

**A STUDY OF GENDER ROLES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE  
IN GHANA**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that, this dissertation is a result of my own research conducted at the School of Communication Studies, University of Ghana, Legon and all references to other people's work used have been duly acknowledged. The work was supervised by Professor Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to the Almighty God for His direction and His help throughout my life in this school and also for inspiring confidence in me to go through life with a positive zeal. I also dedicate this work to Nana Ama Agyemang and Philip Wola Adadevor for mentoring me through my life. I further dedicate this research to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Gyan, and my siblings, Alby, SK and Elsie. My messages to them is that when the thought and vision from the inside become powerful than the thought from the outside, you master your life.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined gender influence on role performance in PR departments in the Ghana Commercial Bank, the Electoral Commission and the University of Ghana. The study was undertaken within the framework of the social role theory.

A combination of qualitative in-depth interviews and observation was employed to gather data using Frederick's nine-item list of activities and Alimo-Metcalfe's four-item list of leadership styles. The study found that male and female managers appeared to be performing similar activities although male and female technicians differed in the activities they performed.

It concludes that male and female technicians performed roles based on their gender due to social expectations and female traits were the preferred traits for leadership positions. The study thus recommends further research to investigate how masculine and feminine traits affect promotion and job satisfaction to enrich the literature on the topic.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background to the Study

The study anticipated that gender roles may exist in the practice of public relations by managers and technicians of the Ghana Commercial Bank, the Electoral Commission and the University of Ghana. This was because gender relates to the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females (Gidden and Sutton, 2009). Gender is a cross-cutting issue which makes it inevitable for any aspect of human life to escape gender relations.

The impact and influence of gender is obvious in society as certain roles and activities are thought to be appropriate or inappropriate for a particular gender group. Men are thought to exercise agency and are more aggressive, self-sufficient and analytical. Women, on the other hand, are thought to be nurturing, affectionate, gentle and are often expected to be in less assertive positions (Fernandez and Coello, 2010). In Ghana, studying gender in any field is important because cultural influences and social expectations may have an influence on what people do.

“Gender division of labour in Ghana is evident across the country,” (Gender Policy for Ghana, 2011: 3). This policy suggests that there is work that is appropriate for men and women because of their orientation and socialisation. Therefore, gender has a role to play in most occupations.

Public relations is said to be a gendered field, according to studies conducted in Canada, Australia and the United States of America (Rea, 2007). These studies found that women dominated or out-numbered men in PR practice (Rea, 2007, Schuebel, 2009, Janus 2008).

Owing to the events of the World War II, women got the opportunity to leave home to fill positions in the work place. Women found public relations to be favourable because it had less institutional barriers unlike law and medicine that allowed only men to practise (Janus, 2008).

Public relations scholars prescribe four roles for PR practitioners: the expert prescriber, the problem solver, the communication facilitator and the communication technician. These roles are collapsed into two broad roles. These are the technician role, where the majority of females tend to group, and managerial roles, where the majority of men tend to hold jobs (Schuebel, 2009). The technician provides journalistic skills, like writing and editing while the manager is often involved in decision-making and counselling management (Frederick, 2003).

### **1.1 The Concept of Gender**

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women (Janus, 2008). According to Coon (2001), gender is the psychological and social characteristics associated with being either male or female. It involves the construction, negotiation and performance of masculine and feminine identities. Gender roles are therefore, “the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed needs are satisfied” (Reiter, 1975 cited in Janus 2008: 5). Gender stereotypes affect how men and women behave and how well they do in certain activities. Lips (2001) argues that individuals face stereotype threats when they become aware that they are being subjected to gender based judgement by society. They may also develop stereotype threat due to fears of self-fulfilling negative stereotypes about their gender group. Gender roles and stereotypes affect men and women in different ways and individuals may be judged by how

well they conform to these traditional stereotypes. Pleck (1976) asserts that boys and men are pressured to fulfil a standard of masculinity. Those who do not fulfil the standard often suffer from low self-worth (Pleck et al, 1993).

Social constructions influence men and women to behave in ways that conform to the stereotypes of masculinity (aggressive, independent, authoritative, and controlling) and femininity (emotional, nurturer, cooperative and dependent). However, three main schools of feminist groups, namely liberal, radical and social feminist have opposed these stereotypes. Liberal feminists insist that females should enter male-dominated fields and demand equal pay for equal work. On the other hand, radical feminists opine that females should create their own spaces or alternative spaces so that they have a platform to express their views and not lag behind men. However, social feminists embrace and form alliances with men and other minority groups to create a level playing field for both men and women (Van Zoonen, 1996). Therefore, the socially constructed concept of gender goes beyond power relations and privilege for women but for men also. It involves how these are affected by the interplay of social, cultural and institutional practices (Janus, 2008).

## **1.2 Gender Situation in Ghana**

Ghana is not homogenous and each community is highly influenced by the views of its leaders, tradition and religious doctrine (Gender Policy for Ghana, 2011). Gender affects individuals, especially women in diverse ways. Gender issues are present in employment, education, division of labour and violence.

In terms of access to employment, inequalities between men and women are still common despite noticeable improvements. Gender discrimination in employment occurs through unequal access to work, unequal payment for equal work, unfair prerogatives in favour of

men pertaining to parental authority and access to leadership positions. Thompson (2008) concretises this in her study as she found that, female respondents earned a modal annual basic salary which was lower than their male counterparts. Women are still employed in under-valued positions even when they have higher levels of education. In factories and companies, as well as in plantations, some types of activities are deemed to belong to women while others are reserved for men, due to discriminatory interpretation of their respective capacities and unfair remunerations that are favourable to men. Discrimination in the workplace remains and this is often rooted in family and community gender socialization (Gender Policy of Ghana, 2011).

The gender division of labour in Ghana is evident across the country. Traditionally, there are strong divides between work that is acceptable for women and work acceptable for men. In rural as well as urban families, labour division remains largely unequal as household chores are exclusively women's and girls' responsibility (Gender Policy of Ghana, 2011). However, gender division varies across different ethnic groups. Among the Akan, Ga and Adangme, women assume the basic domestic and childcare roles (Schwimmer, 2009). Female time loads are estimated as being approximately 15-25 percentages higher than that of males. Typically, women spend 20 hours per week on housework as compared to men who spend five hours per week (World Bank Gender Review, 2002). According to Ghana Statistics Service report (2012), men spend more time on work for formal establishments such as corporations and government (65 minutes) than women (23 minutes) in a day, while women spend more time in a day on unpaid household work (2 hours and 35 minutes) than men (40 minutes).

Women have only half as many years of schooling as men. Women and girls, who are at the bottom of the social, economic and political ladder in these societies, have even less

opportunities to have command over productive resources such as land or credit (The Ghana Women Children and North American Collective, 2011).

At home and work, women, including domestic servants, are often sexually abused or harassed. Sexual violence is also rampant in communities and among young people. Violence against women occurs in different forms; women are faced with physical, psychological or verbal expressions of abuse and exploitation (Gender Policy for Ghana, 2011).

There have been a number of positive developments towards gender equality in Ghana, including an affirmative action policy for women's representation on government and public boards, government programmes to improve women's access to micro credit, the provision of paid maternity leave and the establishment of a domestic violence support unit within the police service. Ghana's 1992 Republican Constitution enshrines the principle of equality between men and women, and calls for prohibition of all forms of discrimination (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 2005).

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Society constructs roles for males and females in almost every aspect of social life. Eagly (1997) posits in the social role theory that males and females are likely to perform roles assigned them according to societal constructs for both sexes. Various studies have been undertaken by PR experts in the United States of America and Australia to investigate gender roles in public relations. They include studies by Broom & Dozier (1986), Creedon (1991), Dozier (1987, 1990), Dozier & Broom (1995), Lauzen (1992) and Lauzen & Dozier (1992). Others are Grunig, (1992), Toth, Serini, Wright & Emig (1998). These studies confirmed that gendered roles and stereotypes exist in public relations practice, as females are segregated into technician roles while males are in managerial roles.

In Ghana, very little research exists on gender and role performance in PR. Thus, the problem for this study was to find out the different ways that males and females performed their PR roles. It involved identifying roles and matching them with gender predispositions in order to explore how gender affects role performance taking into consideration specific tasks performed by males and females in PR practice.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

RQ<sub>1</sub> What duties were assigned to men and women in PR departments?

RQ<sub>2</sub> What duties performed were self-selected by practitioners?

RQ<sub>3</sub> What stereotypes affected PR role performance?

#### **1.5 Significance of Study**

As indicated in the statement of problem, very little research exists on gender roles in public relations in Ghana, even though many studies have been undertaken in the USA and Australia. Therefore this study adds to scholarly work on gender roles and public relations in Ghana. Since this study focused on role performance in public relations, it will broaden understanding on the various ways PR roles are enacted. This study can also be significant to stakeholders as it is expected that the study would provide empirical data that may go a long way to illuminate and inform policy decision in this regard.

## **1.6 Profile of Institutions**

Three institutions were selected for the study. These institutions were selected because they are well-established institutions which have very strong PR units or departments.

### **1.6.1 Ghana Commercial Bank (GCB)**

GCB is the widest network bank in Ghana. It was wholly owned by the government of Ghana until 1996 when part of the government ownership was divested. Today, government ownership stands at 21.3 per cent, while institutional and individual holdings add up to 78.6 per cent. GCB has 150 branches and 11 agencies throughout the country. The bank has staff strength of about 2101. GCB has several departments. Corporate Affairs is the department that handles PR. The head of Corporate Affairs unit, who is a female, reports directly to the Managing Director of the Bank. The mission of GCB is to be the established leader in banking, satisfying the expectation of customers and shareholders, providing a full range of cost efficient and high quality services through the optimization of information technology and efficient branch network ([www.gcb.com.gh](http://www.gcb.com.gh)).

### **1.6.2 Electoral Commission**

The Electoral Commission (EC) is the body that conducts and supervises all public elections in Ghana. In doing so, the EC is required to register all qualified Ghanaian voters and also compile a voters' register for all general elections. It also has a mandate to educate the public on electoral processes. The mission of the EC is to advance the course of democracy and good governance for enhanced development of Ghana by conducting free, fair and transparent elections that will be accepted by all stakeholders. The EC has seven departments at the Head office and each department is headed by a Director. The departments are; Public Affairs, Elections, Information Technology, Human Resource and General Services,

Research and Monitoring, Finance and Training. The head of the Public Affairs department is a male. The staff strength of the EC is about 1570 personnel in addition to temporary staff that are hired during election years ([www.ec.gov.gh](http://www.ec.gov.gh)).

### **1.6.3 University of Ghana**

The University of Ghana is the oldest and the largest public university in Ghana. It was founded in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast. Its mission is to develop world-class human resources and capabilities to meet national development needs and global challenges through quality teaching, learning, research and knowledge dissemination. The University currently has a student population of about 29754, senior and a professional population of about 972 ([www.ug.edu.gh](http://www.ug.edu.gh)). There are several departments and units at the university. Public Affairs Directorate handles the PR of the university and this department is headed by a female.

## **1.7 Operational Definitions**

**Roles:** The function or position that an individual has in an organisation.

**Duties:** A term used for the activities an individual undertakes in an organisation. For the purposes of this research, tasks and duties will be used as synonymous terms.

**Gender roles:** The activities, duties or parts that is thought to be appropriate only for a particular gender group based on cultural and social influences.

**PR roles:** Technician and managerial positions assigned to public relations practitioners in organisations.

## **1.8 Organisation of the Study**

The study is organized in five separate chapters. Chapter one puts the work in perspective by explaining what gender and gender roles mean and their impact on society. It also states the

problem, research questions, operational definitions, significance of the study, profile of institutions, and the relevance of the study.

Chapter two discusses the theoretical underpinning of the study, which is the social role theory. The chapter also reviews related literature on gender, gender roles and public relations. The methodology is presented in chapter three of the study. It explains the sampling procedure, the sampling size, the study site, respondent background, data collection, data collection instrument and data analysis.

The findings of the study are presented in chapter four while chapter five discusses the findings. Chapter five also contains conclusion, limitations and the recommendations of the study.

## **1.9 Summary**

The chapter looked at the concept of gender, gender roles and its impact on society. The problem statement, objectives of the study, profile of institutions studied, how the study was organised and the significance of the study were all outlined in this chapter. Operational definitions for the study were also given in this chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the theoretical underpinnings for this research. The social role theory was used by the researcher to ascertain the relations between gender and role performance in public relations practice. The second part of this chapter explores some related works focusing on gender and its impact on technician and managerial roles in PR practice. As gender raises questions of inequalities, the related studies looked at positions of authority, leadership and stereotypes in public relations.

#### 2.1 Theoretical framework

This study was contextualised and discussed within the theoretical framework of social role theory developed by Alice Eagly in 1987. To understand why gender is an important phenomenon in public relations, social role theory explained from a structural perspective why individuals behave the way they do in social systems.

The social role theory (SRT) is a social psychology theory that suggests that most behavioural differences between males and females are the result of stereotypes about gender and the resulting social roles that are taught to young people (Eagly, 1987). Gender refers to the role assigned to males and females by society. Gender roles are “socially and culturally defined prescriptions and beliefs about the behaviour and emotions of men and women” (Anselmi and Law, 1998:3). Eagly (1987), offers an explanation for gender development that is based on socialization. SRT suggests that the sexual division of labour and societal expectations based on stereotypes produce gender roles. Gender stereotypes vary on four

dimensions: traits, role behaviours, physical characteristics and occupations (Deaux and Lewis, 1983).

Eagly (1987) developed the theory during the 1980s as a gender related theory and to determine whether biology or society is the determining factor on how people behave. The theory explored the nature or nurture question. Even though earlier research addressed sex differences, their main focus was on biological differences and early childhood socialization (Dulin, 2007). Earlier studies in the 1970s had been strongly criticised because of their ideas on sex differences, the progress on the topic was therefore slow. Since the 1980s, Eagly has devoted a lot of time on this topic and has published a book in 1987 on the theory, *Sex Differences in Social Behaviour: a Social Interpretation*. Eagly (1987) further explored social roles which regulate behaviour in adult life and proceeded to show how a theory of sex-typed behaviour could explain differences in men and women.

## **2.2 Key Tenets of SRT Theory**

The social role theory posits that men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles, because of the expectations society puts upon them (Eagly, 1987). Social role theory used a structural approach to sex differences, rather than a cultural approach. In reality, structural pressures (family, organisations, and communities) have caused men and women to behave differently. These stereotypical gender roles are formed by social norms that apply to people of a certain category or social position (ibid). According to Eagly (1997), society has shared expectations about women and men. These expectations form female and male gender roles. Therefore, individuals tend to act the way that these roles imply and as a result, men and women learn different skills, thus perpetuating sex differences.

Eagly (1997), suggests that beliefs about the differences between men and women can be divided into two dimensions: communal and agentic. Bakan (1966) suggests that agentic qualities are manifested by self-assertion, self-expansion and the urge to master and be independent. Agentic qualities are often attributed to males. Communal qualities are manifested by selflessness, concern for others and emotional expressiveness, commonly associated with domestic activities, and for the most part associated with women. Eagly (1997) uses these dimensions to differentiate between males and females in work and family life.

Division of labour, according to Eagly (1987) is the cause of the differences between males and females, because women often assume responsibilities at home, and men often assume responsibilities outside the home. Division of labour gave rise to gender role expectations and sex-based skills and beliefs, which in effect produced differences in social behaviour among males and females. SRT implies that individuals might question the capacity of women in particular positions, such as leadership roles because of the stereotypical role expectation by society. Straker (2008) suggests three common patterns that correspond to the beliefs about gender. These are: women take on more domestic tasks; women and men often have different occupational roles; and in occupation, women often have lower status.

### **2.2.1 Research done using the SRT**

Several studies have used social role theory to address sex differences in areas such as aggression, helping behaviour, leadership styles, attitudes, dynamics of stereotypes, effective parenting, emotional vulnerability and ethical decision-making (Dulin, 2007).

Eagly and Steffen (1984), for example, tested the correlation between gender stereotypes and division of labour and found that occupational role was a strong determinant of judgement of

communal and agentic qualities. Conway, Pizzamiglio, and Mount (1996) conducted research to test Eagly and Steffen's study and social role theory was tested using meta-analysis. This study compared job status with agency and communality. They found that low status individuals were rated as more communal than agentic and high status individuals were rated as more agentic than communal. These findings imply that communal, which is normally associated with females, is associated with low status positions, so that females are associated with low status jobs.

### **2.2.2 Critique and Limitations of the SRT**

Archer (1996) criticises the social role theory. He examined and compared social role theory and evolutionary theory as explanations for sex differences. Evolutionary theory attributes most sex differences to the consequences of sexual selection and the conflict that arises with the different reproductive strategies of the sexes. Archer (1996) concluded that, since evolutionary theory could explain other mammals' sex differences, that it was a better explanation (Dulin, 2007). Eagly (1997) explains that social role theory is one of the many interrelated theories that worked with other theories to explain certain aspects of psychological and social processes by which gender behaviour was produced but not an ultimate answer to the puzzle of sex differences.

Several limitations exist in the social role theory. First, Sczesny and Kuhnen (2004) show that social stereotypes do not always affect the decisions and behaviour of individuals. People can make cautious and systematic decisions that do not perpetuate stereotypes. The second limitation is reflected in the meta-analytic research by Eagly (1997). The issue, of which size was appropriate for a study was a dilemma. There was considerable disparity between outcomes because of the issue of size, even though numerous studies were reviewed, but later

studies considered other statistical analysis. Though the social role theory has its limitations, it helps individuals to know that there should be a continuum of role styles (Dulin, 2007).

Even though other gender related theories exist, SRT best suits the study because it best explains or addresses the fundamental elements of this study. The study sought to investigate the various roles performed by men and women in PR practice and how they reflected stereotypes (agentic and communal qualities). By using the SRT, the research identified the influence of gender and gender roles on technician and managerial roles in PR practice.

### **2.3 Related Studies**

Broom and Dozier (1986) conducted a study to analyse how the wages of public relations practitioners were affected by participation in management, changing of their roles, and job satisfaction. They also sought to explore how roles, participation in management and job satisfaction affected men and women differently. Broom (1982) conducted an earlier study that confirmed that male and females were affected by various factors in the work place differently.

Broom and Dozier (1986) in their study argued that a change in role score would demonstrate professional development. They posited that gender-based salary discrimination existed. They further hypothesized that gender segregation of roles would provide further support for gender-based salary discrimination. The study also posited that job satisfaction would increase for those practitioners moving from technician-dominated to managerial dominated roles.

The methods used for this study were questionnaires. This enabled the researchers to measure the practitioner's roles, job satisfaction, participation in decision-making, demographic and

organisational characteristics and research activities. The Public Relations Society of America's membership list was narrowed down to 458 respondents used in a similar experiment conducted in 1979. The results from the questionnaires in 1979 and 1985 were compared to find if there were any changes in the respondents.

Broom and Dozier (1986) found from their study that, manager roles performed increased, while technician roles decreased. The percentage of respondents who performed the managerial role increased ten percentage points (71-81 per cent) from 1979-1985, while the percentage of respondents performed technician roles decreased ten percentage points (29-19 per cent). They also found that men and women differed in their participation in management decision-making. Female practitioners and technicians both participated in decision-making less frequently than males and managers. Job satisfaction was found to correlate with roles and professional experience of the respondents. The job satisfaction of practitioners increased when manager role activities were greater and technician roles portrayed decreased.

Income of respondents showed that women made less than men in both years studied. In 1979, the women surveyed earned \$18,030 less than men surveyed annually and in 1986 the salary gap increased to \$33,520. Broom and Doziers (1986) concluded that gender and roles had an enormous amount of influence on the salaries of the practitioners of public relations. The researchers argued that women earn less regardless of equal education, professional experience and tenure in their field. This provided evidence that gender-based salary discrimination still existed. Women are segregated into the technician role, which received less pay than managerial role. In 1979, women made up 39 per cent of the technician roles and 18 per cent of managerial roles, compared to 1986 when they composed 45 per cent of

technician roles and 19 per cent of managerial roles. Women in this study were prevented from obtaining managerial positions by frequently being segregated into the technician roles.

The findings of Broom and Dozier (1986) support the assertion that gender influences the practice of technician and managerial roles in public relations. The issue of inequalities and segregation of individuals into particular roles explored by Broom and Dozier (1986) applied directly to this study and since social role theory was established by meta-analysis, and a kind of comparative study was done by Broom and Dozier (1986), their study is significant for this research.

Aldoory and Toth (2002) studied how differences in PR roles performed by males and females related to the salaries they received. Their study sought to determine why previously mentioned gender differences in salaries and positions in public relations still existed. They felt their research would be a significant contribution to the earlier research by Broom and Dozier (1986) because the field of public relations was made up of 70 per cent women practitioners during the time of the study in the USA.

Aldoory and Toth (2002) distributed surveys to 4,000 randomly selected members of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). They received 864 completed surveys, which reflected the PRSA membership. They placed items on the questionnaire that were similar to items on questionnaires used for earlier surveys, so that the results could be easily compared. Demographics, hiring, salary, and promotions were some of the items surveyed. Six focus groups were then conducted to analyse the survey results. Participant in the focus groups were members of the PRSA or public relations practitioners with at least five years of professional experience.

The perception of gender discrepancies in hiring, salary, and promotion in public relations was explored. The men and women surveyed both felt that more women were hired for technical positions than men. Also, statistically significant difference in salaries among men and women in public relations was found. Men's annual average salary was \$73,700, compared to women's average salary of \$56,000. Aldoory and Toth (2002) again found that even after justification for experience, age, education, and job interruptions were given, gender was still a significant influence on salary. The male and female respondents were in agreement that women made less in the field regardless of the position they were holding (manager or technician). Therefore, men were more satisfied with their salaries in public relations.

The focus group was asked questions concerning their feelings on what contributed to the gender discrepancies in hiring, salaries and promotions. Respondents felt that hiring was not a big problem in the field. Majority of males in the focus group did not believe gender-based salary discrimination existed, while the women felt that gender-based salary discrepancies existed. Some of the factors they felt contributed to the salary differences among genders were women's lack of negotiation skills to demand higher pay, their reserved manners, struggle for promotion, gender discrimination, historical disparity, and the differences in corporation hiring.

The study provided strong evidence that gender discrepancies in hiring, promotion and salary exist in the field of public relations. The findings provided additional support for the earlier findings of gender disparities in the field. The focus group provided the researchers with seven factors that contributed to the gender differences in salary. They were skill differentials, socialization, gender discrimination, balancing work and family, recruitment

efforts of men for higher pay, historical parity that was hard to regain and the lack of salary discrepancy of genders.

Since this study aimed to look at the various ways in which gender affects public relations practice, the results from Aldoory and Toth (2002) was useful in understanding the various ways gender discrepancies played out in public relations.

Another research by Frederick (2003) studied representation of male and female traits in high-level and low-level hiring in public relations. The purpose of the study was to determine if sex role segregation and stereotyping were prevalent. The research was an exploration of gender role stereotyping in the advertising of jobs in public relations and compared the existence of male and female traits in advertisements for managers and entry-level positions in the field of public relations.

Frederick (2003) posited that gender-based salary discrimination existed in the field of public relations because past research showed that women earned less than men in public relations. Frederick (2003) asserts that, women in the field of public relations were segregated into technician roles and that barriers still existed that prevented women from obtaining, managerial positions. An important area Frederick (2003) tackled was in relation to the gender differences in the job descriptions for managerial and technician positions. In advertisement for technician duties, more feminine traits were featured and in advertisement for managerial roles, masculine attributes were sought.

The sample size for the study consisted of 250 jobs descriptions pulled from four different websites. The websites used for the study were hotjobs.com, monster.com, PRSA.org and

flipdog.com. These four websites were chosen because they were popular online global career networks and comprised the largest job collections. 125 job descriptions were for technician (entry-level) positions and 125 job descriptions were for manager positions. A data set was designed with three categories: leadership styles, skills and activities and a list of items was developed for each gender among the three different activities. A seven-item list for skills, a four-item list of leadership styles and a nine-item list of activities were used to analyse the sample.

The activities were developed from a 17-item list that was used by researchers at Boston University and applied in a 1986 unpublished study of professional women in public relations, Toth and Grunig (1986) as cited in Frederick (2003). The list of activities that public relations practitioners performed was separated into two categories: managerial activities and technician activities. The 17-item list was divided by Toth and Grunig's research. They split the 17-item list into a nine-item list of managerial and technician duties in the order that they were most performed. The seven-item list of skills in managerial jobs and the four-item list of leadership styles were developed by Alimo- Metcalfe (1994).

The study found that employers sought male traits in advertising for managerial jobs and female traits when advertising for technician jobs. In all the three categories: activities, skills and leadership styles, managerial advertisements had significantly more male attributes than female attributes and for entry level jobs, female traits were predominate. The research also showed that more companies hired more females than males for entry-level positions.

The study by Frederick (2003) was significant to this study because it looked at two of the three categories: activities and leadership style and tested how males and females differed on these attributes using the four-item list of leadership skills and the nine-item list of activities.

**Table 1: List of Activities**

<b>Managerial Activities</b>	<b>Technician Activities</b>
Counselling management	Implementing decisions made by others
Making communication policy decisions	Writing, editing, producing messages
Evaluating programme results	Disseminating messages
Supervising the work of others	Handling correspondence/ telephone
Planning public relations programmes	Implementing new programmes
Meeting with clients / executives	Making media contact
Managing public relations programmes	Implementing new programmes
Planning and managing budgets	Meeting with peers
Implementing new programmes	Managing public relations programmes

Alimo-Metcalfe (1994) developed a four-item list of leadership styles. The list of leadership styles consisted of management and leadership styles typically attributed to either male or female.

**Table 2: List of Leadership Styles**

<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Competitive	Collaborative
Controlling	Cooperative
Analytical	Democratic (Participatory Style)
Hierarchical	Nurturer

Janus (2008) studied gender, leadership and public relations. Janus (2008) wanted to explore how women leaders in public relations performed their roles and the factors that made them successful. It was because, women made up 70 per cent of the work force of public relations yet only 20 per cent filled top leadership roles. Janus (2008) used feminist theory and social role theory to underpin the research.

The study posited that issues like work-life balance and the “queen bee syndrome” were two examples of how gender might filter decision. Also, female leaders will conduct their leadership role in a more transformational way (using two-way communication styles or feminine traits) whereas men will lead in a transactional manner (masculine attributes, competitiveness, controlling and independence). Janus (2008) asserts that women in the PR industry will have stronger opinions about gender discrimination, whereas men will be less likely to acknowledge that there was a problem.

A case study was employed in the research. 12 in-depth interviews were conducted in addition to a participant observation. The identity of the firm used was protected by referring to the firm as MW. The interview consisted of 12 MW public relations counsellors. Six subordinates and six managers provided insights into views on management. Three men and three women for each experience helped discover how gender played a role. The six subordinates had three to five years of experience in public relations. The managers had 10-15 years’ experience. The 12 interviews consisted of 60 minutes with six subordinates and six executives. The questions for subordinates were: job information, mentoring experience, perceptions about leadership styles, work-life balance, gender discrimination and diversity in the workplace. The questions for managers were: job information, mentoring, perception

about leadership styles, work-life balance, consideration for personnel decision, gender discrimination and diversity in the workplace.

Janus (2008) found that work life-balance did not come to play in hiring and promotion decisions. In addition, both men and women were transactional (competitive, controlling etc.) and transformational (using two-way communication styles). The managers said it was important to have work-life balance and found it easier to achieve now than when they were juniors. The findings showed that the many factors of the employee's overall social location (class, race) trumps gender when it comes to leadership styles, mentoring relationships, gender disparity, work-life balance and hiring / promoting.

The work of Janus (2008) was very significant for this study since the use of social role theory directly reflected the assumptions of this study. Also, the Janus (2008) investigated the leadership style of males and females in public relations. This was an aspect of this research which was studied, which in essence helped to bring out relevant issues in the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes the methods of data collection and analysis that were used for this study. It outlines the sample size, the sampling procedure, data collection, as well as data analysis that were employed. The study was structured as a qualitative study where depth, rather than breadth of phenomenon was of importance. The research used in-depth interview techniques to help explore how PR managers and technicians negotiated gender in terms of their role performance. The chapter further expands on the method of data collection and analysis.

#### **3.1 Study Design**

According to Cresswell (1994: 18):

a qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of respondents, and conducted in a natural setting.

The research employed the qualitative approach. The in-depth interview method was used to gather data for this research. This was to ensure that participants were questioned further on issues. Since detailed responses which border on the personal as well as professional aspects of the respondents were sought, the names and personal details of the respondents were not recorded. The conversation was therefore secure and confidential. Further, clear and elaborate explanations were given to respondents about the objective and the essence of the study. As Gordon, (1980) as cited in Musah (2007) asserts, effective in-depth qualitative interview entails creating a shared concern for each other, in which both the interviewer and the respondent understand the contextual nature of the interview.

## **3.2 Sampling**

The study used purposive sampling, as this method seeks subjects based on specific characteristics. The type of purposive sampling used, was maximum variation. According to Maykut and Morehouse (2000), a maximum variation sample is a purposefully selected sample of persons or settings that represent a wide range of experience related to the phenomenon of interest. They argue that its goal is not to build a random and generalizable sample, but rather to try to represent a range of experiences related to what one is studying. Since this technique captures the variation in the various institutions under study and the varied experiences of male and female technicians and managers, it was considered an appropriate technique for this study.

Three broad categories of institutions were studied. These were higher education institution, financial institution and constitutional bodies. The University of Ghana, Ghana Commercial Bank and Electoral Commission were selected out of these three categories. O'Neil (2003) and Toth *et al.*, (1998) have argued that the organisational environment and practice affect the experiences of PR practitioners especially women. Therefore, the three institutions were used because the nature of practice in these institutions differed and this prevented nature of practice from being a demand characteristic. In that, sampling from a population of financial institutions alone, for example, may not reflect a perfect situation, since the activities of a financial institution may necessarily differ from the activities of a constitutional body. In addition to the above reason, all the three institutions are well-established institutions.

### **3.2.1 Sampling Size**

A sample size of 12 practitioners was selected for the study, four individuals from each institution: six technicians and six managers in all. Two males and two females were selected from each institution, two managers and two technicians from GCB, two managers and two

technicians from EC and two managers and two technicians from UG. In each case there was one male and one female.

### **3.3 Study Site**

The study sites for the research were the University of Ghana campus, Legon, the Ghana Commercial Bank, head office, Accra- High Street and the Electoral Commission office, Accra-Ridge.

#### **3.3.1 Respondent Background and PR Unit Structure**

Out of the six managers interviewed, four had background experience and education in public relations and these four were members of the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana. The other two were in their positions because the institution moved them from other units to head the PR unit. Of the six technicians interviewed, only one had a background in public relations. This was a female; the other two female technicians expressed interest in pursuing a course in public relations.

In all of the three institutions studied, name and the structure of the PR unit varied. The PR unit for UG was known as the Public Affairs Directorate with four subunits - public relations, administration, protocol and alumni. Respondents were selected from the public relations, protocol and alumni subunits. The PR unit for GCB was called Corporate Affairs Unit, with all the aspects of PR undertaken in this unit, therefore all the respondents were selected from the unit. The PR unit for EC was called Public Affairs Unit. It had under its umbrella internal and external relations but protocol was under the human resource department. Three respondents were interviewed from the Public Affairs Unit and one respondent was interviewed from the Protocol Unit.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

The interest of this research was to find out if gender role stereotypes in the performance of PR roles by technicians and managers existed at UG, GCB and EC. It also sought to identify how gender affected or influenced what duties practitioners performed and self-selected. Data was collected using in-depth interviews and observation. The interviews were used to explore the views, experiences and motivations of individual respondents. Practitioners were asked a series of questions, which required them to provide their personal and professional experiences in their duties. Participants were asked questions on the activities they undertook and the leadership styles they employed in the performance of their roles in public relations.

The length of each in-depth interview varied, between 38 minutes and one hour, and the interviews were audio recorded and immediately transcribed to avoid any misunderstandings. A question guide was used during the interviews. The recording time for the interviews was approximately eight hours, 48 minutes and it took approximately 38 hours to transcribe. After transcribing, a report was developed which followed the themes and objectives outlined for the study.

In addition to the 12 in-depth interviews conducted in this study, observation of the respondents in their natural setting was conducted. This was necessary as in-depth interviews are often limited and the credibility of the information given by the respondents need to be ascertained. Often times, in-depth interviews are combined with other forms of data such as documents, diaries and observations to provide a rich source of information about the phenomenon under study. The researcher visited each institution four times, the first day was to make enquiries and book interview days and observe respondents perform their tasks. Then, the other three days were used for the interview. During these three days, the researcher again, observed the activities of the respondents and matched them to what they

said. Notes were taken on the activities performed by these practitioners in terms of their relationship with colleagues and subordinates through non-verbal communication as well as some of the roles they performed.

### **3.4.1 Data Collection Instruments**

An interview guide was developed and used in collecting data. A semi-structured interview guide was used. This ensured that the researcher used follow-up questions based on the responses of the respondents. Responses from the respondents were put together in a report and the notes gathered from the observation compared to the information gained from the interview for correctness. For this study, the issues in the interview guide were based on the objectives of the study and also on a list of activities and leadership styles developed by Frederick (2003) and Alimo-Metcalfe (1994) respectively.

### **3.4.2 Instrument Administration**

An interview guide was developed before the interview was conducted. The interview with each institution was conducted over three days. During these three days, the respondents were further observed using an observation guide. A separate interview guide was used for technicians and a separate interview guide for managers but the same interview guide was used for all institutions in the study.

For all the institutions, a letter was sent to all the PR unit heads to allow the researcher to interview individuals in the unit. The interviews were conducted over a period of one month. A voice recorder was used in recording responses from the interviewees. The data gathered was transcribed. The research sought to answer whether gender roles affected the performance of PR roles.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

The transcribed data was organized into common patterns or themes based on the objectives of the study to identify the various activities that women generally undertook and the activities that men undertook. The nine-item list by Frederick (2003) and the four-item list by Alimo-Metcalfe were used in the data analyses. Themes centred on the activities of males and females in PR, the self-selection of duties and the differences that existed in role performance. It also looked at the leadership skills common to men and women in public relations role performance. The dominant and errant views were emphasized. After data had been transcribed, the findings of the research were discussed with reference to the theory, concepts, themes and related works.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The study set out to uncover how PR roles were performed by male and female public relations managers and technicians in three institutions, Ghana Commercial Bank, University of Ghana, and Electoral Commission. As indicated earlier, the three institutions were chosen to make sure that different institutions with different publics were covered. This helped to prevent the nature of practice of a certain institution from affecting the results of the study. For the purposes of this research, duties have been defined as the activities assigned to technicians and managers in PR units. The study also sought to find out if gendered roles or duties existed in these three institutions. The study further sought to discover whether males and females performed certain roles according to stereotypes of their gender group using a nine-item list by Frederick (2003) and a four-item list by Alimo-Metcalfe (1994), which found that men and women differed in their leadership styles and activities performed. Finally, the study sought to find out whether any of the roles performed by individuals in public relations were self-selected. This chapter presents and analyses the data gathered for the purpose of answering the research questions.

#### **4.1 PR Role Performance by Males and Females**

One of the main objectives of this study was to find out the duties performed by males and females in PR units of Ghana Commercial Bank, University of Ghana and Electoral Commission. With this, the information needed was an inventory and description of the various duties performed by PR practitioners. Some of the duties identified were supervisory

and policy advisory. Therefore, a female manager, a male manager, a male technician and a female technician were interviewed in each of the three institutions.

**Table 3: PR Role Performance by Managers**

Managerial Activities	UG		EC		GCB	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Counselling management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Making communication policy decisions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Evaluating programme results	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supervising the work of others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Planning public relations programmes	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meeting with clients / executives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Managing public relations programmes	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Planning and managing budgets	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Implementing new programmes	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓

#### **4.1.1 PR Role Performance by Male Managers**

The male managers all took part in counselling management, making policy decisions, supervising the work of others and many more as set out in Table 3. They performed the activities that managers were expected to perform according to the list by Frederick (2003) in Table 1. The basic role for the male manager of UG was to advise management.

The male manager at the alumni unit explained that,

My role is a managerial position so, we meet as managers for public affairs and I tell them what the alumni affairs unit needs. For instance, we had so much building problems, like infrastructural, the roof was caving in so, I advised management, and quickly men were brought on board to rectify the situation. So, I do add my voice to decision making.

The other duties included implementation of the decisions by the University body, supervising the work of others, planning budgets and evaluating the activities of the alumni association.

One of the duties of the male manager at EC was to take part in decision-making. He explained that:

Very often, some of the things we have done are ideas I conceive and I go and discuss with the Chairman. On a couple of occasions, we have had some workshops with media personnel and we think that it is necessary for us to meet them and have those seminars. Those ideas are conceived here and then we get the chairman to approve it because of budgeting constrains and others.

The EC manager wrote press releases and sometimes delegated the writing duties to other members of the unit. He also took part in evaluating and supervising subordinates.

#### **4.1.1.1 Summary**

The male managers in all the three institutions performed their PR roles according to the list of activities by Frederick (2003) in Table 1. They took part in counselling management, evaluating programme results, managing PR programmes, implementing new programmes and supervising the work of others.

#### **4.1.2 PR Role Performance by Female Managers**

The female managers reported taking part in most of the activities listed by Frederick (2003) in Table 1. They evaluated programmes, supervised staff, counselled management and met

with clients and executives. According to the female manager in the corporate affairs unit of GCB, her task was to manage the reputation of the organisation. She handled communication with the internal publics through the intranet and a quarterly magazine called 'the Eagle' which was targeted at staff. The Manager revealed that she collated information so that she could share among the 2000 members of staff through 158 branches and she supervised these.

As noted by her:

Before we send anything round I make sure that staff know it already, just so that we can keep everybody on the same page. You can appreciate how information gets mutilated in passing around so we use 'The Eagle' as the print medium and we use the intranet too. Also, I handle communication, media relations, external relations, then of course technology matters.

The other duties of the GCB female manager was to counsel management, take part in policy decisions of the bank, make telephone calls, take part in budgeting and manage PR programmes.

The role of the female manager at EC had to do with media relations. According to her:

Here, there are policies involved and you cannot make a policy statement as a PR person so what I do is to scan the environment, advise my boss as to what measure to take vis-à-vis the law, making sure that the kinds of laws we have are adhered to by the electorates or your target.

She also took part in policy decision making, planning PR programmes and evaluating programmes as seen in Table 3.

The female manager at UG did not take part in planning and managing PR programmes neither did she handle budget. Her department was the protocol unit which meant that she handled visa acquisition, consular matters and travel and tour.

#### 4.1.2.1 Summary

The female managers at the EC and GCB performed all the activities in Table 1. The Female manager from UG on the other hand, did not manage PR programmes, plan and manage budgets, neither did she implement new programmes as set out in Table 3.

**Table 4: PR Roles Performance by Technicians**

Technician Activities	UG		EC		GCB	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Implementing decisions made by others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing, editing, producing messages	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Disseminating messages	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Handling correspondence/ telephone	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Making media contact	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Meeting with peers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ushering at programmes	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
Making food requisition	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓

#### 4.1.3 PR Role Performance by Male Technicians

In this research, all the male technicians interviewed were in charge of protocol duties. They implemented the decisions of their superiors and had peer meetings as set out in Table 4. In terms of writing, editing and producing messages, only the protocol officer from GCB performed this task. The male technician from EC did not handle telephone and correspondence. The male technicians were mostly in charge of acquiring visas and making provisions for accommodation for their guests.

The role of the technician at EC involved implementing policy, making arrangements and booking appointments for members of staff for the commission. According to the EC technician:

In the protocol department, we are supposed to look at the welfare of members of staff especially the commissioners. I make public arrangements and hotel bookings. I arrange for the accommodation of directors coming to Accra from other regions and I also organise meetings.

The male technician of GCB wrote and edited articles, implemented policy decisions and sent electronic mails but the male technician did not receive telephone calls regularly. He explained that:

I do a lot of writing; first I was doing it manually. I will write, then type. Then my boss told me to type directly so now I do that. I do not handle telephone calls, we have our exchange department. All the call go through the exchange. But today, I received a call from a company and another from Ghana Armed Forces. If the call is my schedule it will come to me.

#### **4.1.3.1 Summary**

Male technicians in the three institutions were all performing protocol duties. They implemented the decisions of others and disseminated PR messages. The male technicians from EC and UG did not write PR messages but the male technician from GCB wrote messages. They all handled correspondence apart from the male technician from EC. In addition to the list in Table 1, the male technicians did not perform ushering duties at programmes, neither did they make food requisitions.

#### **4.1.4 PR Role Performed by Female Technicians**

The female technicians in all the three institutions performed all the activities on the list produced by Frederick (2003) in Table 1, in addition to ushering and making food requisitions. The role of the female technician at GCB was to handle internal

communications. The technician wrote stories and articles that were used in the newsletter. The technician also conducted interviews with some of the heads of department and area managers on the progress of activities in the bank, and the information was used in the newsletter to inform staff in all the branches about what was going on in the bank. She added that up-coming events were communicated per the intranet. Updates were sent to those who handled the website by the technician. The female technician also did event planning and ushering during those events. Handling telephone calls was one of the important roles played by the technician in the unit.

The role of the female technician at UG was to assist the head of the unit to write letters to invite guests and to write memos. The technician sometimes went out with drivers to deliver letters to the dignitaries that were invited, she ushered during events. She explained that,

I do requisition for those major events too. I write out what they need for the programme, when it comes to food and refreshment. We do take requisitions, to the restaurants, the major ones; the University guest centre, basements, what they will need basically.

#### **4.1.4.1 Summary**

Female technicians performed all the activities as can be seen in Table 4. They were involved with writing PR messages, implementing decisions and making telephone calls. They also ushered at programmes and made food requisition.

#### **4.2 Self-Selection of Duties**

Another objective for this study was to find out, if the duties that men and women performed in the PR unit of the three institutions were self-selected or those roles were assigned to them; that is, if males and females chose certain duties to perform. The information needed here

was an explanation of how duties were shared and negotiated in their institutions by managements and the practitioners themselves.

**Table 5: Self-selection of Duties**

PR Role	Duty	GCB		EC		UG	
		F	M	F	M	F	M
Manager	Self-selection	-	-	-	-	-	-
Technician	Self-selection	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-

#### 4.2.1 Self-selection by Males

As shown in Table 5 the male managers and male technicians reported not self-selecting any of the roles that they performed. They performed their roles as had been assigned to them. The male technician at GCB explained that management gave the roles he performed to him. He did not self-select any of the roles. He explained that:

Those times I was in a different unit, I did not select any role but they wanted me to perform the protocol duties because it is not for ladies. It takes you deep into the night and that is why I was brought in to perform the role.

According to the male EC protocol officer, roles such as food requisition and ushering were female roles and he did not perform those roles. He explained that:

We give ushering and sharing of the food to the ladies. We call on the ladies to help. Usually, men serving and lady serving, it is better if a lady serves. We enjoy the services of ladies so we call on the ladies to help.

##### 4.2.1.1 Summary

The males in this study reported not self-selecting any of the duties or tasks they performed. All the activities they performed were duties assigned to them as technicians and managers.

#### **4.2.2 Self-selection by Females**

The female managers reported they did not self-select any of the roles they performed.

The female manager of UG reported that she was transferred from the HR unit to the public affairs unit and she took directives from her superior and the university authorities. The manager explained:

I did not decide to do public affairs. I was appointed to this unit as part of the university system, where as an assistant registrar you can be transferred to any unit to work. I therefore perform any role on my schedule, I do not choose.

The female technicians on the other hand, reported, self-selecting ushering and food requisition tasks.

According to the female technician of GCB, all her writing duties, telephone calls and events she took part in and the roles she played in those events were assigned to her by the unit head. On the other hand, she ushered at special events that the bank organized.

The female technician of UG reported that she was assigned the roles that she performed but in situations where a person was not available to perform a certain role, she chose to do it. Other times, she chose to perform these roles because of her orientation. According the technician:

Sometimes, the role you choose to perform is by your orientation as female. For instance, some of the programmes are for students to come and listen to particular lectures that a professor will like to lecture; during the event, we refresh the students. When it comes to the sharing and distribution of food, I choose to do it because I feel like food aspect are ladies' job and my orientation as a woman and a female puts me in the best position to perform.

#### 4.2.2.1 Summary

Female managers reported not selecting any of the duties they performed. Female technicians on the other hand reported they self- selected some of the activities in their PR role performance.

#### 4.3 Stereotypes in Role Performance

Probing to know if men and women differed at how they performed their roles as managers was also an important objective for this study. This objective sought to establish whether managers in PR units exhibited leadership traits associated with their gender group. This would in essence create an understanding of whether leadership roles were associated with particular gender groups as indicated in Table 2. A four-item list on leadership style by Alimo-Metcalf (1994) was used to test these stereotypes.

**Table 6: Stereotype in Role Performance**

Leadership Styles	UG		EC		GCB	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Collaborative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cooperative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Democratic (Participatory Style)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nurturer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Competitive	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Controlling	-	✓	✓	-	-	-
Analytical	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hierarchical	-	-	-	-	-	-

#### **4.3.1 Stereotypes in Role Performance by Male Managers**

All the male managers reported that they used feminine leadership traits in performing their tasks as can be seen in Table 6. They used analytical styles but none of them employed hierarchical leadership styles. They also thought of themselves as non-competitive. Only the male manager from EC reported that he used controlling leadership styles in his role performance. He explained that the nature of the job demanded that he exercised some form of control in order to achieve results. The male manager of GCB revealed that:

I do not compete, the best I can do is to collaborate. I do not have a competitor, if you want to go, go I have my focus.

In addition, the male manager of UG said that he did not control in his job but he used participatory styles in his PR role performance. He revealed that:

Controlling is not even in my dictionary. I cooperate with them as I already said. Maybe you probably have to interview them as well to get some points clarified. If you come to the office you would hardly see who is the manager because with managers there is some 'Eyi bi' (which is translated to means 'an aura') around them, but I do everything with them.

According to the male manager of the EC, team work ought to be an important aspect of every activity performed. He revealed that:

I believe that team work is very crucial and everybody must be part of the team so role playing is key to me and that is why if I think I am under pressure and I cannot attend to something, I will ask someone else to do it and occasionally they will also come and ask if there is something to be done, so collaboration is what has brought us this far and if we are successful so far, it is because we have been collaborative.

He added that he cooperated with all the people he worked with but was quick to add that controlling was also important. He said:

In some situations, being controlling is also important. In a way you have to control because if you want something at 2pm, you must get it at 2pm and there, you have to be a bit tough on the person to get results.

The EC male manager further opined that he was analytical and democratic, depending on the situation and he was always a nurturer when it came to dealing with staff.

#### **4.3.1.1 Summary**

The male managers reported that they used all the feminine leadership traits as can be seen in Table 5. They also were analytical in their PR role performance. Only the male manager from EC said he used controlling leadership traits. None of the male managers reported using hierarchical leadership traits.

#### **4.3.2 Stereotypes in Role Performance by Female Managers**

The female managers reported that they employed all the feminine leadership traits on the list produced by Alimo-Metcalfe (1994) in Table 6. In addition, the female manager from GCB used competitive leadership styles. It was observed that the UG female manager may be employing controlling leadership styles in her role performance. None of the female managers reported using hierarchical leadership style.

According to the female manager of GCB:

If it is my department, I am collaborative. In terms of other departments and the peers, I would not say I am because it is all about proving yourself. For us women it is a another ball game altogether because I believe that when men are in position it is normal but when women are in position you have to push to ensure that you know what you are doing. If in another department, somebody can be afforded a certain peg or anything, then, I too should push to get some advantage. In my department, I will say collaborative because you are expecting ideas but across that is where the competition is. We need to assert ourselves because we are capable, but the men, when you talk, they say you are talking about emotions.

The female manager of UG on the contrary explained that, she believed that team work was better than competition so she always made sure that she was collaborative in leadership duties. She added that she was liberal and democratic. She further stated that:

In any work it is better to involve people. Let us involve people and let us see how best it goes. This is because no one person can achieve anything alone. That is why I think collaborating and being democratic and liberal are important.

She added that:

Once you are a team player, I do not think you will follow hierarchical order. You just want things to be done, things that will move the office forward and make sure you satisfy those you are serving.

The female manager of EC in agreement revealed that, she was always collaborative and cooperative in all her task performance. She explained that:

I have a problem with being stern; I cannot be that straight jacket person because I treat my subordinates as my children. If you do well, I commend you, if you do wrong, I tell you. Naturally, I cannot be stern; it's my weakness, that is me.

She also added that she was analytical in her job and explained that:

I do not mince words but I listen to people's views but if I realize your view will not help, it does not have to override mine because I have sought your view.

#### **4.3.2.1 Summary**

Female managers reported the use of all the feminine leadership traits. Only the female manager from GCB reported she used competitive leadership traits. The female managers from EC and GCB used analytical leadership traits. The female manager from UG was observed to be employing controlling leadership traits. None of the female managers used hierarchical leadership traits.

#### **4.4 Other Findings**

The leadership styles of the PR managers were observed during the interview as additional information in trying to meet the objectives of the research. The observation showed that through non-verbal communications, the male managers in all the three institutions were generally friendly. Their relationship with their subordinates, as observed was nurturing. They used participatory styles in making decisions and negotiating relationships, because they conferred with their subordinates to make decisions.

The female managers from EC and GCB were generally friendly and open. Their relationships with subordinates were friendly and cordial and they related well with their staff as observed. On the day of the interview, the researcher observed that the decision making style of the female manager of UG was analytical and not democratic nor participatory. This was observed as most of the directives she gave were instructive and she did not seek opinions but only directed subordinates as to what to do.

#### **4.5 Summary**

Described in this chapter were the roles performed by male and female technicians and managers from GCB, UG and EC. Role in this research was operationalized as the duties that practitioners performed. Male and female managers performed roles ranging from counselling managements to writing and producing PR messages. The findings show that male and female managers performed similar duties in PR practice. The research also found that male technicians mostly performed protocol duties while female technicians often involved themselves in writing, producing and distributing information. In addition to the female technician's role, she typically ushered at events and sometimes served food.

The research also found that female technicians often self-selected domestic duties such as ushering, serving of food and making food requisition. On the contrary, female managers did not self-select the roles they performed. It was also found that in terms of leadership styles men were collaborative, corporative and democratic and some of the female managers were competitive and analytical.

The observation set out to corroborate or contradict the findings of the interviews. In corroborating the research findings, the male managers showed their leadership styles in the way they related to their subordinates. The female managers from GCB and EC showed their leadership styles in their relationship with their staff and their approach to the interview. On the other hand, the female manager at UG contradicted what she said were her leadership styles with the approach to which she made decisions. Some of the decisions she made were non-participatory as she did not involve her subordinates.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.0 Introduction

This study set out to establish whether gender roles existed in public relations practice in the three institutions that were studied, Ghana Commercial Bank, University of Ghana and the Electoral Commission of Ghana. This was to ensure that the outcomes of the findings applied to different institutions and not relative to only a particular institution and the nature of its PR practice. The findings outlined in the previous chapter are discussed in this chapter with focus on the social role theory since it was the theory that guided this research. Also, realistic and objective conclusions are drawn from the implications of the findings and discussed in this chapter.

#### 5.1 Duties Assigned to Men and Women in PR Departments and whether the Duties were self-selected by Practitioners

In spite of the fact that the three institutions had their different publics that made them practise PR differently, practitioners performed similar tasks such as advising management, writing articles, planning programmes and events and implementing decisions. The task assigned to men and women in PR departments in the three institutions studied were similar as can be seen in Tables 3 and 4, and often matched the PR roles they occupied in Table 1, whether as technicians or managers. In most situations, managers were in charge of decision making according to the list by Frederick (2003) in Table 1. The male and female managers all took part in counselling management, evaluating programme results, supervising the work of others, planning PR programmes and meeting clients and executives. That is to say that gender did not affect what tasks managers undertook.

The technicians, however, differed in terms of the tasks assigned to them. All the male technicians interviewed were in charge of protocol duties. The male technician at GCB said that:

“...they wanted me to perform the protocol duties because it is not for ladies. It takes you deep into the night...”

This seems to suggest that protocol duties may have often been given to males to perform not females, suggesting that gender could have been a factor in terms of protocol role performance. According to Straker (2008), using the social role theory, males and females often had different occupational roles. In this case, males seem to be the preferred group for protocol duties because, it is thought that females have roles to play at home as care-givers and mothers, Eagly (1997) but males may not and therefore are able to spend more time in the workplace than females.

The male technician at GCB performed all the roles under technician activities under the nine-item lists of managerial and technician duties by Frederick (2003) in Table 1. In addition, he performed a supervisory role which was under managerial activities on the nine-item list by Frederick (2003). The male technicians of UG and EC hardly performed any of the activities on the list for technician. They implemented the decisions of others but they did not write, edit or produce messages.

The female technicians, on the other hand, performed all the activities on technician activities on the list. This seems to suggest that gender might have been an influential factor on what tasks or duties were been performed by technicians in PR departments. In addition to those activities, the female technicians were in charge of making food requisition, serving and ushering during events at their various events in their institutions. In most cases, the ushering

and serving at events, which are communal duties were duties that the female technicians self-selected. Eagly (1997) posited in the social role theory that men and women behaved differently in social situations such as the workplace and the home, and they took on different roles due to society's expectation. The female technician at UG confirmed that:

“...when it comes to the sharing and distribution of food, I choose to do it because I feel like food aspect are ladies' job and my orientation as a woman and a female puts me in the best position to perform those roles.”

In addition, the male technician of EC alluded to this issue as he suggested that certain duties were the preserve of women, even in the work place. He revealed that:

“We give ushering and sharing of the food to the ladies. We call on the ladies to help. Usually, men serving and lady serving, it is better if a lady serves. We enjoy the services of ladies so we call on the ladies to help.”

Straker (2003) posited that females often took on tasks that were more domestic. This was reflected in the female technicians choosing to usher and serve even though these duties were originally not part of their duties as technicians. Eagly (1997) suggested that beliefs about the differences between men and women could be divided into two dimensions: communal and agentic. Bakan (1966) suggested that agentic qualities were manifested by self-assertion, self-expansion and the urge to master and be independent. Agentic qualities were often attributed to males. Communal qualities were manifested through selflessness, concern for others and emotional expressiveness, commonly associated with domestic activities, thus, with women. Eagly (1997) used communal and agentic qualities to differentiate between males and females in work. These females self-selected certain roles or duties, which were domestic duties, thereby asserting communal qualities. This would imply that gender roles could have existed in PR practice in the three organisations, with the females self-selecting certain domestic activities because of the communal qualities they had been nurtured into.

## **5.2. Stereotypes and PR Role Performance**

In terms of leadership styles used by the managers, some differences were observed in terms of PR role performance. The four-item list developed by Alimo-Metcalfe (1994) in Table 2 showed certain leadership traits that were often associated with males and females.

In this study, the male managers all said they used leadership styles that were classified as female leadership styles according to the list developed by Alimo-Metcalfe (1994) in Table 2 and these managers demonstrated these leadership styles during the interview process. This then, means that the males were not using masculine stereotypes which are often associated with managerial or leadership positions. It also confirms the study of Janus (2008) that found that both men and women were using transformational leadership styles (using two-way communication styles, being collaborative and cooperative). This may suggest that feminine traits are the preferred traits for leadership positions. There is therefore the need to find out why research in the past discovered that managerial roles are male spaces.

Even though, the female qualities in Table 2 are often thought to be communal, in another way it may be looked at as agentic. This is because according to Gallagher (2000) expressing agentic quality has to do with independence of individuals who were agents of social change. Therefore, even though competitiveness, controlling and hierarchical attributes were often associated with males, two of the three males in this study seem to have moved away from this trend and embraced more preferred leadership styles in their role performance. Female technicians appear to express communal qualities in their PR role performance. Some of the female managers on the other hand, appeared to be exhibiting some of the male leadership styles on the list developed by Alimo-Metcalfe (1994).

Eagly (1997:1485) suggests that emotional expressiveness are tied to communal qualities which are associated with women. According the female manager of GCB,

We need to assert ourselves because we are capable, but the men, when you talk, they say you are talking about emotions

This appears to suggest that stereotypes existed and social expectations of females still existed. Conway, Pizzamiglio, and Mount (1996) conducted research to test Eagly and Steffen's (1984) findings comparing job status with agency and communality. They found that low status individuals were rated as more communal than agentic and high status individuals were rated as more agentic than communal. These findings imply that communal, which is normally associated with females, was associated with low status positions, so that females were associated with low status jobs.

The female manager of EC seems to make suggestions that females are thought of as incapable of certain duties, therefore, high status is often associated with males. She explained that:

“Just because you are a woman you are limited. If I probably were to be a man I would not be where I am now, because there are hurdles and because of these gender issues, there are certain things that a man may do for years, then be recognised but a woman may do the same thing and may not be recognised. Whether it is going to be transformed into promotions appropriately, that is a different issue all together. The issue has to do with male chauvinism, the issue has to deal with the fact that you are a woman and you have to be limited.”

### **5.3 Limitations of the study**

The first limitation of the study was the in-depth interview research method used. The in-depth interview method may be prone to biases. Responses from respondents might have been to create a positive image. The method was time consuming to conduct interviews, transcribe them and analyse the results.

Another limitation of the study is the qualitative methodology adopted. A bigger sample and the inclusion of more organisations would have given a better picture of the topic of study.

However, this was not possible because of the time consuming nature of the data collection method used, coupled with the limited time available to the researcher to collect data

#### **5.4 Recommendation**

From the findings, it is clear that the sample was limited because of the time-frame of the study, so future research is recommended in this area with a larger sample than used in this study. For future studies, more institutions could be researched to explore more gender dynamics in terms of role performance in public relations departments.

It is also recommended that future research be conducted in gender and public relations to investigate why females self-select certain roles even in occupations. Such a research can also explore how females are embracing new spaces in the work place in relation to the home and their domestic duties. In addition, the research could explore masculine traits such as competitiveness, aggressiveness, independence and feminine traits such as collaboration, cooperativeness, nurturing and how these affect promotion. This could be useful because Joann (2012) suggested that men got promoted into managerial positions because of the masculine traits they brought on board. Men in this research on the other hand reported feminine traits and some of the females reported masculine traits. It would therefore be useful to investigate how gender traits affect promotion in public relations in Ghana.

For future studies, research could be conducted to find out how long it takes men and women to be promoted in PR departments. It could also investigate, how satisfied or content female PR practitioners are with the roles they perform and how this translates into promotions. This could be compared to the male practitioners in similar positions to find out if gender affects how an individual is promoted in public relations practice in Ghana.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

Three different institutions with different publics were selected for the study. Ghana Commercial Bank, University of Ghana and Electoral Commission were selected to represent financial institution, educational institution and constitutional bodies respectively. The study was premised on the assumption that gender might have an influence on the way PR practitioners performed their roles since males and females have specific roles assigned to them by society.

To achieve the broad aim of the study, two main objectives were considered. They were: to outline the roles performed by male and female technicians and managers; to identify whether those roles were self-selected by practitioners and to find out whether males and females performed PR roles according to stereotypes for males and females.

In order to arrive at the findings, the study adopted the in-depth interview methodology in addition to observation. A question guide and an observation guide were developed by the researcher. A sample size of 12 practitioners was selected. For each institution, four PR practitioners were selected, two were males and two were females. The data gathered were developed into themes to help interpret the findings of the study.

Analysis from the study revealed that female and male managers performed similar duties in PR units of the three institutions studied. On the other hand, male technicians in these three institutions all performed protocol duties with their female counterparts performing administrative and domestic duties. In addition, female technicians self-selected ushering roles, food serving duties and food requisition duties. In addition, males exercised agency by enacting their roles using collaborative, corporative and democratic leadership styles and this

seem to suggest that feminine traits may be the preferred leadership styles. This means that the males were not reinforcing stereotypes appropriate for their gender group.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Interview Guide for Public relations Managers**

#### **PART ONE: ROLE SELECTION**

- What roles do you play in this organisation?
- How long have you worked in the organisation
- Why did you decide to do PR?
- Did you select the roles you perform or any of the duties you have performed in the past?

#### **PART TWO: ACTIVITIES PERFORMED**

- Do you counsel management and how often?
- How is policy decision made in your organisation?
- How is supervision done in your department?
- How is evaluation of PR programmes done?
- Do you meet with clients and executive and how often do you do this?
- How are PR programmes planned and managed?
- What are the various ways that planning and budgeting budgets done in your organisation? Is it part of your duties?

### PART THREE: LEADERSHIP STYLES (STEREOTYPES)

- What leadership style do you use in your job performance? Collaboration or competitiveness?
- How controlling or cooperative are you in your PR role performance?
- Do you employ democratic or analytical decision making styles? In what ways do you do this?
- In the performance of your PR role, are you often a nurturer or do you employ hierarchical leadership? In what ways?

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Interview Guide for Public Relations Technicians**

#### **PART ONE: ROLE SELECTION**

- What roles do you play in this organisation?
- How long have you worked in the organisation
- Why did you decide to do PR?
- Did you select the roles you perform or any of the duties you have performed in the past?

#### **PART TWO: ACTIVITIES PERFORMED**

- Do you write, edit or produce messages? How do you do this?
- How do messages go around?
- Do you implement decision of others and how often?
- What are the various ways that programmes are evaluated?
- How and who handles correspondence or telephone calls?
- What role do you play in PR programme planning and management?
- How are peer meetings done? What role do you play in it?

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Observation Guide for Managers**

#### **PART ONE: CHARACTERISTICS**

- Name of Institution...
- Situation...
- Who was present...
- Position of the one been observed...

#### **PART TWO: QUESTIONS**

- How does the manager relate to subordinates?
- Is the relationship nurturing in nature or hierarchical?
- What is the manager's general approach to answering the research questions
- Was the respondent friendly or hostile towards the researcher?
- What are the various ways the manager made decisions?

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