

# Assessment of Public Relations Strategies Adopted by National Youth Service Corps in Reputation Management in Nigeria

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**Abstract-** *This study “Assessment of Public Relations Strategies adopted by National Youth Service corps in reputation management in Nigeria was embarked to find out the various public relations strategies that were used in reputation management in Nigeria. The study adopted the survey research design and was anchored on public Relations Transfer Model. A population of 6,700 was identified and a sample size of 382 was chosen. Findings revealed that Public Relations strategies adopted in reputation management of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) were maximally and extensively used. The study concluded that public relations strategies have been adopted in reputation management by NYSC but is yet to attain it full potentials. The study recommended that there is a need for public relation to be upgraded fully to the Directorate Cadre in order to discharged its reputation management roles to the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) as well effectively deploy Public Relations strategies for the maintaining good reputation and mutual relationship between the NYSC and its public.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Public relations is the art of managing the relationship that exist between an organisation and its relevant stakeholders such as media, shareholders, investors, employees, regulatory agencies among others through effective communication management (Salu, 1994; Plowman, Briggs & Huang, 2001; Laskin, 2013; Gregory, 2010). Organisations maintain their relationship with stakeholders or publics through external and internal channel of communication. External channels include press releases, press conferences, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, newsletter, media advisories, curtain raiser, facts sheets, press kit, pitch letters, electronic news services, corporate press advertising, advertorials, press inquires, press reception, press open day,

press clippings services . Internal channels are Meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc. (Reddi, 2009, p. 325). These channels of communication according to Nwodu (2007) serves as a lubricant that galvanizes the interaction\ between individual/groups (called publics) and corporate organisations; between government/government agencies and their allies/ subjects; and between communities and the constituent groups in the communities.

But, a sustained public relations strategies and tactics are essential tool in the Management of Organisation because it will help to balance the self-interest of Organisation with the interest of the public(s) who are affected by the Organisation. For this, public relations is defined as the management function, which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an organisation with the public interest, and executes a programme of action ( and communicates) to earn public understanding and acceptance ( PR Weekly Newsletter, cited in Seitel,1998, p. 6). This implies that public relations requires a series of stages which include the determination and evaluation of public attitudes, identifications of policies and procedure of an organisation with the public interest and the development and execution of a communication programmes designed to bring about public understanding and acceptance.

There exist a plethora of research by scholars about the contributions of public relations strategies to the development, growth, and sustenance of organisations (Asemah, 2011; Uchechukwu, 2011; Barlett, 2012; Mehta & Xavier, 2010; Gale, 2005; Otubanjo, Amujo, & Melewar, 2009) through its multifaceted functions of evaluating attitudes and executing actions, communication, providing bridges of understanding upon which goodwill

reigns between an organisation and the public(s). One area that the multifaceted functions of public relations have been employed is managing the reputation of an organisation. This is because reputation management is the livewire of every organisation whether profit and non-profit.

While Reputation means how positively, or negatively, a company or similar institution is perceived by its key stakeholders—the people or entities that the company or institution relies on for its success. This explains why Gaines- Ross (2004, p.29) argues that if its reputation is strong, a company in crisis is granted the benefit of the doubt by its stakeholders. They expect companies to do the right thing. Even when inevitable mistakes are committed, stakeholders will afford highly regarded companies an additional opportunity to make amends—an opportunity they are not likely to grant the less regarded. When stakeholders view companies in a positive light, they give companies license to continue to operate and grow.

Good reputation is very useful for an organisation, it may enable it to charge premium prices for its products, enter into favourable financial arrangements with banks, attract graduates from top universities, get in touch with customers easily, and so on, such that good reputation constitutes a valuable asset to the organisation (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Roger and Qoronfleh 1998). In contrast, an organisation with bad or no reputation is likely to encounter situations where the opportunities open to it are few and the constraints imposed on it are many (Podolny, 2005; Vendelo, 1998).

In commenting on the influence of corporate reputation on company “bottom line” profitability, Fombrun, Gardberg and Sever (2000) state that corporate reputation has a strong influence in a variety of areas:

To economists, reputations are traits that signal a company’s likely behaviour. To strategists, a company’s reputation is a barrier to rivals, a source of competitive advantage. To accountants, reputations are an intangible asset, a form of goodwill whose value fluctuates in the marketplace. To marketers, reputations are perceptual assets with the power to attract loyal customers. To students of organization, reputations are an outgrowth of a company’s identity, a crystallization of what the

company does, how it does it, and how it communicates with its stakeholders.

However, Good corporate reputations do not just happen. Rather, the corporate reputation must be managed and cultivated. Heath (2005) argues that organizations reinforce the desired corporate reputation across all business functions, including internal and external communication activities. It is the vast nature of corporate communication that makes it simultaneously the most important and the most difficult component of reputation management. For many multinational corporations, the consistent communication of organizational values is one way to ensure consistency across business units and among various stakeholders. For reputation management to be successful, the communication of corporate values and goals needs to be in sync with the lived experiences of the organization’s stakeholders. For Firestein (2006) everything in reputation management is very simple, but nothing in reputation management is very easy.

Reputation building and management has become an increasingly important task for the public relations professionals, especially in the social media era when publics place unprecedented high expectations on companies’ openness, visibility, transparency, and authenticity. Further, the vital connection between organizational reputation and organizational effectiveness has been documented by many scholars (e.g., Fombrun & van Riel, 2004; Gibson, Gonzales, & Castanon, 2006; Hong & Yang, 2011; Yang & J. Grunig, 2005). For instance, Gibson et al. (2006, p.15) note that “positive reputations facilitate and expedite the business of successful organizations, and conversely negative ones damage or destroy individuals and organizations”. In a more specific sense, Fombrun and van Riel (2004) argue that a good corporate reputation can attract customers to its products, investors to new investment, and media or journalists to favourable press coverage. Internally, a good corporate reputation helps attract and retain talents, acculturate employees, engage them in dialogues, cooperation and citizenship behaviours, and generate greater employee productivity (Fombrun & van Riel, 2004; Jeffries-Fox Associates, 2000). Additionally, as argued by Roberts and Downing (2002), good corporate reputation is critical assets not only because of their

potential for value creation, but also because their intangible character makes replications by competing firms considerably more difficult.

Studies have shown that corporate reputation is positively affected by public relations activities; therefore, reputation management is an important part of public relations strategies (Cha & Kim, 2010; Grunig, 1993; Hon, 1998; Kim, 2001; Plowman, Briggs, & Huang, 2001). Hon (1998) argues that the goal of public relations was to communicate the image of an organisation. Grunig (1993) suggests that reputation was one of the dependent variables of public relations effectiveness along with relationship with stockholders and employee satisfaction. Plowman et al. (2001) argue that maintaining the reputation of an organisation was the most important function of public relations. More practically, Kim (2001, p.22) argues that ‘as the unit of public relations expense increases, a positive effect on the company’s reputation [is] expected’. Cha and Kim (2010) also maintain that there was a positive correlation between a corporation’s public relations activities and corporation reputation. Also, studies showed that an excellent public relations department not only enhanced a corporation’s value and contributed to perceptual economic return (Grunig, Grunig, & Ehling, 1992), but also affected corporate reputation and economic return (Bae & Cameron, 2006; Kim, 2001).

However, effective public relations for reputation management cannot take place without appropriate action from the organisation. This explains why Heath (2005, p. 682) argues that public relations has no mystical power to work miracles. What is achieved in any worthwhile sense must be based on integrity, and on sound attitudes, policies and actions at the very top level of management. Perhaps Fombrun (1996, p.8) capture this better when he argues that;

Better regarded companies build their reputations by developing practices which integrate social and economic considerations into their competitive strategies. They not only do things right – they do the right things. In doing so, they act like good citizens. They initiate policies that reflect their core values; that consider the joint welfare of investors, customers and employees; that invoke concern for the development of local communities; and that

ensure the quality and environmental soundness of their technologies, products and services.

The foregoing suggests that reputation management is the result of complex communication processes that can be steered only to limited degree. Murray and White (2004, p. 10) add that

It’s the role of public relations to make sure that the organisation is getting credit for the good it does. Great reputations are built on doing this consistently over a period of time in which a track record of delivering on promises and engendering trust is evident to everyone. All members of an organisation have a contribution to make to building and sustaining reputation.

This implies that reputation management is influenced by the internal and external environment of an organization. Hence, public relations practitioners must scan the environment of an organisation to understand and observe how the organisation is been perceived, where and how it must work on the organisation image and identity, and how others asses the organisation strengths and weakness. Indeed, an understanding of the concept of corporate identity and corporate image is essential to the PR practitioner in understanding how reputation is built and formed.

For a public sector like National Youths Service Corps (NYSC), public relations is very important for image-building concepts such as reputation management. Recent international research shows how various levels and types of institutions in a number of organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] countries, such as ministries and central government agencies (Luoma-Aho 2007; Maor 2007, 2010; Carpenter 2010), local government units (Ryan 2007; Salomonsen 2008), education institutions (Chapleo 2004; Gustafsson and Porsfelt 2009; Wæraas and Solbakk 2009), and public health administrations (Arnold, Coombs, Wilkinson, Loan-Clarke, Park, and Preston, 2003) have become aware of the potential benefits of managing reputation. Strong reputations not only serve as a competitive advantage, increase sales, profits, identification, and performance (Rhee and Valdez 2009), for public organizations they are also “valuable political assets; they can be used to generate public support, to achieve delegated autonomy and discretion from politicians, to protect the agency from political

attack, and to recruit and retain valued employees” (Carpenter 2002, 491). Furthermore, an agency’s power and autonomy may be upheld by a strong reputation (Carpenter 2010).

NYSC can benefit greatly from the strategies and programmes of public relations, which can enhance the management of reputation and achievement of objectives. This is because public relations practitioner can play a key role in public sector development and growth. Public sectors have to develop effective relationships with not only their key stakeholders such as legislators, regulators, and others public sectors but also with the media, civil society such as activists groups, NGOs and labour union that may or may not directly interfere in the public sector’s day to day working. This is one of the main reasons why public relations are necessary for public institution like NYSC that provide communication between different them and various stakeholder’s publics.

However, the public perception of these strategies affects not only the credibility but limits the effectiveness of any efforts aimed at maintaining a harmonious relationship between organizations and their various public. This explains why White and Park (2010, p.319) argue that “perceptions about public relations affect the perceived credibility of the profession and influence whether people see public relations as a value to society. Negative mass-mediated images of public relations can be explained by second-level agenda setting and cultivation theories. Since mediated perceptions are cumulative, a social reality of public relations emerges upon which assumptions and judgments about the profession are made”. It is against this backdrop that this study is designed to appraise public perception of public relations strategies employed by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Various researches have examined the potential benefits of reputation management (Luoma-Aho 2007; Maor 2007, 2010; Carpenter 2010), local government units (Ryan 2007; Salomonsen 2008), education institutions (Chapleo 2004; Gustafsson and Porsfelt 2009; Wæraas and Solbakk 2009), and public health administrations (Arnold, Coombs, Wilkinson, Loan-Clarke, Park, and Preston, 2003). Strong reputation not only serve as a competitive

advantage, increase sales, profits, identification, and performance (Rhee and Valdez 2009), for public organizations they are also “valuable political assets; they can be used to generate public support, to achieve delegated autonomy and discretion from politicians, to protect the agency from political attack, and to recruit and retain valued employees” (Carpenter 2002, p.491). Furthermore, an agency’s power and autonomy may be upheld by a strong reputation (Carpenter 2010).

Also, Alsop (2004) in his book “The 18 Immutable Laws of Corporate Reputation” posits that reputation management consists of three parts; establishing a good reputation, keeping that good reputation (sustainability effects) and repairing a damaged reputation. However, few studies have been conducted that quantitatively connect the value of public relations and its contribution to actual enhancing organisation’s reputation. Similarly, the empirical evidence of public relations contributions in establishing a good reputation; sustaining that good reputation and repairing a damaged reputation remains under-investigated especially in Nigeria. In view of this identified research problem, this study assesses public Relations strategies employed by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria.

### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

In the context of assessing the public relations strategies employed by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria, the study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To find out the public relations strategies and tactics uses in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria.
- ii. To assess the effectiveness of public relations strategies and tactics in managing reputation crisis of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria.
- iii. To asses public perception of public relations strategies employed by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria.
- iv. To identify the challenges of using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria.

### 1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the extent of the use of Public Relations Strategies by NYSC in Nigeria?

- ii. What are the Public Relations Strategies and tactics used in reputation management of NYSC Nigeria?
- iii. How effective are public relations strategies and tactics in the management of reputation crisis of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria?
- iv. What are the challenges of using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria?

#### 1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it revealed the best Public Relations tools and strategies that should be used in accomplishing national integration at the National Youth Service Corps. It also determined whether Public Relations is on track as employed by the NYSC in reputation management.

The study will serve as reference material to different government organisations that have the same set goals of promoting peace and unity in the country like the Federal Unitary colleges, Federal Hospitals, and even civil society groups that enshrined in the promotion of civil acts and togetherness.

This study will contribute to the growth of existing literature on the debate surrounding public relations and reputation management. This will open up a window for further research or studies regarding how public relations strategies can be use in managing the reputation of public and private organisation. The work will also well serve as reference material for other researchers working on similar endeavours. This holds true because it was earlier stated that the empirical evidence of public relations contributions in establishing a good reputation; sustaining that good reputation and repairing a damaged reputation remains under-investigated. The researcher is confident that the findings of the study may ensure credibility, integrity and legitimacy of future researchers into a similar topic to research more effectively.

#### 1.6 Scope of the Study

This study titled "Assessment of public relations strategies adopted by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria". Therefore, this study limited to all the staff of NYSC working at the Headquarters Abuja.

The area of study will comprise of staff of the NYSC both professional and professional staff. The reason for selection of the staff at the Headquarters is because the large number of staff of NYSC cut across the 36 states including the FCT. More so, the Headquarters is where the big decisions and policies are made. These staff were randomly selected for this study. This, considering the vast nature of this research, the researcher to a have manageable area to conduct a fieldwork in order to gather authentic raw data for this study.

#### 1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms and concepts have been operationally defined to enhance the understanding of how they are used in this work:

**Public Relations:** It entails the act of ensuring mutual and cooperative existence of Nigerian people through positive attitudinal change to enhance NYSC reputation. It establishes a two-way flow of communication which is based on truth, knowledge and full information on political, cultural and socio-economic issues that happen in the country.

**Public Relations Strategies:** These are defined approaches used by the Public Relations Officer of the National Youth Service Corps to win the support of the various ethnic groups in North Central of Nigeria to achieve national integration.

**Reputation:** reputation entails two main components, namely: *Perception*--- how the company is perceived by all stakeholders; and *Reality*--- the truth about a company's policies, practices, procedures, systems and performance. Perception is thus closely related to the image that a company projects.

**Reputation management:** Reputation management is the strategic use of corporate resources to positively influence the attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and actions of multiple corporate stakeholders including consumers, employees, investors, and the media.

**NYSC:** This stands for National Youth Service Corps which is a body that uses the most vibrant segment of the Nigerian population (the youth) with the capacity to take over from current leaders to entrench unity in Nigeria through selfless service to their father land for a period of one year.

Corps members: These are young Nigerians within the ages of twenty- five to Thirty years called to serve their fatherland for a period of one year. However, in this research work they are referred to as change agents and Public Relations tools used in achieving national integration in Nigeria.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 preamble

There has been little work in the area of Public Relations as its relates to the Management of Reputation by NYSC. This Research will serve as a benchmark in looking at the key roles play by Public Relations in the Management of Reputation by Organizations.

### 2.2 Review of concepts

The key concepts in this research work are Public Relations, Strategies, Reputation Management.

#### 2.2.1 Public Relations

Public Relations is a universal concept which no organisation, individual, government or any establishment can ignore. The existence of an organisation is dependent upon the goodwill of people it associates with in any environment. The practice of Public Relations can be traced to the Garden of Eden when God visited Adam and Eve and interacted with them. The need for Public Relations according to Musa and Pate (2011,p.22) can be “traced to the industrial revolution in the 18th century as institutions expanded with more goods and services to offer hence, the need for wider markets and favourable public image was sought for.” The first real Public Relations specialist is said to be either Ivy Lee (1877-1934) or Edward Bernays (1912-1995). Ivy Lee is known for his services to Standard Oil and its founder John, D. Rockefeller for introducing the term Public Relations and pioneering modern press release. Edward Bernays on his path is known for refining Lee’s press release as a Public Relations tool. He was said to have been influenced by Professor Sigmund Freud in his concept of Public Relations. According to the Mexican Statement of 1978 by several Public Relations associations, Public Relations is defined as “the art and science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizations leadership and implementing planned programmes of action which

will serve both the organisations and the publics’ interest.”

In Nigeria, the need for Public Relations as cited by Nkwocha (1999) in Oboh & Enobakhare (2010, p.307) “arose immediately after the Second World War, when there was need for effective public information due to the growing unpopularity of the then colonial government.” In Nigeria, late Dr Sam Epelle who headed the Information Unit of the Nigerian Railway Corporation was attributed to have articulated the concept of Public Relations. Public Relations, according to Orraca–Tetta, (1986, p.19) consists of “all forms of planned communication, outward and inwards, between an organisation and its publics for the purpose of achieving specific objectives concerning mutual understanding.” Contributing his view, Nwosu and Uffoh (2005, p.12) see Public Relations as:

Embracing communication and action which is essentially about positively and systematically using actions and communications to influence peoples’ attitude, opinions, beliefs, interests and behavior in a given or desired direction as well as building lasting credibility and reputation for individuals and corporate entities that include profit and non-profit organisations and even nations, states, local governments or communities.

Communication in Public Relations deals with two way information processes. It serves as a bridge between the organisation and her publics. Bernay (1952, p.22) corroborates, that “Public Relations is not a one way street in which leadership manipulates the public and public opinion. It is a two-way street in which leadership and the public integrate with each other.”

Denny Griswold, founder of *Public Relations News*, a leading newsletter for practitioners cited in Seitel (1998, p.7) says “Public Relations is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organisation with the public interest and plans and executes a programme of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.” In his view, Idemili (1990:217) insists that Public Relations as a social philosophy and function of management should be the watch-word of every management because:

It places the interest of the people first in all matters pertaining to the conduct of the organisation. It assumes that an organisation should function to serve the primary needs of people dependent upon it for employment, wages, income, goods and services, social or spiritual satisfaction. To be effective, a Public Relations philosophy must be expressed in action. Good Public Relations involves acting in the public interest.

Taking cognizance of the above views, it means that Public Relations officers should be in the management team to play the role of mediators between the organisation and the general public. For effective Public Relations, management must be one that does good because Public Relations is doing good and publicizing it. To continuously enlist the support of the public, a Public Relations Practitioner as Bako (2013, p.12) puts it, "is like a mid-fielder in a football match who co-ordinates the game, distributes the ball, serves as a link between the defense and attack, whose efficiency could determine the pace and fate of the game" Expatiating, Bako (2013, p.47) says "Public Relations people link the public and organisations, ensures co-operation and effectively absorbs pressures and disagreement for sustained growth. In the mid-field concept, the ball is information, the society-attack and defense-organisation."

Despite the roles Public Relations play in the society, there exist some misconceptions. It is seen as manipulation of the media, covering lies, window dressing and mere publicity intended to deceive. This is more pronounced in government. But, suffice it to say that Public Relations cannot be treated with ignominy. It is a pin in the centre of a hole. The success of reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) no doubt, depends on to do good and publicize it using effective Public Relations strategies.

### 2.2.2 Strategy

According to Gregory (2010, p.118) strategy is the "joined together approach that is taken to a programme or campaign, it is the coordinating theme or factor, the guiding principle, the rationale behind the tactical programme". Gregory maintained that strategy is dictated by the issues arising from analysis of the information at the planners' disposal. It is not the same as objectives and it comes before tactics. This implies that the

objective or nature of a campaign is what determines the strategy to be used, while tactics are expected to be clearly linked to strategy. This suggests how the messages should be communicated effectively.

For Tench and Yeomans (2006, p.196) strategy and tactics of "public relations consists of how should the message be communicated to internal and external public". They further stated that while tactics deals with the implementation of the planning process, strategy provides coherence and focus and is a clear driving force. It is the frame work that guides the menu of activities. This explains why Macpherson (2010, p.7) argued that, in public relations, the term: strategy refers to "the overall approach adopted to respond to changes in an organization's operating environment". While this term is normally an overriding term to the activities adopted within an organization, for this study, public relations strategy will cover any approach made to communicate with internal and external publics of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). These strategies as they apply to this study are: -

- a) Media Relations
- b) Community Relations
- c) Government Relations
- d) Financial Public Relations
- e) Employee/Labour Relations
- f) Sponsorship
- g) Issues and Crisis management

#### a) Media Relations

The mass media are important publics which no Public Relations practitioner can afford to treat with a mere wave of the hand as they inform, educate, correlate, entertain and act as watchdog for the society. In this regard, there is need to create and maintain cordial relationship with them. According to Offonry (1985, p.4)

It is the deliberate policy action and varied communication activities taken by an organisation with a view to winning and sustaining the confidence and goodwill of the various sections of the mass media, thus, removing or at least minimizing the chances of misrepresentation, misquotation, distortion of facts and unfounded criticism by such organisation.

Consenting to Offonry's (1985, p.4) view, Black (1990, p.40) asserts that "media relations is essentially two-way operations. It is the link between an organisation and the press, radio and television. On the one hand, the organisation supplies information and provides facilities to the media on request, and on the other hand, it takes steps to initiate comments and news." Confidence and respect between an organisation and the media are the necessary basis of good relations.

Center and Jackson, (1995, p.259) observe that "both journalists and Public Relations practitioners shape public opinion and should see truth and accuracy as an obligation". This is because a high degree of ethical responsibility involves moral standards and integrity while serving the ultimate interest of the public." The objectives of media relations according to Nkwocha (1999, p.68) are to:

Secure maximum positive publicity... thereby reaching the organisation's diversified publics and creating a good image and reputation for the organisation and its products, services and executives; to effectively inform, educate and explain to the media the programmes and policies thereby removing or at least minimizing the distortion of facts and unfounded criticisms; to interact effectively with journalists, publishers, broadcasters and electronic media owners and to get very close to the mass media so as to appreciate their problems.

To effectively ensure good media relations, Nkwocha (1999, p.68) opines that "these tools are necessary; press or news releases, press statements, press conferences, documentary films, supplements / adverts, press luncheon / facility visits, brown Envelope and other gifts and production of house journals." The researcher disagrees with the inclusion of brown envelopes by Nkwocha because it has bad influence on Public Relations practice. Even, some media organisations disallow their journalists from attending parties and the acceptance of gifts as such things could becloud their sense of judgment.

In this regard, Silva (2009, p.4) asserts that "the best way to interest the media to publish stories is to make them 'news worthy'. The media are interested in local stories or national stories with local angle". Silva (2009) further observes the need to establish

cordial relations with the media stating that it should be seen as a goal in itself and not just a means to an end. The researcher considers this view as a cardinal point in Public Relations because journalists do not like to be used only when a members of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) needs them. They mostly respond to requests if they know members to be one that responds to their requests to provide information when needed. Corroborating, Akande (2001, p.90) posits that:

Public Relations practitioners should make public contacts and have knowledge of the media which include editorial policy, readership profile, circulation figures, copy dates, printing process and frequency of publication. They must uphold conventional responsibilities, servicing the media, creating trust, not visiting the media frequently and assist media executives by providing materials and other facilities to facilitate their jobs. They should not request for suppression of unfavourable news and to give detailed information in case of crisis situation.

A case study of the relations between Public Relations industry and the news media by Larsson (2009) corroborates the above view having shown that Public Relations practitioners and journalists often establish close relations in order to fulfill a mutual need. In the study Larsson (2009) interviewed 64 professional information officers and Public Relations consultants on one hand, and news journalists on the other hand on their activities. He found out that by serving the media with news materials, the activities of Public Relations actors have caused their industry to move towards taking on the shape of news desk located outside the media. The end point of this stated activity is to earn publicity to ensure the achievement of set goals of the organisation.

Correspondingly, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members do relate with the media but the extent of this relation will either make or mar their goals and accomplishment in reputation management.

#### b) Community Relations

Community Relations is one of the activities that Public Relations practitioners employ to realize the goals and objectives of their organisations. It is central and when treated with neglect results to an

abysmal end of an organisation. Owobu (2000, p.57), notes:

The average community expects an organisation be it government department, agencies, association or voluntary agencies operating in its local area to contribute meaningfully toward its economic and social development. That the community in which an organisation operates is the major representative of its general public, whose goodwill is essential for the success and survival of the business.

Tamuno-Koko (2007, p.12) sees a community “as a place of interacting institutions - social, political, economic and religious, all of which produce in the residents an attitude and practice of interdependence, co-operation, collaboration and unification.” Ejomafuvwe (2008, p.187) defines a community “as a group of people living in the same place and satisfying their desire for a good spiritual, material, social and cultural life through the services of schools, churches, libraries, government, business and social welfare organisations of the community.” Owobu (2000, p.57) posits that “the first principle of interaction between organisations and their communities hinges on the understanding that each is dependent upon the other for its wellbeing.”

The idea of community relations according to Ufuophu-Biri (2007, p.153) is to “establish a cordial and mutual relationship between an organisation and the community hosting it. Such a mutual understanding and rapport helps to entrench peace which in turn enables the organisation to operate effectively without hostility from the host community.” To maintain mutual relationship, Nweke (2001) quoted in Ufuophu-Biri (2007, p.92) contends that “it depends on proper understanding and adequate knowledge of each other, easily facilitated by functional communication service, knowledge of the community, its pressing needs, social status structure, channels of communication, social agents, opinion leaders, among other issues.” According to Tamuno-Koko (2009, p.45) “most communities’ immediate and long term aspirations fall within the following demands, preservation of environment, education and health facilities, social amenities, other recreational and cultural pursuits and stable government.” By providing such needs of the community, the organisation is said to be socially responsible. Benson- Eluwa (1999) in

Ufuophu-Biri (2007, p.86) lists such social responsibilities as:

Scholarships, building blocks of class rooms, building of community halls, sponsorship of community events, such as annual festivals and cultural activities and sports activities. Others include construction of roads, boreholes, hospitals, electricity, employment etc. Such kindness on the part of an organisation would endear it to the loving heart of the community.

As pointed out by Owobu (2000, p.75), “an organisation be it government, voluntary and non-voluntary agencies must engage in community relations for relevance and survival.”

Expressing the benefits derived from effective community relations, Nnanyelugo, Udeze and Agbo (1999) in Ufuophu-Biri (2007, p.157) points out that:

Sometimes, two organisations operating in a particular environment are treated in different ways by people in the environment or community neighbours. Whereas company “A” may be liked and protected by the indigenes, company “B” may be hated and sabotaged from time to time by same people. One explanation for this varied treatment is the angle from which each of the companies interprets the concept of social responsibilities.

Agreeing with the above views, Ufuophu-Biri (2007) posits that in a study on community relations carried out by Emenaku (2004) that he found out that despite the oil companies in the Niger Delta’s neglect for community relations activities that they still regarded community relations as synonymous with getting information from the opinion/community leaders. He therefore recommends that community relations officers should give more attention to research as a means of generating reliable information on different aspects of their operations including the disposition of the target audience, and the effect of community relations activities on the target audiences and other issues.

To be successful in community relations, Ejomafuvwe (2007, p.187) recommends the following media of communication “press, radio and television publicity, company publications, opinion leaders meeting and visit to community institutions. The researcher submits that town hall

meetings, which must cut across all facets of the community is essential for grassroots information to be generated. This will ensure that the needs of the communities are initiated by them.”

c) Government Relations

Explaining the meaning of government public relations, Achor & Okoye (2013, p.14) claimed that there are;

“two distinct notions of government public relations can be identified in the literature. First, corporate entities or business organization have aspect of public relations that specially focused on creating and sustaining harmonious relations with government, its agencies, official etc. Second, it is also assumed or hoped that government or its official, agencies etc employ public relations strategies, techniques and philosophies in relating with the citizens or other stakeholders in order to engender mutual understanding, goodwill, partnership and respect.

The study is specifically concerned with the second notion. Approached from this second notion, government public relations can be conceived as a philosophy and function of government which is aimed at evaluating public attitudes identifies the policies, programmes, actions and procedures of government with public interest and carrying out genuine programme of action and effective communication to win and sustain public understanding and acceptance (Canfield & Moore, 1973). Government Public Relations Activities

- i. Informing constituents about activities of government agency: informed public about new regulations through booklets, newspaper stories, posters, television panel discussion and radio programmes.
- ii. Ensuring active-co-operation in government programmes: Voting, recycling, seat belt uses and anti-smoking regulation.
- iii. Fostering citizen support for established policies and programmes for example foreign aid and welfare
- iv. Projecting the country overseas: good image to attract tourist; good image for political purpose; project country as being safe place for foreign investment.
- v. Handling Crisis: Riots, natural disaster, floods, air crash, informing and liaising with all peace-keeping public order forces,

civil authorities and other related agencies.  
Step in handling crisis;

- a) Information are collected and distributed to affected bodies to foster cooperation and fast action
  - b) Proceeded by early warning system or drill to prepare for an emergency
  - c) Intelligent appraisal of possible areas where problems will escalate
  - d) Channel of communication to be kept open
  - e) Key publics should be identified and their information needs should be met.
- vi. Recurring activities
- a) Referring publics to the right official handling the matter
  - b) Channeling public complaint to responsible authority
  - c) Handling press queries
  - d) Providing press with information
  - e) Channeling statements to press
  - d) Financial Public Relations

According to Nwosu (1996, p.132), financial public relations is a “specialized area of modern public relations management that is concerned with all matters that affect or could affect the financial existence, standing or survival of any organisation. Earlier, Nwanwene (1993, p.9) defines financial public relations as:

...the relationship of a corporation with all the public important to its financial success. It aims at fostering easy and accurate lines of communication between a company’s financial and commercial activities, and the various publics or groups affected by the activities or can have influence on the company’s prospect and successes.

The implication is that the practice of financial public relations involves establishing and sustaining rewarding relationship between an organisation and the financial publics. Financial publics here include both the individuals and groups who contribute to and or benefit from the financial success of an organisation. This is why Nwodu (2009, p.159) informs that “financial public relations usually target wealthy individuals who have money to invest in shares and capital market as well as Real and or potential financial corporate friends of an organization”.

A parallel function to investor relations is to provide extensive information to the financial community

including security analysts at brokerage houses, large banks and similar institutions, and to weigh the information and make judgments on a company's financial strength and prospects. On the basis of their recommendations, institutional investors and brokerage firms buy or sell a company's stock. A thorough knowledge of finance, as well as Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) rules, is essential for a public relations person specializing in financial relations. Some of the tools of financial public relations include annual/quarterly reports, fact books (or factsheets), press releases, newsletters, telecommunication devices (old & news communication technologies, meetings with and presentations before the financial publics (Reddi, 2009, p.171). This implies that the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members are expected to partner with financial individuals, groups with the aim of providing basic infrastructural thereby entrenching the reputation of the institution in North Central, Nigeria.

e) Employee Relations

In any organisation, there must be a good communication "flow" between management and employees and employees and management. The public relations department often works closely with personnel or human resources to achieve good employee relations through publication of an employee newsletter, magazine, newspaper, or video news magazine, the writing of brochures to explain company policies and benefits, preparation of audio-visual materials for training and policy-transmission purposes, the scheduling of staff meetings and seminars, the training of speakers among managers and supervisors who serve as communicators to employees, and coordination of employee productivity or energy conservation campaigns. Tools available for National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members include but not limited to meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc.

f) Sponsorships or Partnerships

Partnerships and sponsorships are good for business. Supporting a not-for-profit cause can help build feelings of goodwill towards an organisation or business. Community partnerships may involve an exchange of funds or in-kind benefits to grow a local community organisation in return for benefits that promote an organisation or business reputation.

Partnerships can help consumers identify an organisation or business brand with good business practice and good ethics.

g) Issues and Crisis Management

According to Mackey (2004, p.334) issues management is defined as "maintaining the viability and reputation of the organization or industry by anticipating, understanding and keeping in touch with significance currents of thought in society". Earlier, Chase (1984, p.78) defines issues as "the process of identifying issues, analyzing those issues, setting priorities selecting programme strategy options, implementing a programme of action and communication and evaluating effectiveness". Also, Nwosu (1996, p.115) defines issues management as "...tracking, analyzing, collecting and presentation of data and making practical recommendations to management or administration of the organisation on issues and problems that may have negative or positive impact on the growth and survival of the organization".

These strategies link and flow from the objectives or goals of the organization. Strategy is the overriding plan that allows a public relations practitioner to help ensure that organizational goals and objectives are achieved (Hudson, 2004).

2.2.3 Reputation Management

Reputation is an asset many organizations are beginning to realize; hence the need to manage it cannot be overemphasized. A good reputation is pivotal to organizational success. In today's competitive market, it can make the difference between success and failure. Reputation evolves over time and is at the heart of any organization – it is based on vision and values, the quality of products and services, and corporate personality and behaviour. According to Resnicks (2002), 'reputation has a lot to do with trust'. And trust is all about the kind of image an organization is able to create in the mind of its various publics.

This image is referred to as corporate image by Baines, Egan, & Jefkins, (2004:356). They further explain it as, 'the impression of an organization held by a public based on knowledge and experience. The corporate image defines the character of the organization. The way the company is seen to behave will influence the impression

people have of it.' Endorsing Baines, Egan & Jefkins' views, Nwosu (2011:159) states that:

Reputation management is a relatively more recent dimension of modern public relations practice. Its meanings and practical applications are still emerging, but they are NOT too far from the meanings and applications of the image concept. It should indeed be seen and understood as an extension of the image concept in the sense that it is still anchored on PERCEPTION, as opposed to reality. But it is different and stronger than image, in the sense that it takes longer to crystallize. It is anchored more on corporate or organizations and individual's performance over time than the temporal perceptions.

In the same view, Dowling (2001:19) defines Corporate image as 'the global evaluation (comprised of a set of beliefs and feelings) a person has about an organization'. This definition further elucidates Dowling's point of view by linking an organization's reputation with its corporate image, 'Once these beliefs and feelings are recognized by a member of a particular public, individuals start to become familiar with an organization and how it goes about doing things. Eventually, members of a public develop an understanding of the company's values'. It is at this point that a company is said to have developed a reputation. Dowling (2001:19) also defines corporate reputation as 'the attributed values (such as authenticity, honesty, responsibility and integrity) evoked from the person's corporate image'.

Corporate image or better put, organizational image is actually the brainchild of organizational reputation management. Image is a true reflection. In this particular case, it is the true reflection of an organization in the eyes and minds of its publics. Organizational image according to Tench & Yeomans (2006:253), 'is the impression perceived by an individual of an organization at one moment in time. Organizational image can change from individual to individual and also throughout time'. The importance and challenges of positive image to modern business organizations or corporate bodies – including government – demands professional public relations to effectively and efficiently manage it.

The relationship that exists between corporate (organizational) image and corporate

(organizational) reputation is like two sides of a coin. One leads to the other, and the latter sums up the formal. Tench & Yeomans (2006:254), argues organizational reputation is arrived at 'by considering the sum total of images an individual has accumulated over a period of time that help that individual form an opinion about an organization'. The symbiotic relationship that exists between image and reputation of an organization is metaphorically presented in terms of photography. Organizational image could be equated with a photograph of an organization taken at one moment in time by an individual; organizational reputation is when that individual collates all the photographs (or images) taken over a period of time into an album and forms an opinion of the organization by looking at the entire collection of photographs (Tench & Yeomans, 2006).

The concept of reputation management is indeed a very broad and relatively new concept having looked at the managerial tasks that constitute it. It is a complex process and can be broadly understood as an art and science of accomplishing organizational tasks by using human and material resources to achieve organizational goals.

### 2.3 Review of Previous Studies

The general literature is reviewed under the following headings:

#### 2.3.1 Public Relations as a Management Function

One major area of argument by scholars and public relations practitioners is that public relations should be seen as a management function and not a technique of communication (Budd 1995 in Siramesh & Vercic, 2009; GrunigL, Grunig, J & Dozier, 2002; Grunig, 2001; Gregory, 2001 in Theaker, 2004 and Asemah, 2009). Today, therefore, the organisations that employ individual public relations practitioners or public relations firms have begun to recognize public relations as an important management function. They recognize that public relations have value to an organisation because it helps to balance the self interest of the organisation with the interests of people who are affected by the organisation or who have the power to affect the organisation (Grunig, 2001, p.4). In collaborating this view Setiel (1998, p.143) opined that "like other management process professional PR work emanates from clear strategies and bottom line objectives that flow into specific tactics, each

with its own budget, timetable and allocation of resources". Stated another way public relations today is much more a planned, persuasive social/managerial science than a knee-jerk, damage-control reaction to sudden flare-ups.

According to the official statement of Public Relations Society of American (PRSA) on public relations as management function (cited in Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth & Van Leuven, 2004, P. 5) encompasses the following:

- i. Anticipating, analyzing, and interpreting public opinion, attitudes and issues which might impact, for good or ill, the operations and plans of the organisation.
- ii. Counseling management at all levels in the organisation with regard to policy decision, courses of actions, and communication taking into account their ramifications and the organisation's social or citizenship responsibilities.
- iii. Research conducting and evaluating, on a continuing basis, programmes of action and communication to achieve informed public understanding necessary to the success of an organisation's aims. These include marketing, financial, fund-raising, employee, community or government relation, and other programmes.
- iv. Planning and implementing the organisation's efforts to influence or change public policy.
- v. Setting objectives, planning, budgeting, recruiting and training staff & volunteers, developing facilities, that is managing the resources needed to perform all of the above.
- vi. Examples of the knowledge that may be required in the professional practice of public relations include communication arts, psychology, social psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and the principles of management and ethics. Technical knowledge and skills required for opinion research, public issue analysis, media relations, direct mail, institutional advertising, public actions, film/video productions, special events speeches and presentations.

Also, the policy statement of PRSA further states that in helping to define and implement policy, the Public Relations Practitioners utilizes a variety of professional communication skills and plays an integrative role both within the organisation and the external environment (Lattimore, et al 2004, p.5). This broad description of public relations as a

management function suggests that public relations is an integral part of management structure of an organisation.

As a management function Public Relations serves to bring the public's interest and organisation's policies and programmes into harmony. This position holds true because public relations as a management function serves to achieve organisational goals by developing effective relationship with various public of the organisation. This explains why Lattimore et al (2004, p.6) opined that the leadership of organisations needs to understand the attitudes and values of their public in order to achieve organisational goals. In view of this Setiel (1998, p.146) argued that as management function public relations must be the interpreter of the organisation- its philosophy, policy, and programmes. These emanate from the top management. Therefore, public relations must report to those who run the organisation. The goals themselves are shaped by the external environment of an organisation. This explains why public relations practitioners undertake environmental scanning with the aim of providing appropriate policy and programmes that will serve the interest of public and the organisation.

Public relations practitioners usually embark on environmental scanning to gather information about the macro-environment (external public) one of the strategy used by practitioners to scan the macro-environment is PEST (political, economic, social and technological). According to Gregory (2010, p.7) public relations practitioners are (or should be) acutely aware of the environment in which the organisation operates. She maintained that this is vital because public exist within that environment and it is not possible to understand people fully unless there is a clear appreciation of the social, technological, economic, political and cultural issues and factors that influence them and drive their lives.

According to Theaker (2004: 51) some strategists now regard PEST as no longer reflecting the complexity of the environment in which modern organisations operate. They recommend an expansion of PEST to EPISTLE which include encompass the *Environment*, that is, the physical or green environment, *information* and the *legal* or regulatory aspects of an organisation. Some analysts

also recommend that culture should have a special consideration. As organisations become increasingly global they need to be aware of religions and social differences between and within the countries in which they operate. This explains why Gregory (2010:8) further opined that being able to make sense of the environment, public relations professionals not only provide intelligence to the strategic development process, but contribute to the general decision making within organisations. However, as a management function, public relations must build long-term, mutually beneficial relationships for the organisation. This explains why Lattimore et al 2004, p.12) argued that public relations practitioners must show an organisation's top managers how a proposed relationship building plan aligns with the organisation's values and mission. They maintained if that connection is not established, the plan will probably die for lack of consensus and approval. This suggests that public relations objectives and goals, strategies and tactics must flow directly from the organisation's overall goals. Public relations strategies must reflect organisational strategies and tactic must be designed to realize the organisation's objective.

### 2.3.2 Communication and Reputation Management

Communication is so vital to the existence, survival and growth of any organization that many experts have pointed out that there can be no organization without communication, (Rogers and Rogers, 1988, Nwosu, 1996). This concept explains the interactive relationship that exists among human beings, between an organization and its intended publics. For the effective flow of communication to take place, it is essential that whichever form of communication adopted by an organization's management, such must be well planned and managed.

Communication could become an impediment to reputation management by any organization, when it is not properly planned and managed. It must be seen beyond just disseminating information, it is a two-way flow. The organization's management should understand its publics in making policies, conducting its activities and the publics should understand, and appreciate the organization through feedback. When not well planned and managed, communication may become difficult because the

recipient of the message does not have the same knowledge and experience as the communicator.

According to Bettinghaus and Cody (1994:67) communication is part of the learning process, and public relations is about informing, educating and creating understanding. In order for the public to understand what we are trying to convey, messages often need to be repeated, since people usually forget them over time, particularly the specific arguments or message presented. The general substance or conclusion of the message is marginally more likely to be remembered. Baines, Egan, & Jefkins (2004) assert that "The purpose of public relations is to create understanding by imparting knowledge and information. This process requires the PRO to select the most appropriate media and techniques for the particular task at hand".

What this entails is that effective communication between an organization and its publics (which in the long-run builds and sustains a positive reputation for the organization in the hearts of its publics) largely depends on the effective use of the appropriate media and the techniques that best serve the purpose of that communication by public relations experts. It, therefore, implies that the inability of people (organization's publics) to actively communicate with the authorities/management poses a huge challenge in reputation management.

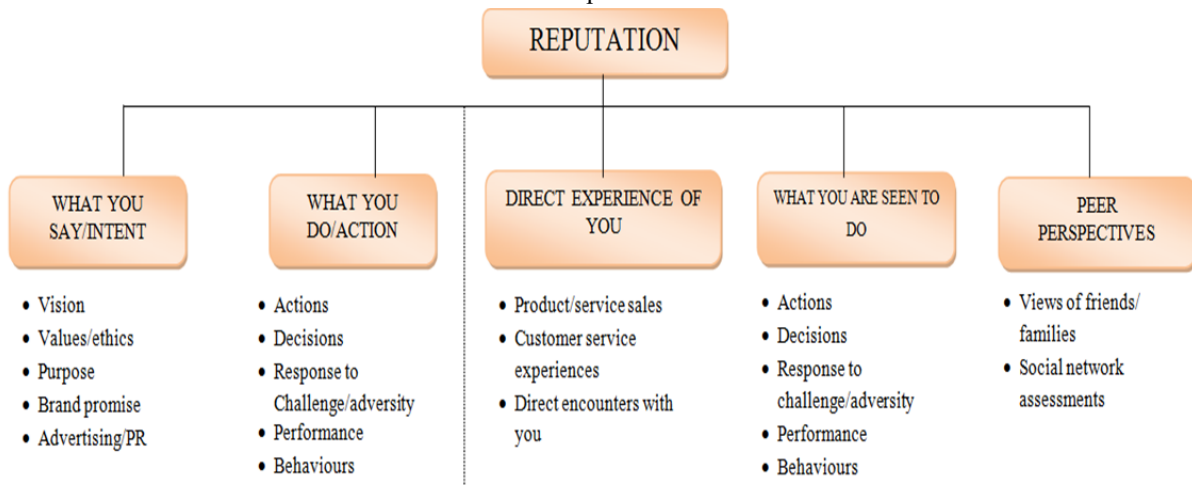
### 2.3.3 Public Relations and Corporate Reputation

Studies have shown that corporate reputation is positively affected by public relations activities; therefore, reputation management is an important part of public relations strategies (Cha & Kim, 2010; Grunig, 1993; Hon, 1998; Kim, 2001; Plowman, Briggs, & Huang, 2001). Hon (1998) argued that the goal of public relations was to communicate the image of an organisation. Grunig (1993) suggested that reputation was one of the dependent variables of public relations effectiveness along with relationship with stockholders and employee satisfaction. Plowman et al. (2001) argued that maintaining the reputation of an organisation was the most important function of public relations. More practically, Kim (2001) argued that 'as the unit of public relations expense increases, a positive effect on the company's reputation [is] expected' (p. 22). Cha and Kim

(2010) also maintained that there was a positive correlation between a corporation's public relations activities and corporation reputation. For

effectiveness in using public relations strategies in the management of reputation, this study adopted Griffin's reputation framework.

FIGURE 1.1 A Reputation Framework



Source: Griffin, A (2014) *Crisis; Issues and Reputation Management: PR in Practice*

### 2.3.4 Public Relations and Reputation Management in Government Organizations

Public relations definitions, functions and strategies all point in one direction, which is, seeking to elicit goodwill, support for, build and sustain mutual understanding between individuals, groups or organizations and their various publics. Nwosu (2011) asserts it can be deduced that public relations achieve its objectives through actions and two way integrated and systematic communications, based on truth and full information, as opposed to lies, half-truth, deceptions, misinformation, disinformation, buck-passing and other propaganda techniques. Public relations, also achieves its objectives by applying its tools, strategies and techniques that are appropriate for the circumstances under consideration or the task/problem at hand, including parastatal issues and problems.

He further argues that, for government public relations and other managers of government business/affairs to understand and effectively apply reputation strategies, they must first of all understand very well the meaning and application of the image concept (Nwosu, 2011). Nwosu's emphasis stresses the point that the concept of image is a pre-requisite to understanding and applying the reputation concept and strategies for improved management of government organizations, problems and issues.

Walter Lippmann (1922:79-130) in Nwosu (2011:158) helped to popularize the image concept in information and public opinion management, when he pointed out, the only feeling anyone can have about an event, object, person or organization that he is not personally involved with is the feeling aroused by his mental image of that entity painted by various stimuli (e.g. policy, actions, events and communications). And since, it is not possible for man to be involved personally with every institution, event or organization, he depends most of the time on the images and pictures of these organizations or the entities whenever he has anything to do with them.

Managing reputation in government organization or any other organization according to Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann (2005:2) is "about ensuring that everyone's experience of the organization is in keeping with the reputation the organization has or hopes to build. This means that everyone within the organization has a role to play. Managing reputation is more than just an exercise in spin. Spin doctoring is a process of putting a good face on unacceptable facts, whereas managing reputation is a process of ensuring that the facts are themselves acceptable."

It is therefore, clear at this juncture that reputation management was, is, and always will be of immense importance to organizations, whether commercial, governmental or not-for-profit. For these

organizations to reach their goals, stay competitive and prosper, good reputation paves the organizational path to acceptance and approval by stakeholders – it is a collective responsibility of every member of the organization from the least to the top. A well-managed reputation is not as a result of happenstance. It means it does not occur by chance. It relates to leadership Management and organizational operations; the quality of products and services; and crucial- relationships with stakeholders. It is also connected to communication activities and feedback mechanisms.

From the available literature few studies in Nigeria have assessed the value of public relations and their contributions to actual enhance organisation's reputation without the use survey. More so researchers in Nigeria did not ponder directly on the contribution and effectiveness of public relations strategies in the management of reputation in government agencies. With respect to these problems, there is need for more studies using different research design in this area.

#### 2.4 Empirical Review

A study by Udende and Salau (2012) titled "National Corps Scheme and Quest for National Unity and Development: A Public Relations Perspective" sought to establish how Public Relations could be used to achieve national unity and development in the NYSC. The study which was carried out in Kaima and Buruten Local Government Areas in Kwara State employed survey research design and used questionnaire as instrument of data collection. The objectives of the study sought to identify the major areas the NYSC has impacted positively on Nigeria; determine the level of integration among Nigerians and also determine how Public Relations can be used to improve the scheme.

Findings from the study show that most corps members integrated themselves where they were posted by making friends not only with their colleagues in service, but also with the host communities; majority of corps members that served in the two Local Government Areas were non-indigenes of which the service gave them the opportunity to live among the natives of the communities thereby enhancing association among Nigerians. That three quarter of corps members that were posted to the two local government areas were

not rejected. Suggestions which were advanced for possible solution to the problem of rejection are that posting of corps members should be on demand by employers. Operators of the scheme should encourage employers to accept corps members while corps members on their part should discard negative behavior and attitude towards the scheme. Concluding, the researchers were of the view that the scheme has come to stay and that the landmark achievements can be more discernible if Public Relations managers are accorded their rightful vantage position to play their advisory role that must be acted upon.

They recommend that regular research, diligent implementation of planned programmes, effective communication of successes achieved by the scheme as well as evaluation (which are the hallmark of Public Relations) should be of top priority to the NYSC scheme so as to ascertain emerging challenges and map out strategies to surmount them. Also, that security of corps members should be top on the agenda and adequate funding should be made available to provide requisite logistics and facilities that can sustain the scheme.

In a study titled "Immigrant Integration Through Public Relations and Public Diplomacy: An Analysis of the Turkish Diaspora in the Capital of the European Union" Emel and Juan – Carlos (2014) examined the imperative use of Public Relations and Public Diplomacy to entrench mutual relations among the Turkish Immigrants that live in Brussels, Belgium and the Europeans. The study focused on the Turkish Diaspora in Belgium because as at the time the study was conducted Belgium had less strict citizenship requirements compared to most European Countries such as Sweden, Germany, Austria, France and Netherlands which had stringent nationality requirements. The study is significant given that Brussels, Belgium serves as the Capital of the European Union EU hence, the assumption that EU Immigrant Integration Policies and decisions and their impact on the Communities' which are their target would be most visible there.

The objectives of the study were to examine how the Turkish Communities identified themselves; what kind of relationships they have with the larger EU milieu in which they are situated and whether

the EU is able to inform them of its policies. The following research questions were raised. How do Turkish association leaders see and define the Turkish Diaspora living in Belgium? How do leaders of Turkish association in Brussels receive, evaluate, and respond to EU Public Relations and diplomacy efforts about Immigrant Integration? Can Turkish immigrant associations influence the EU on Immigrant Integration or are they engaged in a two-way communication and what strategies do they use to influence EU decisions and initiatives? The study used in-depth semi-structured interview which was conducted with Turkish Association Leaders in Brussels. In-depth semi-structured interviews provided flexibility and interaction between the researcher and participants which allowed participants to tell their stories and expressed themselves freely. The study used critical case sampling, a purposive sample which enabled the researcher to employ participants who were conversant with the happenings in EU and Turkish Immigrants.

The findings of the study reveal that Public Relations and Diplomacy need to be utilized together to communicate with Immigrant Communities and to encourage two-way communication because community exposure to EU Policies seemed to be limited and deficient as did potential channels through which they could express their concerns to EU body.

Second, regarding the issue of national identity there was difference in perception as whether the participants belonged to first, second and third generations. The first generation immigrants see themselves as Turkish while the second and third generations who were born in Belgium also acknowledge their Turkish heritage but emphasized their European identity.

Third, there was lack of awareness of EU Integration Policies by the Turkish Associations, because EU Policies are implemented at the national level and it was difficult to know whether such decisions come from the EU or the National Government.

Fourth, association leaders were not proactive in learning more about the EU and EU level initiative, communicating with EU officials or trying to

influence decisions regarding Immigrant Integration.

The study recommends the need for EU institutions to use Public Relations and diplomacy strategies to promote EU principles and other decisions and initiatives. The EU should use PR and Public Diplomacy to create a transitional European Identity especially among Immigrant Communities. That a new way of enhancing communication with EU various publics, including third country nationals' (TCN) is to engage in a dialogue. Also, two-way communication between the EU and Immigrant Communities should be encouraged.

In the third study, Clark (2000) titled "An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the National Youth Service Corps Scheme as an Instrument for Promoting National Integration in Nigeria" the study found that the National Youth Service Corps scheme tends to develop among her members a high positive attitude towards the host community, encourages strong desire for inter-ethnic communication through the knowledge of the language of the host community, improves the individuals perspective to accept employment in states other than one's own and has a positive effect on participants desire for unity in Nigeria.

Clark (2000) observes that deployment of Corps Members across cultural and geographical boundaries enhances and promotes national integration. He opines that the capability of the NYSC as an instrument for promoting national unity by infusing greater understanding, association, appreciation and national consciousness amongst the people is not in doubt. The research established that despite the criticisms of the NYSC scheme its capability to entrench positive attitude and enhance national unity has been proved. The scheme also has a significant impact on nation building especially in the areas of social development and national cohesion.

In a study by Melladu (2012) titled "Public Relations Strategies and the Management of Selected Conflicts in Nigeria" sought to determine the extent and appropriateness of the use of Public Relations strategies in the management of the 2001 Tiv - Jukun Ethnic Conflict, the 2004 Yelwa-Shendam Religious Conflict and the Federal Government of Nigeria-Academic Staff Union of

Universities Labour conflict. The study employed survey research, using questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as instrument for data collection.

The first finding of the research depicts that the parties and stakeholders in the three conflicts made use of a number of Public Relations strategies in the management of the conflicts. Some of the strategies were appropriate while some were not. The appropriate ones were the mass media, dialogue, research, compromise, persuasion, consultation, collective bargaining, reconciliation, public opinion, mediation and arbitration. The inappropriate ones were the use of force, falsehood, propaganda, lobbying and sanction.

Secondly, the finding reveals that the respondents in the three conflicts indicated the need for prompt and lasting peace which was the fundamental factor that prompted parties and stakeholders to adopt the Public Relations strategies in managing the conflict. However, comments from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) indicate that the parties and stakeholders approached the realization of this need from a biased or sentimental perspective.

Thirdly, the findings show that the parties to all the three conflicts studied viewed the conflicts as justified. This attitude influenced the adoption of the Public Relations strategies used in managing the conflict. One of the discussants, a 48-year-old male Jukun has this to say “if the Jukun had not fought, the Tiv people, who have high expansionist tendencies, would have taken over every bit of Jukun land and made Jukun subservient to them”.

The fourth finding shows that there were some differences in the Public Relations strategies adopted in managing the three forms of conflict studied (Ethnic, religious and labour conflict). The differences manifested in the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) conflict in which the use of force, falsehood and sanction were less used.

Another finding reveals that certain strategies adopted in managing the three conflicts studied did not conform to acceptable Public Relations standard as unethical considerations were used to adjudge acceptable standard of Public Relations. Those strategies that did not conform to acceptable Public

Relations standard included the use of force, sanction, falsehood and confrontation among other approaches that did not serve the entire public interest. A key finding of the study indicates that a significant relationship exists between attitude towards conflict management and effectiveness of adopted Public Relations strategies in conflict management.

From these findings, the study concludes that parties and stakeholders in the conflicts studied adopted some appropriate PR strategies which yielded required results while inappropriate strategies did not produce expected results. That parties and stakeholders in the conflicts studies adopted the PR strategies based on their perceived need for prompt and lasting action. That since parties to the conflicts blamed their opponents for being responsible, is a clear indication that the conflicts have not ended. What existed as at the time of the study was uneasy calm. That most of the Public Relations strategies adopted were not proactive in nature but deployed as reactionary fire-brigade approaches which failed to address main issues especially in the ethnic and religious conflicts.

That those Public Relations strategies found effective if wrongly applied can produce undesirable effects. That Public Relations approach in the 2007 FGN-ASSU conflict was correctly and appropriately adopted than those in the ethnic and religious conflicts.

The study therefore recommends that Public Relations strategies aimed at effective conflict management, especially the ethnic and religious ones in Nigeria must be proactive to address both immediate and remote causes of the conflicts. Public Relations programmes or approaches for effective communal conflicts (ethnic and religious inclusive) management should begin to advocate for a solution to the problem of citizenship – indigene versus settler status in Nigeria. That the 1999 Constitution should be amended to define who an indigene and a settler is and what opportunities are open for them.

Public Relations approaches for effective ethnic and religious conflicts management should aim at addressing the problem of national integration. This is essential because while official documents

subscribe to one united nation what is really on ground is a highly disjointed ethnic nationals.

Public Relations strategies in conflict management should contribute to the voice of advocacy calling for the provision of adequate socio-economic amenities. This means a strong advocacy for good governance.

Public Relations strategies should be used to demand the release and implementation of report of commissions of inquiry by government at different levels. This to a large extent restores confidence that justice and fairness are done. This study by Melladu (2012) is relevant to the present study as it studied religious conflicts among four ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Jukun- Tiv and Yelwa- Shandan which pose integration problems. The use of Public Relations strategies in solving the problems generated by the conflict which is aimed at uniting ethnic groups in Nigeria is in consonance with this study that seeks to evaluate the effectiveness Public Relations application in national integration at the National Youth Service Corps and the National Orientation Agency.

In another study titled “The Impact of Public Relations in Nigerian Political Parties’ Campaign Programme in the South East of Nigeria” Ngwoke (2010) examined the impact of public relations in Nigerian political parties’ campaign programme. The specific objectives are; to evaluate the need for an effective public relations in political parties’ campaign programme; to identify the various public relations strategies used during political campaign; to determine the extent to which political parties and politicians use public relations as a tool for winning voters’ support; to find out the implications of not employing public relations strategies in political parties’ campaign and to proffer some recommendations in line with our findings.

Using questionnaire and oral interview, the study found that the need effective public relations served during electioneering campaign includes; informing and educating the electorate about the party’s name, logo, manifesto and other identity which differentiate it from other political parties; canvassing or soliciting for votes on the election day; creating mutual understanding and garnering goodwill; projecting the good image of the party and the contesting candidates; dispersing rumour

and opinion management, and opportunity to interact with the electorate face to face, among others. Also, political parties used public relations tools, strategies and tactics to achieve their purpose of electioneering campaign which is to win the votes of the greater majority of the electorate.

Further; public relations tools used by political parties in their campaign programme includes; press release, feature/articles writing, press conference, political rallies and voter’s enlightenments. It was also observed that political parties use these media as a vehicle in carrying public relations functions during electioneering campaign, they are, radio, television, newspapers, magazines, internet and billboard. Findings shows that the factors militating against the effectiveness of public relations strategies during electioneering campaign include lack of funds, political violence, oath-taking, ineffective communication, lack of internal democracy, poor planning and implementation.

The study concluded that lack of professional public relations practitioners and lack of adequate funding account for the ineffective application of public relations strategies during electioneering campaigns. The study further recommends that public relations activities during electioneering campaign should be handled by public relations practitioners. Also, that political party should adequately fund their public relations unit in order to prosecute electioneering campaign activities.

In a similar study titled “Public Relations in Non-profit Organisations: A Guide to Establishing Public Relations Programmes in Non-Profit Settings” Gale (2007) examined the application of public relations in non-profit organisations with the aim to establish public relations programmes in non-profit organisations; and to identify strategies adopted in the application of public relations programmes in non-profit organisations. The study also aimed at establishing the extent to which public relations could be applied in non-profit organisations.

Four research questions were raised to guide the study and both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used, while questionnaire and interview were used to collect data for the study. Simple percentages and content analysis were used to analyze data. Findings revealed that; public

relations strategies have been adopted in the management of non-profit organisations. Findings also revealed that, public relations has contributed to the management of non-profit organisations. Findings also revealed that lack of funds and ethical issues are the challenges hindering the adoption of public relations in non-profit organisations.

Resulting from the findings, the study concluded that, public relations is important in the management of non-profit organisations and that public relations strategies are not fully adopted in the management of non-profit organisations. The study further recommended that public relations professionals should be employed to effectively manage the public relations efforts of non-profit organisations in line with ethical principles, adequate budget should be allocated to public relations to enable the effective running of its programmes in non-profit organisations.

In a study by Melladu (2012) titled “Public Relations Strategies and the Management of Selected Conflicts in Nigeria” sought to determine the extent and appropriateness of the use of Public Relations strategies in the management of the 2001 Tiv - Jukun Ethnic Conflict, the 2004 Yelwa-Shendam Religious Conflict and the Federal Government of Nigeria-Academic Staff Union of Universities Labour conflict. The study employed survey research, using questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as instrument for data collection.

The first finding of the research depicts that the parties and stakeholders in the three conflicts made use of a number of Public Relations strategies in the management of the conflicts. Some of the strategies were appropriate while some were not. The appropriate ones were the mass media, dialogue, research, compromise, persuasion, consultation, collective bargaining, reconciliation, public opinion, mediation and arbitration. The inappropriate ones were the use of force, falsehood, propaganda, lobbying and sanction. The findings show that the parties to all the three conflicts studied viewed the conflicts as justified. This attitude influenced the adoption of the Public Relations strategies used in managing the conflict. One of the discussants, a 48 year old male Jukun has this to say “if the Jukun had not fought, the Tiv people, who have high expansionist tendencies, would have taken over

every bit of Jukun land and made Jukun subservient to them”.

From these findings, the study concludes that parties and stakeholders in the conflicts studied adopted some appropriate PR strategies which yielded required results while inappropriate strategies did not produce expected results. That parties and stakeholders in the conflict studies adopted the PR strategies based on their perceived need for prompt and lasting action. That since parties to the conflicts blamed their opponents for being responsible, is a clear indication that the conflicts have not ended. What existed as at the time of the study was uneasy calm. That most of the Public Relations strategies adopted were not proactive in nature but deployed as reactionary fire-brigade approaches which failed to address main issues especially in the ethnic and religious conflicts.

The study therefore recommends that Public Relations strategies aimed at effective conflict management, especially the ethnic and religious ones in Nigeria must be proactive to address both immediate and remote causes of the conflicts. Public Relations programmes or approaches for effective communal conflicts (ethnic and religious inclusive) management should begin to advocate for a solution to the problem of citizenship – indigenes versus settler status in Nigeria. That the 1999 Constitution should be amended to define who an indigene and a settler is and what opportunities are open for them.

Public Relations approaches for effective ethnic and religious conflicts management should aim at addressing the challenges of promotion democracy. This is essential because while official documents subscribe to one united nation what is really on ground is a highly disjointed ethnic nationals’.

Public Relations strategies should be used to demand the release and implementation of report of commissions of inquiry by government at different levels. This to a large extent restores confidence that justice and fairness are done. This study by Melladu (2012) is relevant to the present study as it studied religious conflicts among four ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Jukun- Tiv and Yelwa- Shandan which pose as challenges to promotion of democracy.

In a similar study titled “Status of Government Public Relations (GPR) in Nigeria and its Institutionalization in Governance” Achor & Okoye (2013) examined the status of Government Public Relations (GPR) and its Institutionalization in governance in Nigeria. Hence, the study empirically examined the status of government public relations in Nigeria via the three PR approaches and to x-ray its institutionalization in governance.

Using pilot study, the study findings revealed that GPR practices in Nigerian do not deeply reflect the three PR approaches or the tripod model which is the key index in determining the status of government public relations. The study also found that GPR in Nigeria is yet to a top management function. A combined factors ranging from lack of transparency, poor understanding of PR role, non recognition of PR as a management function to adoption of pernicious propaganda militate against institutionalization of PR in governance. Furthermore, the study found that the adoption of the three PR approaches in government public relations practices ensures its institutionalization in governance. The study ascertained that trust building between government and the citizenry, shared understanding on government viewpoints, issues and provision of accurate information about government policies, actions among other factors are the direct impact/ benefits of institutionalizing PR in governance.

Based on the findings, the study concluded that despite the historical presence and growing ubiquity of public relations efforts in government/governance, there is still a lack of coordinated approach that properly reflects the three PR-approaches or the tripod practicing model, particularly in government ministries and agencies. Within the context of the study and global best practices, the institutionalization of the government public relations tends to render legitimacy to public relations practice and empower the practitioners by according PR practice a strategic function towards the achievement of public institution effectiveness. However, factors that militate against institutionalization of public relations in governance centers around practices that do not promote the mutuality principles-trust, understanding, transparency, respect, recognition and partnership. The study further recommended among others that public relations must be practiced as a two-way

communication process and with a symmetrical purpose of using communication to foster collaboration between government and their publics (stakeholders). This study is relatively relevant to the present study having investigated the status of public relations in government building which is one and the same to promotion of democracy.

In a study, “Public Relations and Organisational Management: An Assessment of Jos International Breweries Plc”, Asemah (2009) examined the use of public relations in the management of Jos International Breweries with a focus on the following objectives; to find out whether Jos International Breweries Plc recognizes and uses public relations in the management of the organization; to find out public relations activities carried out by Jos International Breweries Plc; to ascertain the extent to which Jos International Breweries Plc has embraced public relations and to find out the factors (if any) which impede the effective practice of public relations in Jos International Breweries Plc

Using the survey method with the instruments questionnaire and interview to elicit data from the respondents the study findings revealed that Jos Internal Breweries Plc actually accepts and recognizes public relations in the management of the organization because public relations representatives attends management meeting and there is a public relations unit in the organization. Findings revealed that Jos International Breweries carries out public relations activities. Findings also revealed that the extent to which Jos International Breweries Plc embraces public relations is minimal and under-utilized. Findings revealed factors that hindered the effective practice of public relations in Jos International Breweries Plc includes managements negative attitudes to public relations, poor funding of public relations unit, unfriendly relationship with public relations men.

The research hypotheses revealed that there is no significant relationship between public relations and the effective management of Jos International Breweries, thus the study concluded that Jos International Breweries Plc has not really given due recognition to the role public relations can play in the organization. Based on the conclusion, the study further recommended that the management of Jos International Breweries Plc should constantly relate with its employees and external publics, as this well

generate goodwill of both external and internal for effective management. This implies that the potentials of public relations have been underutilized by the management of Jos International Breweries, this underlining the relevance of the findings to this study.

In a similar study “An Evaluation of the Contributions of Public Relations to the Business Operations of Airtel Nigeria” Omula (2011) examined the impact and contributions of public relations to business activities of Airtel Nigeria through the following objectives: to ascertain the significant relationship and importance of public relations to business activities of Airtel Nigeria; to identify the extent to which Airtel Nigeria has adopted and utilized public relations methods and techniques in its business; to investigate the role of public relations to adequately sensitize the publics on various services rendered by Airtel Nigeria and to determine whether public relations can be used to resolve internal and external conflicts in business management.

Using questionnaire and interview as method of data collection, the study revealed that public relations is sine-qua-non (an essential condition or element) to the attainment of organization goals; finding revealed that Airtel has adopted and used public relations in her operations through sponsorship and corporate social responsibility to maintain harmonious relationships with the publics. Findings further revealed that public relations has been used to resolved both internal and external conflicts in business management by establishing of a functional two-way communication aimed at strengthen the relationship that exist between Airtel and their customers.

Based on the hypothesis testing, the study concluded that there is significant relationship between public relations and business management in the operations of Airtel. As such Airtel must continue to use public relations strategies and techniques to establish and sustain the needed goodwill and mutual understating. Arising from the conclusion of the study, the researcher put forward the following recommendation public relations practitioners must not lie to build a favourable image for their organization because when the lie is discovered it may spell doom on the organization and public relations research must be on ongoing as

no organization such as Airtel can succeed entirely without research. Management must make funds available as at when due.

In another study titled “Community Relations Strategies and Conflict Resolution in the Niger Delta: A Study of three Major Oil Companies” Amodu (2012) investigated community relations strategies and conflict resolution in the Niger Delta with as focus of three Major Oil Companies. Amodu’s study is similar to the present study in that they both focus on the use of public relations strategies in the management of an organization or conflict. Again, the research design employed for both former and present studies is the survey and was appropriate since they both seek opinions of people. Also similar to both studies is the use of instruments which include questionnaire, interview guide, and focus group discussion for data collection. However, the former study narrowed its focus on the assessment of just one out of the many strategies of public relations in the management of conflict. Although the use of survey and particular instruments of questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion is quite commendable for the adequate and in-depth data is was likely to generate. However, the limitation in scope of the study may not have produced elaborate result concerning the efforts of the oil companies in the management of conflicts. This is in that, other public relations strategies may have likely been employed by those companies which the researcher never considered to assess since it was not within the scope of the study. The present study therefore sets out to assess the perception of public relations strategies adopted by NASS members from Benue North West in the promotion of democracy to establish the level to which priority is given in the utility of this strategy in effective representation by legislators.

Osabiya, (2015) conducted a research on the topic “Conflict Management and Resolution in Nigeria Public Sector”. The researcher sought to identify best practice in conflict management in the workplace and how to improve organization and working life through better employment relations. The study focused on the factors that informed an organization’s decision to seek alternative means of handling conflict to traditional discipline and grievance procedures; and also looked at the barriers and facilitators to integrating mediation into workplace practice and culture.

The researcher employed the experimental survey design and collected data from a sample of 170 employees of the Nigerian Public Service. Two hypotheses were formulated to determine the source of conflict and conflict resolution in the Nigeria Public Service. Data were analyzed using percentage and frequency distribution scores. Findings of the experimental survey showed that conflict can be resolved through compromise between the employee and management. That leadership styles can lead to more conflicts in the organization. It was recommended that workers should be more involved in decision making process in Nigeria Public Service so as to reduce the rate of conflict. And there should be effective communication network between the workers and the management.

As an exploratory effort, Osabiya's (2015) survey experiment has yielded significant result that has enhanced understanding of the present work. More so, it has become a beacon on which findings of the present study will be used in supporting hypotheses of the present study. As revealed in the former study, conflict could be resolved through reaching a compromise by the warring parties and not necessarily the mediator. However, it is revealed that, leadership styles in organizations can ferment more conflicts if not checked. Thus, findings of the former study have drawn attention of the present study concerning the style of leadership with which the Benue State Government has taken in handling the herders and Farmers conflict. It is therefore expected that, result of the present study will show if leadership style of the present government is creating more conflict to the already existing one or otherwise.

Uchendu, (2009) conducted a study on "An Evaluation of Public Relations' Roles in Health Promotion in Rural Areas: A Study of Mbano Local Government Area". The study aimed at establishing the roles of public relations in promoting health in rural areas. It also sought to identify the public relations strategies employed in promoting health in rural areas. Five research questions were raised to guide the study. The study adopted survey research method and questionnaire was used as instrument of data collection from 120 respondents drawn from 6 health care centers from the local government area. Simple percentages and tables were used to present and analyze data. The study found that public

relations plays significant roles in promoting health in the rural areas some of which include health communication, health advocacy, health education, and advertisement of health facilities and equipment. The study also found that, some of the managers of the health care centers in the rural areas have no adequate knowledge of the roles of public relations in health promotion.

The study also found that public relations experts have not been employed to manage the public relations functions in the health centers. The study then concluded that public relations plays important roles in the promotion of health in rural areas however, no adequate attention has been paid to the adoption of public relations in the management of health care centers in rural areas as well as their health promotion activities. The study further recommended that, public relations strategies should be fully utilized in health promotion programmes of health centers in the rural areas. Public relations experts should be employed to manage the public relations strategies of health promotion in rural areas.

In a study "The Contributions of Public Relations to Business Management: A study of MTN Connect Stores in Benue State" Irabor, (2014) examined how public relations strategies have contributed to the business management of MTN in line with the following objectives: to ascertain whether public relations has contributed to the business management of MTN; to find out how public relations has provided free publicity for MTN; to investigate how public relations has managed public opinion in times of crisis in MTN and to ascertain how public relations has promoted MTN's business.

Using questionnaire and oral interview as method of data collection, the study findings revealed that public relations contributions includes management of information flow at MTN, encouraged patronage and has encouraged mutual understanding between MTN and its customers; Free publicity through media (social media, text messages, mass media), fliers and hand bills through the public relations officer and public relations has promoted by offering special benefits to cultures thus, increased the patronage from customers.

Based on the result of the hypothesis, the study concluded management of MTN and an effective

public relations strategy is that which has long-term and wide-range objectives and are usually planned for but faster when a business needs to minimize any negative publicity from its public. Arising from the conclusions, the research put forward the following recommendations further study should be conducted to ascertain the professional competence of public relations practitioners in charge of public relations units or departments in business organizations. Further study should be conducted to know how business managers can help public relations units or Department in the attainment of public relations goals in their organizations.

The findings and gaps of these research works reviewed did not in any way appraise public perception of public relations strategies employed by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria which would be filled by this present study.

## 2.5 Review of Related theories

In line with the study objectives, the following theoretical reviews were conducted using related theories to further give further insight in to the scope of the study.

### 2.5.1 The System Theory

In a related study by Udende (2016) "National Youth service Corps Scheme and the Quest for National Unity and Development: A public Relations Perspective" used system theory of Management as theoretical framework. The key ideas of the systems theory is that people together create the realities of their social groups, Organizations and Cultures are amazingly coherent.

### 2.5.2 Excellence Theory

Also Gale [2003] examines Public Relations in a non-profit Organizations: A guide to establishing Public Relations Programs in non-profit settings. The study used Excellence theory which remains the most vital tools in ensuring Public Relations Strategies impactfulness. This theory clearly specifies how Public Relations could make an organization function more effectively.

A good relationship with the public is helpful and could help increase the positive relationship between stakeholders in NYSC Organisation and the public.

### 2.5.3 Stakeholder Theory

Nwandu (2019) assessed public relations in image management of justice administration in Nigeria. The study used stakeholder theory and concluded that for good application of public relations in the administration of justice in Nigeria, the courts and the relevant security agencies need to understand, appreciate and conscientiously apply the propositions of stakeholder theory to expand the number of those to be involved in the Judiciary system. For example, every individual or groups that have stake in the judiciary, effort must be made by the public relations practitioner/information officers or court registrars as well as public relations officials of police, EFCC, Nigeria Prisons Service (or Nigeria Correctional Service) as well as other relevant stakeholders to preserve and protect the interests of those involved in the administration of justice.

### 2.5.4 Frank Jefkins Public Relations Transfer Process Model

Again, in a study conducted by Nwandu (2019) to assess public relations in image management of justice administration in Nigeria, Frank Jefkins Public Relations Transfer Process Model was also used as a theoretical framework. This model remains one of the idea structures used in measuring the effectiveness of public relations activities in an organisation. Using the tenet of the model, Nwandu states that it is only through effective communication that the anxiety on the part of citizens and other stakeholders who express apathy and prejudice towards the courts and security agencies which are involved in the administration of justice in Nigeria could be abated. By implication, all the stakeholders would now be transformed from their uninformed state. In order to other enhance their knowledge, commitment, and co-operation with various processes and procedures in the administration of justice, they would become less prejudicial and antagonistic partners.

### 2.5.5 Two-Way Symmetric Model.

Ede (2018) evaluated public relations strategies adopted in the management of Centre for Integrated Health Programs (CIHP). Two-Way Symmetric Model was used to premise his study because the focal point of the model is feedback mechanism. Ede argues that as a result of the interface between organisations and its publics, a two way flow of information occurs between the parties through the

process where the publics are kept abreast of the organisation’s policies and programmes, able to access them and response (feedback) accordingly. Such relationships need be sustained to ensure long-term relationship that will earn the public trust and acceptance for organisation’s policies and programmes. The desired goodwill and mutual understanding as well as long-term relationship can be achieved by public relations using two-way communication. The two-way symmetric model provides this platform and can be said to be “crux” of modern public relations strategy.

### 2.5.6 Cognitive Dissonance Theory.

Ikerave (2019) investigated the perception of public relations strategies adopted by the National Assembly members from Benue North West in the promotion of effective legislation. Cognitive dissonance theory was used as a theoretical foundation of the study because the effectiveness of changing the perception of publics about an organisation is dependent on the credibility sources. The theory holds that people who initially have a negative opinion or are against an issue are more likely to change their beliefs or attitudes if the source is highly credible. High credibility sources may change negative perceptions. On the other hand, if the information presented is congruent or in consonance with the belief of the receiver of information, a low credibility source is more effective.

### 2.6 Theoretical Framework

Theories help us to explain and predict human behaviours and communications in order to further give direction to this study, the Public Relations Transfer Process Model will be employed for the study.

#### 2.6.1. Public Relations Transfer Process Model

The Public Relations Transfer Process Model was propounded in 1988 by Frank Jefkins, a United Kingdom based Public Relations expert. It unveils the imperative of using effective communication by Public Relations Practitioners to change negative attitudes of hostility, prejudice, apathy, and ignorance to a positive state of sympathy, acceptance, interest and knowledge. Attitude as Edeani in Salu (1993,p.9) puts it, “is one of the most complex psychological processes in human society...The construct is regarded as persons predisposition to evaluate a person, group,

organisation, object or an issue in a consistent favourable or unfavourable manner.” However, Jefkins (1998, p.10) explains:

It is the duty of Public Relations practitioners to employ special methods, techniques, strategies and tactics available to them through effective communication to change the attitude of people that are negative towards an organisation, issue, government and a person to a favourable state.

He presents this model in a diagram.

Table 2.1: Frank Jefkins Public Relations Transfer Process Model

Negative Situation	Positive Situation
Hostility	Sympathy
Prejudice	Acceptance
Apathy	Interest
Ignorance	Knowledge

Source: *Jefkins, F (1988, p.9) Public Relations Techniques*

Consenting to the tenets of the model, Ajala (2005, p.23) states that “Public Relations practice would have moved from mere recognition to maturity when practitioners increase the publics’ knowledge by providing information through the media and by channeling feedback from public to management.” This model no doubt, agrees with the Public Relations Society of America’s “Official Statement of Public Relations Roles” which was cited by Cutlip, Centre and Broom (2005,p.5) as:

A management function which encompasses; anticipating, analyzing and interpreting public opinion, attitude and issues that might impact, for good or ill, the operations and plans of the organisation; counseling management at all levels in the organisation with regard to the policy decisions, course of action, and communication, taking into account their public ramifications and the organisation’s social or citizenship responsibilities and researching, conducting, and evaluating on a continuing basis, programmes of action and communication to achieve the informed public understanding necessary to the success of an organisation’s aims.

When Public Relations officers perform these functions, the organisation would be seen to have a listening ear and socially responsive which will enhance their acceptability by the internal and external publics.

In a study, Nwosu (1997) added another component to the Transfer Process Model-“War to Peace.” He argues that it is through effective communication of issues that a war situation could be turned down, paving way for peace. Here, the challenge is for Public Relations practitioners to use their tools to accomplish a given situation. The relevance of this model to this study cannot be over-emphasized as there is hostility, apathy, and prejudice amongst ethnic nationalities in Nigeria which threaten her corporate existence. Putting it in the context of Nigeria implies that the Public Relations practitioners in National Youth Service Corps, should make knowledge of the negative situations available to Nigerians to dispel doubts when applying PR tools in solving the negative situations. Also, to change citizens’ hostile attitudes to sympathy requires carrying out researches to unveil the causes of hostility to find out if it is due to lack of appropriate information, dissatisfaction due to non provision of social amenities, non representation in government or non rational behavior of political leaders etc. This could be overcome through proper explanation of issues using the media and embarking on community relations programmes. Supporting the above views Okieburor (2014,p.136) opines that “to change prejudice to acceptance PR practitioners will embark on programmes of action that will communicate more and effectively to the target publics, and cause publics prejudice to melt into total acceptance of these things they had hated or discriminated against.” There is no doubt, that applying effective persuasive communication to enlighten the Nigerian populace, supported by good governance will enhance national integration.

#### 2.7 Chapter Summary

The literature review suggests that for Public Relations to be effective in realizing organisations goals and objectives, the management must as a matter of fact be responsible. This is actualized by accepting Public Relations practices as its philosophy. The essence is that management in making decisions should first consider the effect such issues will have on their publics because Public Relations involves doing good and publicizing it.

With regard to the national integration programmes of the NYSC, the abysmal or positive performance of those in governance in the areas of economic,

and social- political development will either make or mar their success. No nation can be cohesively integrated in an atmosphere of political quagmire, endangered by corruption and mismanagement of public funds as it is the case with Nigeria. But, there is no gain saying, that if the reverse becomes the case where political leaders deliver the dividends of democracy to the people that the NYSC can manage her reputation using Public Relations strategies. This assertion seems to be true because no matter how good an advertisement is, it cannot sell a bad product. Relatedly, no amount of publicity can change a bad image but good works. The review submits that effective Public Relations strategies must be employed to ensure the accomplishment of organisations goals and objectives (reputation management) in any given environment. Hence, Public Relations practitioners should be able to analyze trends, evaluate them and counsel management (political leaders) so as to win public support and sympathy. To achieve success in reputation management programmes the doors of two-way communication and feedback mechanism must not be neglected.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 preambles

In this chapter, the procedures used in carrying out the study are discussed. The sections in this chapter include research design, population of study, samples and sampling techniques, validity and reliability of instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The study employed mixed method research using the questionnaire and interview as instruments of data collection. Barbie (2001, p.259) emphasizes the value and importance of survey by giving credence to it when he noted that “survey is probably the best research method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for the purpose of describing a population too large to be observed directly. Careful sampling provides a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken as representative of those of a larger population the opportunity to be selected”. Surveys are also excellent vehicles for the measurement of attitude and orientation prevalent within a large population.

### 3.3 population, sample and Sampling Techniques

N= population of the study area = 6, 700

#### 3.3.1 Population of the Study

A population can be defined as all people or items (unit of analysis) with the characteristics that one wishes to study. The unit of analysis may be a person, group, organization, country, object, or any other entity that you wish to draw scientific inferences about (Bhatacherjee, 2012). Additionally, Riffe, Lacy and Fico (2014) state that the population of a study is composed of all the sampling units to which the study will infer. The population of this study is the entire staff of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Headquarters Abuja. According to Adenike (2019), records from the Establishment unit of the Administrative Department of the Organization, NYSC shows an estimated staff of 6, 700 personnel. Therefore, the population of this study is 6,700 staff of NYSC at the headquarters Abuja.

#### 3.3.2 Sample Size

The sample size for this study is 384 which are statically determined using Araoye Formula for sample size determination. The formula is presented thus;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 Pq}{d^2}$$

Where n = minimum sample size

Z=Standard normal deviate which corresponds to 1.96

P= Perception of public relations from a previous study. In this case 50% was assumed.

q = complimentary probability of.

P= (Z 1-P) = 1-0.5 = 0.5

d= degree of precision (0.05)

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05}$$

$$= 384.16$$

Since the population of the study area is less than 10, 000 and the formula  $n = Z^2 Pq/d^2$  is for population of 10, 000 or above. There is need for correction for infinite factor using the formula

$$n^1 = \frac{n}{1 + n/N}$$

Where n= sample size for population of 10, 000 or above

$$n^1 = \frac{384.16}{1 + \frac{384.16}{6,700}}$$

$$= \frac{384.16}{1.005}$$

$$= 382.3$$

$$= 382$$

Therefore, this sample size is 382.

Therefore, the sample size is 382 respondents. However, 374 respondents were administered with questionnaire while 8 participants were selected purposively for interview from Press and Public Relations Unit.

#### 3.3.3 Sampling Techniques

The study used three sampling techniques in selecting respondents for the study. First, the researcher used disproportionate stratified sampling technique to assign number of respondents to the sixteen (16) Departments at the NYSC headquarters. Accordingly, the researcher assigned respondents to the sixteen (16) departments disproportionately; Corp Mobilization was assigned 25 respondents; 23 from Corp Certification; 25 from Finance and Accounts; 23 from Human Resource Management; 23 from Information and Communication Technology; 25 from Planning, Research and Statistics; 23 from Procurement; 23 from Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development; 23 from Community Development Service; 23 from Ventures Management; 23 from General Service; 23 from Special Duties; 23 from Internal Audit; 23 from Reform Unit; 23 from Legal Unit and 23 from South-West Area Office.

To select participants from the sixteen (16) departments, the researcher wrote “Yes” and “No” in separate pieces of papers and those who picked “Yes” was included in the study while those that picked “No” were not included. This is further explained in table 3.1.

For the semi-structured interview, the total of 8 interviewees was purposively selected from Press and Public Relations Unit of NYSC, Headquarters. This is further explained in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Assigned disproportionate Stratified Sample Size

S/N	Departments	No of Respondents	Interviewee	Total
1	Corp Mobilization	25	0	25
2	Corp Certification	23	0	23
3	Finance and Accounts	25	0	25
4	Human Resource Management	23	0	23
5	Information and Communication Technology	23	0	23
6	Planning, Research and Statistics	25	0	25
7	Procurement	23	0	23
8	Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development	23	0	23
9	Community Development Service	23	0	23
10	Ventures Management	23	0	23
11	General Service	23	0	23
12	Special Duties	23	0	23
13	Internal Audit	23	0	23
14	Reform Unit	23	0	23
15	Legal Unit	23	0	23
16	South-West Area Office	23	0	23
17	Press and PR Unit	0	8	8
Total		374	8	382

Source: *Researcher's Computation year 2023*

### 3.4 Methods of Data Collection

To ensure adequate data collection that helped in addressing the research questions raised, primary and secondary sources of data collections were used for this study. Primary data was sourced through administration of research question instruments—the questionnaire and interview to help in eliciting information concerning the issues investigated.

For the primary data, the study utilized questionnaire and personal interview as instrument to collect data for the research. The questionnaire consisted of both ended and closed ended questions, to provide both qualitative and quantitative analysis. They were divided into sections; Section A provides general information on demography, Section B seeks to give details strategies of public relations internal publics. The questionnaire had closed ended items and open ended items. The closed ended items required the respondent to seek one or more response from a given alternatives and the open ended items required the respondent to express their personnel views about the questions asked.

In all the questionnaires contains 12 closed ended questions to avoid problems of categorisation of response. The questionnaires were administered face to face to the respondents by the researcher. This method of administration was adopted so that

the researcher will be available to explain points or options to the respondent if need be.

Another instrument used is semi-structured interview. This was conducted one on one by the researcher on 8 staff of Press and Public Relations Unit of NYSC Abuja Office. They were selected purely because of their wealth of experience and the fact that they are better positioned to make informed decisions and respond to questions.

The secondary sources include textbooks, journals articles, book chapters and internet sources where necessary to either reinforce or refute the findings of this study.

#### 3.4.1 Validity and Reliability of Data Gathering Instruments

The measurement of instruments is very key in any empirical study. Most times, the research instrument appears misleading to the respondent to the extent that their views and answers fails to capture the precise information sort to address the problem at hand. In fact, the instrument should be able to measure what it is set to measure and result should be predictable in terms of consistency.

To make sure, the measuring instruments (questionnaire) addresses the objective of the study, face validation was done. To carry out face validity

of the measuring instruments, copies of the instruments are given to experts where necessary corrections are made in such a manner that the questions effectively address the objectives of the study.

### 3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The researcher adopted quantitative and qualitative methods. The data were presented in simple tables and percentages because they present data in a less complex and easily understandable manner. The oral interview was recorded, transcribed and analyzed. Descriptive statistics data sets to allow for easier interpretation (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006). The hypothesis was tested using Pearson's correlation Coefficient.

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To make sure the measuring instruments (Questionnaire) address the objective of the study, face validation was done. To carry out face validity of the measuring instruments, copies of the instruments are given to experts where necessary corrections are made in such a manner that the questions effectively address the objective of the study.

### 3.6 Description of Research Instruments

The study utilized questionnaire and personal interview as instrument to collect data for the Research work. The questionnaire consists of both open ended and closed ended questions, to provide for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. They were divided into sections; Section A provides for general information on demography, Section B seeks to give details strategies of Publications internal publics.

The questionnaire contains 12 closed ended questions to avoid problems of categorization of response. These questionnaires were administered face to face to the respondents by the Researcher.

Also, the Researcher used personal interview. This was conducted one on one by 5 members of the Management cadre because of their wealth of experience and the fact that they were better positioned at the Management to make policies

### 3.7 Justification of Method

The study used survey method because it is a very method in collecting information from a large number of sources. It also ensures that no segment of the population is given preferential treatment at the expense of another. The use of questionnaire and interview guide as instruments for data collection is justifiable because both provide the researchers with different, but potentially complementary ways of measuring operationally defined concepts and advocate a mixture of both designs. Interview guided was used because they are able to provide rich details, and enable the researcher to understand the interviewee's real thoughts or experiences with regards to the topic or problem, while copies of questionnaire was used because it helps to elicit the same information from a large number of respondents if properly designed.

## IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 preamble

This chapter basically looks at two key variables of Data presentation and analysis of questionnaire.

### 4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis of Questionnaire

Out of the 374 copies of the questionnaire administered, 367 copies were properly filled and returned, 3 copies were found unusable because they were mutilated while 4 copies were not returned. Therefore, the data presentation and analysis is based on the 367 correctly filled and returned copies of the questionnaire. This implies that the study recorded 1.9% mortality rate. But, the mortality rate is considered insignificant to have any effect on the overall outcome given the fact that there was 98.1% return rate of the questionnaire administered. Consequently, the data presented and analyzed is based on the 98.1 % return rate of the questionnaire administered, which is considered an overwhelming representation of the views of the target population studied.

Therefore, the data collected for the study is presented and analyzed in the sequence of the questions in the questionnaire; therefore, the demographic data is presented before the responses to the research questions.

Table 4.1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	214	58.3
Female	153	41.7
Total	367	100
Age		
18-25	131	35.7
26-40	159	43.3
41-60	77	21.0
61-above	00	00
Total	367	100
Educational Qualification		
'O' Level	00	00
Diploma/NCE	00	00
Degree/HND	278	
Postgraduate	89	00
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Data contained in Table 4.1 show that out of total population sampled, 214 (58.3%) respondents were male while 153 (41.7%) respondents were female. Although most respondents are male, it has no effect on the outcome of the study as it is not gender based. Also, Table 4.1 contained data of age bracket, 131(35.7%) respondents were between 18 years and 25 years age bracket, 159 (43.3%) respondents were between 26 years and 40 years age bracket, 77(21.0%) respondents were between

41 years and 60 years age bracket. Most respondents fell between 26 years and 40 years old. Finally, data contained in Table 4.1 show 278 respondents representing 75.7% attained degree/HND as qualification and 89 postgraduate respondents representing 24.3% attained postgraduate as qualification. This implies that respondents are educated enough to provide useful and relevant information for the study.

Table 4.2: Awareness of the public relations strategies used by NYSC in reputation management

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, I am aware	367	100
No, I am not aware	00	00
None of the above	00	00
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.2 revealed that all the respondents representing 100% were aware of the use of public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management. This implies that respondents are properly position to identify the public relations strategies used and indicate the level of effectiveness.

Table 4.3: Meaning of public relations to staff of NYSC

Options	Frequency	Percentage
the management of communication between an institution and their various public	70	19.1
the management of the relationship that exist between an institution and their various public	63	17.2
the management of corporate image or reputation	61	16.6
All the above	173	47.1
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Data contained in Table 4.3 show 70 (19.1%) respondents indicated the management of communication between an institution and their various public as their understanding of public relation, 63 (17.2%) respondents indicated the management of the relationship that exist between an institution and their various public, 61 (16.6%) respondents indicated the management of corporate image or reputation and 173 (47.1%) respondents

indicated all of the above mentioned options. Most of the respondents representing 47.1% indicated all the above options which imply that respondents understand public relations to mean the management of communication between an institution and their various public; the management of the relationship that exist between an institution and their various public and the management of corporate image or reputation.

Table 4.4: Extent of the use of public relations strategies in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Great extent	52	14.2
Moderately extent	231	62.9
Some extent	72	19.6
Little extent	12	3.3
None	00	00
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.4 presents information on the extent of the use of public relations strategies in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria. Accordingly, 52(14.2%) respondents indicated great extent as the extent of the use of public relations strategies in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria, 231(62.9%) respondents

indicated moderately extent, 72(19.6%) respondents indicated some extent and 12(3.3%) respondents indicated little extent. Majority of the respondents representing 62.9% moderately extent which means public relations strategies have been moderately or minimally employed in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria.

Table 4.5: Has public relations strategies aided reputation management of the NYSC in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage
It has aided in reputation management of the organization as it is used to cement relationship between the public and the organization	247	67.3
It does not aid in bridging the gap between the public and the organization	120	32.7
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.5 revealed that 247 (67.3%) respondents said public relations strategies has aid in reputation management of NYSC in Nigeria because it has helped in cementing relationship between the public and organizations while 120 (32.7%) respondents indicated that public relations did not aid in bridging the gap between the public and the organization. Most respondents representing 67.3%

were convinced that public relations strategies aid in reputation management of NYSC as organization because it was used by NYSC to cement relationship between the public and the organization. This means that public relations strategies used by NYSC to large extend has contributed in sustaining the relationship that exist between them and various stakeholders.

Table 4.6: Public relations strategies used by NYSC to manage its reputation

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Media campaign and Media relations	166	45.2
Community relations	59	16.1

Employees relations	78	21.3
Special events and sponsorships	64	17.4
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.6 revealed that 166 (45.2%) respondents identified media campaign and media relations as public relations strategies used by NYSC to manage its reputation, 59(16.1%) respondents identified community relations, 78(21.3%) respondents opted for employees relations and 64(17.4%) respondents identified special events and sponsorships.

Information from the table above revealed that majority of the respondents representing 166 (45.2%) identified median campaign and median

relations as public relations strategies used by NYSC for reputation management. Closely related in terms of highest responses is employee relations. This implies that NYSC has used both external and internal form of public relations strategies in maintaining a harmonious relationship with internal and external publics of the organization. However, the low responses of the use of community relations suggest that NYSC has not adequately paid attention to the various host community's need.

Table 4.7: Public Relations tactics are used in implementing the above strategies

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Press releases/Conferences/Newsletters	82	22.3
Exhibitions and counseling	73	19.9
Brochures, Annual Reports and Pamphlets	72	19.6
All of the above	170	46.3
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.7 revealed that 82(22.3%) respondents indicated press release/conferences/newsletters as public relations tactics used in the implementation of the strategies identified in Table 4.4. Also, Table 4.5 revealed that 73 (19.9%) respondents indicated exhibitions and counseling as public relations tactics used by NYSC, 72(19.6%) respondents indicated brochures, annual reports and pamphlets and 170 (46.3%) respondent indicated all the aforementioned options.

Information from Table 4.7 revealed that the public relations tactics used by NYSC in managing her reputation are press release/conferences/news letter; exhibitions and counseling and brochures, annual reports and pamphlets. This means that public relations strategies used by NYSC in reputation management have been diligently executed through the various tactics identified above.

Table 4.8: Effectiveness of Public relations strategies used by NYSC in managing organizational reputation

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	150	40.9
Agreed	196	53.4
Disagree	12	3.3
Strongly Disagree	9	2.5
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.8 revealed that 150 (40.9%) respondents strongly agreed that public relations strategies have been effectively used by NYSC in managing organization's reputation, 196 (53.4%) respondents agreed, 12 (3.3%) respondents disagreed and 9 (2.5%) respondents strongly disagreed. Most respondents representing 346 (94.3%) either

strongly agreed or agreed that public relations strategies used by NYSC have been effective in managing her reputation. This means that the use of public relations by NYSC will help in managing public perception in times of crisis and help in limiting the damage caused by a negative episode on organisation's image in the long term.

Table 4.9: How effective are public relations strategies in reputation management

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	82	22.3
Effective	254	69.2
Less Effective	17	4.6
Non-Effective	14	3.8
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.9 revealed that 82 (22.3%) respondents indicated very effective 254 (69.2%) respondents indicated effective, 17(4.6%) respondents indicated less effectives, 14(3.8%) respondents indicated non-

effectives. Most respondents indicated effective as indication of how effective public relations strategies have been used in managing its reputation.

Table 4.10: Ways public relations strategies have contributed to reputation management of NYSC

Options	Frequency	Percentage
By communication the activities of NYSC practices which integrate social and economic consideration into its services.	119	32.4
Communicating the activities and achievements of NYSC	244	66.5
None of the above	4	1.1
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.10 revealed ways public relations strategies have contributed to reputation management of NYSC. of the total population sampled, 119 (32.4%) respondents indicated by communicating the activities of NYSC which integrate social and economic consideration into its services, 244 (66.5%) respondents indicated communicating the

activities and achievements of NYSC and 4 (1.1%) respondents indicated none of the above. Majority of the respondents representing 66.5% were convinced that public relations strategies have contributed to reputation management of NYSC by communicating the activities and achievements of the organization.

Table 4.11: Use of Public Relations programme changed public opinion about NYSC in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage
More awareness	67	18.3
More cordial relationships between the public	91	24.8
Improves image of NYSC	84	22.9
All of the above	125	34.1
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.11 revealed information about the change public opinion about NYSC in Nigeria as a result of the use of public relations programmes. Out of the total sampled, 67 (18.3%) respondents indicated more awareness, 91 (25.8%) respondents indicated more cordial relationships between the public and NYSC, 84 (22.9%) respondents indicated improved image of NYSC and 125 (34.1%) respondents indicated all the above options.

Information from the above table revealed that the use of public relations strategies changed public opinion about NYSC in Nigeria because it has created more awareness about the activities or NYSC established more cordial relationships between the public and NYSC as well as improved their images.

Table 4.12: Ways should the NYSC use public relations strategies in reputation management of crisis

Options	Frequency	Percentage
By allowing media full access to its information about the crisis	54	14.7
Prompt response and dissemination of information to various stakeholders	171	46.6
Establishing channels for NYSC and other agencies for effective communication and feedback	142	38.7
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.12 revealed ways NYSC should use public relation strategies in reputation management especially during crisis. Out of the total sampled population, 54 (14.7%) respondents indicated by allowing media full access to its information about the crisis, 171 (46.6%) respondents indicated prompt responses and dissemination of information to various stakeholders, 142 (38.7%) respondents indicated establishing channels for NYSC and other

agencies forfeiture communication and feedback. Most of the respondents representing 85.3% indicated prompt responses and dissemination of information to various stakeholders and establishing channels for NYSC and other agencies for effective communication and feed back as ways NYSC should use public relations strategies in reputation management during crisis.

Table 4.13: Rating of NYSC's management in encouraging the use of Public Relations programmes for reputation management

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	84	22.9
High	82	22.3
Average	182	49.6
Below Average	19	5.2
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.13 present data on the rating of NYSC's management in encouraging the use of public relation strategies or programmes for reputation management. Out of the total sampled, 84(22.9%) respondents rated NYSC's management very high, 82(22.3%) respondents rated NYSC's management high, 182(49.6%) respondents rated NYSC's

management average and 19(5.2%) respondents rated NYSC's management below average. Majority of the respondents representing 182(49.6%) rated NYSC's management average. This means the use of public relations strategies have not been fully recognized by the management of NYSC.

Table 4.14: Challenges pose in the use of public relations strategies in the reputation management of NYSC in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of adequate funding	64	17.4
Lack of trained staff	71	19.3
Lack of adequate autonomy to act as a department	41	11.2
Lack of recognition from the management	44	12.0
All of the above	147	40.1
Total	367	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.14 revealed the challenges in the use of public relations strategies in the reputation management of NYSC in Nigeria. Out of the total population sampled, 64 (17.4%) respondents

identified lack of adequate funding, 71 (19.3%) respondents identified lack of trained staff, 41(11.2%) respondents identified lack of adequate autonomy to act as a department, 44 (12.0%)

respondents identified lack of recognition from the management and 139 (40.1%) respondents believed all the above option were the challenges in the use of public relations strategies in the reputation management or NYSC in Nigeria. Most respondents representing 40.1% identified lack of adequate funding, lack of trained staff, lack of adequate autonomy to act as a department, and lack of

recognition from the management were challenges in the use of public relations strategies in the reputation management of NYSC in Nigeria. However, a close look at the table show that lack of adequate funding and lack of trained staff were the prominent challenges in the use of public relations strategies by NYSC for reputation management.

Table 4.15: Ways the Management of NYSC can overcome the challenges faced by the public Relations Department within the organization

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate funding	74	20.1
Proper training	70	19.1
Management recognition	60	16.4
All of the above	163	44.4
Total	359	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.15 revealed ways the management of NYSC can overcome the challenges faced by public relations department within the organisation. Out of the total sampled, 74(20.1%) respondents indicated adequate funding, 70(19.1%) respondents indicated proper training, 60(16.4%) respondents indicated management recognition and 163(44.4%) respondents indicated the above options. Major of the respondents representing 44.4% were convinced that the management of NYSC can overcome the challenges faced by public relations department within the organization by funding the department adequately, proper training and full recognition from the management about the usefulness of public relations strategies in effective management of the organization.

#### 4.3 Qualitative Data Presentation

The personnel interview was another research method used for data collection for this study. Interviews were conducted with staffers of Press and Public Relations Unit of NYSC Abuja. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcription was done verbatim. Also, 10 to 20 minutes on the average was used for each interviewee. However, in the dissertation, citations have been carefully edited to make them more reader-friendly. However, data collected through interview is presented using the following themes;

##### 4.3.1 Extent of the use of public relations strategies in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria.

The first theme of the interview segment dwells on extent of the use of public relations strategies in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria. Opinions of respondents drawn from the Press and Public Relations Unit of NYSC were duly considered. Data obtained from respondents on this matter indicated that an overwhelming majority of the respondents have shown that they use public relations strategies in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria minimally. According to all the staff of Press and Public Relations unit of NYSC, public relations strategies are used when communicating with the media, employees, different government agency and Corp members. Elaborating on the question, The Leader of Press and Public Relations unit of NYSC disclosed that: Although public relations is not part of management structure of NYSC, we ensure information are disseminated at the right time. Information concerning staff is circulated through memos. We write, edit, organize and coordinate special events among others. We also relate with media organization in order to get favourable coverage for all programme. Also public notices are placed to create awareness for the programme.

All the eight respondents contacted said public relations strategies have been employed in reputation management in Nigeria but it was not employed extensively.

4.3.2 Public relations strategies and tactics used in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria.

This second theme of the interview segment was based on public relations strategies and tactics used in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria. Information obtained from respondents on this matter indicated the majority of the respondents identified various public relations strategies and tactics used in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria. According to them the main strategies of public relations used include financial public relations, Media relations /media campaigns, employee relations and government relations. Also, the respondents identified the tactics thus; annual/quarterly reports, press releases, newsletters, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls/ visits, text messages/ e-mail; government event sponsorship, meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc. In explaining, the head of Press and Public Relations Unit of NYSC Abuja stated that:

We upload videos; write on blogs and other supplementary publications and press conferences, meetings with and presentations before the financial publics. We also used press releases, press conferences, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, newsletter among others to communicate and management a harmonious relationship with the press. Furthermore, we have been relating and communicating with staff through meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, organisation of end of year party and staff retreat for effectiveness in meeting our objective.

Deductively, from the quotation above, financial public relation, media relations, employee relations and government relations have been used as public relations strategies by NYSC. Similarly, all the four Presidents of Editorial Board CDS and their publicity secretary identified strategies and tactics of public relations used by NYSC thus;

Features articles, letters to the editor, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls to private and public institutions as well as government agencies.

With references to the quote above, government relations and media relations have been used as public relations strategies by NYSC.

From the analysis, public relations strategies used by NYSC in reputation management include media relations, financial relations, government relations, community relations and employee relations. These strategies were implemented using diverse tactics thus; annual/quarterly reports, press releases, newsletters, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls/ visits, text messages/ e-mail; government event sponsorship, meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc.

4.3.3 Effectiveness of public relations strategies and tactics in the management of reputation crisis of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria

The third theme of the interview section focused on the effectiveness of public relations strategies and tactics in the management of reputation crisis of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria. Information obtained from respondents on this matter indicated that all the staff said public relations strategies and tactics were not effectively used by NYSC in reputation management.

According to six out of the eight staff:

Apart from getting information from Press and Public Relations Unit of NYSC Abuja, memo, press releases, press conference and text messages, NYSC has a website to communicate the activities of the institution. However, these websites are not robust enough. This is because most of the websites are not updated regularly to contain current information about NYSC. To make the dissemination of information effective, NYSC needs to provide a stress free channel of information for the press. For example, NYSC should provide information electronically about her activities proactively to aid management of communication. Also, another way a direct communication will be effective is by using local languages and pidgin English to communicate the activities of NYSC.

In similar vein, the two remaining two Press and Public Relations staff state that;

Although public relations strategies and tactics have been used by NYSC for reputation management,

their approach were rather reactive than proactive in nature. Also, the strategies and tactics used are considered not effective because of lack of healthy media relations because media coverage plays a large role in determining NYSC's reputation.

Conclusively, it could be deduced that the public relations strategies and tactics used by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria were not effective.

#### 4.3.4 Challenges of using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria?

The fourth theme of the interview section dealt with the challenges of using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria. Information obtained from respondents on this matter indicated that most of the Public Relations Officers of NYSC differed in their responses. According to four of Public Relations Officers the major challenges of using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management is inadequate funding and retraining and training of Public Relations Officers. According to them;

The resource available to us is limited so they believed lack of fund or inadequate fund pose as challenge in the implementation of public relations activities for their organisation. As you know involving the media is not cost effective for us, so we infrequently use these strategies in the management of the organisation. Most times the use of public relations strategies and tactics will stress the stringent resources available for operations.

Similarly, one of the staff was of the view that the structure of public relations impedes effective discharge of their responsibilities because management recognition for public relations strategies seems to be shallow. For him,

The challenge of using public relations strategies in the management of NYSC lies in the fact that management does not recognize the value of public relations to the organisation. Although there is a public relations unit, it has no a directorate.

In conclusion, it can be inferred from the responses provided by the participants that inadequate funds, lack of management recognition for public relations programmes and lack of trained personnel poses as challenges in using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria.

#### 4.4 Answering Research Questions

Four research questions were raised to guide this study. These research questions will be answered in this section based on the findings of the study.

Research Question One: *What is the extent of the use of public relations strategies in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria?*

Answer: Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.11 as well as interview responses were used in answering this research question. Data contained in Table 4.2 revealed that all the respondents representing 100% were aware of the use of public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management. This implies that respondents are properly position to identify the public relations strategies used and indicate the level of effectiveness. Data contained in Table 4.3 revealed that most of the respondents representing 47.1% indicated all the above options which imply that respondents understand public relations to mean the management of communication between an institution and their various public; the management of the relationship that exist between an institution and their various public and the management of corporate image or reputation. Data contained in Table 4.4 revealed that majority of the respondents representing 62.9% moderately extent which means public relations strategies have been moderately or minimally employed in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria. From Table 4.11, data revealed that

From the interview conduct which sought to know the extent of the use of public relations strategies used by NYSC in reputation management revealed that public relations strategies have been employed in reputation management in Nigeria but it was not employed extensively

Research Question Two: *What are the public relations strategies and tactics used in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria?*

Answer: Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 as well as interview responses were used in answering this research question. From Table 4.5, data revealed that most respondents representing 67.3% were convinced that public relations strategies aid in reputation management of NYSC as organization because it was used by NYSC to cement

relationship between the public and the organization. This means that public relations strategies used by NYSC to large extend has contributed in sustaining the relationship that exist between them and various stakeholders.

From Table 4.6, data revealed that majority of the respondents representing 166 (45.2%) identified median campaign and median relations as public relations strategies used by NYSC for reputation management. Closely related in terms of highest responses is employee relations. This implies that NYSC has used both external and internal form of public relations strategies in maintaining a harmonious relationship with internal and external publics of the organization. However, the low responses of the use of community relations suggest that NYSC has not adequately paid attention to the various host community's need. From Table 4.7, data revealed that the public relations tactics used by NYSC in managing her reputation are press release/conferences/news letter; exhibitions and counseling and brochures, annual reports and pamphlets. This means that public relations strategies used by NYSC in reputation management have been diligently executed through the various tactics identified in Table 4.6.

From the interview conduct which sought to know the public relations strategies used by NYSC in reputation management revealed that the following strategies: media relations, financial relations, government relations, community relations and employee relations. These strategies were implemented using diverse tactics thus; annual/quarterly reports, press releases, newsletters, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls/ visits, text messages/ e-mail; government event sponsorship, meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc.

In summary, Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 as well as interview responses have jointly answered research two. Data revealed that public relations strategies used by NYSC in reputation management revealed that the following strategies: media relations, financial relations, government relations, community relations and employee relations. These strategies were implemented using diverse tactics

thus; annual/quarterly reports, press releases, newsletters, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls/ visits, text messages/ e-mail; government event sponsorship, meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc.

*Research Question Three: How effective are public relations strategies and tactics in the management of reputation crisis of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria?*

Answer: Tables 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.12 and 4.13 as well as interview responses were used in providing answer to this particular question. Information contained in Table 4.8 revealed that most respondents representing 346 (94.3%) either strongly agreed or agreed that public relations strategies used by NYSC have been effective in managing her reputation. This means that the use of public relations by NYSC will help in managing public perception in times of crisis and help in limiting the damage caused by a negative episode on organisation's image in the long term.

From Table 4.9, data revealed most respondents representing (69.2%) indicated effective as indication of how effective public relations strategies have been used in managing its reputation. From Table 4.10, data revealed that majority of the respondents representing 66.5% were convinced that public relations strategies have contributed to reputation management of NYSC by communicating the activities and achievements of the organization. From Table 4.12, data revealed most of the respondents representing 85.3% indicated prompt responses and dissemination of information to various stakeholders and establishing channels for NYSC and other agencies for effective communication and feed back as ways NYSC should use public relations strategies in reputation management during crisis. From Table 4.13, data revealed that majority of the respondents representing 182(49.6%) rated NYSC's management average. This means the use of public relations strategies have not been fully recognized by the management of NYSC.

From the interview conduct which sought to know the effectiveness of public relations strategies and

tactics in the management of reputation crisis of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria revealed the following that: the public relations strategies and tactics used by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria were not effective as expected.

In conclusion, Tables 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.12 and 4.13 as well as interview responses have combined to answer research question two which revealed that public relations strategies and tactics used by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria were not effective as expected. This is because the management of NYSC has not fully recognized the worth of public relations. But, they have contributed to reputation management of NYSC by communicating the activities and achievements of the organization. This is because public relations strategies and tactics have created more awareness about the activities of NYSC and established more cordial relationships between the public and NYSC as well as improved their images.

Research Question Four: *What are the challenges of using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria?*

Answer: Tables 4.14, and 4.15 as well as interview responses were used in answering research question four. From Table 4.14 data revealed that most respondents representing 40.1% identified lack of adequate funding, lack of trained staff, lack of adequate autonomy to act as a department, and lack of recognition from the management were challenges in the use of public relations strategies in the reputation management of NYSC in Nigeria. However, a close look at the table shows that lack of adequate funding and lack of trained staff were the prominent challenges in the use of public relations strategies by NYSC for reputation management. From Table 4.15 data revealed that major of the respondents representing 44.4% were convinced that the management of NYSC can overcome the challenges faced by public relations department within the organization by funding the department adequately, proper training and full recognition from the management about the usefulness of public relations strategies in effective management of the organization.

Interview conducted also confirmed that inadequate funds, lack of management recognition for public

relations programmes and lack of trained personnel poses as challenges in using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria.

Together, Tables 4.14, and 4.15 as well as interview have answered research question four which revealed that inadequate funds, lack of management recognition for public relations programmes and lack of trained personnel poses as challenges in using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria. These challenges are responsible for ineffective communication, delayed press releases and lack of regular chats are ways the non-recognition of public relations as a management function affect public relations activities of NYSC. To deal with these challenges respondents were convinced that the management of NYSC can overcome the challenges faced by public relations department within the organization by funding the department adequately, proper training and full recognition from the management about the usefulness of public relations strategies in effective management of the organization.

#### 4.5 Discussion of Findings

This section of the chapter is specifically aimed at the discussion of findings after data presentation and analysis. The findings are discussed in line with the objectives of the study.

First and foremost, the study found that public relations strategies used in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria were minimally and not extensive. The implication of this first finding shows that NYSC has not deployed public relations strategies and tactics as a management function effectively. As a management function public relations serves to bring the public's interest and organisation's policies and programmes into harmony. This position holds true because public relations as a management function serves to achieve organisational goals by developing effective relationship with various public of the organisation. To improve the her reputation, NYSC must act professional and use public relations as a management function which is anchored on balancing the interest of the organisation and various stakeholders aimed at achieving the core objectives of the organisation (NYSC's objective is for national integration). This

view was better captured by Lattimore et al (2004) as they argue that public relations practitioners must show an organisation's top managers how a proposed relationship building plan aligns with the organisation's values and mission. They maintained if that connection is not established, the plan will probably die for lack of consensus and approval. This suggests that public relations objectives and goals, strategies and tactics must flow directly from the organisation's overall goals. Public relations strategies must reflect organisational strategies and tactic must be designed to realize the organisation's objective.

The study found media relations, financial relations, government relations, community relations and employee relations. These strategies were implemented using diverse tactics thus; annual/quarterly reports, press releases, newsletters, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls/ visits, text messages/ e-mail; government event sponsorship, meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc. This finding is in tandem with Offonry's (1985, p.4) observations study that:

Media relations is a deliberate policy action and varied communications activity taken by an organization with a views to winning and sustaining the confidence and goodwill of various sections of the mass media, thus removing at least minimizing the chances of misrepresentation, misquotation, distortion of facts and unfounded criticism by such organization.

The finding also agrees with Black's (1989, p.139) observation that "employee relations embrace almost everything other than pay which encourage employees to make their maximum contribution to productivity and the prosperity of the company." Also the findings agree with Hule (2012) that shareholder relations, employee relations, media relation were adopted by Sanusi in his banking sector reforms. The implication of this first finding means that effective communication using the identified public relations strategies and tactics coupled with appreciable performance will enhance the reputation of the organisation. This view find expression in the study conducted by Nwosu and Uffoh (2005, p.12). According to public relations is:

Embracing communication and action which is essentially about positively and systematically using actions and communications to influence peoples' attitude, opinions, beliefs, interests and behavior in a given or desired direction as well as building lasting credibility and reputation for individuals and corporate entities that include profit and non-profit organisations and even nations, states, local governments or communities.

Therefore, in public relations communications is believed to be anchor of the profession. This is because effective communication drives the overall performance of NYSC which invariably enhance her reputation.

The study also found that public relations strategies and tactics used by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria were not effective as expected. This is because the management of NYSC has not fully recognized the worth of public relations. But, they have contributed to reputation management of NYSC by communicating the activities and achievements of the organization. This is because public relations strategies and tactics have created more awareness about the activities of NYSC and established more cordial relationships between the public and NYSC as well as improved their images. The implication of this finding shows that public relations strategies and tactics were not effectively deployed in reputation management of NYSC especially in North Central Nigeria. It also implies for effective public relations strategies and tactics use in reputation management of NYSC, the management must recognize the intrinsic value of the profession to the overall success of the organisation. This view resonate the position held by Achor and Okoye (2013). According to them;

Organizations usually have several management functions to help them operate at their maximum capacity: research and development, finance, legal, human resources, marketing, and operations. Each of these functions is focused on its own contribution to the success of the organization. Public relations' unique function is to help the organization develop and maintain relationships with all of its key publics and stakeholders by effectively communicating with these groups. Communication is key in maintaining a satisfactory, long-term, trusting relationships with publics and stakeholders.

With regard to community relations, it was found that NYSC has not adequately deployed community relations as public relations strategies in reputation management. In addition to reaching employees, a successful organization must also communicate effectively with host community. For each key public, a set of messages must be developed as well as a plan to reach the public in the most efficient way. For Ufuophu-Biri (2007, p.153) community relations is to “establish a cordial and mutual relationship between an organisation and the community hosting it. Such a mutual understanding and rapport helps to entrench peace which in turn enables the organisation to operate effectively without hostility from the host community.” To maintain mutual relationship, Nweke (2001) quoted in Ufuophu-Biri (2007, p.92) contends that “it depends on proper understanding and adequate knowledge of each other, easily facilitated by functional communication service, knowledge of the community, its pressing needs, social status structure, channels of communication, social agents, opinion leaders, among other issues.” NYSC now need to act in ways that build community trust. The purpose of the typical community relations activities is to convey a company’s benevolence, corporate citizenship and social responsiveness.

Finally, the study found that inadequate funds, lack of management recognition for public relations programmes and lack of trained personnel poses as challenges in using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria. These challenges are responsible for ineffective communication, delayed press releases and lack of regular chats are ways the non-recognition of public relations as a management function affect public relations activities of NYSC. To deal with these challenges respondents were convinced that the management of NYSC can overcome the challenges faced by public relations department within the organization by funding the department adequately, proper training and full recognition from the management about the usefulness of public relations strategies in effective management of the organization. The implication of data means that although public relations strategies and tactics have been used by NYSC in reputation management, lackadaisical attitude of the management impedes its effectiveness and maximization of the full potential inherent in public relations activities to organisation’s success. This

view resonate the view held by Setiel’s (1998) assertion that if public relations were to serve the organisation properly, it must report to top management, it must serve as an honest broker to management, unimpeded by any other group, its advice to management must be unfiltered, uncensored and unexpurgated. This can only be achieved if the public relations department reports to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) directly. Although marketing promotes a specific product, public relations promotes the entire institution.

## V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Preamble

This chapter discussed the summary, conclusion and recommendation found during the course of the study

### 5.2 Summary of Findings

This study was concerned with assessing public relations strategies employed by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria. This was to find out the public relations strategies and tactics uses in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in North Central Nigeria, assess the effectiveness of public relations strategies and tactics in managing reputation crisis of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in North Central Nigeria, assess the extent of public relations strategies employed by NYSC and identify the challenges of using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in Nigeria.

To address the issues raised in the study, survey research design was adopted, under which questionnaire and interview guide were used as research instruments to extract primary data from the respondents. The sample size of the study was 382. Respondents drawn from the entire staff of NYSC at Headquarters, Abuja while the staff of Press and Publicity unit was purposively chosen for interview. Data collected was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Finding from the study reveal as follows:

- a) The study found that public relations strategies used in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria were minimally and not extensive.
- b) The study found media relations, financial relations, government relations, community

relations and employee relations. These strategies were implemented using diverse tactics thus; annual/quarterly reports, press releases, newsletters, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls/ visits, text messages/ e-mail; government event sponsorship, meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc.

c) The study also found that public relations strategies and tactics used by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria were not effective. This is because the management of NYSC has not fully recognized the worth of public relations. But, they have contributed to reputation management of NYSC by communicating the activities and achievements of the organization. This is because public relations strategies and tactics have created more awareness about the activities of NYSC and established more cordial relationships between the public and NYSC as well as improved their images.

d) Finally, the study found that inadequate funds, lack of management recognition for public relations programmes and lack of trained personnel poses as challenges in using public relations strategies by NYSC in reputation management in North Central Nigeria. These challenges are responsible for ineffective communication, delayed press releases and lack of regular chats are ways the non-recognition of public relations as a management function affect public relations activities of NYSC. To deal with these challenges respondents were convinced that the management of NYSC can overcome the challenges faced by public relations department within the organization by funding the department adequately, proper training and full recognition from the management about the usefulness of public relations strategies in effective management of the organization.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Although the study established that public relations strategies have been employed in reputation management of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria, it was not effectively utilized. Among the challenges limiting the effectiveness of public relations strategies and tactics in reputation management of NYSC in Nigeria are inadequate funding, lack of sustained recognition of public relations by the management, lack of autonomy to

act as a department and inadequate training for public relations officers of the states studied.

### 5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained from this study, the following recommendations are made;

- i. Since public relations strategies and tactics is used by NYSC in reputation management, headquarters of NYSC Abuja, as well as all the state secretariat, should make public relations a directorate so as to effectively supervise and assess public attitudes, and maintain mutual relations and understanding between NYSC and its public.
- ii. Public Relations strategies found to be employed by NYSC more were media relations and employee relations. Hence, NYSC should use other components of public relations such as community relations to effectively achieve healthy relationship in reputation management in Nigeria.
- iii. Public relations units should be upgraded to the status of departments in the entire secretariat if not directorates. The heads of public relations of 36 States in Nigeria should also be part of the management, in order to enhance the decisions making process which would ensure that decisions are made in the public interest.
- iv. There is the need for training and retraining of personnel in Public Relations Departments.

### 5.4 Limitations of the Study

The use of only questionnaire and interview guide as instruments of data collection constitute a limitation which has influenced the application or interpretation of the results of this study. This is because after completing the interpretation of the findings, the study discovered that the way in which data were gathered inhibited the ability of the researcher to conduct a thorough analysis of the results. For example, Focus Group Discussion could have helped in generating in-depth data and robust discussion among participants to determine the effectiveness of the public relations strategies and tactics in reputation management of NYSC in Nigeria.

Also, most of the interviews were conducted via telephone over a couple-weeks period. Because of

this, the researcher was unable to perform any direct observation of the participants' that would have granted the interviewer the advantage of social cues that interviewees may give, such as body language and voice intonation. These can give the interviewer a lot of additional information were not collected. However, this drawback provides a substantial opportunity for future research.

#### 5.5 Suggestions for further studies

The following suggestions for further study are made:

- i. The study recommends that further study be conducted to the management of NYSC can help in the professional application of public relations strategies as a management function. This stems from the findings of this study which revealed that NYSC employed public relations more as a technical function rather than management function. As a management function Public relations' unique function is to help the organization develop and maintain relationships with all of its key publics and stakeholders by effectively managing the relationship that exists between these groups.
- ii. Although this study used survey research design with questionnaire and interview guide as instruments for data collection, there should be a similar study in other zones across Nigeria to build our knowledge on how public relations strategies was employed by NYSC in reputation management in other zones, and the entire country generally using different instruments like Focus Group Discussion and Content Analysis.

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