculation

$$X^2 = \frac{(121-97)^2}{97} + \frac{(73-97)^2}{97} = \frac{576}{97} + \frac{576}{97}$$

$$X^2 = 5.938 + 5.938 = 11.876$$

Calculated value $X^2 = 11.876$, df - 1, $P < 0.05$

Table value $X^2 = 3.841$

Decision rule

The above calculation in the table shows that the computed value $X^2 = 11.876$ at 1 degree of freedom and 0.05 probability level is greater than the table value $X^2 = 3.841$. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, which stated that Public Relations provide useful information about fund raising events.

Discussion of Results

The course of this project study had led the

researcher to unearth some truths about the effects of public relations in fund raising events in the churches. In order to do this, four hypotheses were tested and all of them did not receive the statistically support of the study.

Hypothesis one stated that churches do not employ the services of public relations in fund raising. The statement did not receive statistical support with calculated value $X^2 = 7.44$ against a table value $X^2 = 3.841$. It should be understood that public relations is often regarded as a social philosophy and principle of management expressed in policies and practices through communication, with the aim of attaining mutual understanding and goodwill, and of eliciting favourable beliefs, opinions and action. The above definition of public relations as quoted in the literature reviewed in this study is an added support to the fact that churches employ the services of public relations in fund raising events.

Hypothesis two stated that a public relations does not create an atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising event. The postulation did not receive statistical support with table value $X^2 = 3.841$ against a calculated value $X^2 = 7.442$. Majority of the respondents 116 did not support the hypothesis against minority 78 respondents who are in support.

People are usually interested in knowing the outcome of special events like fund raising, hence they usually ask questions. How was the occasion? Was it good? Public relations practitioner come into play by answering these questions and creating atmosphere of acceptability during and after fund raising event.

Table.1 Questionnaire distribution table

Response	Number	Percentages
Distribution	194	100
Returned	190	98
Not returned	4	2
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014.

Table.2 Sex of respondents

Option -	Frequency	Percentage——— V
Male	138	71
Female	56	29
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.3 Marital status distribution of respondents

Option	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	156	80
No	38	20
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.4 Age distribution of the respondents

Age	Frequency t	Percentages
18 - 25 years	45	23 A
26 - 35 years	48	25
36 - 45 years	49	25
46 and above years	52	27
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.5 Occupational distribution of the respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentages
Civil servants	89	46
Farmers	31	16
Business	74	27
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.6 Educational distribution of the respondents

Option	Frequency	Percentages
FLSC	20	10
WAEC/SSCE	32	16
OND/HND	58	30
B.Sc.	46	24
MBA/M.Sc. and above	38	20
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.7 To determine whether churches employ services of pr in fund raising activities

Option	Frequency	Percentages *
Yes	116	60
No	78	40
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.8 To determine whether PR creates an atmosphere of acceptability in a fund raising

Option	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	118	61
No	76	59
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.9 To determine whether PRP can educate guests on the need for fund raising events

Option	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	120	62
No	74	38
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.10 To determine whether PRP can provide useful information about fund raising activities

Option	Frequency	Percentages *
Yes	121	62
No	73	38
Total	194	100

Source: Research Data, 2014

Table.11 Chi-square test in respect of hypothesis one

Option	O	E	O-E	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2$
					E
Yes	116	97	+ 19	361	3.721
No	78	97	- 19	361	3.721
Total	194	194			7.442

Source: Research Data, 2014

The hypothesis three postulates that public relations practitioners do not educate guests on the need for fund raising events. This statement also did not receive statistical support of the study with calculated value $X^2 = 10.906$ against table value $X^2 = 3.841$, hence majority of the respondents are of the opinion that public relations practitioners educate their guests, on the need for organizing a fund raising event. The fact remains that public relations

implement policies and programmes by educating his publics with a view to maintain goodwill and between an organization and its publics.

Hypothesis four stated that public relations do not provide useful information about fund raising events. This postulation did receive the support of the study. Calculated value $X^2 = 11.876$ is greater than the table value $X^2 = 3.841$. The null hypothesis

rejected and the alternative accepted. According to the literature reviewed, public relations objective of special events is to inform public of the aims, policies and activities of the organization as well as to gain goodwill of the people. Drawing from these results, therefore one can well confirm that public relations provide useful information about fund raising events in any organization.

Conclusion

It is good to say in conclusion that Public Relations, more and more today, is regarded as a management process, the professional public relations work emanates from clear strategies and bottom line objectives, which flow into specific tactics, each with its own discrete budget, timetable, and allocation of resources.

Communication is essential as far as public relations work is concerned, a successful public relations practitioner must be a good communicator in the real sense of the word. He should be objective in all his dealings with the public and his organization.

Public relations practitioner ensures that there is a cordial relationship between the organization and the employee of the organization.

Public relations consist of all forms of planned communication outwards and inwards, between an organization and its public.

Churches "organize fund raising programme and the success of such event depends on the pursuance of correct public relations policies, for it is important to secure and maintain the support of people of varying cultural, religious and political beliefs. Public relations can assist churches to

enlarge the scope of their activities and can also be used to direct support of fund raising.

Public relations can contribute to the successful organization of fund raising in any church organization to the extent to which it is allowed to play its roles.

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