

Analysis of Public Relations Strategies for Management of Employer and Employee Relations: A Study of UBA and Zenith Bank PLC Abakaliki

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study is to analyze the techniques and programs of public relations in the financial institution in Nigeria. The progress of any firm is determined by the level of relationship between the employer and his employees. The researcher studied two commercial banks, United Bank of Africa (UBA) and Zenith Bank Plc Abakaliki Branches. Descriptive survey Method was adopted in the study with five likert scale mean rating in the analysis of the data. The sample size of 58 was chosen through Wimmer and Dominic online mass media calculator. The study revealed: that public relations offices in UBA and Zenith banks have created strong relationship between the management and their staff, that different public relations strategies have been applied in their respective banks in order to bring cordial relationship in their institutions like messages, welfare packages, seminar, promotions, conference and award of gift, etc. The study recommends that more effective strategies should be adopted to boost the economy high and the welfare of married women should properly handle.

Keywords: Public Relations, Public Relations Strategies, Employer and Employee Relations, Banks.

I. INTRODUCTION

The competitive nature of the modern banking sector in the Nigeria needs proper co-ordination of their human resource of the organization for it to function well. The management of banks cannot succeed without the employment of workers [1,2,3]. The progress of any establishment is determine by the levels of relationship between workers and their employees. According to [4] the beginning of establishment of business is the employment relationship between the employer and the employee. In the banking sector, the employee and employer relation need to be strengthen in order to achieve the aim of the establishment. The origin of employer-employee relations in Nigeria can be traced to have started before the colonial era in the form of rural economy, culture and conventions which were the reasons for arrangement of work and reward [5]. In view of Tansel and Gazioghlu, 2012 as cited in [6], the development of employer and employer relationship is very important for the satisfactory execution of any firm and for the employee to occupy in the organization. However, all forms of development, success and advancement can only be achieved within the context of cooperation and collaboration [7]. Employees are the central point at which every organization will grow [8]. Bank business is hectic for uncoordinated workers to operate. The well cordial relationships of the owners and the workers have to work hand in hand to survive in this era of technology. [8] opines that for banks to survive and thrive in a globally competence market place, organization must adopt a broad strategies that will give them a sustainable and competence advantage.

The strategic method adopted in any organization cannot be affective without a well design relations with the partners. For the relations to stand strong public relation must be put in place. According to [9] public relation is the major contribution of organizational success. Public relations, according to British Institute of Public Relation defined it as “a deliberate planned and sustain effort to establish and maintain understanding between and organization and it public”. To the institution, public relation is international and aimed attaining set goals [10]. The planned effort of public relations officers in financial institution is the reflection of the advancement of such establishment. Public relations activities are usually planned effort to maintain goodwill and understanding with it public are constantly maintained. Public relation stands to build strong relation between employer and employee relation, employee and the personnel that are being employed to work in an organization. In order to achieve the aims of the organization it is necessary to apply public relation to form good and achievable relation in any establishment. According to [11] describe employees as one the most important determinant and leading factors that facilitate the success and failure of any organization in a competitive environment. United Bank of Africa (UBA) is one of the commercial banks in Nigeria that has thrived in the financial institution in Nigeria and beyond. The establishment of UBA started operation in Nigeria in 1948 as a branch of British and French Bank for Commerce and Industry. It has its headquarters in Lagos. UBA is one of the oldest banks in the country, it offer deposit product, loans, mortgages etc. It has over 12,500 employees with over 14 million customers globally with more than 1,000 branches nationwide. Zenith Bank Plc

was formerly established in May 1990 and commenced operation in July of the same year. The bank becomes public limited company on 21st October 2014. The bank has over 5000 branches in Nigeria, [12].

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The relationship between the key owners of the banks and the employees need to be properly harmonized for such organization to thrive in this competitive era. Lack of good relationship has made banks not to achieve the intended goals for some decade. The extent to which some banks sale off to other bank is a good example of the advise effect of employee relation challenge. In recent time, Diamond Banks, seize to exist. However, for other banking sector to continue to exist, a strongly relations strategies have to be put in place. The female workers of banks who newly married do not find the job easy. Mostly, many born babies are not allowed to carry their babies in the banks. In the same vein, the maternity leave for the female workers and much consideration well. It is pertinent to note that when employment relationship is defective there are tendencies for many factors to emerge which will adversely affect job performance, [12]. The relationship between employer and employee can be attributed to the relationship between a mother and her baby, the child may die and the aims bearing child will end off if the relationship of the relationship is off . Many banks have seized to operate. This may be as a result of poor management of the employees in such banks. Every good work need a reward, every employee in private or public sector need to be rewarded after delivering a function or task which is then destined to pay [10]. As the workers of banks work hard to meet the demand of their employer, the employer needs to appreciate their effort very well. Bank services are very difficult type therefore good packages should be put in place. Employer anticipate that employees will convey a designated task to their satisfaction while employees also anticipate that their employers will guarantee them of satisfactory salaries after they humbly carryout what is expected of them [11].

In view of the above, there is need for proper public relation strategies to have the welfare packages of the employees to enhance the productivity of the organization. [10] described public relations as reputation builders. To him, public relation in all ramification are very importance for nay organization that seek profits. Lack of good communication and understanding between employer and employee has a continuous challenge that organization face in the relation with their employees. Many workers in the bank have been sacked without proper and reasons. This has created fear and panic to others. It is important that good public relation strategies must be employed to improve the lives of the workers. Public relation strategy can be properly handled to create a special bond thereby enhancing the services of the organization [9]. This study is geared to analyze the public relations strategies in the management of employer and employee relations in financial institution in Nigeria, how affective employee relations as well as strategies can assist banks to retain their staff and build a growing financial institution.

Objectives of the Study

1. To ascertain the effectiveness of public relations in creating good relations between the employer and employees of UBA and Zenith Bank Plc Abakaliki Branch.
2. To find out the Public relations strategies applied in UBA and Zenith Bank Plc.
3. To verify the levels of satisfactions between employers and employee in achieving the aims and objective of the UBA and Zenith Bank Plc.
4. To know the extent public relations programmes have positively affected the relationship between employer and employees relations.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. To what extent have public relation created relationship between employer and employees relations in the UBA and Zenith Bank Plc?
2. What are the public relations strategies applied in UBA and Zenith Bank?
3. To what extent have these strategies satisfy the goals of these banks?
4. Have the programs of public relations positively affect the relationship between employee and employers relations?

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Public relation programmes or strategies are determined by the establishment by which such they operate. The aims and objective of any organization is always the front focus of a public relations officers to achieve maximum cooperation among the personnel involves. The lack of cordial relationship between organizations and it workers had made it mostly difficult for organization to achieve its aims and objective [8].

Public Relations Strategies

The view of the public relation on banks is to achieve a set up goals. Strategies are synonymous with the techniques or style the Public relations apply to create good relationship to the establishment. According to [10] Bank public relations strategies must reorganize the problems and be ready to address them appropriately. In his view, public relations officers should start addressing banks internal problem that rob off negatively on his image, and they must:

- Continue to package appropriate training programmes that will help to improve good service delivery.
- Put in place enlightenment programmes to regularly educate bank top management on the negative impact of boardroom.
- The banks must recognize the important responsibilities of public relations unit and strengthen them accordingly to be able to perform these responsibilities efficiently and effectively.
- The bank public relation unit must be cost oriented with strong recognitions of the managements

Public Relations Programmes in Banks

The activities of public relation in financial institution is not far from their activities in other institutions, according to [6,8] the following are the strategies applied:

- 1 Conferences, seminars and workshop for employees
- 2 Speeches and press releases
- 3 Some charitable donations
- 4 In-house magazine

Other form of strategies may include: publicity in any media, inter personal communication and recognition of employee performance and giving of award.

IV. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Employee relation is very pertinent in enlightening the performance of any organization or establishment. The management and coordination of human activities is the key point of achieving organizational survival [2]. Employee relations are strategies, programs and technology to effectively manage how firms relate to prospective employers [12]. Without good relationship between the employer and employee, administration cannot be formed. Employees relations is the link that hold the workforce of any organization together for achieving of its goals. According to [11] employees were the major asset of any organization. He stated that “employee relations management activity helps in strengthening the bond among the employee and ensure that each one is contented and enjoy a healthy relations with each other”. Effective monitors and manages the relation Employee relation is a cordial relationship that put healthy communications that promotes the organization. According to [11] employee relation is the process of adopting various controlling method and practices to regulate the relationship between company and its staff. He viewed employee relations as a process and strategy while [8] described employee relations as communication. Thus, employee relations management is effective organisational communications that build employee confidence, trust and loyalty, enabling management to realize the potential of the souls and knowledge within the organization [9]. Communication level of organization determine to grown and development. Good communication brings understanding. The mutual relationship between employer and employee is perceived by good communication to avoid communication gap between the two groups, the need of public relation comes in. to maintain clear relations with the employee depend on the credibility [10]. It further suggests that, “there must be a climate of trust between the management and the staff”. There is big need that the employee perform well by cultivating good communication with their customers for the protection of the institution they working.

V. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

There is no doubt that challenges due occur between the employer of banks and its employees. To help the financial institution grow, there is need that public relations is employ to stand as mediator in order to foster the growth and development of banks in Nigeria. Public relations strategies are the tools applied by public relations in maintaining cordial relationship within the establishment in achieving its aims and objectives. public relations is a crisis control measure. There are many other studies that have done in past with regard to the public relations strategies, employee relations and uses of public relations in banking sector in Nigeria. [11] studied on “The Use of Public Relations Strategies by Commercial Banks during the Recapitalization of the Banking Sector in Nigeria” 2004-2009. The study was aimed to ascertain the effectiveness of public relations strategies employed by the banks during recapitalization exercise of 2004-2009. The research adopted an explanatory mixed method in designing the study. The research revealed that commercial banks applied public relations strategies during the recapitalization exercise, the Bank’s public relations in a moderate form influenced customs confidence on that banks during the recapitalization exercise. It also found that inadequate funding was the major challenge the public relation/corporate communication. The study recommended that

commercial banks must maximally harness the potentials of public relations to secure and consistently maintain a good image of their institutions. [10] in his study on “Substantiating Public Relations Contribute to Organisational Success in Nigeria’s Banking Sector” which the research used survey method. The study revealed that; banks generate public relation ideology, that public relations make important contribution to the banks. The researcher recommends that banks in Nigeria should elevate the status of their public relation unit and that public relations executive should have a multi-disciplinary training that will make them more competent in their duties.

Olanrewaju (N.D), in his work entitled the role of public relations in banking business of the future. The researcher examine the bank’s image making efforts, the public’s perception of the banks and how public relations can contribute to a successful banking practice. The study applied qualitative method of gathering data. The research recommends that public relations in bank should focus more on the customers’ satisfaction and remove barriers that are capable of shielding bank activities.

VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The study is anchored on ‘Involvement Theory’ The theory of involvement was propounded by Astin in 1984. The ideology of the founder is on the importance of involving employee with the management decision. According to [11] involvement theory is seen as strategic means of facilitating all areas of employee cognitive and emotional development. The three component of involvement include informative with other co-workers. The theory of involvement observed the significant of employee recognition by the management in order to foster the achievement of the firm or organization. This theory is found relevant as it reflect on employer and employee relation. There is a link between other studies that have been reviewed and the present study. In scrutiny of the review, all the study boarded on the public relations in banking sector. However, survey method was almost applied in their analysis. All these studies guided the researcher to formulate the objective of the study and adopt a unique method that suit the present study.

VII. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey method. This involves the application of primary and secondary data collection method gathering required information for the study.

The researcher used structured questionnaire to gather the primary data while the secondary data is sourced through Local and international journals, books, blogs and other important materials for the study.

Population of the Study

The total aggregate of the data within the area of this study consist of the staff and management of United Bank for Africa UBA in Abakaliki branch. These branches include UBA Ogoja road I and II and Ziks Avenue branch. The total staff and management officers are 99 staff and management. For Zenith Bank consist of two branches Ogoja road and Waterworks Road Branch. These banks consist of 46 staff and management officers. This figure is captured through the management of the banks under the study. Total population 99 +46 = 145.

Determination of Sample Size

Sample is a selected element of the population of the study.

To determine the sample size of this study the research adopter Winner and Dominic online mass media sample size calculator. The confidence level of the calculation was 5% with 10.0 margin error. The sample size is

Sample Technique

The specification of how the sample sizes are drawn from quota sampling. The type of sampling that is selected based in population density of the area each study.

Instrument of Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire covered all the research question stated above. A five point likert scale was adopted. The respondents were required to rate according to their conscience

SA	= Strongly Agree	= 5 point	
A	= Agree	=4 point	
U	=Undecided	=3 point	
D	=Disagree	=2 point	
SD	=Strongly Disagree	=1 point	
5+4+3+2+1	=	<u>15</u>	
		5	= 3.0

Decision Rule:

Decision Rule: 3.0 and above accept, while 2.9 below reject.

VIII. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table one: research question one; To what extent have public relations created relationship between employer and employee relation in UBA and Zenith Bank?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	SD	D	FX	\bar{X}	DECISION
1	There is a functional public relations officers in our bank	15	23	6	11	3	210	3.62	Agreed
2	The functions of public relations have not been properly identified in our banks	9	10	5	16	18	150	2.58	Disagreed
3	The relationship between the employer and employee is very strong in our bank with the help of public relations	24	17	4	9	4	222	3.82	Agreed
Grand mean								3.34	Agreed

Source: field survey 2019

Table one answered research question one above; the respondents agreed with the mean rate of 3.62 that there is functional public relations officers in their respective banks, while in item two the respondents reacted that even though, there is public relations officers in their banks. Their functions have not manifested very well. In item three the respondents agreed with mean rate of 3.82 that there is strong relationship between the employers and the employee with the help of public relations officers

Table two: research question two; What are the public relations strategies applied in UBA and Zenith Bank?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	SD	D	FX	\bar{X}	DECISION
4	Public relations officers in my bank use different programs like publicity, interpersonal communication, messages	26	22	2	5	3	237	4.08	Agreed
5	There is intermittent seminar, conference and workshop for employees	7	9	10	19	13	152	2.62	Disagreed
6	Public relations have made staff feel belonged	20	25	2	7	4	224	3.86	Agreed
Grand mean								3.52	Agreed

Source: Field Survey 2019

Table two above answered research question two; the staff and managements of the banks agreed(4.08) that public relations officers use strategies like publicity, interpersonal communication, messages and other form of relations. In item five the respondent disagreed that there is intermittent seminar conference and workshop for the staff. The implication is that it though long time before such programs occurs. On the other hand, the still agreed that public relations officers have made them feel belonged despite the nature of their job.

Research Question Three: To what extent have these strategies satisfy the goal these banks?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	SD	D	FX	\bar{X}	DECISION
7	The objective of the bank management have been achieved with the help of public relations	26	19	2	4	7	199	3.43	Agreed
8	There is job satisfaction through public relations programs	19	22	0	8	9	208	3.58	Agreed
9	There is a good relationship between the management and the employees of the banks	22	17	3	11	5	214	3.68	Agreed
Grand mean								3.56	Agreed

Source: Field Survey 2019

The respondents in item seven concurred with the mean rate of 3.43 that the objectives of the bank management have been achieved through the help of public relations. In the same vein, the respondents agreed to have experience job satisfactions. In item nine there is total agreement that there good relationship between the management and the employees of the banks.

Research Question Four: Have the programs of public relations positively affect the relationship between the employer and employee relations?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	SD	D	FX	\bar{X}	DECISION
10	Public relations strategies in the banks have effectively brought good development to the institution	20	15	2	13	8	200	3.44	Agreed
11	The welfare of the nursing women have been properly handled	7	11	4	19	17	146	2.51	Disagreed
12	public relations have created good relationship for our bank workers	12	16	5	14	11	178	3.06	Agreed
Grand mean								3.00	Agreed

Source: Field Survey 2019

In item ten (3.44 mean rate) above the respondent confirmed that public relations strategies applied in their banks have effectively brought good development to the institutions. On the other hand, item eleven (2.51 mean rate) the welfare of the nursing women staff of these banks have not been properly handled. In the conclusion, the respondents in item twelve(3.06 mean) accepted that public relations have created good relationship for the bank workers.

IX. FINDINGS

The researcher discovered the following after necessary survey

1. public relations officers in UBA and zenith Banks have created strong relationship between the employers and the employees.
2. It takes long time before bank hold seminar and workshop or conferences due to the nature of their work
3. The public relations officers in these banks have apply different strategies like publicity measure, interpersonal communications, mail, workshop, seminar and making good communication with the management on the welfare of the staff.
4. The aims and objectives of UBA and Zenith Banks have been achieved with good effort of public relations officers.
5. The public relation strategies and techniques have positively affected the relationship between the staff and the managements.

X. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The programs and activities of public relations in bank have brought big development despite the had nature of their profession. The technicalities of public can only be achieved through good support of the management of the firm. The researchers recommend that: 1 More effective strategies should be adopted to boost the relationship of the employer and employee relations in financial Institution in Nigeria

2 The welfare of married nursing women should be properly handled

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