Unit - 14: PUBLIC RELATIONS ORGANISATIONS IN INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

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14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- describe the status of the public relations in India
- define the role of the various organisations to promote public relations
- explain the code of ethics adopted in India

14.2 INTRODUCTION

Professional associations and bodies engage in fostering services in the public interest and its members. These bodies over the years of their existence have become strong and powerful forces across the world. They provide healthy spaces and platform to exercise the objectives and goals that have been set by them for the larger interests of the members and the community. They establish, maintain, develop, and enforce standards of qualification, practice, and conduct. They also strive to bridge the gap between the public and the professionals. Professional associations may or may not be regulatory or certifying bodies. This solely depends on the nature and the nomenclature of the association.

As public relations professionals, joining a public relations professional body is an invaluable component to one's career. By being a part of such professional bodies, PR professionals will be able to expand their network, engage with professionals in the same field, find new opportunities and upgrade their knowledge on the latest trends and updates in the industry.

According to Reed's Dictionary of Public Relations Organisations around 200 national and regional public relations organisations around the world which includes associations such as the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), International Public Relations Association (IPRA) and Public Relations Society of India (PRSI).

The International Public Relations Association was formally established in London on May 1, 1955, with the adoption of the constitution and the appointment of the first IPRA Council. Today IPRA constitutes the international forum of public relations practitioners worldwide. IPRA is engaged in promoting the exchange of information and co-operation in every sector of the profession and building opportunities for professional development. India has been actively associated with the IPRA. On April 21st PRSI adopted International Code of Ethics. It is on this day National Public Relations Day is observed across India.

There are three main organisations or professional bodies that look after the PR fraternity in India: Public Relations Society of India (PRSI), Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) and the Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI). We will look into each of the associations in detail in the subsequent sections.



ACTIVITY 4. 1

Find out about the roles and function of international professional bodies such as International Public Relations Association

14.2.1 Public Relations Environment in India

India had undergone rapid industrial changes post independence, especially during the 1950s. While studying unit II you may have by now are thorough with the history of public relations in India. The public wasn't welcoming towards expansion of foreign industries. These companies such as oil industries like Burmah Oil Company, Nestle and Britannia were all foreign establishments. Such unfavourable public opinion was seen as a potential threat to these companies. Public Relations played its part here.

Among the Indian ventures, Tata Groups recognized the potential and significance of building a relationship of goodwill among its organisation, the government and the Indian citizens. The Tata Groups were established during the pre independence era in the year of 1868. In 1943, Tatas' opened its first public relations division. In 1958, pioneers of Indian public relations such as Kali Mody and Farouk Mulla among others formed a professional Public Relations Association to promote and inculcate the public relations skills. That gave birth to India's first national public relations body - the Public Relations Society of India.

14.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF INDIA

The national association of public relations practitioner, Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) established in 1958. As stated by the PRSI, it was established with a vision to promote the recognition of public relations as a profession and to formulate and interpret to the public the objectives and the potentialities of public relations as a strategic management function. By now, the learner through reading the previous units may have understood how public relations plays a crucial management function role in any organisation.

In the Memorandum of the Association, the society adopted the following as its majorobjectives:

a) To promote the recognition of Public Relations as a profession;

b) To formulate, promote and interpret to the public the understanding of theobjectives, potentialities, and functions of the Public Relations practioners;

c) To promote and seek to maintain high standards among the Public Relationspractioners;

d) To exchange ideas, experiences and informations on the value of the public relations practioners; and

e) To foster the study and research in Public Relations

Until 1966, the society was an informal body and it was then registered under the Indian Societies Act XXVI of 1961, with headquarters in Mumbai. Kali H. Mody, was the founder President of PRSI from 1966 to 1969. Different regional chapters of the society were launched in Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata till 1969. Another professional body called the PublicRelations Circle was established in 1965 in Kolkata. However, it was dissolved in 1968 in order to strengthen the Public Relations Society of India and instead the body launched the Kolkata Chapter.

PRSI is recognised as the national public relations organisation by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). It is also one of the founder members of the Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communications Management. PRSI today have 30 chapters and 3000 strong membership.

Membership of the Society is available to any person who engaged in public relations professionally or are associated with this field in some way. A special category of CorporateMembers was created to involve a company, institution or association which believes in and engages the practice of organised Public Relations. The society also enrols non-voting members in Associate and Student category to encourage a larger participation in thepublic relations activity.

Each application for membership is forwarded by the Regional Chapter to the National Council for consideration with their recommendations regarding acceptance and classification, and forward the same to the Secretary-General for consideration of the National Council.

14.3.1. THE FIRST ALL INDIA PUBLIC RELATIONS CONFERENCE

During this period, the first All India Public Relations Conference was held on April 21, 1968 in New Delhi discussing the role and promotion of Public Relations by the existing PR practitioners of the country. The theme of the conference was 'Professional Approach'. Since then, PSRI had conducted 26 All India PR conferences, including the 9th PR World Congress in Bombay in 1982. The theme of the conference was the 'Interdependent World'. The society of the first Asia Pacific PR Meet in Kolkata during January, 1998 and International Public Relations Conference at Bangalore in 2002.

The conduct of the Conference every year serves two objectives:

1) To introduce public relations as a management discipline to non-user organisations.

2) To improve the professional competence of its own members by exposing them to the public relations in India. This will lead to the increasein the number of members by attracting talented persons from allied professions such as Journalism and Advertising.

14.3.2. NATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS DAY

The first All India National Public Relations Conference led to the observation of the National Public Relations Day on April 21. The day is observed to focus attention on public relations functions and public relations professionals in India who have an increasingly important role in maintaining harmonious relationships between different stakeholders. It is in fact a significant contribution to the development of the country. Specific themes for the day is identified to organise events to highlight the issues selected in the theme.

14.3.3. CODE OF ETHICS

During the first All India Public Relations Conference the PRSI adopted the International Code of Ethics for Public Relations. Accordingly, each Member of this Society, shall endeavour the following

1. To contribute to the achievement of the moral and cultural conditions enabling human beings to reach their full stature and enjoy the indefeasible rights to which they are entitled under the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights";
2. To establish communication patterns and channels which, by fostering the free flow of essential information, will make each member of the group feel that he is being kept informed, and also give him an awareness of his own personal involvement and responsibility and of his solidarity with other members;
3. To conduct himself always and in all circumstances in such a manner as to deserve and secure the confidence of those with whom he comes into contact;

To bear in mind that, because of the relationship between his profession and the public, his conduct - even in private - will have an impact on the way in which the profession as a whole is appraised;

Shall Undertake

1. To observe, in the course of his professional duties, the moral principles and rules of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights";
2. To pay due regard to, and uphold, human dignity, and to recognize the right of each individual to judge for himself;
3. To establish the moral, psychological and intellectual conditions for dialogue in its true sense, and to recognize the right of the parties involved to state their case and express their views;
4. To act, in all circumstances in such a manner as to take account of the respective interest of the parties involved: both the interests of the organisation which he serves and the interests

of the public concerned;

5. To carry out his undertakings and commitments which shall always be so worded as to avoid any misunderstanding, and to show loyalty and integrity in all circumstances so as to keep the confidence of his clients or employers, past or present, and of all the public's that are affected by his actions;

Shall Refrain From

1. Subordinating the truth to other requirements;\
2. Circulating information which is not based on established and ascertainable facts;
3. Taking part in any venture or undertaking which is unethical or dishonest or capable of impairing human dignity and integrity;
4. Using any "manipulative" methods or techniques designed to create subconscious motivations which the individual cannot control of his own free will and so cannot be held accountable for the action taken on them.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1. Why is April 21st observed as National Public Relations Day?

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Q 2. Who could become a member of the PRSI?

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Q 3. List down the major objectives of PRSI.

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14.4 PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNCIL OF INDIA (PRCI)

Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) is a premier non-political and not-for- profit organisation of professionals in the fields of public relations,communication and advertising PRCI has been trying to create awareness on the growing popularity of communication and Public Relations in India. N.D. Rajpal a public relations doyen was the founding chairman of of PRCI during early 2000s.M.B. Jayaram is the current chairman emeritus of the council.

PRCI is Registered under Karnataka societies Act, 1960 with its national headquarter at Bangalore and has about 32 chapters all over India. PRCI over the last decade and more has managed to successfully emerge as one of the foremost platforms for PR and Communication professionals for global exchange of ideas in areas of public relations, corporate communication, advertising, brand management and academics. PRCI launched its global endeavour by initiating the formation of its UAE Chapter and is working on setting up its wings in Australia, the US and Europe.

PRCI has successfully conducted twelve global conferences and five international meets till date. It also gives away prestigious awards such as Chanakya Awards, PR Hall of Fame Awards, Corporate Collateral awards are like Oscars of PR and Communication world. Every year hundreds of achievers get recognised by PRCI in global conclaves heldacross major cities in India. The first global conclave was conducted in 2007 in Bengaluru. In 2013, PRCI launched its youth wing - Young Communicators Club (YCC) - across its chapters in the country. This platform gives an opportunity to the students of different media and management related disciplines to learn the fundamentals of the industry and become ready to enter such a vibrant industry after interactions with eminent media personalities through workshops, seminars, contests and creative events and festivals.PRCI organises symposiums, seminars, conferences, knowledge forums and workshops regularly in all its active chapters.

PRCI also runs a 24x7 virtual blog e-magazine called the PRapport. The magazine comprises latest trends and upgrades in the public relations

and communications industry. The magazine has over 75,000 page views across India, US, Canada, UK, France, Portugal, Russia, Gulf, Singapore and Australia.

PRCI has also taken initiatives to expand internationally by recently promoting a global platform - World Communicators' Council (WCC) - with Chapters in UAE, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. PRCI even initiated the World Communicators' Day observed on October 28. On this day the world's first Press Release was sent out to the press by public relations pioneer Ivy Lee in the US in 1906.

14.5 PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

The Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI) evolved through the convergence of seven top notch Public Relations organisations of the country. PRCAI was founded on October 4, 2001 with the aim to encourage and support budding communications professionals and to push further the potentials and prospects of public relations in the country.

The seven organisations that took this initiative are:

1. Corporate Voice - Weber Shandwick
2. Genesis BursonMarsteller
3. Hanmer MSL
4. Text 100
5. Good Relations India
6. Ogilvy PR
7. 20:20 Media (now 20:20 MSL)

The PRCAI has been modelled on the United Kingdom's Public Relations Consultants Association. Today, the PRCAI is not only the Indian PR industry's flagship trade association, but it also serves as a forum for government, public bodies, industry associations, trade and others to engage with public relations consultants through one body. It has a robust regional network as well.

PRCAI represents themselves as a vibrant and proactive community of PR professionals that share a common goal and to instill best practices for the greater progression of the PR industry in India and around the world.

HELSINKI DECLARATION

The Membership of PRCAI is for PR consultancies and associates that meet the basic criteria set out by the association and pledge to uphold the PRCAI's code of conduct in communication & public relations. Membership is offered to segments of consultancies, individual consultants and practitioners in communications, marketing and government affairs that are common services offered by a variety of PR Consultancies.

Mindful of the considerable and increasing influence and importance of public relations, the International Communications Consultancy Organisation has launched the Helsinki Declaration, a set of principles aimed at uniting the global PR industry under a single banner of ethical behaviour. The PRCAI follows the same:

1. To work ethically and in accordance with applicable laws;
2. To observe the highest professional standards in the practice of public relations and communications;
3. To respect the truth, dealing honestly and transparently with employees, colleagues, clients, the media, government and the public;
4. To protect the privacy rights of clients, organisations, and individuals by safeguarding confidential information;
5. To be mindful of their duty to uphold the reputation of the industry;
6. To be forthcoming about sponsors of causes and interests and never engage in misleading practices such as "astroturfing";
7. To be aware of the power of social media, and use it responsibly;
8. To never engage in the creation of or knowingly circulate fake news;
9. To adhere to their Association's Code of Conduct, be mindful of the Codes of Conduct of other countries, and show professional respect at all times;
10. To take care that their professional duties are conducted without causing offence on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, origin, religion, disability or any other form of discrimination.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

4. List out the seven public relations organisations whose brain child is PRCAI.

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14.6 LET US SUM UP

Let us summarise some of the important points of this unit in the following ways:

- According to Reed's Dictionary of Public Relations Organisations around 200 national and regional public relations organisations around the world which includes associations such as the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), International Public Relations Association (IPRA) and Public Relations Society of India (PRSI).
- The International Public Relations Association was formally established in London on May 1, 1955, with the adoption of the constitution and the appointment of the first IPRA Council. Today IPRA constitutes the international forum of public relations practitioners worldwide.
- The national association of public relations practitioner, Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) established in 1958. As stated by the PRSI, it was established with a vision to promote the recognition of public relations as a profession and to formulate and interpret to the public the objectives and the potentialities of public relations as a strategic management function.
- During this period, the first All India Public Relations Conference was held on April 21, 1968 in New Delhi discussing the role and promotion of Public Relations by the existing PR practitioners of the country. The

theme of the conference was 'Professional Approach'. Since then, PSRI had conducted 26 All India PR conferences, including the 9th PR World Congress in Bombay in 1982. The theme of the conference was the 'Interdependent World'. The society of the first Asia Pacific PR Meet in Kolkata during January, 1998 and International Public Relations Conference at Bangalore in 2002. 21st April was adopted as the National Public Relations Day.

- During the first All India Public Relations Conference the PRSI adopted the International Code of Ethics for Public Relations. There are 12 codes which every member of the society has to abide by.
- Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) is a premier non-political and not-for- profit organisation of professionals in the fields of public relations,communication and advertising PRCI has been trying to create awareness on the growing popularity of communication and Public Relations in India.
- PRCAI was founded on October 4, 2001 with the aim to encourage and support budding communications professionals and to push further the potentials and prospects of public relations in the country.
- Mindful of the considerable and increasing influence and importance of public relations, the International Communications Consultancy Organisation has launched the Helsinki Declaration, a set of principles aimed at uniting the global PR industry under a single banner of ethical behaviour. The PRCAI follows the same set of principles.



14.7 FURTHER READING

1 Reddi, C.V.N (2013). Effective Public Relations and Media Strategy. Second Edition. Prentice Hall India Learning Private Limited.

2 Kaul, J.M. (1986) ; ,Public Relatiorls in India, (2nd Ed.), Noya Prakash; Calcutta



14.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q no 1: April 21 is considered as the Nationa Public Relations Day as it was adopted on this day during the conduct of the first ever All India Public Relations Conference was conducted organised by the Public Relations Society of India.

Ans to Q no 2: Membership of the Society is available to any person who engaged in public relations professionally or are associated with this field in some way.

Ans to Q no 3: The major objectives of PRSI are as follows:
To promote the recognition of Public Relations as a profession; To formulate, promote and interpret to the public the understanding of the objectives, potentialities, and functions of the Public Relations practioners; to promote and seek to maintain high standards among the Public Relations practioners; to exchange ideas, experiences and informations on the value of the public relations practioners; and to foster the study and research in Public Relations.

Ans to Q no 4: The seven organisations whose brainchild is PRCAI are : Corporate Voice - Weber Shandwick, Genesis BursonMarsteller, Hanmer MSL, Text 100, Good Relations India, Ogilvy PR and 20:20 Media (now 20:20 MSL).



14.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions :

Q.1 : When was the International Public Relations Association established? What is its main objective?

Q.2 : Wha are the three main organisations or professional bodies that look after the PR fraternity in India?

Q.3 : What is the name of the virtual blog e-magazine that is run by PRCI? What does the magazine contain?

B. Short questions(Answer each question in about 150 words):

Q1. What is the need of establishing public relations body?

Q2. What are the general roles a public relations professional body plays?

C. Long questions(Answer each question in about 300-500 words):

Q1. Why was PRSI established? Elaborate on the first All India Public Relations Conference.

Q2. Explain the roles and inception of PRCI and PRACI.

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