Unit - 2: GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the evolution of public relations
- understand the role of the pioneers in public relations
- describe the Indian scenerio as far as public relations is concerned
- discuss the prospects of public relations.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit gives an overview of the emergence and evolution of public relations across the world and in India.Aristotle, the philosopher had stated, 'Man is a social animal'. From ancient times to the present era, public relations like any other disciplines of human activity has come a long way to achieve professional growth and maturity. The origin of public relations can be traced all the way back to the dawn of civilisation. In this unit, the development of public relations will be focused on.The profession of public relations was probably first heard of in India only during the late twentieth century. With industries booming in India and the publics becoming more

sensitive to the relevance of business companies in their lives, perception about the public relations profession have tremendously changed amongst the publics, particularly in the mind of business leaders. Liberalisation and free market in the 90s have resulted in the opening of the Indian economy. The multinational companies over the decades have benefited from the public relations. The growth and evolution of public relations in India will also be stressed upon.

2.3 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations have always existed in some form or the other. It is, of course, though not in the same form as practiced today. The term public relations was first used in 1882 by Dorman Eaton, a lawyer, while addressing an audience in Yale Law School. But, it was only in 1916, 'public relations' the term started being practiced professionally by one of the pioneers of public relations Ivy Lee.

The Greeks through historic events like the Olympic Games created a platform for exchange of opinions. The Romans even reflected the importance of public opinions through oratory skills of Cicero and historical writings in pamphlets during the reign of Julius Caesar. They underscored the emerging significance of public opinion and came up with the Roman phrase *Vox populi, vox dei* meaning the voice of the people is the voice of the God.

In the medieval world, the church and the state were the same entity. The church shaped public opinions and its effective implementation depended on its public relations activities. In England, the king recognised the need for a third person i.e. a mediator to engage in communication between the government and the people. Hence, the king had a Lords Chancellor as *Keepers of the King's Consicence*. The word propaganda came to existence during that period. The church had set up *Congregation de propaganda* meaning congregation for propagating Christanity.

The invention of the printing press by Johann Gutenberg in 15th century led to more pamphlets, handbills and posters comprising important information for dissemination. By the 17th century, educational institutions

such as Harvard College launched the first fund raising event in United States of America. King's College now Columbia University used a press release for getting news coverage.

In the 19th century, Amos Kendall became the first US presidential Press Secretary. P.T. Barnum pioneered press agentry by his touring circus across the country. In 1889, the first corporate public relations department was established by the Westinghouse, a year after Mutual Life Insurance Company had established a department called species of literary bureau to coordinate advertising and publicity. Use of public relations and publicity in political campaigns had started around that time.

During the 20th century, car giant Ford started with product reviews and promotional events to promote its products. The Publicity Bureau became the first publicity firm in the US. Pioneers like Ivy Lee was hired by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and he issued the 'Declaration of Principles', considering it as the birth of modern day public relations. Edward L. Bernays published Crystallizing Public Opinion. The term public relations counsel became popular. He even taught the first public relations course in New York University. Public relations was used extensively in the world war I and II to promote support and encourage participation and involvement of the citizens in the war. The government had established an Office of War Information and the Advertising Council to advocate information campaigns about the war. Television publicity became popular and in 1947 the Public Relations Society of America was established. With rapid industrial growth, public relations as a management function became an essential component for every organisation that entered competition in different markets be it local or global.



LET US KNOW

Campaigns Inc. is the first political consulting firm, was created by husband and wife team Clem Whitaker and Leone Baxter in 1933. The firm often worked with Republican candidates of US and created techniques still used today

2.4 PIONEERS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

IVY LEE

Ivy Lee graduated with a degree in economics from Princeton University. He started his career in journalism and worked for publications such as the New York Journal, New York Times, and the New York World. By the year 1903, Lee entered the public relations field. He worked for a group called the Citizens Union, whose purpose was to monitor the actions of the various political parties. Partnering with George Parker, Lee opened the public relations firm Parker and Lee. It was only the third public relations firm to be opened in the United States. Lee issued a statement to the media entitled the "Declaration of Principles" to put his ideas of how public relations should be handled.This statement contained what Lee felt were the basic obligations that public relations practitioners had to the media and the public. The "Declaration of Principles" is one of his most important contribution to the development of modern-day public relations. Lee positioned himself as a mediator, believing rational people would make good decisions when presented with correct information. He was famously hired by the richest man in the world, John D. Rockefeller, and helped built Rockefeller's public image of a well-loved philanthropist.

Lee's ideas on the interaction between public relations practitioners, the media, and the public is best explained by the manner in which he handled a fatal accident that occurred with the Pennsylvania Railroad. He issued a statement to the media informing them of all information he had concerning the accident. Considered as the first press release issued by a corporation to the media giving factual details of the accident.Lee preferred complete openness and invited interested reporters to the accident site so that they could see the damage first hand. He also made sure that company executives were available to answer questions and speak to the media. The positive reaction from the media and the public that Lee and the railroad received led other companies to follow the same when it came to their own public relations activities. This led to a much better relationship between the two groups.

As Dennis Wilcox mentioned in his book *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, Ivy Lee is remembered today for his four important contributions to public relations:

(1) Advancing the concept that business and industry should align themselves with the public interest
(2) Dealing with top executives and carrying out no program without the active support of management
(3) Maintaining open communication with the news media, and
(4) Emphasizing the necessity of humanizing business and bringing its public relations down to the community level of employees, customers, and neighbours.

EDWARD BERNAYS

Edward Louis Bernays was an Austrian-American pioneer in the field of public relations and propaganda, referred in his obituary as "the father of public relations". Larry Tye explained in Edward Bernays biography, The Father of Spin, "Bernays was the profession's first philosopher and intellectual. He saw the big picture when few others did, and he was the first to appreciate the nexus between theory and practice or, as he would have said, between the art of PR and the science. And, in doing so, he was the first to demonstrate for future generations of PR people how powerful their profession could be in shaping America's economic, political, and cultural life."Bernays, believed public relations should use a blend of social science research and behavioural psychology to develop campaigns and messages that could change people's perceptions and encourage certain behaviours.The Barney information model was essentially one of advocacy and scientific persuasion. It stressed on listening to the audience, but the purpose of feedback was to come up with a more persuasive message. It was more modern, more scientific, and more effective than all of the earlier, one-way communication that was solely based on issuing press releases and transmitting messages.Crystallizing Public Opinion, published in 1923 by Bernays, was the first-known book focused on public relations. Later, he also wrote the book *'Engineering of Consent'*, which deals with concept of

PR as a systematic way of generating persuasive publicity. He did successful campaigns such as Proctor & Gamble's Ivory soap for children and their participation in contest for making soap models to the Torches of Liberty campaign where Bernay was hired by the American Tobacco Company to target women as a consumer of tobacco. To counter the taboo of women smoking in the public, fashion models marched in New York's popular Easter Parade, each waving a lit cigarette. By making smoking a symbol of liberation, the sale of cigarettes to women increased.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. Who wrote the book Crystallizing Public Opinion?

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Q2. Who wrote the Declaration of Principles of Public Relations?

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Q3. Which was the first corporate public relations department that was established by the Westinghouse?

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2.5 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN INDIA

Public relations have always existed in the Indian historical perspective, but was not practised consciously and professionally. Spiritual teachers Gautama Buddha, Sankaracharya, and Kabir were master communicators in the sense the common people found easy to understand. The rock inscriptions of emperor Ashoka were written in local dialects for easy communication. During the Mughal rule followed by the colonial English rule led to the emergence of the public relations. The rulers tried persuading

public opinion by stating that they were working for the people of India and people should cooperate in their continuance. On the other hand, after centuries of invasion, Indians also started fighting for Independence against the colonial Britishers.

William Augustus Hickey started the first newspaper in India in 1780 called Bengal Gazette. It targeted the interests of the European settlers in Calcutta (now Kolkata). Newspapers soon became a means of educating and informing the literate people. The newspapers acted as catalysts for the growth of public opinion. Mahatma Gandhi has always been an outstanding example of an excellent communicator. His effort in Quit India Movement in 1942 resulted in Indian citizens coming out for the exit of the Britishers for once and for all. Within five years, India became independent.

Professional systematic practice of public relations in India began with the Indian Railways. The Great Indian Peninsular (GIP) Railways conducted a campaign in England in the 1920s to attract tourists to India. In India, its Publicity Bureau introduced a travelling cinema, which held open air shows at fairs, festivals and other places. This Bureau also undertook extensive advertising in newspapers and journals besides participating in exhibitions abroad to popularize the Indian Railways and tourist traffic. During the First World War, the Government of India set up a Central Publicity Board. This was the first organised PR/Information set-up of the Government of India. It was renamed as Central Bureau of Information, afterwards, renamed as Bureau of Public Information, and functioned as a link between the Government and the Press. The Bureau also developed a policy in 1938 for publishing of government advertisements. After Independence, the Government of India set up a full-fledged Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

During that time, multinational companies operating in India felt the need to communicate with the Indian people more meaningfully. In order to adjust their corporate policies to the democratic scene, these companies increasingly turned to public relations. Among the Indian giants, the House of the Tatas had already set up a Public Relations Department in Mumbai in 1943 headed by Shri Minoo Masani. They have been well known for their

philanthropic activities and in 1892 the House of the Tatas founded the J.N. Tata endowment to provide higher education abroad for meritorious outstanding Indian graduates. They built India's first industrial township model Sakchi known as Tatanagar or Jamshedpur providing facilities for all the employees of Tata Steel Limited. Public Service Undertakings like HMT, BHEL, Bhillai Steel Plant, followed by NTPC, Indian Oil, VSNL, NHPC, ONGC-- to name a few contributed immensely to the growth and development of public relations. In 1958, Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) was set up. It is the national association for professional development of Public Relations practitioners and communication specialists. It seeks to promote Public Relations as an integral function of the management.

2.6 MODERN PUBLIC RELATIONS IN INDIA

The public relations in the present India have the opportunity to offer integrated solutions because of an explosion in media and business. There appears to be no room for mere smart talkers restricted to only handling media or getting a house journal published. Today, public relations is a knowledge based intellectual profession and with the advent of globalisation and economic liberalisation,public relations in India has emerged as a demanding and prosperous industry. Most organisations have realized the need of public relations to boost their business and manage their communications effectively. Public relations have become a strategic management function of most organisations in the country. In the 80s and 90s public relations were mainly an extension of an advertising agency. Today there is an opportunity to offer integrated solutions, especially as the line between public relations, advertising and digital is already starting to blur and it has incorporated as an important component of integrated marketing communications. Companies ask the PR agencies or their in-house public relations or communications department to help them understand how best to communicate their messages and present them in a context that is meaningful for the targeted publics. According to a survey conducted by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry in India

(Assocham, 2012), the PR industry in India is growing at an annual rate of 32 percent.There are hundreds of large and small PR consultancies in the country, employing thousands of practitioners where nearly 150,000 persons work in PR agencies, PR departments in Business Corporations, PR and Information departments in secretariats in the States and Central Government and in the universities, colleges and other educational institutions in the country.

LIST OF POPULAR PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENICES IN INDIA

- Adfactors PR
- Genesis Burson-Marstellar
- Weber Shendwick
- Edelman
- Ogilvy PR
- Perfect Relations
- Waggener Edstrom
- MSL Group India

In Assam, public relations industry looks extremely promising. In the early 2000s, Cabsford Public Relations was the first public relations agency. Today across the capital city of Guwahati houses agenices like Life's Purple PR, Prodigy Communications, Mantraa Media and Events and Seven Sense Communications have been making its mark in the northeastern region of the country. PRSI has a Guwahati Chapter as well. The State government has its Directorate of Information and Public Relations department. Plus, many public relations departments are present in PSUs across the state such as ONGC, Indian Railways, Coal India, numerous tea gardens etc.

2.7 PROSPECTS OF PR IN INDIA

The public relations (PR) industry has grown18% to touch Rs1,315 crore in 2017, according to a report titled 'State of the Industry Survey 2017' by the Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI).Digital, social

media and content-driven campaigns contributed as much as 29% to the revenue of PR firms.Public Relations has never enjoyed a position of greater prominence than it does today. The growth of the internet, combined with news and social media, has increased the growth of the PR industry. The PR industry is at an exciting phase of growth with a rather sharp transformation from information to conversation. Technology has accorded has afforded people the new ways to interact and enhance the PR proposition of storytelling and thought leadership.

The employment scenario for PR graduate is promising, especially in Central, State, and Local government departments. Vast private and public sector industries, defence services, private and public banking institutions, hospitals, community welfare agencies, voluntary service bodies and organised enterprises need trained PR personnel. PR counselling and PR Research and Evaluation are highly specialised fields, requiring specialised training in behavioural sciences. As a career, PR is rewarding, secure, creative and socially useful and productive profession.

Factors like growing competition, increasing consumer awareness, a need to project an image of a responsible corporation, the importance of making employees motivated - all these have contributed to the status of the profession. So, public relations will continue to gain much momentum in India and globally as it's cost effective and focused on Target public. If the 5Ws and 1H are answered and executed properly than any PR plan can do wonders any time, any where.



2.8 LET US SUM UP

From ancient times to the modern, public relations has come a along way to establish itself as a successful industry. It has undergone massive changes to shape it into what it is today. In this unit the learner can understand the role European countries and the US has played in developing public relations. Propagating religious ideas to persuading citizens to understand policies, it can be observed how public relations have played a role. Also,

the unit comprises biographical notes on the two pioneers of public relations - Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays. Their contribution has led to the stepping stone of the entire industry as well as public relations, became a component of academics and research.

Moving on in the unit a lot has been explained about the emergence, growth and evolution of public relations in India. The role of freedom struggle, the Indian government and private conglomerate like the House of the Tatas have played in shaping public relations in the country. Economic policies and with the onset of liberalisation and globalisation the public relations scenario changed massively in the country. With capitalism, industrialisation and accelerating consumerism set in a competitive environment, public relations has come a long way and have a promising future to cater to different targeted publics.



2.9 FURTHER READING

1. Newsom, Doug, Turk V, Judy, Kruckeberg, Dean (2000). This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations. Seventh Edition. Singapore: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.
2. Sachdeva, Iqbal. (2009). Public Relations: Principles and Practices. First Edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press
3. Wilcox, Dennis, Cameron, Glen, Reber, Bryan (2015). Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics. Eleventh Edition. Essex: Pearson.



2.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans 1: Edward Bernays

Ans 2: Ivy Lee

Ans 3 : 1889



2.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q1. How does public relations help in building the image of an organisation?

Q2. What was the contributon of Ivy Lee towards the development of public relations?

B. Short Questions (answer each question in 150-200 words)

Q1. Write a comprehensive note on the history of public relations.

Q2. Explain the role of the pioneers of the public relations who were responsible in the development of public relations as a profession.

C. Long Questions (answer each question in 300-500 words)

Q3. Trace the evolution of public relations in India.

Q4. Briefly explain the prospects of public relations.

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