

An Assessment of Public Relations Approaches in Managing EFCC's Corporate Image

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Abstract

This study examined public relations approaches adopted in managing EFCC's corporate image. The study was anchored on the theoretical frameworks of excellence theory and transfer process model. The study adopted mixed methods design. Data were collected through the instrument of questionnaire. Result of the findings revealed that although EFCC recognizes public relations, it does not apply it effectively, hence its corporate image before Nigerians is not very positive as respondents felt that the anti-graft body is not always neutral in its operations. Findings also indicated that respondents felt the commission is a tool in the hands of the ruling party to fight against opposition parties. The study, therefore, concluded that the commission is not in the complete know about what public relation entails. Based on the findings, the study recommended that there need for the commission to embrace public relations as a management tool for discharging its functions. The commission should also ensure that only trained public relations personnel are employed to manage the public relations and communication related offices of the commission across the nation.

Keywords: Anti-graft war, corporate image, corruption, financial crimes, public relations strategies.

Introduction

The success of any organization whether, private or public, profit or non-profit, depends on its relationship with its stakeholders as well as the favourable image it builds in the eyes of the public. This underlines the significance and growing adoption of public relations practices as important aspect of management function in most organizations around the world. Public relations simply known as PR is seen as the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 2006) as cited in Wang, 2015). It involves the creation and maintenance of a positive image which is aimed at providing constant and consistent communication with the stakeholders (Ismail & Ahmad, 2015).

Over the years, many organizations in Nigeria have fallen victim of lack of effective application of public relations in carrying out their activities. For instance, Msende (2002) cited by Rishante, Ali and Ahima (2010) revealed that the inability of Stanbic IBTC Plc to effectively utilize public

relations approaches in the management of its image had once led to decline in customer patronage. Onyeokoro and Esi-Ubani (2018) asserted that non-application of public relations approaches to manage tourism in Nigeria has resulted in the degradation of reputable tourism sites that were once popular. Wilson and Jibril (2014) opined that fracas between institutions of learning and their host communities has become a reoccurring trend in Nigeria due to lack of strategic application of PR approaches.

Every organization that is concerned about its portrayal before its publics would employ public relations approaches. Using public relations, an organization identifies issues that faces its publics, seeks ways of resolving the issues and considers what to say and/or do to enhance its relationships and reputation which is a panacea for achieving organizational or institutional goal and enhancing public or societal good (Nweke, 2001). The Nigerian society is faced with several challenges, one of which is corruption.

Corruption is an anti-social behaviour conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms, and which undermine the authorities' efforts to improve the living conditions of the people (Dike, 2008). Nigeria, since independence, has witnessed one type of corruption or the other, especially financial misconduct. Evidence, abound that the rate of financial crimes like advanced fee fraud (419), money laundering, looting and diversion of organizational and public funds is alarming in Nigeria; thereby creating a negative perception of the country in the community of nations (Ugwuja, 2016). Every year, Global Corruption Watchdog -Transparency International (TI) captures Nigeria as one of the most corrupt nations of the World. The increasing rate of corruption at all levels in Nigeria has continued to undermine developmental efforts despite huge resources earmarked for development, and the abundant natural resources in the country (Ugwuja, 2016). Waziri-Azi (2017) concurs that corruption is a threat to economic growth and undermines the sustainable management of natural resources. It breaches fundamental human rights, undermines national security, exacerbates poverty and promotes instability by diverting funds from healthcare, education and other basic services.

As part of efforts to combat corruption, in 2004 the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of president Olusegun Obasanjo established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). The functions of EFCC as contained in sections 6 and 7 of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Act include the investigation of all financial crimes, coordination and enforcement of all economic and financial crimes (Babatunde & Filani, 2016). According to Ribadu as cited in Babatunde and Filani (2016) the Commission's enforcement approaches include: investigation, arrest and detention of suspects, arraignment and prosecution of suspects, confiscation and seizure of properties, freezing of accounts and deportation of accused persons. Oyeama, Roy, Oredola and Ayinla (2018) reported that between 2010 and 2015, EFCC investigated a total of 15,124 petitions (41.5% of all petitions received). In terms of criminal prosecutions filed in court, the EFCC filed a total of 2,460 cases in this period but secured only 568 convictions, representing 3.75% of investigated cases and a conviction rate of 23.09% (Onyeama *et al*, 2018).

The challenge, however, is the view by many Nigerians that EFCC is being used by the government to deal with perceived opponents and enemies. Some individuals have questioned its failure to investigate the financial crimes involving top government officials and party loyalists (Jason, 2006). Eme and Okon (2011, p. 49) capture this view when they state that, "...there is a general perception that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission remains a tool of witch-hunt, blackmail, intimidation and political persecution in the hands of the incumbent powers that be..." Of course many Nigerians still believe that the EFCC officials themselves who are charged with the responsibility of carrying out the activities of the anti-graft agency involving investigating, arresting and charging persons to court are not free from corruption. This allegation is more reinforced with the suspension of the former EFCC boss, Ibrahim Magu in 2020 by a Presidential investigation panel set up by the Federal Government over allegations of corruption. The allegations against EFCC actually pose a serious threat to the corporate image of the commission in the eyes of the public capable of eroding public confidence and support for the activities of EFCC in the country. This phenomenon, if not checked or well managed, will undermine the success of EFCC in combating corruption in Nigeria.

Importantly, the various negative perceptions of Nigerians about the credibility of the commission shows that its corporate image is at stake. This further raises the questions of whether the commission is aware of public relations or not. If it is aware, how is it applying public relations approaches in redeeming and projecting its corporate image in Nigeria? This becomes the crux of this study. This study investigates the Public Relations (PR) approaches adopted by the EFCC in enhancing its corporate image in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Public Relations

The term public relations often called PR is subject to many definitions. The Institute of Public Relations (UK) in (Chiakaan & Chile, 2015) defines public relations (PR) as a deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics. The concept of "planned and sustained effort" implies that public relations activities are organized and continuous. For banks, public relations should be a culture or a life style of maintaining mutual understanding with customers and stakeholders. According to Jefkins (1978) cited by Nwaeze (2015), public relations is defined as a set of communication techniques which are designed to create and maintain favorable relations between an organization and its publics. This definition shows that the purpose of public relations is to achieve mutual understanding. Nwaeze and Ujah (2014) posit public relations as the activities of a corporation, union, government or other organizations in building and maintaining sound and productive relations with special publics such as customers, employees, stakeholders and with the public at large so as to adapt itself to its environment and interpret itself to society. The main aim of public relations is to secure mutual understanding between the organization and its public and thus create goodwill. In this light, Chiakaan and Chile (2015) asserted that public relations officers or units advise top management staff regarding issues of importance that affect the public and their organization's

reputation as well as organize programs and produce communication contents that will enhance the reputation of their organization with the aim of enhancing mutual relationship with their publics.

The World Assembly of Public Relations professionals held in Mexico (1978) defined public relations as the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizations leaders, and implementing planned programs of actions which will serve both the organization and the public interest. Analyzing trends implies the application of research techniques before planning and implementing public relations programs. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) as articulated by Hendrix (2001) explained that Public relations helps organizations to make decisions and function more effectively towards ensuring that there is mutual understanding among groups and institutions.

Osho (1999) has defined public relations as the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedure of an organization with the public interest and execute programs of actions and communication to earn public understanding and acceptance. Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006) say public relations is the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends. Similarly, Onwuchuruba (1996) as cited in Nwaeze and Ujah (2014) defines public relations as the activities of a corporation, union, government or other organizations in building and maintaining sound and productive relations with its publics so as to adapt itself to its environment and interpret itself to the society. Its main aim is to secure mutual understanding between the organization and its public thereby creating goodwill. For anti-corruption agencies like EFCC, building and maintaining relationship and support with various arms of government, security outfits, civil society organizations and the generality of members of the public is very important.

In the same vein, Ajala (2001) defines Public Relations as the use of communication to bridge the gap between a company or an establishment and the society at large. Ajala further states that, public relation is an image-making process which aims at informing the public about the goings on in a given establishment. After examining books, journals and magazines containing 472 definitions of public relations, Harlow (1976) in Chiakaan and Chile (2015, p.12) defines public relations as:

...Distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound ethical communication as its principal tools.

Considering the plethora of definitions of public relations, the task of making a particular definition acceptable is difficult, thus, the need to carefully select definitions that are contextual to a given situation. In this light, the study adopted Ajala's (2001) and Harlow's (1976) definitions as given

above. The definitions are considered apt to this study because they stress the importance of communication which is very key instrument of achieving the goals of an organization like the EFCC.

Corporate Image

Image is a mental picture of how something looks or might look. It is therefore inclined to perception and exists only in the mind (Theaker, 2002). Villanova, Zinkhan and Hyman (2000), state that corporate image is an overall perception of the company held by different segments of the public. Rayner (2003), Adeniji and Osibanjo (2012) perceive corporate image as the mental picture of an organisation. Howard (1999) corroborates that, corporate image is all the visual, verbal and behavioural elements that make up the organization. Gotsi and Wilson (2000) see corporate image as a conglomerate of attitudes towards the company held by various stakeholders. Jack, Peter and Linda. (1998) defined corporate image as an overall impression, a mosaic synthesized from numerous impressions formed as a direct or indirect result of a variety of formal or informal signals emanating from the company. Bernstein (2004) argues that corporate image includes the attitudes and feelings consumers or publics have about the nature and the underlying reality of a company or organization.

Formbrun (1996) defines corporate image as the overall estimation in which a company is held by its constituents through perceptual representation of its past actions and future prospects when compared with other leading rivals. According to Rayner (2003), corporate image confers clear-cut advantages and privileges on companies. It proves difficult to imitate, at the same time, it creates responsibilities. According to Bromley (2003), corporate image is the summary of the impressions or perceptions held by its external stakeholders. To Adeniji and Abiodun (2015) corporate image includes information and inferences about the company or organization as an employee, employer, customer, community as a corporate citizen.

Based on the above submissions, corporate image can simply be seen as negative or positive views held by members of the public about an organization. The term corporate image is often used interchangeably with organizational image. Worthy of note is the fact that corporate image of an organization will differ between the various stakeholders' groups depending on the nature of their interaction with the organization. Thus, it follows that an organization may have more than one image depending on the nature of the interaction it has with the different interest groups. Good corporate image is difficult to achieve and measure but to manage corporate image well is to manage public relations programs of an organization well. Attaining the sum total image of any organization is a collective effort; it requires the effort of both management and staff of an organization (Chiakaan & Chile, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the excellence theory and the Jefkin's transfer model.

Excellence Theory of Public Relations

The excellence theory was developed out of the seminal work of Grunig and Hunt's (1984) entitled; "Managing Public Relations". The theory believes that good relationship between any organization and its publics is helpful for an organization to develop and achieve goals desired by both the organization and its public. The theory also holds that best public relations practice by an organization reduces cost of negative publicity (Grunig, 1992). Furthermore, the excellence theory believes that to maximize the value of public relations, it must identify strategic publics and build long-term relationships with them through two-way symmetrical communication programmes (Grunig & Grunig, 2008).

The excellence theory of public relations identified four major characteristics of what constitute effective public relations practice. These include empowerment of public relations as critical management function, communication roles where public relations play managerial as well as administrative role, organization of communication function where public relations is separated from marketing and other management function and that organizations should base its internal and external communication and relationship building on a two-way symmetrical model.

Excellence theory is perhaps the most critical and dominant paradigm in the discussion and understanding of public relations theory and practice. Unfortunately, the theory is not without some criticism. Meiden (1993) opines that, two-way symmetrical model which the excellence theory advocated is unrealistic. Leichty (1997) asserts that complete collaborative public relations as suggested by excellence theory are not feasible in some situations. However, a meaningful synthesis of these disjointed criticisms against excellence theory has not yet been produced. Therefore, the theory has continued to serve as suitable basis for analyzing the importance of best practice of public relations in actualizing organizational goals.

Based on the above, the theory is considered suitable for this study because an excellent application of public relations practices help EFCC to embark on activities or programmes that can sell its corporate image to Nigerians positively; adapting the theory also implies that the anti-graft body will always embark on research to know what Nigerians feel and say about it. The commission based on the tenets of the excellence theory can also be effective in communicating to Nigerians about its operations including its success.

Transfer Process Model of Public Relations

This model was propounded by Frank Jefkins in 1988. The model explains the function that public relations can play in converting worst negative situations to favorable situations that can benefit any organization (Jefkins, 2005). According to Jefkins (1988) cited in Nweke (2001), when the negative situation is converted into positive achievements through knowledge, the result predictably, is the primary objective of public relations.

The model as postulated by Jefkins states that when effectively applied, public relations is capable of changing Hostility to Sympathy, Prejudice to Acceptance, Apathy to Interest and Ignorance to Knowledge. The model explains hostility to mean the existence of problems in an organization,

the nature and the reason for the problems and on the other hand sympathy is the task that must be sorted and used to overcome this problem. Prejudice may be as a result of educational, cultural, social, religious, class influences and diplomatic misunderstanding. Apathy means loss of interest in issues and could be as a result of selfishness, lack of foresight, poor creativity and imagination (Nweke, 2001).

The Jefkin's transfer model is another suitable guide for this study because it provides a blueprints and roadmap for reconstructing the corporate image of EFCC. The model thus gives EFCC insight regarding the application of public relations tools and strategies to change the negative perception and disposition of Nigerians toward it. Thus, based on the demands of the model, the commission can change the hostile behaviour of many Nigerians against EFCC to sympathy and support. It can make Nigerians to only accept EFCC but have interest in it and its operations thereby cooperating with it in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Of course, all those can only be achieved through adequate and effective communication.

Methodology of the study

The study adopted survey design. Data were collected through the instrument of questionnaire. The population of the study consisted 2,567 members of Nigeria Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), derived from the administrative headquarters of NIPR, Abuja as well as 368 members of staff of the EFCC derived from the commissions headquarters in Abuja. The population of the study is therefore, 2,935.

A sample of 383 respondents was drawn from the population. The sample size was determined based on recommendation by Comrey and Lee (cited in Wimmer and Dominick, 2011) that in a multivariate study, an acceptable sample guideline can be as follows: 50=very poor, 100=poor, 200=fair, 300=good, 500=very good and 1000=excellent. The study purposively sampled 35 staff members of the commission who are responsible for the communication activities of the agency. Only few of them were selected because the Commission could not allow the researcher to sample many of its members for interaction and data collection. Since the 35, were however, fully responsible for public relations activities of the commission communicatively inclined, the researcher felt their responses could be of value as they could complement data that would be collected from NIPR members generally. The study, therefore, further sampled 348 members of NIPR across Nigeria. Sampling them was necessary since they are experts in public relations and since they also constitute a part of the members of the Nigerian publics. The sampling was done by using simple random technique on line.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The quantitative data analysis was adopted and presented below.

Table 1: Extent of the adoption of PR Approaches by EFCC

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High extent	81	21%
Low Extent	189	49%
Very Low Extent	113	30%
Total	383	100%

Source: Field survey, 2021

The respondents particularly members of NIPR were further asked to determine the extent they believed EFCC adopted or used public relations to project the commission's corporate image. Data in Table 1 revealed that 21% of the respondents believed that the extent of the used of PR approaches by the Commission was high 49% of the respondents believed that the use of PR approaches by the Commission was to a low extent, while 30% opined that the adoption was to a very low extent. This implies that the adoption of PR approaches by the commission in managing and projecting its corporate image is to a low extent.

Table 2: PR Approaches adopted by EFCC in Managing its Corporate Image

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Media Jingles	153	14%
Press release and conferences	20	05%
Visitation to schools	18	05%
Advocacy visit to traditional and religious leaders	32	08%
Use of new media e.g. social media	25	07%
Partnering with clubs and other groups in anti-corruption campaigns	52	14%
Use of Billboards, stickers and posters	25	07%
Use of Newspaper articles	15	04%
Use of special events	22	06%
Organizing public sensitization workshop on anti-corruption campaigns	26	07%
Engaging in community services e.g. sanitation	23	06%
Contributing to social amenities	15	04%
Provision of branded materials to the public with anti-corruption messages	23	06%
Provision of public complaint's desk and lines	26	07%
Being honest and just in its responsibility of arresting and prosecuting suspected corrupt Nigerians	06	01%
Punishing its erring or corrupt members	05	01%

Source: Field Survey, 2021

**Multiple responses

Public relations approaches are gamut of communication activities and channels employed by organizations to promote mutual relationship between them and their public. A list of various approaches was given and respondents were asked to indicate the approaches adopted by EFCC in managing its corporate image as shown in Table 2 above. Data collected have shown that 14% identified media jingles as the approach adopted by EFCC in managing its corporate image 05% identified press releases and conferences; 05% pointed to visitation to schools; 08% pitched tent

with advocacy visit to traditional and religious leaders; 07% identified use of new media especially social media; 14% pointed out partnering with clubs and other groups in the commission's anti-corruption campaigns, while 07% agreed with the use of billboards, stickers and posters, just as 14% identified print media articles .

Also, 06% of the respondents identified use of special events as the approaches adopted by EFCC in managing its corporate image; 07% identified organizing public sensitization workshops on anti-corruption, 06% of the respondents pointed to engaging in community services e.g. sanitation; 04% identified contributing to social amenities; 05% identified provision of branded materials to the public with anti-corruption message; 07% identified provision of public complains desk and lines, while 02% and 01% of the respondents identified being honest and just in its responsibility of arresting and prosecuting suspected corrupt Nigerians and punishing its erring or corrupt members as the approaches adopted by EFCC in managing its corporate image. Analytically, from data collected here, it can be said that EFCC adopts different PR approaches using different media of mass communication to manage and project its corporate image in Nigeria.

Table 3: Effectiveness in the use of PR tools in Managing the Image of EFCC

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly Effective	91	23%
Moderately effective	209	55%
Not Effective	83	22%
Total	383	100%

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 3 above is concerned with knowing the effectiveness of EFCC in the use of PR tools in managing its image. Data in this regard have revealed that 23% of the sampled respondents believed that the public relations tool by EFCC are highly effective in managing its image; 20% believed that they are only moderately effective, while 22% of the respondents opined that the public relations approaches by EFCC are not effective in managing the corporate image of the commission at all. This implies that the public relations approaches by EFCC are not very effective in managing its image. This further means that more needs to be done by the commission in this regard.

Table 4: Impact of the PR Approaches used by EFCC on its Corporate Image

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nigerians are happy with the conduct of EFCC	27	7%
Nigerians perceive the image of EFCC in a positive manner	23	6%
People feel free to report corrupt people to EFCC	20	5%
People feel EFCC is biased in its operations	198	52%
Nigerians feel EFCC is as corrupt as the Nigerians it prosecutes	115	30%
Total	383	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4 seeks information on the influence of the PR approaches used by EFCC on its corporate image. Here, out of the 383 sampled respondents, 7% believed that Nigerians are happy with the conduct of EFCC; 6% of the respondents opined that Nigerians perceive the image of EFCC in a positive manner, 5% revealed that people feel free to report corrupt people to EFCC, while 52% said people feel EFCC is biased in its operations and 30% of the sampled respondents pointed out that Nigerians feel EFCC is more corrupt than Nigerians it prosecutes. This implies that majority of the respondents 30% believed EFCC to be biased in its operations.

Table 5: Challenges Militating against the Utilization of Public Relations Approaches in Promoting the Image of EFCC

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Poor Audience segmentation	87	22.7%
Lack of deliberate PR activities	91	23.8%
Absence of Expert PR personnel	55	14.4%
Poor knowledge of PR dynamics	86	22.5%
Too much reliance on media activities	49	12.8%
Absence of PR guiding documents	15	3.9%
Total	383	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Data in Table 5 were aimed at finding out whether EFCC has some challenges in the course of applying public relations in redeeming and protecting its corporate image. Out of the 383 respondents, 87 representing (22.7%) opined that poor audience segmentation is a challenge in EFCC's PR campaign activities; 91 respondents representing (23.8%) identified lack of deliberate PR activities. Furthermore, 86 respondents representing (22.5%) identified poor knowledge of PR dynamics by the commission; 49 respondents making (12.8%) said too much reliance on media activities is the major challenge; and 15 respondents making up (3.9%) perceived lack of PR guiding documents as the major challenge undermining the application of PR in redeeming and projecting the corporate image of the commission. The implication is that it is obvious that there are some challenges the commission is facing in its efforts towards building, redeeming and projecting its corporate image in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

This study is basically carried out to assess the public relations approaches adopted by EFCC in managing its corporate image in Nigeria and even beyond. Corporate image, no doubt, has been identified by different public relation scholars including Chiakaan and Chile (2015), Ajala (2001) as key factors responsible for the success of any organization, public or private. This is hinged on the belief that the way an organization is perceived by its publics has, to a very large extent, the ability of making it to succeed or fail in realizing its goals. This implies that corporate image is what any responsible public organization like EFCC must care so much about.

No doubt, data collected have revealed that EFCC recognizes public relations. The commission utilizes public relations in projecting its corporate image in Nigeria. The problem, of course, identified, as shown by data collected in Table 1 is that the commission, even though, is aware of

the benefits of public relations does not apply to a very high extent. This is the position of 49% of the sampled respondents. If the commission, as revealed by data collected here does not apply public relations highly, it shows that it does not understand properly what public relations is. According to Nwosu (2005) public relations appears to be the most misunderstood profession. Even though the commission applies public relations to a low extent, the study makes efforts to find out the public relation approaches it usually adopts in achieving its goals. Data collected in this regard have revealed different approaches. Accordingly, to all the respondents in Table 2, the various public relations approaches by the commission include media jingles, press release and conferences, visitation to schools, advocacy visit to traditional leaders and religious leaders, use of new media, social media, partnering with clubs and other groups in anti-corruption campaigns, use of billboards, stickers and posters, use of newspaper articles, organizing special events, organizing public sensitization workshops on anti-corruption campaigns and engaging in community services. Others include provision of branded materials to the public with anti-corruption messages, provision of public complaint's desk and lines, being honest and just in its responsibility of arresting and prosecuting suspected corrupt Nigerians and punishing its erring or corrupt members.

It is interesting to note that being honest and just in arresting and prosecuting suspected Nigerians as some of the public relations approaches have attracted very low scores of 02% or responses from Nigerians. EFCC according to 01% of sampled respondents does not seem to be punishing erring corrupt members. The implication of this finding is that EFCC is only committed to lip services; it is not deep into public relations. Perhaps, it has a shallow perception of public relations. Public relations, according to Keghku (2005), Nwosu (2005) involves good deeds that are made known or publicly committed by an organization. Over reliance on media relations, not caring about the attitude of some of its members, shows that the excellence theory of public relations as propounded by Grunig and Hunt (1984) has been neglected by the commission.

No wonder data in Table 3 have revealed that the commission's public relations approaches only moderately influence the way Nigerians think about it. According to 55% of the respondents, the public relations approaches by the commission are moderately effective in protecting its corporate image. Interestingly, data collected in Table 4 have proved that most Nigerians do not speak well of the commission; the commission is perceived by 52% as being biased in its operations, and by 30% that its personnel are also as corrupt as some of the Nigerians they go after.

From all that has been gathered, all is not well with the corporate image of EFCC; this makes the study to investigate whether there are challenges the commission is facing. Data collected in Table 5 have actually revealed that certain challenges are facing the commission in its ability of using public relations in managing and projecting its corporate image. Respondents identified a number of issues to include poor knowledge of public relations dynamics, lack of public relations plan, too much reliance on media activities and absence of public relations guiding document among others. This finding has validated the finding by Chiakaan (2016) that public relations as a profession is faced with many problems in Nigeria and other developing societies.

Conclusion

It is an established fact that the corporate image of an organization is key to its success and that the organization needs to be deliberate in understanding and promoting its image among its target audience through the application of public relations approaches. Data collected and analyzed in this study revealed that EFCC has not adequately adopted public relations approaches to promote its image. Ineffectiveness in the commission to apply public relations has affected its corporate image among Nigerians who have little or no confidence in the commission's ability to fight corruption despite several successes reported by the commission through the conventional media. The study therefore concludes that EFCC has a lot to do in promoting its corporate image and that despite its successes, a significant portion of Nigerians do not view the commission in positive light. This clearly indicates a gap between the commissions media activities and many Nigerians. Thus, the need for more proactive public relations activities.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following are hereby recommended.

- i. To achieve commendable success in promoting the corporate image of EFCC, the commission henceforth should ensure that only trained PR personnel are employed to manage the PR and communication-related offices of the commission across the nations.
- ii. There is also need for EFCC to partner with NIPR to train its PR staff on the dynamics of PR and the fact that everyone has a role to play in promoting the image of the commission. Such training can be carried out annually or after a certain time interval. The trainings will go a long way in correcting institutional inadequacies.
- iii. There is need for adequate funding to facilitate PR campaigns and trainings for personnel in charge of PR and communication activities in EFCC.
- iv. Similarly, there is need to define or segment the various audiences of the commission as well as identify appropriate channels to reach and relate with them, ernment must be ready to fund forces" activities adequately including Pu

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