

**CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN BUILDING CORPORATE IMAGE OF  
AN ORGANISATION (A CASE STUDY OF KOMFO ANOKYE TEACHING  
HOSPITAL)**

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## STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

We have read the university regulations relating to plagiarism and certify that this report is all our work and do not contain any unacknowledged work from any other source. We also declare that we have been under supervision for this report.

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## SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision laid down by Christian Service University College.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The concept of Community relations has seen a new heightened interest with many organizations in Ghana joining the Community relations bandwagon. It is as a result of this reason that the researchers set out to explore the reasons why organizations undertake Community relations activities. The research focused on one organization in Ghana, Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH), whose Community relations activities are widely publicized through the media.

Qualitative research method was used for the study. Interviews were conducted to find out the views of some selected staff and members of the community within which KATH is located, about community relations and how it has helped in building the corporate image of the organization.

The study revealed that, KATH undertakes community relations activities in the area of health education, training and provision of clinical services. It was also found that the community relations activities have created a positive image in the minds of the publics. The findings also showed that KATH ascertains its community relations strategies by observing the community relations programmes which are in progress. The study therefore recommends that, proper attention should be given to the social policy in the host community to maintain positive image and reputation in the minds of the publics.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to our parents, guardians and other family members for their support and encouragement to the successful completion of our course.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Public relations practitioners fail to realize their full potential because of how their roles are perceived within organisations. The time has come when professional public relations are made to play its proper role towards promoting a positive image for the organisation. This can be achieved, if the public relations professionals are allowed to influence the policies at the stage of initiation, analysis and preparation of programs. According to Dozier and Grunig quoted in Grunig et al. (1992: 395), “Public relations must be placed high in the organisation hierarchy and must be practiced strategically if it is to be more effective and, thus, to be excellent”. Meanwhile, in many existing organisations the roles of public relations practitioners in building the corporate image of the organisation to the public are taken for granted, neglected and even attributed to other departments within the organisations. It should also be noted that, public relations’ roles have become the subject of extensive research by public relations scholars. Roles define everyday activities of the public relations practitioners and practitioners roles are keys to understanding the functions of public relations in building the image of an organisation to the public. Practitioners’ roles are at the nexus of a network of concepts affecting professional achievement of practitioners (Dozier and San Diego in Grunig et al, 1992: 328).

Public Relations as a Profession played a part in changing the face of the earth. As the human society becomes more challenging and complex, people have become open minded with their fundamental human rights, which has led to series of crisis among organisations and their host community.

There is no doubt that most of these activities performed by organisations are a nuisance to the host community and also puts their health at great risk. The main objective of every organisation is to make profit or maximize profit and this cannot be achieved without a serene environment. Building the corporate image of an organisation is not an easy task that can be achieved in a day within an organisation by a public relations practitioner. Some industries, financial services, chemicals factories, etc. suffer from a serious (corporate) image problem. In the eyes of many, they are seen as exploiters, inefficient, having fat-cat bosses, etc. Varey (2002: 193). Meanwhile, according to Dowling (1994: 8) quoted in Varey (2002: 195), corporate identity is the symbols (such as logos, colour scheme) that an organisation uses to identify itself to people. Since corporate image is sometimes deemed as the organisation reputation, therefore, reputation is considered by a growing number of management practitioners and scholars to be an intangible asset that enables the enactment of relationships among the corporation and their public.

Public relations practitioners' roles also contribute to identifying, establishing and extending the organisation's sphere of influence. The practitioner's roles help in monitoring, controlling and establishing its corporate identity and corporate image. The image making functions of public relations are principally counseling based on the understanding of human behavior. By analyzing trends and predicting their consequences, through research of public opinion, attitudes and advising a necessary action, public relations establishes and maintains two-way communication based on truth and full information. This is to say that, public relations are concerned with maintaining public image for high profile organisations, programs, or individuals (Seitel, 1998:6).

Good community relations ensure a well-planned and sustained corporate identity which plays a dominant role in shaping the corporate image of an organisation. It is necessary for organisations to live by the community's ordinances and social mores. In present day Ghana, community relation is now of much interest to companies and corporate bodies in the aspect of public relations. This is so because of some important factors: The survival of a company is dependent on the community in which it finds itself. Since they need to compete with other companies or stay in business, their activities are carried out in rural communities with its numerous risks; it becomes imperative that public relation practitioners in those organisations should give more attention to community relations. Secondly, some activities from these companies pollute the environment and make the inhabitants helpless. It is of importance that adequate measures should be taken to reduce the risk of helplessness. The surest way is by planning and performing a good community relations strategy. This study will therefore, examine the concept of community relations and the role it has played on the corporate image of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

People like Bittner (1989) argue that in a bid to ensure good community relations, organisations expend shareholders money, cut down workers' salaries, waste precious time which should be used for other profitable things. He calls it "a fundamentally subversive doctrine which offers insoluble practical problems". While Nweke (2001:220) is of the view that compliance and non-compliance with the idea of corporate philanthropy determine the measure of goodwill, cordiality and continued acceptance an organisation enjoys in its business premises. The problem

of this study is to ascertain the role Community Relations has played in building the corporate image of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

The reason behind the negative or positive public perception. More so, it will examine the extent to which these perceptions and attitude are capable of affecting the success or failure of the organisation.

### **1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to examine the role community relations has played on the image of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

### **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main goal of this study is to find out the role community relations has played on the corporate image of KATH with the aim of assessing their corporate philosophy, its benefits and peoples attitude towards Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

This would be achieved through the following objectives:

1. To determine the community relations activities undertaken by KATH.
2. To find out the kind of image the community have about KATH.
3. To ascertain how the implementation of community relations strategies have contributed to the corporate image of KATH.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions will be answered through the study:

1. What community relations activities have KATH undertaken?
2. How has the implementation of community relations strategies contributed to the corporate image of KATH?
3. What kind of image does the community have about KATH?

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study will help students or practitioners of public relations in diverse organisations to understand the usefulness of good community relations in the life of every organisation. So far as public perception is very crucial to every organisation, this study will help Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in understanding how people feel towards its community relations practice. Also other organisations will see the usefulness of the findings as it will help them in ensuring good community relations with their host communities. The study will help in advancement of knowledge in the areas of community relations and the developing business ethnics of corporate social responsibility.

## **1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

There are a lot of Hospitals in Kumasi, but due to the proximity, willingness on the part of management to provide information and time factor, the group decided to settle on Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

## **1.8 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS**

To clarify meaning, it is relevant to present and explain some terms used in the study to the level that will enable understanding of the inherent ideas. The terms include the following:

**Community Relations:** It is a public relations activity that tends to create and sustain environmental friendly programmes and actions of mutual benefits to both the organisations and its host community. It fosters and nurtures good neighborliness in a reciprocal interest of both parties.

**Corporate Identity:** This means and also includes the totality of what an organisation stands to its public and host community, how it does that, its communication process and environment. It serves as the forerunner to corporate image; it hits the soil for corporate image to grow without problem.

**Corporate Image:** This is the public perception of the organisation. This sums up the impressions formed about an organisation based on its corporate identity and general relationship with its public. It goes with mental perception.

**KATH:** Acronym for Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

**Crisis:** It is any occurrence described as a turning point, for better or for worse with both negative and positive effects.

**Host Community:** This is a group of people residing in an environment where an organisation operates.

**Publics:** These are various groups of people who may directly or indirectly be affected by the activities of an organisation. They include the shareholders, employees, host community inhabitants and contractors.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses findings of studies relevant to community relations and the gap in literature that needs to be filled. The chapter also explains the theoretical framework for the study.

#### **2.2 THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERM 'COMMUNITY RELATIONS'**

The term community relations seems to have been coined around the early sixties in Britain and pertained to solutions being sought there in relation to the problem of racial disharmony, apparently arising from the immigration of various African and Asian peoples to the United Kingdom. Earlier definitions of the objectives of community relations work seem to have primarily concerned themselves with emphasising the idea of a harmonious existence between differing groups, with the intended goal of integrating the minority groups into the wider community as quickly as possible. Later definitions of objectives have put a far greater emphasis on the idea of equality of basic rights and opportunity for all groups, whilst simultaneously encouraging cultural diversity, as being preferable contemporary objectives of community relations work. This shift in emphasis is reflected for example in the changing of the title of the Race Relations Board in Great Britain to the Commission for Racial Equality in 1976. Similar shifts in emphasis have taken place in New Zealand. Therefore what was called the Community Relations Commission has been called the Human Rights Commission since 1977. These shifts in emphasis reflect development in thinking about how the problem of disharmony between



groups is to be understood, and also about how the problems produced by such disharmony are to be tackled.

### **2.3 UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Community relations refers to the various methods companies use to establish and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with the community in which they operate. The underlying principle of community relations is that when a company accepts its civic responsibility and takes an active interest in the well-being of its communities, then it gains a number of long term benefits in terms of community support, loyalty and good will. In this sense, community relations is a strategic implementation of objectives to create, maintain, enhance and repair relationships with stakeholders whose interest can be aligned with those of the organisation. Community involvement builds public image and employee morale, and fosters a sense of teamwork that is essential in a long- term success (Desatnik, 2000).

Peak (1978) also states that effective community relations is an institutions plan, active and continuing participation with and within a community to maintain and enhance its environment to the benefit of both the institution and the community. It is a well-known fact that in today's business organisation, corporate philanthropy is inevitable, some people see it as something that must be religiously adhered to, and in order to sustain the future growth of the organisation while for some it must be avoided at all cost. Lesley (1990) points out that if one is desirous of success, one has to keep abreast of changes within the locality. According to him community refers not only to a group of people living in the same locality but to the interaction of those people". In the

past the tendency was to treat a community as a rather simple entity, a collection of people, and a home town”.

Thomas (1981) said “a socially responsible management of a business organisation must first of all have an awareness of the firms’ obligation to solve some of the problems facing society”. This awareness of social problem facing society, exist in the firms’ relationship with its customers, owners, employees, suppliers, creditors, management, government, community and society in general. Secondly, there must be a willingness on all the part of the firms to help solve some of these social problems. Obviously not all the problems of the society can be solved by business organisation, but the firm must be willing to tackle some of these problems. Thirdly, and more specifically, it must attempt to make decision and actually commit resources of various kinds.

Black (1989) also states that “in the area of industry and transaction people today expect more from organisation than merely ‘ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE’”. They expect organisation to be useful and use its power to help solve “broader problems” when it can. Organisations have a large stake in the society in which it operates; it can flourish when it operates in a healthy and orderly society. It has responsibility as a corporate citizen with special abilities, resources and power. Good community relations should go beyond the open houses. They include helping concrete things happen in important areas. “Community relations should be seriously taken into consideration by top management. ‘Being socially responsible also means that company should be held accountable for any of its actions that affect people, their communities and their environment. It implies that negative business impacts on people and society should be

acknowledged and corrected; if at all possible it may require a company to forego some profits, if its social impacts are seriously harmful to some of its stakeholders or if its funds can be used to promote a possible goal.

Nwosu (1996) public relations serve as a veritable information and communication bridge between the organisation and its various internal and external publics. Public relations actually ensure a steady two- way communication and feedback between the organisation and its publics. The public relations officer performs counseling function in any organisation as regards advertising in the management on the importance of such issues as good community visit and sitting arrangement which are protocol function. This unit determines the protocol list of recognitions in all speeches in the organisation.

Public Relations also involve in community relations by ensuring that the organisation and its staff relate well with the members of the community in which it operates. It involves building mutual understanding between the organisation and its community neighbors by identifying with the joys and problem of the community neighbors where it exists. It should be understood that community relations functions and social responsibility function of Modern public relations are related. Public Relations combine duties, like advising management of an organisation as well as ensuring that the organisation is both responsible and responsive “corporate citizen”. This involves carrying campaign on environmental protection, contributing to rural and national development, promoting entrepreneurship, contributing to education, promoting arts and culture.

## **2.4 COMMUNITY RELATIONS EXPECTATIONS**

For an organisation to coexist peacefully in its community, three skills in particular are required: (1), determining what the community knows and thinks about the organisation, (2). Informing the community of the organisation's point of view, and (3). Negotiating or mediating between the organisation and the community and its constituents should there be a significant discrepancy. Basically, every organisation wants to foster positive reactions in its community. This becomes increasingly difficult in the face of protests from and disagreement with community activists. Community relations therefore are to analyze the community, help understand its makeup and expectations, and communicate the organisation's story in an understandable and uninterrupted ways are critical. The community of an organisation can vary widely, depending on the size and nature of the business.

Bowen (1975) states that "when an organisation has a good relationship with its community, it can make an important difference in the quality of that community. Communities look up to business for civic leadership and for help in coping with urban problems, while business expects to be treated fairly and in supportive ways by the local communities. Nweke (2001:229) is of the view that "People, who live in a community and corporate entity, must practice interdependence, collaboration and unification and should strive to eschew all forms of selfishness by working assiduously towards a common goal. People cannot enjoy a good life without these institutions, and these organisations can exist profitably only with the support of the community." The success of this mutual relationship thus depends on proper understanding and adequate knowledge of each other. Peak (1978) supports the above view and states that, "a basic

ingredient of every good community relations programme is the necessity for official up and down the live to know their community.”

According to Hillstrom & Hillstrom (2002) “a comprehensive, ongoing community relations program can help virtually any organisation achieve visibility as a good community citizen and gain the good will of the community in which it operates”. This is important to a new business as the interaction between the business and the communities are the most significant determinant of whether a business will continue to grow and become more successful in the community (Kilkenny, Nalbarte, & Besser, 1999). The following ways have been proven effective for businesses to get involved with their communities: “providing employee volunteers to work on community projects, sponsoring educational and literacy programs, staging open houses and conducting plant tours, and celebrating anniversaries” (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2002). Aside from partaking in certain local activities, part of building and maintaining community relationships is showing to the public that businesses do care about the surrounding community and remain responsible. As a business proceeds with socially responsible behavior, its public image is enhanced which inevitably leads to an increase in sales, fair supplier relationships, and opportunities for more attractive rates on loans (Besser, 1999). The problem with a lack of involvement of businesses in small communities is that they are often viewed under a closer microscope than they would be in a larger community because there is less business for locals to monitor. As stated by Terry L. Besser “the socially responsive behavior of businesses operating in small towns will be more generally known by residents and then rewarded or sanctioned by local residents through changes in employee morale, performance, and turnover; customer

loyalty; and positive interactions with business service professionals, suppliers, local government officials, and business colleagues.”

## **2.5      RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND CORPORATE IMAGE.**

Corporate image is the perception about a corporation held by the public based on how it is portrayed through branding, public relations efforts, news media, stakeholders, employees, labour unions and consumer advocacy organisations. Companies invest a substantial portion of marketing and advertising dollars to build and maintain a positive corporate image which is critical to their competitive standing .The image that stakeholders have of the company will influence their willingness to either provide or withhold support. Thus, if customers develop a negative perception of a company or its products, its sales and profits assuredly will decline. Obviously, each of the various stakeholder groups is likely to have a somewhat perception of the corporation because each is concerned primarily with a different facet of its operation. A comprehensive ongoing community relations program can help virtually any organisation achieve visibility as a good community citizen. Organisations are recognized as good community citizen when they support programmes that improve the quality of life in their community.

In the words of Nworgu (2002) “the idea of community relations boards on the need for a firm or an institution to be a good neighbor”. Still an organisation can be regarded as a bad neighbor when it fails to embrace the activities of good community relations. There should be deliberate effort on the part of the companies to cultivate good relationship with the public’s including the host community. In fact, there should be nothing like sitting on the fence or being in different in

community affairs. Such attitude can instantly give an organisation a bad image or reputation which will be difficult to change”. He also quoted Osuji (1999) saying that “any company that is aware of its social impact upon local communities will ultimately develop a social policy and will scarcely have community relations problems.”

Burton (1989:13) has almost a different view. He was looking at public relations from the organisational perspectives. He wrote that public relations should help a company to establish and maintain a good name for its products and service through professional communication techniques and of course prospect a good image of the company itself. It should be noted that lack of an efficient and effective two ways communication has an adverse effect on the organisation. The reason is that it creates a loophole for misunderstanding and disharmony, and unnecessary tension between the organisation and its internal and external publics. This could lead to voluntary resignation of experienced and key personnel of the organisation. The resultant effect is not only tarnishing the public image but ruin the entire organisations activities. Whereas in the external publics, the inability of the organisation to communicate properly its policies and programmes which is a task or parts of their ethnics and which the publics supposed to know brings about loss of confidence, credibility and a total ruin of the entire company.

All the opinion reviewed above point to the fact that every corporate organisation should be socially responsible by using part of its profits to solve developmental needs of the community in which it operates. This, the opinion thinks will bring serene business environment and ensure that anything below that is capable of bringing conflicts between two parties which can escalate to dysfunctional crisis.

## **2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

We need to know that apart from opinion and attitude, the internal public also has great influence on the firm's reputation. So many authors agree there is need to carry out research and evaluate public relations activities for an organisation. Relevant to the study are some models and a theory from the communication field, some are mostly related to public relations. Grunig and Hunt (1984) recommended the System Theory. This theory emphasizes on the maintenance of understanding, respect and good will between an organisation and its publics, dialogue instead of monologue is the main focus of this model.

System Theory is undoubtedly the most effective in this study because, it describes organisations as a set of sub system that affects each other and jointly interacts with the external environment. Organisations have to adjust and adopt as they change from within and as the environment changes. Systems theory is helpful in explaining the need for evaluation in public relations. Systems theory promotes an understanding of how interrelated subsystems contribute to an organisational whole and is useful for both understanding and managing public relations (Broom & Dozier, 1990, Cutlip center, and broom, 1985). A system theory approach is applied to develop a framework in which public relations strategy is intrinsically linked to the various levels of business strategy (Moncur, 2006). Society is usually regarded as an integral whole, and the various sub systems work together to keep the whole in balance. The systems primary function is to maintain itself; therefore the interactions of the system and the environment ultimate define the system (Merham, 1995). Organisations exist for a purpose. The essence of productive organisational community relations is that the society maintains the organisation system so that the organisation can exist to serve the needs of the society.



In order for an organisation to survive within a community it has to perform its social responsibilities by providing services to the host community and as such will have a serene atmosphere. Communities look up to organisations for civic leadership and for help in coping with urban problems, while organisations expect to be treated fairly and in supportive ways by the local communities.

Community Relations is there to develop and maintain good relationship with communities to help the organisation achieve its objectives. Nweke (2001) is of the view that “People, who live in a community and corporate entity, must practice interdependence, collaboration and unification and should strive to eschew all forms of selfishness by working assiduously towards a common goal. People cannot enjoy a good life without these institutions, and these organisations can exist profitably only with the support of the community”. It is good to build a stronger relationship with the host community because they can make or unmake the organisation. The host community determines or plays a part in the success of the organisation. The success of this mutual relationship depends on proper understanding and adequate knowledge of each other. Organisations should discourse with the members of the host community, to ensure understanding, respect and goodwill between the organisation and their publics. This will greatly help them in finding out and solving some of the problems and needs of the publics.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. It outlines the sampling size, data collection methods, sources and administration procedures of the study. Miller & Brewer (2003, p. 192) defined “methodology” as a set of rules and procedures to guide research and against which its claims can be evaluated. This means that the methodology a researcher uses must conform and must be located in the confines of academic circles.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This Research design focused on Qualitative Research. Qualitative Research is about exploring issues, understanding phenomena and answering questions by analyzing and making sense of unstructured data. According to Opoku-Amankwa (2009) qualitative data is usually presented as the written discussion. Researchers turn to make use of short verbatim quotes of what respondent said or wrote. They do this to provide evidence of typical or particularly important responses and statements. The researchers used qualitative research approach because of the flexible questioning approach used.

### **3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY**

The research strategy for this study is going to be a case study. The researchers chose this strategy because the study aimed to find out the role of community relations in building corporate image of KATH. According to Opoku-Amankwa (2009, p.41) The case study involves a systematic investigation into a single individual, event or situation, that is, the researcher studies a single example, or case, of some phenomenon. The chosen case can be a person, group or situation that is researched because of its uniqueness and rarity value. Yin (1984, p. 23) also defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

### **3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

The population of this study covers staff of KATH and the members of the community in which it operates.

### **3.4 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The researchers used purposive sampling method in the selection of the sample size from the population of the study. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the members of this element. In purposive sampling, we sample with an objective in mind. We usually would have one or more specific predefined groups we are seeking will respond. Also respondents will be selected based on their qualities or positions to meet the needs and requirements of the study. To every researcher, sampling is crucial. Generally the time, money and effort involved does not permit

the researchers to study all possible members of the population. However, a sample size of twenty (20) was drawn for the study.

This includes the Public Relations Officer and his Assistant, five other employees of KATH. The other thirteen respondents were selected from the host community. This includes one assembly man, other opinion leaders and selected residents of the community.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

The researchers decided to use the interview because it provides detailed background about reasons why respondents give specific answers. Opoku-Amankwa (2009, p.50) defines interview as useful for finding out individual opinions, ideas, value and beliefs. They provide an opportunity for people to describe what aspects of their lives are like for them and what they think, or would like you to think, they do. Interview also is customized to individual respondents where interviewers form questions based on each respondents.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT**

The researchers decided to use the interview guide as a tool for obtaining the necessary data for the research. An interview guide will be a suitable option for this study because it will be easy for the respondent to get an immediate response for the study. The interview guide will be where broad questions will be asked and it will allow the researchers to determine what further questions to ask to obtain the required information (Wimmer & Dominic, 2003). The questions will be structured in line with the objectives of the study. It will include both open-ended and close-ended questions. The interview guide will be designed and administered personally to respondents. Data will be collected via the internet and face-to-face interview with the help of a

tape recorder.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE**

According to Yin (2004) a case study should start with a general analytical strategy that provides the bases for what to analyze and why. There are three different general analytic methods: relying on theoretical propositions, thinking about rival explanations, or developing a case description. Yin (2004) explains that without a general analytic strategy a case study analysis will be difficult to carry out. Yin (2004) indicates that the first strategy, relying on theoretical propositions, is the most preferred. What it means is that one has to follow the theoretical propositions that led to the case study. The original objectives and design of the case study presumably were based on such propositions, which in return reflected a set of research questions and review of the literature. Data has been analysed based on the theoretical concepts and the research questions.

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

- i. The researchers seek the consent of the management of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital before administering interview guide.
- ii. The researchers acknowledged all sources to avoid plagiarism.
- iii. The purpose of the study was made known to the respondents.
- iv. All issues pertaining to confidentiality were treated as such.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains the findings and analysis of the study. The data for this study was collected through interviews. This section of the study specifies the extent to which the set of objectives has been attained. The focus of the study was to elicit the viewpoints of staff and the external publics. The analysis is based on the data collected on the research objectives; the purpose of the study is to find out the role community relations has played in building the corporate image of KATH.

#### **4.2 BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS (INTERVIEWEES)**

The respondents for this study were the public relations officer, some selected staff members of KATH and some selected members of the host community. All the respondents were purposively sampled. According to Opoku-Amankwa (2009) purposive sampling is when respondents are intentionally selected based on certain characteristics or qualities to meet the needs and requirements of the study. This intentional selection of respondents is based on the judgement of the researchers. All the twenty (20) respondents selected to partake in the study were those who the researchers deemed to have the qualities to meet the needs and requirements of the study.

### **4.3 COMMUNITY RELATIONS ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY KATH**

The first objective was to determine the community relations activities undertaken by KATH; this sought to find out what kind of community relations activities has been undertaken by the organisation within the host community. Every organisation and the kind of community relations activities performed to favor both the organisation and the community and what these activities meant to the organisation. This led to four (4) sub-questions. The first sub- question was to find out what community relations mean to the organisation. The practitioner indicated that “KATH regards community relations as a proof of its continued relevance to the socio-economic development of the country through enhanced access to specialist health care services to the needy.”

When asked in the interview, why is KATH undertaking community relations programmes? The researchers wanted to know why the organisation is undertaking these community relations programmes. The P.R.O. explained that it is in line with the hospital’s mandate and corporate social responsibility obligations. Thus, in line with Black’s (1989) statement, which says it’s a social responsibility of an organisation but ‘Being socially responsible also means that company should be held accountable for any of its actions that affect people, their communities and their environment. It implies that negative business impacts on people and society should be acknowledged and corrected; if at all possible it may require a company to forego some profits, if its social impacts are seriously harmful to some of its stakeholders or if its funds can be used to promote a possible goal.

The next question wanted to know if the organisation embarks on community relations and state some of these activities with reasons for carrying such activities. Community relations should be seriously taken into consideration by top management by (Black, 1989). Organisation have a large stake in the society in which it operates, it can flourish when it operates in a healthy and orderly society. It has responsibility as a corporate citizen with special abilities, resources and power. Good community relations will determine the success or failure of an organisation and should go beyond the open houses. They include helping concrete things happen in important areas. Any company that is aware of its social impact upon local communities will ultimately develop a social policy and will scarcely have community relations problems (Osuji, 1999). The practitioner responded that “KATH as a policy encourages its various departments and units as well as staff members to undertake routine community relations activities especially in the area of health education, training and provision of clinical services especially in under-served areas or communities.

The researchers sought to know what informed the organisation’s decision to embark on a particular community relations activity. Before an organisation will decide to carry out a particular activity it is either based on the needs of the host community or based on a research done by the organisation to know what will benefit the community. It emerged that, such programmes are usually informed by a number of reasons which are:

- a. Social Needs- for maximum impact, the hospital identify a felt need of a particular community of group of persons and provide a service that would have a maximum positive impact on the beneficiaries.



- b. Interest of partners- the hospital has a number of collaborations with internal and external institutions and depending on the interest of such partners, community relations programmes are tailored to leverage the strengths and resources of these partners in order to reach as many beneficiaries as possible.
- c. Institutional capacity- the hospital's specialist human resource and other capacities also play a role in determining such programmes.
- d. Catchment area delineations- the hospital basically serves the northern part of the country and therefore as much as possible this geographical delineation determines which communities are selected for which outreach, for instance.
- e. Availability of funds- community relations activities cost a lot of money and time to plan and execute and where funds are unavailable, such programmes may not be organized.
- f. Relation and Image improvement reasons- there are a number of times when such programmes are organized to help improve hospital relationship with a particular community or simply as an image improvement drive.
- g. Public Health considerations- emerging public health concerns with regards to an increase in the incidence of a particular health issue are at times considered.

Thus, in line with Thomas's (1981) assertion, which states that, socially responsible management of a business organisation must first of all have an awareness of the firms' obligation to solve some of the problems facing society. This awareness of social problem facing society, exist in the firms' relationship with its customers, owners, employees, suppliers, creditors, management, government, community and society in general. Secondly, there must be a willingness on all the part of the firms to help solve some of these social problems. Obviously not all the problems of

the society can be solved by business organisation, but the firm must be willing to tackle some of these problems.

#### **4.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS STRATEGIES**

The third objective was to find out how the implementation of community relations strategies have contributed to the corporate image of KATH, four (4) sub- questions were asked namely:

1) How do you measure the impact of your community relations activities? 2) Please tell us how your community relations programmes have contributed in enhancing the corporate image of KATH? 3) How has community relations helped in building the corporate image of KATH? a) What specific community relations activities helped in building the corporate image? 4) What image do you think the public's has about the organisation based on the community relations activities?

The researchers asked the respondent how they measure the impact of their community relations activities. The measuring of community relations activities can be done in a number of ways which includes monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring the community relations activities can be done by observing the community relations programmes which are in progress. Thus, by giving responsibilities to other members who intend report to the one in charge by so doing helps the practitioner monitor the flow of activities. Also the community relations activities must be aligned with the set goals and objectives of the organisation to see if they are on course. Furthermore, the community relations programmes can be assessed through feedback and recommendations from participants or beneficiaries. The evaluation of these activities guides the organisation for reconsideration or reshaping for future programmes. The practitioner stated that

among others, feedback from beneficiary communities/patients and staff involved in such programmes helps them to measure the level of effectiveness of such activities.

When the Practitioner was asked how has your community relations programmes contributed in enhancing the corporate image of the organisation. The compliance and non-compliance with the idea of corporate philanthropy determine the measure of goodwill, cordiality and continued acceptance an organisation enjoys in its business premises (Nweke, 2001). He indicated that the community relations programme has helped to project the hospital's reputation as a leading specialist health care service provider and enhanced its relations with some key stakeholders. An example is the free eye screening and ophthalmic care provided to members of the regional branch of the Ghana Journalists Association.

The researchers sought to find out how community relations has helped in building the corporate image of the organisation and what specific community relations activities helped in building the corporate image. The community relations programmes help the organisation to know the perceived image the publics have about the organisation which affects the reputation of the organisation positively or negatively. The respondent stated that it has contributed to building a positive image of the hospital and highlighted on the following as specific community relations activities that has helped in building the corporate image of the hospital.

- a) Free medical screening for schools, communities and other identifiable groups.
- b) Public health education.
- c) Medical outreach to under-served communities.
- d) Donation of medical consumables to needy health institutions.

- e) Training of health professionals in district hospitals.
- f) Provision of communication gadgets to some district hospitals to facilitate their consultations on maternal and child health issues with KATH Specialists.
- g) Provision of complex surgeries such as heart operations for needy patients free of charge or at highly subsidized rates.
- h) Release of staff who volunteer for medical missions to the hinterlands with other medical charities.

When asked what image do you think the publics have about the organisation based on the community relations activities?” the way and manner the public’s perceive an organisation will let the management of an organisation know if their community relations activities performed is loved by the members of the host community or disliked by them. The publics will determine the success of the organisation or the failure of it. Nweke (2001) is of the view that, People, who live in a community and corporate entity, must practice interdependence, collaboration and unification and should strive to eschew all forms of selfishness by working assiduously towards a common goal. People cannot enjoy a good life without these institutions, and these organisations can exist profitably only with the support of the community. The practitioner indicated that “the image held by the external publics is positive and explained that mostly, these activities are provided at the doorsteps of beneficiaries either free of charge or at highly subsidized rates and this endears them to the hospital.”

#### **4.5 THE IMAGE THE COMMUNITY HAS ABOUT KATH**

Based on the community relations activities performed by an organisation, members of the host community will have a perceived image about the organisation and this can affect the organisation in a positive or negative way. To find out what kind of image the community has about KATH, Eight (8) questions were asked namely: 1) Can an organisation survive without Community Relations? Why or why not? 2) Why do you think KATH embarks on community relations? 3) What does the name of the organisation mean to you? 4) What's the first thing you think of when you hear the organisation's name? 5) Have you participated in any community relations programmes organized by KATH? 6) What is your impression of the organisation's products and services? 7) Would you care to be employed by the organisation? Why or why not? 8) Please describe the organisation in your own words. Do you see a need for change or improvement? How and where?

The researchers wanted to find out if an organisation could survive without Community Relations? Thirteen (13) of the respondents answered 'No' and explained that organisation depend on clients to survive and therefore the community and the organisation are intertwined. The organisation produces the products for the community and people must buy or patronize for the organisation to have continuity. This position is in consonance with Lesley's (1990) assertion, if one is desirous of success, one has to keep abreast of changes within the locality. According to him community refers not only to a group of people living on the same locality but to the interaction of those people". In the past the tendency was to treat a community as a rather simple entity, a collection of people, and a home town. Five (5) other respondents stated that organisations can survive without community relations depending on the kind of business they

engage themselves in and the goal of which the organisation is driving at but, also explained that it is good to build a stronger relationship with the host community because they can make or unmake the organisation. One (1) other respondent answered that organisation can fully be in business and achieve success without engaging in community relations.

When the respondents were asked why you think KATH embarks on community relations. An organisation embarks on community relations because it is their social responsibility by (Black, 1989). Peak (1978) also states that effective community relations is an institutions plan, active and continuing participation with and within a community to maintain and enhance its environment to the benefit of both the institution and the community. Seventeen (17) out of the nineteen (19) respondents stated that KATH embarks on community relations as part of corporate social responsibility and explained that it's a way of giving back to the society. This is in line with Black's (1989) statement. One (1) other respondent said that the hospital embarks on community relations for goodwill and to build a stronger relationship with the host community which at the long run projects the image of KATH. Another respondent answered that "I think the hospital basically does that to know the needs and grievances of its publics".

On the question of what the name of the organisation meant to the public? Seven (7) of the respondents answered that KATH is a health facility that provides quality health care also an organisation set up to train professional doctors, nurses and also provide medical services to the general public. Another respondent said that it is a hospital that bears the name of one fetish priest who ever lived in the Ashanti Region and further he explained that it tell how Ghanaians and for that matter Ashanti's value culture, showing some kind of respect and paying a sort of tribute to the dead priest. These responses were deduced based on the perceived image by the

publics. Thus, from the community relations programmes that was carried out by the organisation.

The researchers sought to find out what's the first thing you think of when you hear the organisation's name. The name that comes in mind when asked from the respondents; a number of responses were given. This was due to the supposed image they have about the organisation being it direct dealing or indirect dealing with the organisation. Basically with regards to an organisation it is due to what has been done which has affected the publics in a negative or positive way. Eight (8) respondents said that the first thing that comes to mind when they hear of KATH is that KATH is a health centre. Nine (9) other respondents responded that as soon as they hear the name KATH, they think of the organisation which caters not for the community. The community relations activities of KATH have not projected a good corporate image of the company comes in mind. Two respondents (2) also said by the mention of KATH a good hospital comes, free medical screening and blood donation comes in mind.

When the researchers asked have you participated in any community relations programmes organized by KATH?" Nine (9) respondents answered 'Yes' and explained that they participated in blood donation exercise, free medical screening exercise and soccer fiesta. Ten (10) other respondents answered 'No' because the organisation does not provide for the community, they prefer to see development taking place within the community. When asked "What is your impression of the organisation's services?" seventeen (17) respondents answered the services provided by KATH are good and they have the patients at heart. One (1) respondent said that their services are very encouraging but attitudes of some workers are uncalled for. Another

respondent said that they have highly skilled professionals ready to serve patients.

When asked “Would you care to be employed by the organisation? Why or why not? Fifteen (15) respondents out of the nineteen (19) respondents said why not and explained that since they are from the host community when such opportunities are given they will grab it. Four (4) respondents answered ‘No’ and explained that they do not like being within hospital environment. On the question of describing the organisation in your own words and do you see a need for change or improvement? How and where? All the respondents said there is the need to change certain things at the hospital such as the behavior of nurses and other staff, the cash and carry system.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter concludes the study. It provides a summary of conclusion and recommendations drawn from the study.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The findings lead to the conclusion that for the organisation to have a peaceful relationship with their host community, a well planned community relations policy has to be put in place. The researchers have in this work examined the role of community relations in building the corporate image of KATH. Relevant literature in the subject have been reviewed, which tries to showcase the diverse opinions of some scholars on the most effective ways of ensuring good relationship with the host community in which the organisation is located. Though the community projects are expensive, it gives an organisation the needed serene business atmosphere.

Yet, if the practical measures are applied, the company as well as the community will continue to enjoy the rewards of good community relations. It also proves that business organisations have some responsibilities to their host community and that a company cannot survive without good community relations. From the study, the host community (Bantama) proves that the basis behind the disputes in the area can be attributed to KATH's neglect of the community. The supposed community related projects of KATH in the area are only seen on the papers. This has badly affected the corporate image of KATH.

## **5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Management, staff and publics felt reluctant in providing information at some instance. Due to the duration for submission of the project work by the university college, the research was limited as a matter of fact time constraint; the researchers were unable to expand the scope of the study to other health institutions. The nature of the study does not allow generalization of the findings.

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the findings made certain recommendations are hereby made which will help KATH in solving community relations problems:

- i. **Social Policy:** there should be awards of scholarships and employment of host inhabitants by KATH is necessary for effective business transaction. The current effects of these health education, training and provision of clinical services needs not be overemphasized.
- ii. **Crisis Management:** To end disputes in the areas and unforeseen occurrence, the community relations department of KATH should dialogue with the opinion leaders to ensure free flow of communication between KATH and the community.

## **5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study is based on KATH alone and it does not cover all the health facilities in the host communities. For further studies therefore, the following areas are suggested:

- i. To fairly assess the community relations programmes of KATH and those of other health organisations in the host communities.
- ii. To critically examine the employee relations of KATH.

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## **APPENDIX I**

### **Profile of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH)**

Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) is located in Kumasi, the Regional Capital of Ashanti Region with a total projected population of 3,204,609 (1998). The geographical location of the 1000-bed Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, the road network of the country and commercial nature of Kumasi make the hospital accessible to all the areas that share boundaries with Ashanti Region and others that are further away. As such, referrals are received from all the northern regions (namely, Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions), Brong Ahafo, Central, Western, Eastern and parts of the Volta Regions.

In the 1940s, there was a hospital located on the hill over-looking Bantama Township designated African and European Hospitals. As their names implied, the African side treated Africans while the European side treated Europeans. However, on some rare occasions, high-ranking African government officials were given treatment in the European section. By 1952, the need to construct a new hospital to cater for the fast increasing population in Kumasi and therefore Ashanti Region arose. The European Hospital was therefore transferred to the Kwadaso Military Quarters to make way for the new project to begin. In 1954/55 the new hospital complex was completed and named the Kumasi Central Hospital. The name was later changed to the Komfo Anokye Hospital in honour and memory of the powerful and legendary fetish priest, Komfo Anokye.

The hospital became a Teaching hospital in 1975 for the training of Medical Students in collaboration with the School of Medical Sciences of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology formerly University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

To determine the community relations activities undertaken by KATH.

1. Does KATH embark on community relations activities, Please specify some activities and explain reasons for carrying out these activities?
2. What does community relations mean to KATH?
3. Why is KATH undertaking community relations programmes?
4. What community relations programmes is KATH undertaking?
5. What informed your decisions to embark on a particular community relations activity?

### **OBJECTIVE 2**

To find out what kind of image the community has about KATH.

1. Can an organisation survive without Community Relations? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think KATH embarks on community relations?
3. What does the name of the organisation mean to you?
4. What's the first thing you think of when you hear the organisation's name?
5. Have you participated in any community relations programmes organized by KATH?
6. What is your impression of the organisation's products and services?
7. Would you care to be employed by the organisation? Why or why not?
8. Please describe the organisation in your own words. Do you see a need for change or improvement? How and where?

### **OBJECTIVE 3**

To ascertain how the implementation of community relations strategies has contributed to the corporate image of KATH.

1. How do you measure the impact of your community relations activities?
2. Please tell us how your community relations programmes have contributed in enhancing the corporate image of KATH?
3. How has community relations helped in building the corporate image of KATH?
  - a) What specific community relations activities helped in building the corporate image?
4. What image do you think the public's has about the organisation based on the community relations activities?