

DISSECTING THE ROLE OF EXCELLENCE THEORY IN PR PRACTICES OF NIGERIAN POWER COMPANIES

Emeka Oghenekaro Okafor

Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies, University of Port Harcourt,
Nigeria

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17434712>

Abstract

This paper analyzes the language style used by Ifeoma Okoye in her novel Men without Ears. It examines how Okoye employs specific linguistic approaches to convey her message and achieve particular effects on readers. In the novel, she critiques societal ills in Nigeria in contrast to other societies, such as Tanzania. The metaphorical title, Men without Ears, highlights the obstinacy of Nigerians who perpetuate corrupt practices through continuous illicit transactions. Through her careful use of language, Okoye exposes the most corrupt elements among government officials, security agencies, and others, while eliciting the attention and sympathy of readers who may be directly or indirectly involved in such practices. This study demonstrates that strategic use of language style can serve as an effective tool for addressing societal malfunctions in Nigeria.

Keywords: Language, Style, Ifeoma Okoye, Corruption, Nigeria

Introduction

It is universally agreed, to a large extent that publics of corporate organisations are not homogeneous. They vary according to the socio-economic and sometimes political factors surrounding the products or services an organisation has to offer its publics. For any organisation, whether it is government, industry, business or even religion, there is no singular public. Conventionally, publics of organisations are the heterogeneously located individuals, groups, socio-cultural organisations, corporate organisations, national/international organisations, religious organisations etc that benefit or are adversely affected by the operations of an organisation. Publics of organisations are unpredictably inclined to the point that they change from time to time. This, according to Seema (2013), is because, "... the various groups public relations deals with have different characteristics, needs, wants, etc. More importantly, they play different roles and differ in the type of relationships they share with the organisation" (p.524). This group of people with diverse interests and expectations interfacing with an organisation are known as publics. Seema (2013) further explains the reason for the heterogeneity of publics thus:

People want employment, employers want better facilities and services, investors want better returns, the trade. The Excellence Theory of public relations advocates the deliverance of quality service by organisations to their publics. It highlights that for an organisation to be regarded as effective in carrying out its functions, its behavior must be seen as solving a problem for its publics and satisfying stakeholder

aspirations while keeping the management and shareholders' goals achieved all in the same threshold. Failure to achieve these goals will lead to either stakeholders pressuring the organisation to change or oppose it in ways that add cost and risk to organisational policies. The organisation is expected to incorporate socially acceptable norms especially with regard to those affected by its policies and operations with the hallmark of the theory being the two-way symmetrical communications among publics as key to industrial harmony. With regard to the electricity distribution companies in Nigeria, faced with challenges that are political and economic in delivering its stated mandate of electricity distribution to the country, they are expected to apply the Excellence Theory where a failure in satisfying their customers should be followed by communication that eases the concerns of its subscribers. This becomes more paramount with the privatization of the power sector; the companies are expected to be responsible to their shareholders and subscribers.

(distributors, dealers and retailers) want better margins, suppliers want orders, the government wants financial supports in form of taxes, voluntary organisations want support in form of donations and the community wants a wide variety of benefits (p.524).

Taking a look at the foregoing, it is obvious that public relations professionals tinker their approaches according to stakeholders interests so much that the various interests are reasonably addressed. It is erroneous to assume that the needs of all stakeholders are same and should be addressed without critically examining the chemistry of the groups that make up the publics' of an organisation. This can be regrettable sometime.

Electricity distribution in Nigeria is a very strategic sector in the Nigerian economy. Everyone needs electricity. It is the backbone of all economic activities as it is essential for meaningful development to take place in the society. The publics of electricity distributors therefore, cut across the length and breadth of any Nation. According to Seema (2013) publics of strategic organisations of Power companies in Nigeria such as the Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company and the Benin Electricity Distribution Company are truly universal. In as much as such a public exist in this twenty first century the need for electricity is paramount. Their goal will be to serve the public in delivering uninterrupted power, and where such fails, applies public relations practices in interfaces with their customers.

2. Strategy in Public Relations

The term strategy, historically has a military connotation derived from the Greek word 'strategos' meaning, art of the general or plan to destroy enemies through effective use of resources. According to Mintzberg and Quinn (1991) the term itself is considered an organisational skill in the early Greek dominated era of Pericles (450 BC) which meant management skills (administrative, leadership, public speaking, and power). There are several definitions of strategy and no single and definite definition of the term strategy. Each definition seems to have been coined depending on the context in which the study was carried out. According to the English Dictionary, strategy typically, is associated with a plan of action marshaled to diffuse or reinforce a foreseen or unforeseen situation.

Mintzberg et al (1998) proposes in five phrases, the word “strategy” as follows: - (1) A plan as consciously intended course of action (2) A ploy as a specific maneuver intended to outwit an opponent or competitors (3) A pattern representing a stream of action (4) A position as a means of locating an organisation in an environment (5) A perspective as an integrated way of perceiving the world organisations. In the corporate environment, operators use different shades of strategies to operate businesses to achieve set goals. Any organisation without a workable strategy is like buying a beautiful Limousine car without making gasoline available to power it.

It takes a good strategy to ensure the overall success of the organisational set goals. Without an ideal and well thought out strategy, an organisation cannot drive her corporate policies properly. The strategy of an organisation can rightly be described as the pivot on which the mechanism of corporate organisations thrives. Porter (1985) states that “strategy is a set of offensive or defensive actions to create a defensible position in an industry, to cope successfully with competitive forces and thus get a higher return on investment” (p. 66). Fahey (1989) argues that “strategy explains how the company will use its resources and capabilities to build and sustain the competitive advantages that favourably influence customers purchasing decisions” (p. 28). This depicts that the bottom line for organisations formulating strategies is driven by their desire to attract and sustain customer loyalty and followership. In essence, organisations see the customer as key to their survival and growth hence, the need to always ensure that the customer’s needs and complaints are consistently addressed through their customer care strategy. Ansoff and McDonnell (1990) explaining the role of strategy in organisations state that:

Strategy is a set of rules for decision making to guide the behavior of an organisation. There are four distinct types of rules: standards by which the present and future performance of the company is measured (objectives, targets); rules for the development of relationships with the external environment (product strategy and marketing, or business strategy), rules for establishing relations and internal processes in the organisation (organisational concept); and rules by which the company shall conduct its activities in the day-to-day (operational policies) (p. 9)

The definition by Ansoff and McDonnell above tries to do some explanation to the implications of strategy in a secular organisational setting with consideration to four distinct taxonomies of rules. It takes into cognizance the need to capture all grey areas seen to be susceptible to crisis that may likely jeopardize free flow of mutual relationships between an organisation and its publics. The formulation of organisational strategies is basically a managerial function or sometimes that of board members of an organisation’s apex policy making body which is vested with the authority to carry out such on behalf of the organisation. Fundamentally, the aim of public relations strategy is to provide the direction and vision to drive an organisation’s operation smoothly with its various publics to achieve set goals.

Gregory (2000) states that public relations strategy is, “...the overall approach that is taken to a programme or campaign. It is the coordinating theme or factor, the guiding principle; the big idea, the rationale behind the tactical programme” (p.118). Strategies in public relations provide the road-map or leeway to navigate

the route through which its public relations policies are marshalled out and implemented. Strategy does not only provide the leeway to get to the destination but also provides the insight on how to get there. Practitioners of public relations are of the opinion that public relations policies should be regularly updated to accommodate current realities and changes in the environment.

To this end, Wright, Kroll and Parnell (1997) argue that “strategy is the set of plans from top management to achieve results consistent with the organisational mission and objectives” (p. 88). Porter (1996) adds that “strategy means performing different activities to those performed by rivals or performing the same activities differently” (p. 67). Any organisation that craves to remain in business and also enjoy customer loyalty or followership must always see to it as a policy to regularly update their strategies distinctively to differentiate their activities from other competitors and contemporaries.

Hasan (2013) describes strategy as a blueprint or set of principles designed by corporate organisations to achieve business or communication set goals. Strategy formulation in private sector businesses are sometimes setup by one single individual with a powerful driving force either on a short or long term basis. For example, Mark Zuckerberg the founder of Facebook whose business strategy is basically to ensure people (friends, families, colleagues, businesses) across the globe are connected online through the internet and in the process share or exchange information, photographs, videos and other graphics and other experiences in a ‘global village’ setting.

Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, whose goal, is to provide computers on all tables and desks in the world; is another good example of single individuals with powerful initiatives drive in the private sector businesses. Another example is the establishment of a university whose sole strategy is to provide higher education through teaching, research and consultancy services to the society. Gregory (2000) reiterates that “strategy is the principle that will move you from where you are now to where you want to be” (p. 118). Any business outfit or organisation that operates on purposeful and virile public relations strategy; carefully formulated with consideration to the interest of its publics is bound to achieve its organisational goals. Strategy formulation processes vary from organisation to organisation. This is based largely on factors such as culture, values, norms, religion and political system.

Ledingham and Grunig (1998) assert that public relations is all about building and sustaining reputation; not just about producing publicity materials to their publics but a planned, deliberate and dedicated process aimed towards establishing goodwill and attracting the attention and support of an organisation’s publics and subsequently strives to sustain same. Without mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics, there will be no collaboration to prompt goodwill by the organisations’ towards their publics. For an organisation to achieve the trust and patronage of its publics there must be a planned strategy that will serve as a spring board for the actualization of set goals.

Wilson (1997) asserts that public relations is a strategic part of an organisation’s strategic management and therefore sees strategy as the way to achieving organisational set goals. Strategy formulation in public relations is a veritable process in the quest for achieving the aims and aspiration of an organisation. The

strength of any organisation lies in its reputation therefore; it is the duty of the public relations practitioner to manage the reputation of the organisation through planned strategies that provides the required symbiosis between it and its publics. In considering the essence of strategies in public relations, Gregory (2000) reiterates that issues to be looked at include: the present position of the organisation, where the organisation want to be, who are the publics to be addressed? What does the organisation expect from the publics and why? What's the message to be transmitted? Where are the publics located? When are we going to reach them? What method should we use to communicate with the publics? How much is the cost of the whole process? What about contingencies? How do we address the contingencies if any?

Hasan (2013) asserts that a good and workable strategy can only be formulated when the objective of the organisation is clearly stated after the problem to be solved has been detected. In essence, every strategy must be preceded by the organisational objectives; meaning that formulation of workable strategies must be carried out in accordance to the objectives which the organisation intends to achieve.

From the foregoing, public relations strategy therefore is a comprehensive and well thought out plan of action devised by corporate organisations with an intention of evoking a favourable disposition to create goodwill and promote mutual understanding with its publics. In other words, public relations strategies are usually ideas or concepts designed to combat certain challenges faced by organisations; promote a course of action in line with corporate policy aimed at achieving set goals on a long or short term basis.

According to Mintzberg (1987), "Public relations strategy represents some sort of consciously intended course of action, a guideline or set of guidelines to deal with a situation"

(p.12). Gregory (2000) puts that "Public relations strategy is the overall approach that is taken to a programme or campaign. It is the coordinating theme or factor, the guiding principle; the big idea, the rationale behind the tactical programme" (p.118). Public relations strategies are typically designed based on prevailing issues arising from analysed research data of specific challenges. The strategy of a public relations campaign is definitely not the same as an objective of the campaign. This means that strategies are conceived from the information derived from the objectives of the campaign. The tactics of the public relations campaign is also derived from the strategies of the campaign. It simply follows that there can be no good public relations strategy without a good objective and no good tactics without a good or sustainable strategy.

No feasible or practicable public relations strategy can be seamlessly implemented without the inputs of a sound public relations practitioner. It suffices then to say that public relations practitioners in corporate organisations ought to be sufficiently trained and intermittently retrained to be knowledgeable and master the science and art of public relations in order to proffer professional solutions to critical issues when required. Fundamentally, public relations strategy is a subset in public relations, therefore, at this juncture, it may be appropriate to offer a little analysis of their conjugation.

Public relations basically, refer to the heterogeneous methodologies used by corporate organisations to foster goodwill and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with the various publics with which they

operate. A typical definition of public relations propounded many years ago by the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) United Kingdom succinctly describes public relations as “a deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics” (Ajala, 2001, p.13).

A sustained and efficient public relations programme offers corporate organisations a wide range of advantages. They offer their publics and communities a reason to be proud of such corporate organisation which invariably, increases loyalty. These efforts in turn lay the foundation for industrial harmony and also help to reduce labour and production costs. A corporate entity with good reputation in the eyes of its publics is likely to attract highly qualified employees. It is also true that good public relations can be beneficial in times of crisis, such as a fire disaster or a plant closure, by rallying publics around the affected organisation.

The distinctive and rudimentary trait of public relations is that when an organisation accepts its social responsibility and in turn invests actively in the well-being of its publics, it attracts a number of long-term benefits which ultimately translates into public support, loyalty, and goodwill. When a corporate entity is involved in public relations it enhances its corporate image, raises employee morale and promotes a sense of collaboration that is essential in long-term success.

An extrapolation from the foregoing clearly depicts that a good public relations strategy, can only be conceived based on the professional's sound knowledge of public relations. It suffices to say that, a distinct and solid objective is central to the overall success of an organisation's public relations strategy in every corporate organisation.

Gregory (2000) explains that:

Public relations strategy is the principle that will move you from where you are now to where you want to be. It is sometimes called ‘the big idea’. Sometimes it is: It can be an all-embracing concept. Sometimes it isn't, and you shouldn't be overly concerned if you can't come up with a big idea. You should, however, be very concerned if you don't have a clear rationale (p.118).

The success of any public relations campaign is solely dependent on the coherence and cohesiveness of the strategies formulated. Again, the success of the tactics employed in the implementation of the strategy is also dependent on the practicality of the strategy. It is therefore imperative that a good public relations strategy is achievable only when the objectives of the campaign are clearly defined. In effect, this means that the reason for the formulation of the strategy must be concisely stated so that the strategy's formulation falls in line with the objectives of the campaign. In a nutshell, strategy simply means ‘how’ an objective can be achieved while tactics is all about ‘what’ can be done in order to achieve the strategy.

The huge task before any corporate organisation in the quest to organise successful public relations campaign is that; it is imperative that the public relations expert (whether in-house or consultancy) should identify the various issues or problem at stake. This can only be achieved through conducting a proper

research into the problem; using clear objectives, mapping out the strategies and finally, devising the tactics for actualising the strategies.

3. How Strategy and Tactics differs in Public Relations

Gregory (2000) states that the words tactics and strategy are interrelated terms; erroneously used interchangeably by some professionals of public relations. While strategy is the method through which a competitive advantage is gained; tactics is the competitive advantage itself. In simpler terms, strategy in public relations is the overall plan of action prepared by an organisation for a public relations campaign while tactics is the way or manner specific strategies are carried out in the campaign. For instance, an organisation may decide to carry out a public relations campaign to address grey areas on product variations. It is the duty of the public relations expert in the organisation, to advise management on the best tactics to be used to reach target audience in order to achieve set goals. What this means is that tactics is used to interpret the strategy to the audience in their different locations and settings.

Gregory (2000) reiterates that "...strategy is how you will achieve an objective and tactics is what you will do". Tactics is usually preceded by strategy and objectives meaning for an organisation to carry a successful campaign clear objectives must be set out; strategies to achieve the objectives will be development and specific tactics to actualize the strategies fathomed. It is a known fact tactics must be clearly linked to strategy to achieve the objectives of the organisation. However, in the case of organisations with large programmes with segmented elements e.g. customer relations, community relations and employee relations; it is most ideal that the organisation develops different tactics to address each section of the programme because no singular tactics is capable of addressing all the challenges in an organisation.

In developing a tactical programme from strategy, Gregory (2000) again, opines that a tactics must be clearly linked to the strategy of the programme and practitioners of public relations must bear in mind veritable factors while planning such as: using strategy to guide brainstorm, reject non-strategic activities, relate tactics to strategy and strategy to objectives and testing tactics where possible: It is professionally advisable to change the tactics of a programme that is seen to be unsuccessful before changing the strategy. This is so because, if the tactics of a programme is wrongfully applied, it may lead to the failure of the programme therefore, the tactics could be changed to see if the failure of the programme was as a result of tactical error. It is reasonable also for professionals to apply some flexibility in the planning stage of the programme to accommodate any necessary change that may be required in the course of the programme

4. The Excellence Theory of Public Relations

The excellence theory of public relations by James Grunig became an authentic theory in the 80s'. Its development began in the 1960s with Grunig's study on publics found among Columbian farmers how public relations makes organisations more effective, how it is organised and managed when it contributes most to organizational effectiveness, the conditions in organizations and their environments that make organizations more effective. Other studies on the role of public relations in organisational decision-making, the symmetrical model of public relations, public relations measurement, and how the structure

and environment of organisations shape public relations behavior then followed. Other theories such as public relations role, operations research, and gender and diversity were added to the paradigm. The amalgam known as excellence theory has since evolved as a general theory of public relations as a strategic management function. Further studies have added concepts and tools that could enable professionals in strategic roles in different organisations use the theory in practice.

According to Grunig (1992), some assumptions of the excellence theory are encapsulated thus: For an organisation to be effective, it must behave in ways that solve the problems and satisfy the goals of stakeholders as well as management. If it does not, stakeholders will either pressure the organisation to change or oppose it in ways that add cost and risk to organisational policies. The organisation must behave in socially acceptable ways by scanning their environment to identify publics who are affected by potential organisational decisions and policies or those who want the organisations to make decisions and policies that will be favourable to them. The theory also highlights the importance of two-way symmetrical communications among internal publics as key to industrial harmony.

5. Customer Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty

Every commercial or profit making organisation do have customers or consumers that patronize their products or services. As such, any organisation that intends to remain in business must regard its customer as king. The natural propensity for profit-oriented organisations to maintain existing customers and to attract potential patronage usually propels them to remain proactive in analyzing current trends in customer relations services. Ohiagu (2015) states that:

No organisation (especially profit oriented ones) can do without the valued patronage of its customers. Because a company is into business to make profit, then the satisfaction of its customers who are the sources of repeat purchases becomes of paramount importance. (p. 171-172)

For this reason, it becomes paramount for organisations to view customers' satisfaction with utmost importance in order to maintain mutual relationship that in turn encourages repeated patronage from consumers. Building brand loyalty in an organisation is an onerous task for management. This process is usually not done haphazardly but through well thought-out decision of management taken in due consideration to current customers' needs and demands. Jobber (1998) agrees that:

Marketing-orientated companies attempt to create customer value in order to attract and retain customers. Their aim is to deliver superior value to their target customers. In doing so, they implement the marketing concept by meeting and exceeding customers better than the competition. (p. 11) Customers' or consumers' opinions on products and services cannot be taken for granted. Their decision to continuously patronize an organisation's product or service depends on the measure of gratifications customers get in return for their patronage. Organisations therefore need to always strive to make amends where necessary or spring positive surprises in form of innovative additions to their regular services to maintain customers' patronage and even attract new ones. No customer wishes to continue patronizing an

organisation that cannot meet their expectations hence, the need for a competition so as to provide options and varieties for consumers of products and services.

Jones and Sasser (1995) posit that:

Top companies do recognize the importance of listening to their customers as part of their strategy to manage satisfaction. Customer satisfaction indices are based on surveys of customers and the results plotted over time to reveal changes in satisfaction levels (p. 88).

The job of providing information on customers/consumers need for an organisation's product or services rests on the public relations practitioners. It is their duty to carry out surveys on their publics and provide professional guidelines to management for effective decision making. Though, it is nearly impossible for organisations to meet up 100% customized needs of every individual customer due to customers' high level of diversity but products and services are usually segmented to provide a wide range of choices for customers to choose from.

Morgan (1996) agrees that "innovative thinking and listening to customers are key ingredients in this" (p.29). Customers' need therefore is the key to planning organisations' marketing strategy. A well informed management will definitely take customer-friendly decisions on trending demands of customers or consumers that stand the test of time. Periodic information on new products and services, product variations etc is essential for customers' patronage, brand loyalty and obsessive followership.

Brand loyalty is achieved from an organisation's high professional and innovative inputs into a product or services to earn customers' attention and patronage. According Keller (1998) "a brand is, therefore, a product, but one that adds other dimensions that differentiate it in some way from other products designed to satisfy the same needs". Brand loyalty is earned and comes with a lot of hard work and dedication to the improvement of services rendered to customers over a period of time. To earn brand loyalty, an organisation must offer customers something different from what the competition is doing.

Murphy (1990) sees brand as "... the product or services of a particular supplier which is differentiated by its name and presentation" (p.1). A product or service must have a distinct quality as its selling point and it is usually something others cannot offer. The moment customers spot the difference then, the brand is ready for patronage and followership. Building brands is essential for the improvement of an organisation's image. Though, scholars like Ambler (1992) have argued that brand is not always real but sometimes illusory and emotional and they in-turn, see branding as a process that promises attributes that customers or consumers end up not realizing.

On the whole, customers need regular or intermittent attention from organisations to vent out their frustrations and expectations regarding organisations' product or services or to receive information on product and services from the organisation. The inability of customers to access information or provide same may put off the customer psychologically and subsequent cause a change in attitude towards the organisations' product or services. Jobber (1998) reiterates that "...no response to a telephone call can cause dissatisfaction but a fast response may cause positive satisfaction or even delight" (p.13). Ohiagu

(2015) concludes that customers' satisfaction can be achieved only when organisations offer customers satisfactory or high quality products or services and maybe as an innovation, include incentives like quick service or product delivery, installation and maintenance with guarantee.

6. Public Relations as Panacea for Electricity Distribution in Nigeria

Public relations as a profession started in Nigeria in the year 1963. Exactly 65 years after public electricity generation and distribution took off in Lagos in 1898. The Electricity industry has since then metamorphosed through several stages of acclaimed development until most recently in November 2013, when the Federal Government finally handed over electricity distribution in the country to the private sector. The successful unbundling of the defunct Power Holding Company of Nigeria set the pace for the emergence of 11 successor power distribution companies through a seemingly contested bidding process. Power distribution in Nigeria has been on public discourse for the past 120 years for obvious reasons. It is common knowledge that without adequate electricity supply, there will be no substantial economic growth in any nation hence; the need for concerted efforts from all stakeholders to encourage a rapid development of the sector is inevitable.

According to Awosipe (2014) "... the first electricity generating plant was installed in Marina, Lagos, in 1898, fifteen years after its introduction in the United kingdom and its total capacity was 60 kilowatts" (p.5). The salient question is how gratified are the customers of electricity distribution companies in Nigeria? Are the services of these electricity distribution companies commensurate to its 120 years of existence in the country? Today, the image and reputation of the electricity distribution sector in Nigeria is obviously not in the best of rankings. Could it be that a proper public relations practice was in place and yet no significant progress was recorded in its 120 years in existence? All indices attest to the fact that public relations is a profession that thrives in creating mutual understanding between organisations and their publics for industrial growth and harmony. It is also possible that public relations policies may not have been properly put to use in the electricity distribution industry in Nigeria.

Hasan (2013) asserting the relevance of public relations practice in organisations state that "public relations is the art and science of managing communication between an organisation and its key constituents to build, manage, and sustain its positive reputation". This definition goes to prove that any organisation that adopts public relations practice in its management policy, will definitely record success stories due to the harmonious relationship that would exist between the organization and its publics. Publics of an organizations sometimes include employees, shareholders, government, consumers, contractors/suppliers, community and the media. It is the duty of the public relations practitioners in the organisation to constantly ensure there is internal and external cohesion between and organisation and its publics.

Paulo (2000) asserts that how an organisation is perceived depends on the genuine assessment of its publics. Likewise, Watts (1970) cautions organisations not to ignore their publics but to combine their interests with the company's corporate goals in order to win them over. In other words, organisations

cannot win credibility, patronage and confidence on a platter of gold. The image or how an organisation is perceived is more likely than not to determine the disposition and attitudes of its diverse publics to its messages and requests.

In the case of electricity distribution companies in Nigeria, a look at the range of its heterogeneous publics, one can understand clearly, why its abysmal underdevelopment especially in the absence of proper PR policies to which could bring about industry harmony of all relevant interest groups within and outside the organisations.

Kanu (1985) notes that all public relations activities revolve around eight main pillars which are government relations, community relations, corporate relations, media relations, financial relations, international public relations, employee communication and marketing support. In order to achieve better understanding of the term, public relations, Ajala (2001) explains that

“Public relations is an act of projecting a good image of an organisation to the public. It includes formulation of policies and management of issues within the organisation” (p.3)

Public relations is therefore, a discipline which looks after reputation, with the aim of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behaviour. Every organisation, no matter how large or small, ultimately depends on its reputation for survival and success. Customers, suppliers, employees, investors, journalists, environmentalists and regulators can have a powerful impact on the image and performance of an organisation. They all have opinions about the organisations they come into contact with - whether good or bad, right or wrong. These perceptions will drive their decisions about whether they want to work with, shop with and support these organisations. Public relations practice in organisations is inevitable and electricity distribution companies are not exempted. It is needed to assist in building and sustaining a good image and reputation for their organisations.

7. Conclusion

The Excellence Theory has outlined that the value of public relations to companies is reliant on the organization-public relations. It is essential for an organization to have a good relationship with its strategic publics, and to develop and to achieve and maintain short term and long term organizational goals in order to reduce costs and negative publicity that comes with a toxic relationship between an organization and its publics. The Power holding companies have a lot to incorporate into how they manage their relationships with their publics most especially with regard to power supply and managing their public and government relationships. With the privatization of the sector, it is important they incorporate elements of the Excellence Theory in their affairs to foster a healthy relationship with their publics.

References

Ajala V.O. (2001). *Public relations: In search of professional excellence*. (3rded) Ibadan: MayBest Publications Limited.

Ambler, T. (1992). *Need to Know Marketing*. Century Business: London.

Ansoff, I. & McDonnell, C. (1990) *Implementing Strategic Management*, HemelHeapstead: Prentice Hall.

Awosepe, C.A., 2014. Nigeria electricity industry: Issues, challenges and solutions. Covenant University 38th public lecture, public lectures series 3(2), October. Ota, Ogun State Nigeria: Covenant University Press.

Fahey, L. (1989). *The strategic planning management reader*. New Jersey:Prentice-Hall.

Gregory, A. (2000). *Planning and Managing Public Relations Campaigns* (2nd .ed). London: Kogan Page Limited.

Grunig, J. E. (1992) *Excellence in Public Relations & Communication Management*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hasan, S. (2013). *Mass Communication: Principles and Concepts*. New Delhi: CBS Publishers and Distributors.

Jobber, D. (1998). *Principles and Practice of Marketing*. (2nd.ed). London: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.

Jones, T. O. & Sasser, W. E. (1995) Why Satisfied Customers Defect. *Harvard Business Review*, 73, 88- 99.

Kanu, O. (1985) *Guide to Public Relations Practice in Nigeria*. New Africa Publishing Company: Lagos.

Ledingham, J. A. & Brunig, S. D. (1998) Relationship Management in Public Relations: Dimensions of An Organisation-Public Relationship. *In Journal of Public Relations Review*. 24 (1), 55-65.

Mintzberg, H., Ahlstrand, B. & Lampel, J. (1998). *Strategy safari: A guided tour through the wilds of strategic management*. New York: Free Press.

Mintzberg, H. & Quinn, J. (1991). *The strategy process: Concepts, contexts and cases*. 2nd ed.

Englewood Cliffs/New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Mintzberg, H. (1987). The strategy concept I: Five P's for strategy. *California Management Review*. 1987, 30(1), 11-24.

Morgan, A. (1996). Relationship Marketing. *Admap*, October, 29-33.

Murphy, K. J. (1990) *Brand Strategy*. Cambridge, England: Fitzwilliam International Group.

Ohiagu, O. P. (2015). *Fundamentals of Advertising and Public Relations*. (2nd .ed) Port Harcourt: Accuracy Prints.

Porter, M.E. (1985). *The Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance*. New York: Free Press

Watts, R. (1970). *Reaching the consumer: Elements of product public relations*. Business Books: London

Wilson, L. J. (1997). *Strategic program planning for effective public relations campaigns* (2nded.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Wright, P.L., Kroll, M.J. & Parnell, J.A. (1997). *Strategic management: concepts and cases*.

Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall