UNIT - 4 : PUBLICS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to -

- describe the concept of target audience
- discuss the internal and external publics in PR
- trace the linkage between the internal and external publics
- name the publicity media which is important for PR campaign.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit we have analyzed the PR set up in an organization and the functions of a Public Relations Depertment in an organization and finally we have discussed PR in crisis management.

This unit will concentrate on some important aspects of PR, such as the publics of PR i.e. internal and external publics, publicity media for PR etc.

In the following unit, we will discuss the various tools of Public Relations such as House Journals, Bulletin Boards, Open Day, Video Magazine etc.

4.3 TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is a segment of the large audience identified for aiming or targeting the messages or programmes in Mass Communication. To fulfill the need of the target audience is one of the most important aspects of an organization.

Target audiences are distinct groups or segments of customers. Most businesses cater to a variety of clients and customers. Some marketing strategies will be relevant to all those segments, but knowing each target audience well will help the company to deliver the marketing messages to get positive responses from the customers.

A fundamental technique used in Public Relations is to identify the target audience and to tailor the message to appeal to the audience. It can be a general, nationwide or worldwide audience, but it is more often a segment of a population. PR firms cater to a very broad range of audiences on a daily basis. A PR cell needs to communicate with many different groups of people. It is necessary to choose the strategy and media to reach them effectively.

There are certain categories of the target audience for any broad PR programme

- **The community -** People around the organization or its location;
- **Opinion leaders -** People who command and influence the publics such as the politicians, bureaucrats, social workers, etc;

- **The Suppliers -** The person who supplies different required materials,
- **The Customer and users -** Present, past and future;
- **The Traders -** Distributors, wholesalers, agents, etc.; and
- **The Financial contacts -** Bankers, shareholders, investors, brokers etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What do you mean by target audience?

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Q. 2. Give at least five examples of target audience of an organization.

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4.4 THE PUBLICS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

The concept of Public Relations basically consists of two terms. The 'public' and the 'relations'. The term 'relations' stands for mutual dealings or connections or communications among persons or groups. Now what is the meaning of public here? Webster's dictionary defines it as - 'People in general considered as a whole or a body of people sharing some common interest'. It means "a public may be defined as any group of people tied together, however loosely, by some common bond of interest or concern." In connection with our discipline, public is referred to as employees, stock holders, customers etc.

Already we have discussed in the first unit that Public Relations is a management function. From the management's point of view, there are

two types of Public Relations - first is internal Public Relations and other is the external. The management of an organization or a firm has to enlist the support as well as the participation of its employees to achieve the goals and to win the confidence and trust of the other publics of the organization, who are directly or indirectly related to the organization.

So, in traditional Public Relations usage, the publics are divided into two categories - internal public and external public. Let us discuss both categories in detail

4.4.1 Internal Publics

The internal publics are directly related or associated with the organization. They are the most closely related to the organization and share its identity, such as the administration, management and marketing etc.

An employee may be someone, who is hired by an employer under a contract of employment to perform work on a regular basis. An employee works either at the employer's premises or at a place otherwise agreed upon and is paid regularly, or enjoys fringe benefits and employment protection. Employees are the internal public in an organization. They are important because they directly participate in the various activities of the organization or in its functioning, like production, management etc. They have a share in the decision making process directly or indirectly. An organization cannot run smoothly without the cooperation of its employees. Harmony and mutual understanding between the employees and the management is a prerequisite for increasing the creativity and productivity of an organization. So, effective and persuasive communication between the employees and the management is very much important for the improvement and the development of the image of an organization.

An employee always wants to know about the various achievements, developments, new facilities, advantages and disadvantages of those facilities cum initiatives or new policies and

the new deals of the organization. Therefore Public Relations for the internal publics are of paramount importance not only for dissemination of information regarding the organization but also for developing the network as well as the work culture.

In an organization all employees should act as Public Relations executives with the external publics for their organization. We generally do not want to go to a police station to file a complaint or we generally do not want to go to any government office only because of the behaviour that we receive from the employees of those organization. This is one of the important reasons of the slow development of our state functionaries. On the other hand, in many organizations, employees do not know what is happening in their organization. Employees today expect more information on what is happening in the organization and how it will affect them in their daily routine. The Public Relations strategy must cover these issues for the internal public and must also convey all the possible information on relevant facts, figures, achievements and crisis. From this information they can also create an awareness and can help to maintain the standard and the reputation of the organization.

4.4.2 External Publics

The external publics are those who are associated with the organization, but not in a direct manner. As the name suggests, it is concerned with the people outside of the organization. Already we have discussed the concept of the target audience. So the external publics, may include the target audience and others, those who are indirectly associated with the organization and who matter much for the company's goodwill. In the public sector undertakings there are normally four groups of external publics, these are -

a) customers
b) government
c) shareholders

d) opinion leaders.

But for the private organizations, their periphery is much broader than the government or the public sector organizations. Let us discuss some groups of the external publics of an organization in general.

a) Customers

A customer is a purchaser of a product or service. A customer is a person or organization that purchases or obtains goods or services from other organizations such as manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, or service providers. A customer is not necessarily the same person. All the customers are the external publics for an organization. But their decision always matters for the existence of the organization.

b) Share holders

Share holder is a person who owns shares of a fund or investment trust of an organization. Actually, the share holders are the real owners of an organization, especially for a private organization. A private sector organization, therefore, cannot afford to ignore the interests of its share holders. The private organization has to depend on these financial matters and therefore, the activities of these external public is very important to ensure the organization's further development.

c) Opinion leaders

The opinion leader is a high-profile person or organization that can significantly influence public opinion. An opinion leader can be a politician, religious, business or community leader, journalist, or educator etc. Show business and sports personalities can exert a great deal of influence on young people's leisure, lifestyles and buying habits. They can influence the general people, may be the customers, and those who are directly or indirectly related with the organization. So, in Public Relations they are important for the organizational management.

d) Media and Journalists

Being a student of Mass Communication and journalism you can realize the media power and the importance of the journalists in the society. They can reform the society and can also persuade people towards something new. Therefore, every organization tries to maintain very good media relations. Media can also help to build a good image of the organization before the general mass.

e) Community

The Wikipedia Encyclopedia defines the term community as a biological term. It is 'a group of interacting organisms sharing an environment'. The word 'community' is derived from the Latin communitas (meaning the same), which is in turn derived from communis, which means "common, public, shared by all or many". In human communities, intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs, risks and a number of other conditions may be present and common, affecting the identity of the participants and their degree of cohesiveness. Traditionally in sociology, a "community" has been defined as a group of interacting people living in a common location. So the community around us is very much important for smooth running of an organization.

f) Government

A government is "the organization, that is the governing authority of a political unit", "the ruling power in a political society", and the apparatus through which a governing body functions and exercises authority." Statist theorists maintain that the necessity of government derives from the fact that the people need to live in communities. Yet personal autonomy must be constrained in these communities. In our country we have a three tier government system, one is in the centre, i.e. union government, one is in the state i.e. the state governments and the local self government at the grassroots level. Basically an organization always maintains a good relation with the union govt. and with the respective state govts concerned. So the govt. people are the external public for an organization.

g) Financial relations

In the financial management, the prime target groups of a company are share holders and potential investors. They have to be kept informed and updated. Public relations must establish, maintain and improve the organization's image, so that it gets financial support from the public and financial institutions.

h) Citizen action groups

An organization may adopt a democratic approach while dealing with the citizens. The management of an organization should participate in various social, cultural and other activities to develop a better understanding and interaction with the various groups of the society.

i) Public at large

Already we have discussed that the public may be defined as any group of people tied together, however loosely, by some common bond of interest or concern. But in this context we can include all the people of the society nearer to the periphery of the organization. The image of the organization is vital for the people at large.

With the tremendous growth of business and commerce, the organization needs to maintain a very good Public Relations with the external public.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3. What do you mean by the publics?

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Q. 4. Name the various types of the publics associated with an organization.

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Q. 5. Do you think employees are internal public?

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Q. 6. Who are the external public for a public sector undertaking organization?

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ACTIVITY 4.1

Observe the Public Relations activities carried out by a Bank near your locality and prepare a list of internal as well as external public of that bank.

4.5 PUBLICITY MEDIA FOR PR

Publicity is to reflect the performance and get public acknowledgement and appreciation to build the image of the organization. Many organizations of the new era use publicity to promote their ideas, concepts or products. A news takes birth from Public Relations and surface in the media through various media vehicles and thus it travels through the masses. Hence, publicity has become an essential function of PR. The PR executives provide the contents of news to the media. The media decision makers may not use these sets of information. Cutlip defined publicity as "–Information from an outside source that is used by the media because the information has news value. It is an uncontrolled method of placing messages in the media because the source does not pay the media for placement" Good Public

Relations start with good performance as viewed by the public. Publicity that does not reflect good performance is likely to destroy credibility. It is a communication tool, which is concerned with the dissemination of information about an organization to attract attention or to gain recognition, to build image, with the approval of the target public.

A PR department can use different media as print, electronic and so on. Let us discuss some important media that a PR department generally uses.

4.5.1 Print Media

The print media includes newspapers, magazines, brochures, pamphlets and all the related materials that fall under the purview of the printed form. Print media is the most popular form of media in the world. Even in the digitalized arena, the print media is sustaining as the most popular media for its special characteristics.

In 1956, in India there were just 6,500 newspapers and journals or magazines having a circulation figure of nine million copies. In the 1990s the number of journals and newspapers rose to more than 30,000 contributing about 127 million copies in circulation. This figure went up to 14 crore copies by the year 2000 putting us at the second spot from the top with China leading the list with more than 62000 newspapers and journals. The World Association of Newspapers (WAN) maintains that during the last decade Indian print media circulation has registered almost a 23 per cent rise.

4.5.2 Television

Television, Radio, Film etc. are some important electronic media. TV has already caught the market and holds huge number of audiences in different demographic groups. Organizations always prefer TV as an important medium for the product publicity.

From the historical effort by German scientist Paul G Nipkow to send pictures through telegraph over a short distance in 1884 to the invention of Television by Irish scientist John Logie Baird in 1925, a number of scientists were involved in the efforts to dedicate gift to the

general mass, though the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) started broadcasting in 1936. Television entered India rather late. On 15th September 1959 a relatively less powerful transmitter controlled by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, gifted 21 tele club signal receivers by the All India Radio Centre, Delhi to mark the beginning of television in India . Initially Delhi Centre telecast one hour programmes on Saturdays and Sundays. These two hours were the only telecast time in a week. But, today hundreds of Government and Private TV channels broadcast programmes round the clock round the year. In 1975, the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was started for 2400 villages of India. The UGC started Educational programmes on 15th August, 1984. In the year 1989 Central Production Centre was established to upgrade the standard of television programmes. After one year, "Doordarshan Metro" was started. But "DD Metro" was closed down and 15 regional channels started operation one by one. Gradually with the advent of cable Television, a good number of private television channels came out.

Now we can say that television is the most effective medium of communication with the rapid expansion of this electronic media the whole world has come to a box and more than 150 channels are in front of us. Television has great force and scope as a publicity medium, which allows the printed words, spoken words, other natural and unnatural sounds, moving images, colour, and animation to be combine into one format. With the arrival of cable television, the private and also the public broadcasters try to develop the programmes and innovative ideas were employed to improve the presentation style to attract the attention of the general masses. Digital Video Broadcasting, Conditional Access System, Internet Protocol television etc. are the emerging trends which have come to the market to provide noise free digital quality picture and stereophonic sound. Now maximum organizations prefer television as one of the best publicity media if their budget permits that.

4.5.3 Radio

The radio is a popular medium in the rural areas. In India we have more than 80 % rural areas and also we have so many villages, with the maximum number of illiterate people and without electricity facilities. These illiterate people are unable to read newspapers and therefore the radio is the medium that provides the various information and introduces them to the modern developed world. It is cheap, easily available and affordable to people.

Radio in India started in the form of a few private short distance transmission centres in the decade of 1920s and in 1927 Indian Broadcasting Corporation was started by the government. This was later renamed as Akashvani and All India Radio (AIR) and it became hugely popular. In 1947 when India became free from foreign rule, there were just six radio stations all over the country. Now there are more than 200 full-fledged AIR stations supported by a network of many transmission and relay centres, taking messages into the remotest areas of the country.

AIR has been doing a tremendously commendable job ever since its inception as it broadcasts programmes in 146 languages and dialects including foreign languages also. From the early 1990s the private FM channels have been allowed to operate.

A pioneer in the field of using the radio for educational purposes is the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) dedicated towards spreading formal education amongst the masses residing in the far and wide corners of the country and abroad through the distance education mode.

Recently many community radio centres have been established by various educational institutes like IGNOU, Anna University and also by the NGOs in various regions of the country. The radio is a powerful medium not only in the rural areas but also in the urban areas with the help of FM radio culture and the community radio services. So it is one of the most useful media of publicity.

4.5.4 Film

A film or motion picture is a series of still photographs on film, projected in rapid succession onto a screen. Motion pictures are filmed with a movie camera, which makes rapid exposures of people or objects in motion, and shown with a movie projector, which reproduces sound synchronized with the images. The film is considered an important art form, a source of popular entertainment, and a powerful method for educating or indoctrinating citizens. The visual elements of cinema give the motion pictures a universal power of communication.

The principal inventors of the motion-picture machines were Thomas Alva Edison in the U.S. and the Lumière brothers France. Film of production was centred in France in the early 20th century i.e. 1895 onwards, but by 1920 the U.S. had become dominant.

There is hardly any need to introduce you to the world of Indian film industry. Our country produces on an average 800 films every year. It is one of the highest by global standards. Mumbai is the topmost film producing centre for the country. Yet, we have a highly vibrant regional film industry. Since independence, there has been a phenomenal growth of Indian films dealing with every possible theme - sports, science fiction, violence, the underworld, children's issues, women's issues etc. the list is endless. A good number of films are made as social drama and art movies.

It needs no reiteration that the film is one of the most attractive and effective media of communication and for Public Relations purpose, it can be used as the most successful tool for publicity.

4.5.5 New Media

The new media are the emerging technologies in the field of disseminating messages. This form of communication in the digital world, includes electronic publishing on CD-ROM, DVD, digital television and, most significantly, the Internet. It implies the use of

desktop and portable computers as well as wireless.

These new methods of communicating in the digital world allow smaller groups of people to congregate online and share, sell and swap goods and information. They also allow more people to have a voice in their community and in the world in general. Here we can use the new media for publicity. Say, for instance, a PRO has organized a press conference. He or she can invite the entire important guest list through e-mail. He can get their confirmation to attend the conference immediately.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 7. What is publicity?

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Q 8. What is media?

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Q. 9. What does WAN stand for?

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Q 10. Who invented the television?

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Q 11. Do you think the new media are useful for publicity?

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ACTIVITY 4.3

Select a product or service of your choice and observe what are the media used by the organization to give a good publicity to that product.



4.6 LET US SUM UP

Target audiences are a segment of the large audience identified for aiming or targeting advertising messages or programmes in Mass Communication.

A 'public' may be defined as any group of people tied together, however loosely, by some common bond of interest or concern. In traditional Public Relations usage, publics are divided into two categories - internal public and external public. Internal publics are directly related or associated with the organization. They are those which an organization most closely relates to - one that shares the organizational identity, such as the administration, management, employees, dealers, marketing personnel etc. External publics are those who are indirectly associated with the organization. For the publicity purpose of an organization, we can use Print Media, Radio, Television, Film, new media etc.



4.7 FURTHER READINGS

1. Black, Sam (Ed) (2011). The Practice of Public Relations. London : Routledge.

2. Moore, H. Frazier, Kalupa, Frank. B (1985). Public Relations, Principles, Cases and Problems. R.D. Irwin.

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No 1 : The target audience is a segment of the large audience identified for aiming or targeting the messages or programmes in Mass Communication. To fulfil the need of the target audience is one of the most important aspects of an organization.

Ans. to Q. No 2 : The following are some target audiences of an organization-

a) Consumer, b) Suppliers, c) Opinion leader, d) employees, e) media or journalists.

Ans. to Q. No 3 : A public may be defined as any group of people tied together, however loosely, by some common bond of interest or concern. In traditional public relations usage, publics are divided into two categories - internal public and external public.

Ans. to Q. No 4 : Internal public and external public are two categories of 'publics', who are associated with an organization.

Ans. to Q. No 5 : Yes. Because they are directly associated with the various activities of the organization.

Ans. to Q. No 6 : The following are the external publics for a public sector undertaking organization-

a) customers
b) government
c) shareholders
d) opinion leaders.

Ans. to Q. No 7 : Publicity is the simple act of making a suggestion to a journalist that leads to the inclusion of a company or product in a story. Also we can say that Publicity is the only PR tactic that relays information to a "gatekeeper" (the media) - in order to get to the larger audience: the public.

Ans. to Q. No 8 : Media is the plural form of medium that indicates the channels or tools of communication.

Ans. to Q. No 9 : WAN stands for World Association of Newspapers.

Ans. to Q. No 10 : Irish scientist John Logie Bayard invented television in 1925

Ans. to Q. No 11 : The concept is that the new methods of communicating in the digital world would allow smaller groups of people to congregate online and share, sell and swap goods and information. For example, a PRO has to organize a press conference. He or she can invite all the important guests through e-mail. He as well gets their response immediately.



4.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q1. What do you mean by an opinion leader?

Q2. Why publicity has become an essential function of PR?

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

Q1. Why is film considered to be a powerful method for educating or indoctrinating citizens?

Q2. “The news media are the emerging technologies in the field of disseminating messages”. – Explain.

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

Q. 1. Prepare a list of 'publics' of an organization of your choice.

Q. 2. What are the characteristics of print media?

Q. 3. Enumerate the differences among press, radio and television.

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