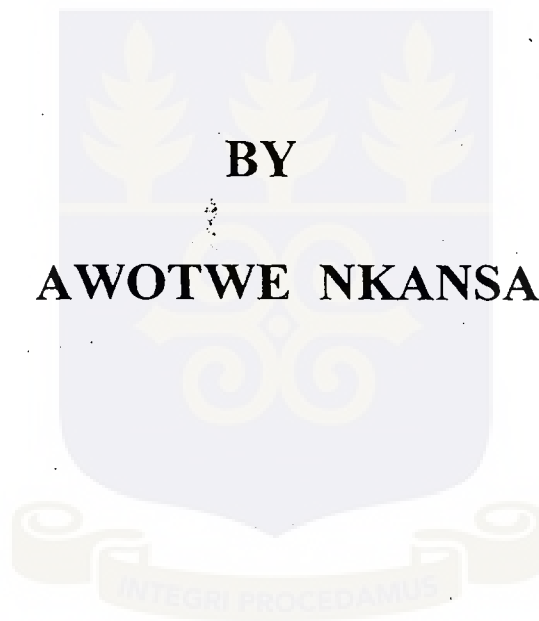


**MANAGEMENT PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC
RELATIONS IN SERVICE ORGANISATIONS: A
STUDY OF GHANA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF TEACHERS (GNAT)**

BY

AWOTWE NKANSAH



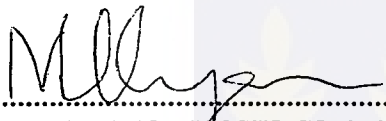
**A PROJECT WORK PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION
STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A GRADUATE DIPLOMA
IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES.**

JUNE, 2000

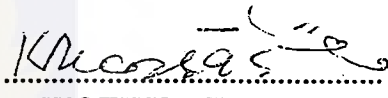
DECLARATION

I declare that this project work was my original research done in the School of Communication Studies under the supervision of Mrs. Margaret Ivy Amoakohene.

The project work has neither been submitted in part nor whole to any institution for any purpose. nor has it been presented elsewhere for any award of degree.

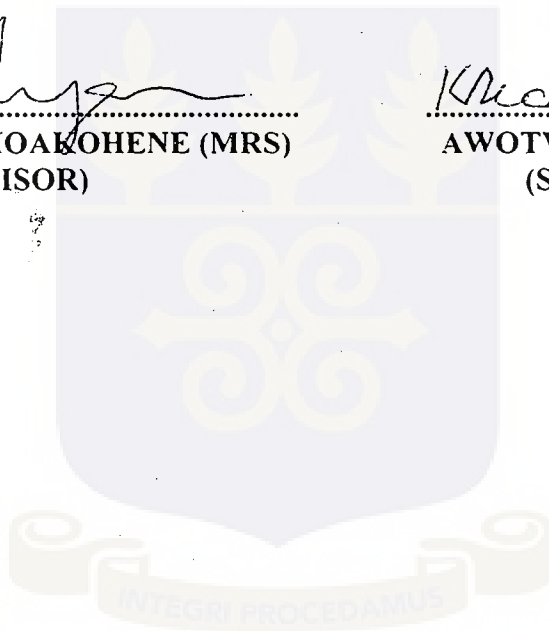


.....
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(SUPERVISOR)



.....
AWOTWE NKANSAH
(STUDENT)

JUNE, 2000



DEDICATION

To the General Secretary of GNAT, Mr. Paul Osei-Mensah.

To my beloved wife Connie and our children:

Akosua Nyarko, Akua Afriyie, Maame Serwaa,

Nana Yaw Fosu and Adwoa Asantewaa.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am greatly indebted to my supervisor, Mrs. Margaret Ivy Amoakohene, a Lecturer at the School of Communication Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, for her priceless help in making this research study a reality.

May I thank Prof. Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh for his patience in introducing me to research methods, something I needed most to enable me carry out this project work.

I am also grateful to the GNAT Department of Communications/International Relations, Regional Secretaries and Research Officer Mr. John Nyoagbe for inspiring me to go ahead to undertake the study. To Miss Dinah Tsibo of GNAT Headquarters I say thank you for packaging the questionnaires sent to respondents. *mixture of persons!*

I should equally thank Mr. Newlove Franklin Anku for his untiring effort in typing this work.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY OF ERROR

I would like to acknowledge that I am solely responsible for any error contained in the project work.

A.N.

ABSTRACT

The project work hinged on management perception of public relations (PR) in service organisations, based particularly on GNAT. The aim was to bring to light the lapses in PR of GNAT and examine management plans to check or minimize these setbacks in order to promote effective public relations.

A descriptive study involving a total population of 140 members was carried out. Respondents were made up of full-time senior management staff at national, regional and district secretariats of GNAT. Self-administered questionnaires were sent to gather data from respondents.

The findings from the study disclosed that public relations was facing problems and needed to be reduced to enable PR contribute to achieving organisational goals. The study indicated further that respondents understood the role of PR but it was noted that PR was beset with problems due largely to low management support.

Significantly, the study revealed that respondents considered PR relevant. However, the study disclosed poor management attention for PR programmes. To this end, respondents suggested that communication matters and PR generally, should be adequately financed and supported to enable GNAT meet the needs of its vast empire of publics and organisational goals.

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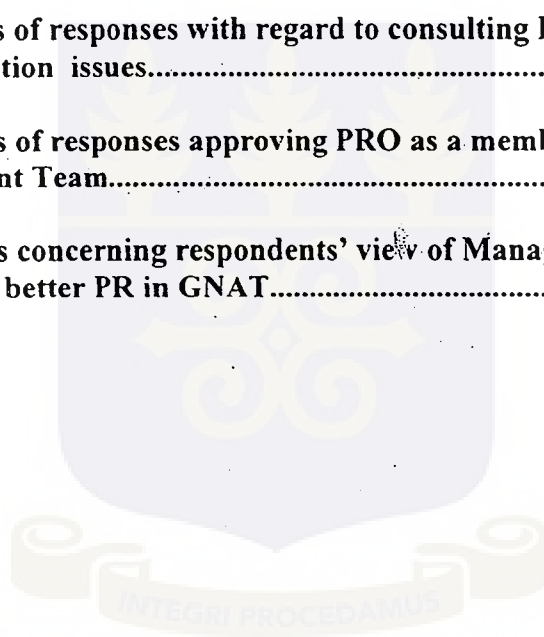


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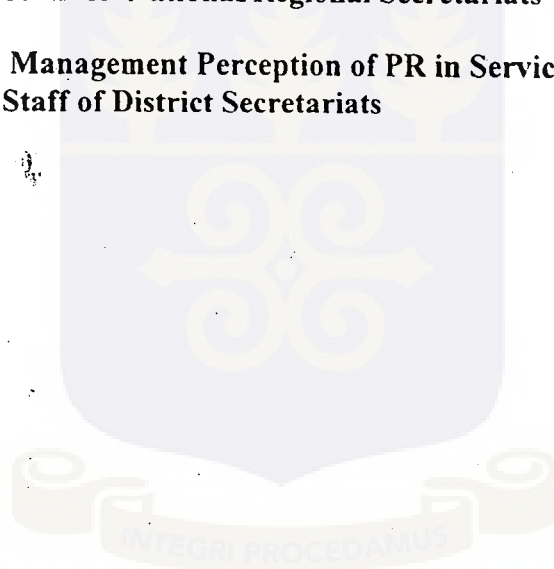
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Public relations is that management function that concerns the relationships and communications that individuals and organisations have with other groups to bring about mutual understanding and goodwill. In view of this, the Foundation of Public Relations Research and Education, founded by members of Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), in 1975, defined public relations as:

A distinctive, management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communications, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its publics;... and uses research and sound and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools.¹

Accordingly, Arens and Bovée (1994) state that PR refers to building good relationships with other groups by ensuring that someone in the organisation takes the time to cultivate relationships with the right people. Arens and Bovée state further, everyone in an organisation or a set-up has relationships with groups of people who are affected by what the organisation does.² These groups of people might be employees, customers, suppliers or shareholders.

Obviously, each group can be considered as one of an organisation's publics and each group is expected to develop and maintain favourable co-operation with most, if not all, of the organisation's publics.³ If an organisation fails to win the goodwill of its publics the consequence can be severe. It could be in

terms of loss of customers, time lost in dealing with complaints or lawsuits and loss of reputation.⁴ This is particularly so in times of crisis, emergency or disaster as well as major policy decisions like changes in management⁵. Representatives of more than thirty regional and national public relations associations who gathered in Mexico City in 1978 defined public relations practice as:

*The art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organisation's leadership, and implementing planned programmes of action which will serve both the organisation's and the public interest.*⁶

Wayne and Dauwalder (1994) state that managers at all levels plan, organize, direct and control activities of the organisation. adding. "each of these functions depends on good communication to achieve the set goals".⁷ The problems facing public relations practice in GNAT make it less effective to meet organisational objectives. In many service organisations, the Public Relations Officer has other people or qualified personnel working under him or her. Though the task of the Public Relations Department of GNAT is quite big, it is woefully understaffed.

Similarly, the public relations unit is given very little financial support to enable it carry out its work. Agee et al (1992) state that public relations departments can function only with the consent of top management.⁸ In GNAT, public relations does not enjoy management support, attention and understanding. Undoubtedly, these setbacks tend to reduce how well public relations of GNAT can function.

1.2 Brief History of GNAT

Ghana National Association of Teachers is a service organisation that is concerned with ensuring better conditions of service for its members who are drawn from pre-tertiary levels of the educational system. Members of GNAT are drawn from public and private primary, junior and senior secondary schools, training colleges, technical institutions and offices of educational administration units. The total membership of GNAT is 120,000.

The first teachers' union to be formed in this country, then Gold Coast, was Government School Teachers' Union (GSTU). The GSTU was formed in 1925 to serve as a platform for teachers to express their views on issues that affected their conditions of work. As the name stands, GSTU did not represent all teachers since it excluded teachers who did not teach in government schools.

Following a massive protest by teachers against the colonial government's attempt to impose 29 per cent tax on their salaries, teachers, in mostly schools set up by religious bodies, formed the Assisted School Teachers' Union (ASTU) in 1931. Unlike the GSTU, the ASTU embraced teachers in both government schools and those set up and managed by religious bodies. In 1956, GSTU and ASTU reached an agreement to come together as one union and took a common name, Gold Coast Teachers' Union (GCTU). In 1958, GCTU joined with the Union of Teachers and Educational Workers (UTEIW), now Teachers and Educational Workers Union (TEWU), as one of the then fourteen affiliated members of the Trades Union Congress (TUC).⁹

However, teachers did not favour TUC's over-dependence on the CPP government and therefore decided to opt out as Osae (1981) notes, to avoid being dragged into ideological controversies of governments, whether in power or not.¹⁰ Consequently, the then President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, agreed to teachers' demand to back out of the TUC. On 14th July, 1962 the Minister of Education formally inaugurated GNAT as a separate Organisation from and independent of the TUC.¹¹

1.3 Aims and Objectives of GNAT

Ghana National Association of Teachers enjoys a legal status. An Act of Parliament, Act 506, 1995 that set up the Ghana Education Service Council, clause 16(1) provides that "The organisation called Ghana National Association of Teachers has been formed to seek and promote, in accordance with law, the interests and wellbeing of its members".¹² The mission of GNAT is to negotiate with employers of teachers, Ghana Education Service (GES), for better, attractive and secure conditions of service for its members, as well as put its professional know-how at the disposal of society.

Specifically, the aims and objectives of GNAT are outlined in its constitution as follows:

- To bring all qualified teachers in public and private institutions in Ghana into a unified association.

- To promote academic standard, professional competence and conduct of members.
- To promote the interest of teachers and secure for them attractive conditions of service that will retain them in the profession.
- To provide internal economic and welfare services to members.
- To co-operate with the Government of Ghana in the pursuit of educational advancement.
- To arouse and increase public interest in educational affairs.
- To place the services of the Association at the disposal of public bodies and other organisations in the pursuit of education.¹³

Ghana National Association of Teachers decentralised in 1994 to give a measure of authority to local branches to manage their own affairs. The reason for creating a local authority, as Garbutt (1985) states, is "...to clarify lines of management. financial control and delegate more decision-making to local management with a fuller knowledge of conditions in their areas".¹⁴ In spite of decentralisation in GNAT, the national secretariat coordinates and monitors the programmes and activities of all branches to ensure uniformity and fairness at all levels of the Association.

1.4 Origins of Public Relations Practice in GNAT

The earlier teachers' unions used negotiations, petitions and interpersonal contacts to deal with their various publics. For example, one of the unions (ASTU) sent a petition to the colonial government to withdraw a 29 per cent tax it intended to slap on teachers' salaries in the early 1930s.

In the 1970s, GNAT appointed Apraku and later Armah as editors of its newsletter "The Teacher". According to the current General Secretary of GNAT, Mr. Paul Osei-Mensah, the editors were also to act as Public Relations Officers but this attempt failed because, as he put it, "these appointees had no training in public relations to be able to do better".¹⁵

In 1990, GNAT set up the Communications and International Relations Department to take charge of and organise public relations programmes and activities. In the same year, a trained journalist, Mr. Nicholas Kodzo Akyire, was appointed to run the department. Kodzo Akyire now represents GNAT as its Public Relations Officer. He is an accredited member of the Institute of Public Relations (IPR), Ghana.

1.5 Role of Public Relations in GNAT

The rapidly increasing information technology and advancement have created complex work settings and improved people's outlook, as Argenti (1994) states, making them tend to be more skeptical and more educated.¹⁶

As in numerous service organisations, GNAT's public relations department is responsible for publishing newsletters and bulletins, preparing press releases, organising press conferences, seminars and workshops. Besides, the PRO is expected to develop international relations policy for GNAT, undertake protocol services and advise management on policies GNAT should adopt to promote the image of the organisation.¹⁷

1.6 **Objectives of the Study**

This study was done to collect information on management perception of public relations in GNAT. Specific objectives of the study are stated as follows:

1. To identify GNAT's publics.
2. To bring out the lapses in public relations practice of GNAT.
3. To identify management preferences of media to send messages to GNAT's publics.
4. To find out management understanding of the role of public relations.
5. To examine management plans to promote better public relations in GNAT.

1.7 **Problem Definition**

Communication breakdown or information gap is not a healthy occurrence in any service organisation. There is widespread view that public relations practice in GNAT lacks credibility and is poorly recognised by management. In recent times, GNAT has had to contend with membership complaints such as poor salaries and bad conditions of service. For example, the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) accused GNAT of blocking free flow of information about decisions taken by Ghana Education Service concerning teachers' demands for better conditions of service. Besides, the general public expresses some dissatisfaction with the performance of members of GNAT.

It seems the problem has deepened because management fails to accord the right perception, the right understanding and the necessary attention to enable public relations practice run smoothly and satisfactorily. To what extent, therefore, does management perception affect public relations?

1. Does public relations in GNAT really face problems?
2. Can management identify GNAT's publics?
3. Does management make appropriate choices of media when sending messages to GNAT's publics?
4. Is management support adequate for public relations?
5. Does management understand the role of public relations.
6. Does management consider it relevant to promote better public relations in GNAT?

1.8 Significance of the Study

Teachers are commonly known to assume the responsibility for the formal education and learning of pupils or students. Importantly, teachers need to be sufficiently informed about what goes on in GNAT so that they do not leave the classroom to seek clarification on issues that affect their work.

The study was designed to bring to light the lapses in GNAT's public relations practice. Also, the study was designed to help management to appreciate the role of public relations. Above all, the study was intended to help management identify measures that could help limit the lapses in public relations practice to be able to meet the needs of the organisation's publics.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study examined management perception of public relations in service organisations, and centred specifically on Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT). Various scholarly works, both local and foreign, found to be relevant to the study were reviewed.

2.1 Management perception of public relations

According to Wortman (1988), perception refers to learned acts that make some people either like or dislike others, events or ideas.¹ In like manner, Feldman (1989) states that perception is the process by which we sort out, interpret, analyze and integrate events to which our senses are exposed.²

As may be widely known, for management to take the best decisions from among several options, it is important to share roles by means of appropriate information systems and team work. Mullins (1997) states that perception concerns information processing that helps managers to judge the behaviour and intentions of other people. He goes on to say that judgement of other people can also be influenced by perceptions of such factors as "role or status, occupation, physical factors and appearance, and body language that help to draw inferences from say eye contact, tone of voice or facial expressions."³ Explaining further, Mullins (1997) said differences of perception result in different people seeing different things and attaching different meanings to the same thing.

Every person sees things in her or his own way and as perception becomes a person's reality this can lead to misunderstandings.⁴ The accuracy of personal opinions and the judgements made about other people are influenced by such factors as: "the nature of the relationship between the perceiver and the other person; the amount of information available to the perceiver and the order in which information is received; and the nature and extent of interaction between two people."⁵

According to Cutlip *et al* (2000), early researchers cast mass communication in the role of telling us about events, things and places we could not experience directly ourselves. This, they said, created a situation that Walter Lippmann described as "the world outside and the pictures in our heads". There is, therefore, a "triangular relationship" consisting of the scene of action, perceptions of that scene, responses based on that scene and the impact of the responses to the original scene of action.⁶

Management perception of PR in some organisations is likely to be healthy if Public Relations Officers hold top positions in the organisations. Diabour (1992) did a study on the attitude of management towards public relations practice in ten organisations in Accra. He found out that "Public Relations Executives above the rank of heads of departments level had no problems getting access to top management. and constantly joined the top management team to formulate corporate policies".⁷ These findings are not likely to fit the PRO of GNAT since he has no place at the top management level because he is not above the rank of a head of department.

Management perception in most organisations tends to be very low for public relations practice in spite of the common knowledge that public relations is part and parcel of what management does each passing day. Turkson (1986), in a study of the public relations section of the University of Cape Coast (UCC), observed that "the PR outfit is not functioning as effectively as it should, and that is mainly attributed to the low status of the head of the Section".⁸

The findings Turkson made confirmed an observation by Ansah (1990) that "several organisations have PR departments or even use outside counsellors, but there are not many chief executives who really appreciated the value of PR and its positive contributions to the organisation".⁹

2.2 Public relations practice in Service Organisations

According to Jackson and Center (1995), the assigned roles of PR practitioners vary from organisation to organisation. They, however, stated that broadly, roles have been categorised by research on the basis of behaviour and strategy as reported by practitioners. These roles include:¹⁰

- Communication technician, who prepares information for internal or external audiences
- Expert prescriber, who devises programmes, and oversees implementation.
- Communication facilitator, who provides liaison, interpretation, and mediation between an organisation and its publics.

- Problem-solving facilitator, who consults and collaborates on matters involving diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Jackson and Center stated further that the PR practitioner should have the ability to help an organisation adjust to its total environment. As a result, they outlined the work or job that is carried out in an organisation by the practitioner in the following ways:¹¹

1. Writing
2. Editing
3. Submitting newsworthy material to appropriate outlets
4. Preparing speeches for others and giving speeches
5. Arranging for printed matter, slides, and films
6. Programming campaigns and special events
7. Supervising institutional advertising programmes
8. Preparing reports, position papers, public statements
9. Monitoring meetings and interpreting conclusions
10. Training spokespersons; being one her or himself
11. Planning a budget, operating on it and accounting for the outcome
12. Evaluating public opinion, programme results and competitive data.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

According to Gill and Johnson (1997), a theory is a set of ideas that is formulated as regards cause-and-effect relationships between two or more variables, which may or may not have been immediately tested.¹²

Transactional Analysis (TA) was used to support this research project because, as Newstrom and Davis (1993) state, perception and communication are firmly embraced.¹³ Originally developed by Eric Berne in the 1950s, TA is now a theory which, as research findings show, encompasses personality, perception and communication.

According to Newstrom and Davis (1993), the theory states that personality is made up of “three ego states which are revealed in distinct ways of behaving that manifest themselves in gesture, tone of voice and action, almost as if they are different people within us”. The objective of TA is to provide better understanding of how people relate to one another, so that they may develop improved communication and human relationships.¹⁴

Newstrom and Davis (1993) state that in Transactional Analysis, two people interact with each other from one of three psychological positions, known as ego states namely; parent ego state, adult ego state and child ego state. These ego states are explained as follows:¹⁵

- People whose parent ego state is in control may be “protective, controlling, nurturing, critical, or instructive”. They may firmly refer to policies and standards with such comments as “You know the rule, Akua. Now follow it”.
 - The adult ego state will appear as “rational, factual and unemotional behaviour”. It tries to upgrade decisions by seeking and receiving facts, processing data and holding factual discussions.
- The child ego state reflects the emotions developed in response to childhood experiences. It may be “spontaneous, dependent, creative, or rebellious”.

- Like an actual child, the child ego state desires approval from others and prefers immediate rewards. It can be identified by its emotional tone as when an employee comments to the supervisor, "You are always picking on me".

According to Mullins (1997), TA can help understand human behaviour. It can help to improve communication skills by assisting in interpreting a person's ego state and which form of state is likely to produce the most appropriate response. Transactional Analysis should lead to improvement in both customer relations and management-employee relations. Transactional Analysis can be seen as "a valuable tool in which we can understand social situations and the games that people play both in and outside work organisations".¹⁶ He concluded that TA emphasises the strong links between perception and communication.

2.3.1 Relevance to the Study

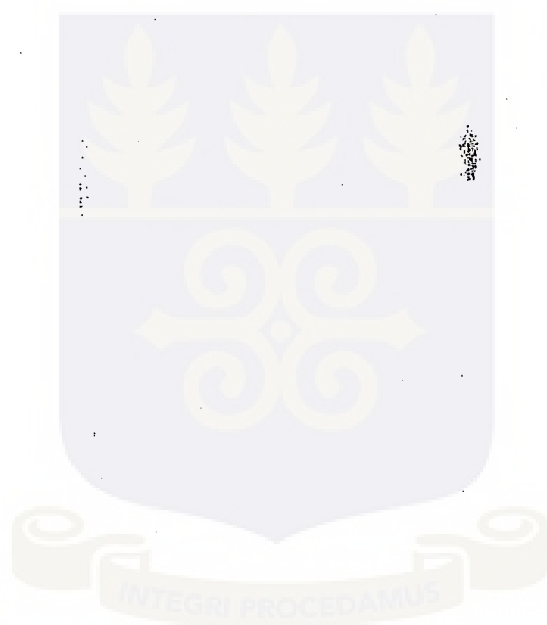
The project work was intended to examine management perception of public relations in service organisations. According to Mullins (1997), the theory of Transactional Analysis (TA) provides a close link between perception and communication.¹⁷ As a result, TA is relevant to this study in the following ways:

- Helped to provide a background to the methodology of the study.
- Helped to formulate the hypotheses for the study.
- Helped to shape and clarify the understanding of concepts used in the study.
- Apart from helping to generate the assumptions, TA ensured the coherence and harmony necessary to link the parts of this research project.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The project work was a descriptive study that was based on management perception of public relations. Information was collected from full-time management staff working at national, regional and district secretariats of GNAT. The study took account of only the full-time staff because they were easily reached.

3.2 Data Collection Method

Questionnaires were designed to obtain data from respondents. Two different sets of questionnaires, made up of closed and open-ended items, were sent to respondents to be self-administered. One set was designed for national and regional full-time secretaries while a second set was prepared for district secretaries. Different questionnaires were used because it was assumed the national/regional staff perception varied from district staff. The reason was that the district staff were relatively new on the job. Open-ended questions were added to let respondents express their own reactions to some more probing questions. (see Appendices 'A' and 'B').

Concerning questionnaire administration, permission was sought from the GNAT Research Director and Regional Secretaries to administer them to the respondents.

3.2.1 Questionnaires Return Rate

Each of the 30 respondents at national/regional secretariats was sent a questionnaire to respond on management perception of public relations. Of this number, 25 responded and returned same. At the district secretariats, 110 questionnaires were sent to respondents. Of this number, 75 responded and returned same.

One hundred out of 140 respondents answered the questions and returned the questionnaires to the researcher. Thus, the return rate was approximately 71.43%.

3.3 Sampling Method

The study covered the entire population of 140 management staff. They included the following members:

- Management Staff at Headquarters: 10
- Management Staff at Regional level: 20
- Management Staff at District level: 110
- Total Management Staff of GNAT: 140

The elected officers were not covered because they were so widely scattered that it was not easy to reach the majority to collect information from them.

3.4 Data Tabulation and Analysis

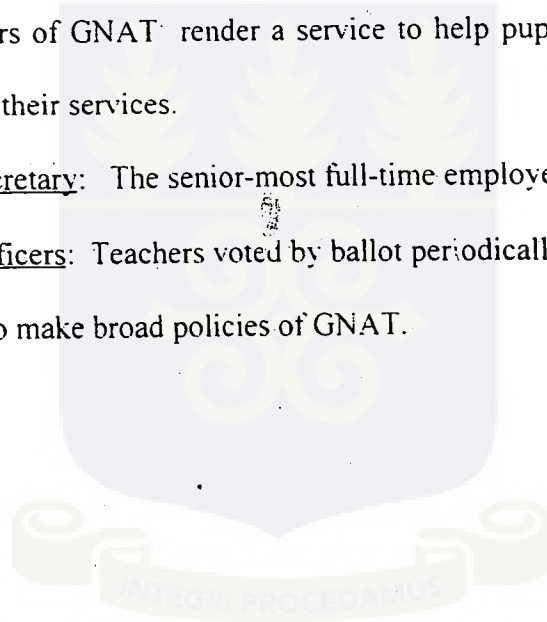
Data gathered were manually transformed to make them statistically meaningful. As Baker (1988) states, once data are collected, they must be put in a form that can be analyzed.¹ In like manner, Arens and Bovée (1994) agree that responses to questions must be checked to eliminate errors and inconsistencies.² To this end, data gathered were organised, edited, and tabulated. Wayne and Dauwalder (1994) indicated that data obtained can be “transformed by tabulating the responses to the questions and calculating the percentages for all responses to each question”.³

3.5 Operational Definitions

According to Katzer *et al* (1991), The “operations” in an operational definition are procedures and steps that one must go through in the real world in order to observe the concept being defined.⁴ In this study, some of the concepts used have been operationalised as follows:

1. Management: All teachers appointed by GNAT to hold office on full-time basis to direct and control affairs of the organisation.
2. Publics: Any person or group of persons that GNAT has something to do with and vice-versa, for example, teachers, students/pupils, parents or GES/Government officials.
3. Service: A duty that GNAT does for its publics e.g. formal education to pupils/students.
4. Organisation: GNAT as a body or set-up.

5. Teachers: All employees of GES directly helping pupils/students to acquire formal education.
6. Legal Status: GNAT's position as recognised by law.
7. Negotiations: Demands GNAT makes from its employers for better conditions of service.
8. Pre-tertiary Institutions: All lower levels of the formal educational system that members of GNAT render a service to help pupils/students learn and get paid for their services.
9. General Secretary: The senior-most full-time employee of GNAT.
10. Elected Officers: Teachers voted by ballot periodically into executive positions to make broad policies of GNAT.



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CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This Study was designed to examine management perception of public relations in service organisations. Out of 140 respondents 100 responded and returned the questionnaires. This gave a return rate of about 71.43%.

4.1 Identified Publics of GNAT

In Table 1 below, respondents agreed that teachers constituted the most important public of GNAT. All 25 respondents at national/regional and 75 at district levels indicated that teachers took the first place in everything GNAT decided to do.

Table 1: Percentages of responses indicating the foremost public of GNAT

Respondents' View	Pupils/Students %	Teachers %	Parents %	Other %	Total
At National/Reg. Levels	0(0.0)	25 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	25
At District Levels	0(0.0)	75 (75.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	75
Total		100(100.0)			100

Respondents also listed various groups that made up the publics of GNAT as including teachers, pupils/students, parents/guardians, tertiary institutions, Ghana Education Service/Government, Central Management Board (CMB), Civil Society Groups such as TUC, Education International (EI) and other national teacher unions worldwide.

4.2 Lapses Identified in public relations of GNAT

In Table 2 below, three-fifths (60.0%) respondents at national/regional levels agreed that the shortcomings in public relations of GNAT were due to inadequate funding. More than a quarter (28.0%) of respondents said the problems facing public relations were due to weak staff training/understaffing while one in 13 (8.0%) respondents said the problems were due to the low image of the Public Relations Department.

Table 2: Percentages of responses indicating what account for lapses in PR of GNAT

Respondents' View	At National/Regional Levels %	At District Levels %	Total
Weak staffing/Understaffing	7 (28.0)	40 (53.3)	47
Inadequate Funding	15 (60.0)	30 (40.0)	45
Low Image	2 (8.0)	5 (6.7)	7
Other	1 (4.0)	0 (0.0)	1
Total	25	75	100

From Table 2 above, a little more than half (53.3%) of respondents at the district levels expressed the view that lapses in public relations of GNAT were due to weak staff training/understaffing. Two in five (40.0%) attributed the lapses to inadequate funding.

Table 3: Percentages of responses showing the major problem facing PR in GNAT

Respondents' View	At National/Regional Levels %	At District Levels %	Total
Poor Image of PR Dept.	2 (8.0)	0 (0.0)	2
Little Financial Resource	2 (8.0)	9 (12.0)	11
Weak Professional Staff	3 (12.0)	6 (8.0)	9
Low Management Support	18 (72.0)	60 (80.0)	78
Other	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0
Total	25 (100.0)	75 (100.0)	100

In Table 3 above, almost three-quarters (72.0%) of respondents at national/regional levels perceived low management support as the major problem facing public relations of GNAT. At the district levels two in every three respondents pointed out that low management support was responsible for the main shortcomings in public relations of GNAT. Almost four in five (78.0) of all respondents indicated that the major pitfalls in public relations practice of GNAT was attributed to low management support.

Respondents listed other lapses that hindered PR as including lack of research on the part of PR Department, negative management perception, exclusion of PRO from top management team, militant behaviour of some members of GNAT, low professional competence and low morale of the PRO.

4.3 Management preferences of media to send messages to GNAT publics

Respondents at national/regional levels said that management preferred to send messages to GNAT's publics by a combination of media channels.

Giving explanations for their responses, respondents said "a combination of media channels could be much more effective in sending messages than using one channel." Management preferences of media, respondents listed, included newspapers, newsletters, district and regional mass meetings, circular letters, memos, press releases/conferences, radio, fax, television and telephone.

4.4 Management understanding of public relations role

Table 4: Percentages of responses with regard to consulting PRO on communication issues

Hold Consultations with PRO?	At District Level		At National/Regional Level		Total
		%		%	
Yes	15	(20.0)	5	(20.0)	20
No	50	(66.6)	5	(20.0)	55
To some extent	5	(6.7)	13	(52.0)	18
Other	5	(6.7)	2	(8.0)	7
Total	75		25		100

In Table 4 above, two in every three (66.6%) respondents at district levels said they had no consultations with the PRO. But one in five (20.0%) had consultations with the PRO on important GNAT issues. On the other hand, respondents at national/regional levels said half of them (52.0%), to some extent, held consultations with the PRO.

Table 5: Percentages of responses approving PRO as a member of top management team

Approve PRO as a member of Top Management Team?	YES %	NO %	To some extent %	Other	Total
At National/Regional Levels	20 (80.0)	5 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	25
District Levels	60 (80.0)	9 (12.0)	3 (4.0)	3 (4.0)	75
Total	80	14	3	3	100

Four-fifths (80.0%) of respondents at national/regional and district levels as shown in Table 5 above, indicated that they approved of the PRO as a member of the top management team. One in five (20.0%) respondents at the national/regional levels disapproved of the PRO becoming a member of the top management team. They explained that the PRO did not have a higher professional training in public relations to enable him function at top management level.

Respondents at national/regional levels listed the job items of the public relations department as including press releases, organising teachers' conferences, preparing newsletters, bulletins, organising special events such as the best teacher award scheme, writing of speeches and organising workshops.

4.5. Management plans to promote better PR in GNAT

Table 6: Percentages concerning respondents' view of management plans to promote better PR

Respondents' View	YES %	NO %	To some extent %	Other %	Total
At National/Regional Level	20(80.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (16.0)	1 (4.0)	25
District Levels	30(40.0)	0 (0.0)	40 (53.3)	5 (6.7)	75
Total	50(50.0)	0 (0.0)	44 (44.0)	6(6.0)	100

In Table 6 above, four in five (80.0%) respondents indicated the desire to increase resources to better public relations. This view was held by national/regional level respondents. At the district levels about half (53.3%) the respondents said management plans, to some extent, to increase support for public relations. Respondents gave reasons for increasing resources and raising management support as follows:

- To intensify information and education drives of GNAT.
- To facilitate the effort of the PR Department to regularly publish GNAT's newsletter.
- To ensure a much stronger link between GNAT and its publics.

With regard to public relations sub-units that management considered necessary for better communications, respondents listed the following: employee relations, management relations, publicity/publications, community relations, media relations, finance/budget, research, welfare services and public affairs.

On how to minimize the lapses in public relations of GNAT, respondents said that this could be done through "consultation and coordination of the various departments and adequate budgeting for regular and sustained programmes". Respondents indicated that management sometimes hired consultants because they exhibited professional competence, and provided high public image and cost-effectiveness. It was found out that media, planning, economic and legal experts have been used periodically to advise management on issues of specialised nature.

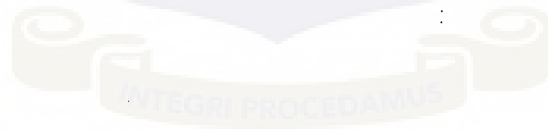
4.6 Opinions on the relevance of PR to GNAT

Respondents indicated that GNAT benefited from public relations in the following ways:

- Free access and constant link with its publics.
- Increased public knowledge of what GNAT stands for.

- Secured good rapport with the press and government agencies.
- Ability to order and manage information that was going public and PR department serves as a vital source of information and transmits same to the publics.
- Provided professional advice to enable management to handle organisational issues.

Respondents agreed that public relations is relevant because, "it supports management by coordinating and reacting appropriately to the opinions of the organisation's publics. initiating programmes to facilitate the maintenance of the organisation's credibility and good standing with its internal and external publics and serves as the only way GNAT can reach out to the outside world". In their opinions, public relations is relevant in an era of information explosion.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study was concerned with finding out management perception of public relations in service organisations. The findings showed that teachers constituted the most important public GNAT considered when planning to do anything. There was no difference in respondents' opinions concerning the fact that teachers took the first place in almost everything GNAT intended to do. Besides teachers, the findings revealed that GNAT had various publics both within and outside the country.

One other finding was that public relations in GNAT faced lapses such as low management support and weak professional staff. It was disclosed that weak management support was the main problem that accounted for the poor public relations practice. This finding confirmed the widespread notion that management perception hindered public relations of GNAT.

Another finding was that management preferred a combination of media channels to a single medium when sending messages to the organisation's publics. Respondents listed various management preferences of media that were found necessary in public relations practice. These included newspapers, radio, television, mass meetings and memos. It was, however, noted that most of the districts scarcely had consultations with the PRO over communication issues. It was also realised that the PRO was kept out of the top management decision making team.

The findings further revealed that management had plans to make communications better through regular publication of newsletters, sponsorships, taking press interviews and holding seminars. Management considered certain sub-units under the Public Relations Department necessary to promote better communications and PR.

Significantly, the findings showed that public relations is relevant to GNAT and has benefited it in numerous ways. One outstanding benefit highlighting the relevance of public relations was that PR has exposed GNAT to the general public to become aware, approve of and accept what the organisation is doing in the society.

In spite of the importance respondents attached to public relations, the findings proved that public relations faced numerous setbacks. Consequently, respondents suggested ways to minimize such hindrances for public relations to help realise organisational goals as well as the needs of the various publics of GNAT.

5.1 Recommendations

1. There should be effective coordination of the numerous publics of GNAT to ensure sustained trust, goodwill and mutual respect.
2. The PRO should be given higher professional training to make him better qualified and competent to handle the task of public relations that will bring about credibility and promote the image of GNAT.
3. The PRO should be made to participate in top management decision making.

This can help enrich his knowledge about GNAT for him to be able to articulate its policies much more clearly to the organisation's publics.

4. Management should provide adequate financial resources for the PR Department to be strengthened to carry out its programmes effectively.
5. Pupils/student relations sub-unit should be considered under the PR Department to deal with matters concerning pupils or students under the care of teachers.
6. In addition to district and regional mass meetings, local mass meetings should be intensified since this is the point where majority of teachers can be easily contacted for effective dissemination of information on their service conditions.

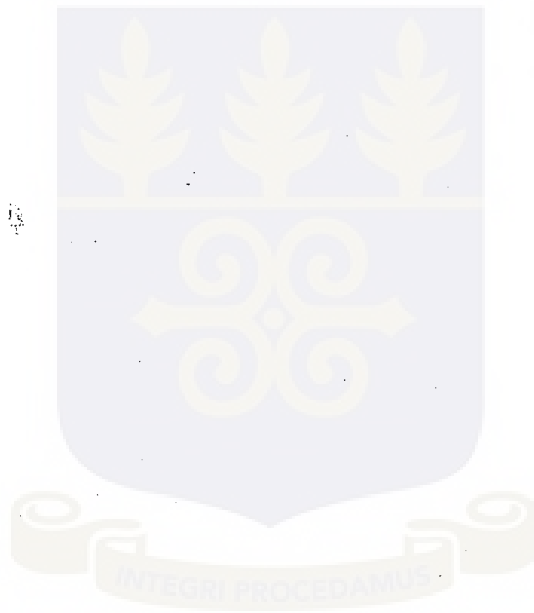
5.2 Limitations of the Study

There was very little local sources of literature specific to management perception of public relations in service organisations available to the researcher. For this reason, the researcher had to depend on general ideas about management perception from foreign works which were indirectly linked to the project work. Some of the questionnaires were sent per drivers to respondents which were exposed to losses and careless handling. Also, questionnaires were administered to only the full-time senior management staff of GNAT. As a result, the project work excluded a large number of members whose views could have been useful for the study.

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APPENDIX 'A'

Questionnaire on Management perception of public relations for management staff of GNAT Headquarters/Regional Secretariats.

INSTRUCTION: Please tick (✓) your answer where necessary.

A. ON GNAT'S PUBLICS

1. Do you know people who show interest in GNAT programmes/activities?.....
2. What work do such people do?.....
3. Do you find their relationship with GNAT favourable? (Please explain your answer).....
4. In your opinion which of the following groups is likely to receive the highest consideration in GNAT programmes?
 - (a) Students/pupils
 - (b) Parents/guardians
 - (c) Teachers
 - (d) GES/government officials
 - (e) Higher educational institutions
 - (f) Other (please specify).....
5. Would you say the relationships GNAT has with other groups can be maintained for a long time? (Please explain).....
6. Are there other friends of GNAT you can list?.....

B. ON LAPSES IN PR OF GNAT

7. Do you observe that people express dissatisfaction about GNAT's programmes/activities?.....
8. What kind of complaints do such people make?
9. Why do they make the complaints?.....
10. Are the complaints made too often? (Please explain why).....
11. In your opinion which of the following is likely to have a major effect on people's relationships with GNAT?
 - (a) Low image of PR Department
 - (b) Inadequate funding

- (c) Weak staff training/understaffing
- (d) Low management support.
- (e) Other (Please specify).....

C. CONCERNING PR ROLE

- 12. Do you hold consultations with PRO?.....
- 13. Why do you hold such consultations?.....
- 14. Have such consultations been fruitful?.....
- 15. In what ways do you say your consultations were helpful?.....
- 16. Do you observe other things PRO does in GNAT?.....
- 17. What have you observed PRO doing in GNAT apart from the consultations you hold with him?.....
- 18. Has it benefited GNAT to have had a PR department?.....
- 19. What benefit do you consider meaningful to GNAT?.....
- 20. Do you observe GNAT takes advice from other people?.....
- 21. What kind of work do such people do?.....
- 22. Has the advice been helpful to GNAT?.....
- 23. Please state how the advice helped GNAT?.....
- 24. In your opinion why are some issues sent to people other than the PRO?.....

D. MANAGEMENT PREFERENCES OF INFORMATION MEDIA

- 25. Do you hold meetings with people?.....
- 26. Are these people members of GNAT?.....
- 27. If they are members why do you hold meetings with them?.....
- 28. If they are not members why do you hold meetings with them?.....
- 29. Could you send messages to these people by other means apart from meetings?..
- 30. If 'Yes', please list other ways you can send messages across to members or friends of GNAT.....
- 31. Please rank in order of preference the means by which messages are often sent to members of this organisation (Please note: 1 is the highest and 5 the least.)
 - (a) Newspapers
 - (b) Radio/TV

- (c) Letters/telephone/fax
- (d) Mass meetings
- (e) A combination of media channels

E. PLANS TO BETTER PR IN GNAT

- 32. In your opinion is free flow of information a good thing in this organisation? (Please explain your answer)
- 33. Do you suggest PRO takes part in top management decision making ? (Please explain your answer).....
- 34. Please do you suggest problems in this organisation be addressed through the PR department?.....
- 35. Do you suggest PR department be sufficiently financed? (Explain).....
- 36. Do you suggest PR department be expanded to include more sub-units? (Explain).....
- 37. Please list the sub-units you consider very important to GNAT.....
- 38. In what ways do you suggest PR work could be made more effective in GNAT?
.....

THANKS



APPENDIX 'B'

Questionnaire on management perception of public relations for Management Staff of GNAT district secretariats.

INSTRUCTION: Please tick (✓) your answer where necessary.

A. ON GNAT'S PUBLICS

1. Do you know GNAT's friends?.....
2. If 'Yes', where do they work?.....
3. Are they helpful to GNAT?.....
4. In what ways are they helpful?.....
5. Which group of GNAT's friends is likely to be given the highest recognition in GNAT programmes?
 - (a) Parents/guardians
 - (b) Students/pupils
 - (c) Teachers
 - (d) Universities
 - (e) Controller & Accountant-General's Dept.
 - (f) Other (specify).....

B. ON LAPSES IN PR OF GNAT

6. Please do you observe people express dissatisfaction about GNAT programmes?
7. If they do so what reasons do they give?.....
8. There is a common belief that there is information gap in GNAT. why?.....
9. Which one of the following do you observe can have a major effect on people's relationships with GNAT?
 - (a) Weak staff training/understaffing
 - (b) Inadequate funding
 - (c) Low management support
 - (d) Low image of PR dept.
 - (e) Other (Please specify).....

C. CONCERNING PR ROLE

10. Do you address issues through PR department?.....
11. If 'Yes', what issues do you discuss at the department?.....
12. Have such discussions been fruitful to your work?.....
13. In which ways have the discussions been fruitful?.....
14. Are there other things the PR department does for you? (Please list them).

D. PREFERENCE OF INFORMATION MEDIA

15. Do people attend meetings you organise?.....
16. Are they members of your organisation?.....
17. If they are how do you invite them to the meetings?.....
18. If they are not how do they get your messages?.....
19. What messages do you send to your members or friends of your organisation?
20. Apart from meetings, do you have other means by which you send messages across to members of GNAT? (Please list them).....
21. Why do you choose such means to carry your messages across?.....

E. PLANS TO BETTER PR IN GNAT

22. If it is true that PRO is kept out of the top management team, do you suggest he is made part of it? (Explain why.).....
23. Please do you suggest there should be increased finance for the PR department? (Explain).....
24. Do you suggest other sub-units be added to the PR department? (Please why?)
25. Please list the sub-units you consider very important.....
26. In what ways do you suggest PR work could be made more effective in GNAT?.....

THANKS.