

Corporate Social Responsibility in Higher Institutions: A Study of Kogi State University, Anyigba

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Abstract

The study seeks to examine the role of Kogi State University in terms of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) and how its host communities have been positively influenced by its programmes. The study arose out of the need to finding a lasting solution to the increasing wave of attacks on the university by some aggrieved residents and hoodlums from the host communities. The study employed survey method whereby questionnaire, interview and field observations were used in gathering data on the university and its host communities. The sample size was drawn using Taro Yamane formula. The data for this study were analyzed using simple percentages and chi-square technique. Findings have revealed that KSU has played a considerable role in its CSR to its host communities. However, the host communities are not satisfied. The study notes that CSR is the necessary ingredients for continued peaceful cooperation within the communities it operates, and an important tool for mutual trust and goodwill between organization and its publics. KSU therefore need to equip its public relations unit with the necessary human and material resources to enable it constantly survey the feeling of its publics so that it can sustain harmonious relationship.

1.0: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

A key indicator to determine the true worth and value of modern organization is their ability to give back to the society part of what they earn through some mutually beneficial initiatives. These initiatives are encapsulated in the concept of corporate social responsibility. Considering that the objective of corporate organizations is to increase profit, this study is centered on the increasing calls for corporate entities to be socially and environmentally responsible. Organization operates in an environment and to create a conducive atmosphere for its business to thrive, it has to do so with public interest in mind. However, the deteriorating socio-political and economic situation in Nigeria seems to have made organizations not to make any meaningful impact on the social lives of the public.

According to Raufu (2005: 85), the principle behind CSR is that it is a social investment that derives from the notion that “*a company has a responsibility to the community in which it operates*” adding that the CSR has come to be part of public relations because it affects the image of an organization. The objective of CSR is image management, which is the essence of public relations.

In view of the dynamic nature of our environment, this study tries to examine corporate social responsibility as a tool for projecting the image of higher institutions with particular reference to Kogi State University, Anyigba. As observed, KSU on its part has carried out several CSR programmes. Following the establishment of Kogi State University in 1999, the university has played a considerable role to some extent in terms of its corporate social responsibility to the host community through the provision of employment opportunities, provision of bore-hole water supply, provision of education at the pre-nursery, primary to tertiary level, fire service, business development with respect to allocating space to prospective investors from the host community, conflict resolution/resettlement of Abadigba community, provision of venue for hosting seminars, conferences and weddings to both the university community and the host community, skill development through its established cashew processing plant, among others. Nevertheless, the host communities seems not to be satisfied as observed in the attack on the faculty of Agriculture by locals of Abadigba, Ojikpadala and Egume communities whose lands were occupied by the university. Also, the invasion of the university by thugs of Anyigba, and the unleashing of terrors in form of robbery, vandalism of the university properties among others within the campus. This is an indication that there is a vacuum in the university's relationship with its host communities.

CSR is the necessary ingredients to improve corporate image and continued peaceful coexistence between the university and its communities. CSR is therefore a recognizable tool for promoting mutual understanding and goodwill between an organization and the community it is operating in and the society at large. CSR is important that interest groups believe there is need to constantly and critically look at its role globally with a view to reviewing, standardizing, and sustaining it for efficiency, effectiveness, as well as creating a good image for organizations to thrive. CSR has become a proactive means to crisis resolutions and Kogi State University is not in isolation. It has not only become more meaningful, but it also provides a variety of opportunities for the university to strive to attain institutional goals. Meanwhile, due to the manner in which the image of the university is projected, it is critical that the units responsible for this important assignment be properly equipped to enable them live up to the highest professional expectations.

2.0: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research work seeks to examine the role played by KSU in terms of its corporate social responsibility programme in its host communities. The rate at which locals of the host communities terrorize staff of the university at their residential quarters and the constant vandalization of university's properties, naturally gives cause for concern. The staff residential quarters which hitherto were the most peaceful areas to live, has now become where most staff are living in fear and also considering relocation. Worst still, both lecturers and students of some faculties like Agriculture have been frequently harassed by locals of Agbadiba and Ojikpadala communities over unsettled land compensation. In the same vein, the corporate image of the university has often been treated with levity, despite its efforts to ensuring good reputation. This has been of concern. It is against this background that the paper examine whether Kogi State University is actually living up to its Corporate Social Responsibility.

3.0: AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to examine corporate social responsibility as tool of corporate image management in the higher institutions with particular study of Kogi State University, Anyigba.

The specific objectives of this study include the following:-

- i) To ascertain whether residents in the host community understand the concept of corporate social responsibility;s
- ii) To identify the efforts made by the management of Kogi State University in their corporate social responsibility;
- iii) To examine the challenges faced by Kogi State University in carrying out its corporate social responsibility project/programmes; and
- iv) To assess how Kogi State University's corporate social responsibility programmes to its host community is managed.

4.0: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the study/research questions:-

- 1) Are people aware of Kogi State University's corporate social responsibility programme?
- 2) Has Kogi State University Management carried out enough corporate social responsibility related project/programme in the host communities?
- 3) Does Kogi State University encounter any challenge in a bid to carrying out CSR project/programme in its host community?
- 4) How can Kogi State University's corporate social responsibility programme in its host community be rated.

5.0: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Though this work may not be all exhaustive, what is done here will add to knowledge as a way forward in understanding the concept of corporate social responsibilities in organizations. This paper would provide insight to the University as regards the area of community involvement in their activities to enable them claim ownership of their operations. It will enlighten the public of the good intentions of the university in assisting the host communities for the good image not only of the university, but generally that of the country and project the university, and by extension Nigeria in a good image.

6.0: SCOPE OF THE STUDY

According to Ohaja (2003: 67), the idea behind delineation of boundaries is to avoid embarking on an unmanageable venture, hence the need to define the boundaries of this study. In this work, the factors that affect or limit the study include the questionnaire and sampling. Due to level of understanding or reasoning of some respondents, there is tendency for them not to be as objective as possible.

This study covers Anyigba where the university is located and its environ. Anyigba is bound by various communities. It shares boundary with Agala-ward in the North, Ojikpadala ward in the South. Abocho ward in the North-West, Agbeji ward in the south, Egume-Ome in the East and Ofugolo in the West. Anyigba is a home to several communities which include Anokwu I, Anokwu II, Ojofu, Kaduna-Efekpe, Ajetachi, Iji I, Iji II, Oyifu, Omedo, Ijebu-ode, Ojuwo, Ofejikpi, Ogane-Aji, Obeya-Kekele, Abuja, University village among others. Anyigba is strategically located at the centre of Igala land (Kogi East), with a total land area of 225.7 hectares, in which residential land use has the highest used percentage of 137.7 hectares (Adeniyi, 2005 and Musa, et al 2010).

7.0: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORITICAL ISSUES

7.1: The Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility

Broadly defined, CSR is an organization's commitment to operate in an economically and

environmentally sustainable manner while recognizing the interest of all its stakeholders (Carrol, 1991). According to Adebayo (1998: 27), CSR is what an organization does to contribute to the social, economic, political or educational development of the community where it is located, but which it is not compelled to do by any law.

Raufu emphasized that CSR has come to be part of public relations because it affects the image of an organization. Raufu emphasized that CSR is not a waste but an excellent opportunity “bank” on goodwill of the community. Jacquie L’Etang (1990) in Raufu (2005: 86) observed that *“the task of public relation is to ensure that CSR is truly representative of organization and that the image matches reality”*. For this reason, Nworgu (2007: 133) states that CSR has become a veritable tool for effective public relations. Ubani (1997:231) and Asemah (2011: 99) agreeably defined CSR as: *“an intelligent and objective concern for the welfare of the society that restrains individual and corporate behaviors from ultimately destructive activities, no matter how immediately portably and lead in the direction of positive contribution to human betterment”*.

Failure to act this way leads organization to crisis, as pointed in Okpe et al (2007:78) *“Once violence became a major instrument of shapping the emergence of Nigerian state”*. This was due to a dissatisfied political and socio-economic situation in Nigeria. Anifowose (1982:132) confirmed that *“The Federal Government was therefore drawn into the crisis to quell what seemed to constitute a revolt by a dissatisfied segment of one region of the Nigerian federation”*. It confirms that when a segment of the community around the organization’s operational location is dissatisfied, the consequence is crisis. Otite (1991) cited in Okpe (2007:93) defined conflict as *“a struggle over values and claim to scarce status, power and resources in which the aim of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals”*. Such conflicts could be informing of religion, ethnic or communal, or economic. Examples of such conflicts especially from the middle belt region where the case study is located, and as listed by Shut (2004) in Okpe (2007:99) include Tango-Kataf in Kaduna State, Tiv/Azara in Nassarawa State, Tiv-Jukun in Taraba State, Bachama-Hausa in Adamawa State and Jos Crisis in Plateau State. Nworgu (2007:96) sees crisis as a situation which occur due to unattended demands or clash of interest which can impact positively or negatively on the organizations overall performance. Newsom et al (2010:315) states that crisis challenges organizations to live up to their reputation, and the way a crisis is handled determined the outcome, both in the court of public opinion and in terms of organizations credibility. Newsom et al (2010:315) reiterated that *“crisis and credibility go hand in hand, and the first few years of the twenty-first century have had a high level of crisis and low level of credibility-a history of damaged control”*. Crisis does not occur in a vacuum. Newsom (2010) states that it occurs in an operational environment that includes all publics central to the organization, and an indirect environment which encompasses all other readily identified publics that usually are involved in the organization’s ongoing relationships with constituencies.

The philosophy behind the concept of corporate social responsibility as a key activity of public relation as put by Abodunrin (1995:13) is that public relations believes that all organizations have a need to be *‘socially responsible and accountable to the society at large and also the immediate community where they operate by obeying laws and regulations, contributing to polices and paying taxes as and when due’*. Abodunrin (1995: 14) explained further that the basic of public relations is that organizations have a social responsibility to contributes to the development and welfare of the communities where it operates. In essence, for the purpose of image management, public relations have to be sensitive to the welfare of its environment and to recognize the right of the communities to CSR. The basic underlining factor in public relations practice is that your operational environment matters and that the support of public opinion is of prime importance in all areas of organizational operations. This basic concept allows the establishment of mutual understanding between the university and its publics with the intention of creating and maintaining good image for itself. Therefore, CSR is basically the job of the public relations practitioner. Whatever an organization does has to be in the interest of the public because they are the major reasons why the organization exists.

Areas where corporate social responsibility could be extended according to Kalu and Igwe (2008: 19) includes: development of consumer-friendly product/standard and safety product; campaign against fraudulent and deceptive advertising processes; employee issues: equity and fairness in employment policies; environmental friendly: conserving and preserving the ecosystem; Provision of infrastructures, scholarship; cause related social responsibility i.e. showing concern to societal challenges for example traffic, HIV, Victims of Disasters, etc. Experts are of the opinion that the level of performance of corporate social responsibility is complex and depends on variety of factors; Peters and Maya (2002: 79), listed these factors as: profitability; size of firm; corporate goal; strategies; professionalism; level of consumerism; industry culture; personal and self code; and societal values and evolution.

7.2: Theoretical Perspectives

This study recognizes social responsibility theory as relevant to the issue of corporate social responsibility which is one among other things which can help higher institution earn trust, reputation and confidence of stakeholders. A key indicator to ascertain the true value and worth of contemporary organizations is their ability to give back to the society part of their income through some mutually beneficial initiatives. These initiatives are encapsulated in the concept of corporate social responsibility.

Knowledge does not exist in a vacuum but in every discipline; there is a body of theories that provides the explanation for observable phenomenon in that field. As assumptions are made and tested in the field through research, those that are validated become generalizations upon which theories are based (Ohaja 2003: 63). In clarifying this assertion further, Brooks (1970) in Ohaja (2003: 64) explained that theories facilitate understanding of issues in the field since through the findings of replicable research, it has been proven that given a specified number of variables or circumstances, a certain outcome can be expected.

According to Wogu (2008:69) although social responsibility theory grew out of libertarian theory, it has advanced since World War II to a new level of integrated theory. This theory work together with press freedom in the sense that the press must be free to perform its traditional social functions but has to do it within the confines of laws of the land. Wogu (2008:70) puts it that “*freedom is concomitant with obligation*”. This is in support of Daramola (2003:72) which states that “the press freedom theory propagates the right of the press to criticize any institution and even government, but it must be responsible enough to maintain the stability of the society”. The main theme of press freedom, libertarian and social responsibility theories is “in public interest”, and the philosophy is “liberty and restraint” Daramola (2003:73) summarizes social responsibility theory to mean that “*everyone who has something to say shall be heard, while the control of the press would be through the community opinions...*” According to Ajala (1993:70), scholars who believe in CSR see it as the responsibility to plan and manage an organizations relationship with all those involved in on affected by its activities. In this regard, CSR is seen as an opportunity to pay back to the committees around the operational environment of the organization. In doing so, it endeared itself to the host communities, concretize a positive relationship and consequently create a conducive and favourable operational environment. Hence this study recognizes social responsibility theory, which could all be used to contextualize studies.

8.0 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN KOGI STATE UNIVERSITY

Kogi State University (KSU) Anyigba, like any other corporate institution has two main publics, as identified by Osuji (1999:57) to include the internal public and external public. The internal publics include: The university council chairman & council members, university management team, headed vice chancellor, university senate, principal staff of the university and their office staff, deans of faculties, head of department, staff unions, senior and junior staff, students. On the other hand, the external publics of university include individuals and or organized groups outside the university whose actions may affect the institution positively or negatively. Such publics include; the Federal Government of Nigeria, Kogi State Government, Local Governments in the state, Anyigba, Abadigba, Ojikpadala and Egume communities, traditional rulers within the host communities, law enforcement agents e.g. Nigeria police, civil defense corps, political leaders, educational institutions the press, etc. For any meaningful development to be established, these groups of publics must be carried along. The university should be responsive to the needs of these various groups so as to enjoy their understanding and support for its programmes, policies and decisions.

The Public Relations and Protocol unit of Kogi State University (KSU), whose assignment it is to implement CSR related matters was established in 2005 as a step towards redeeming the negative image of the University whose 2005 NUC Accreditation report showed that only 9 out of 30 programmes of the University were then given accreditation. Then, the university within its six years of existence was seen by the members of the public as a “glorified secondary school”, as it lacked the basic requirements for academic viability. The institutions’ image was then portrayed as very negative in the local and international media. The public relations unit is located in the Vice Chancellor’s office which justified the belief that public relation is a management function. Osuji (1999:55) explained that “*although there may be some variations in the structure of P.R units in tertiary institutions, some fundamental basis remain constant*”. In this regards, the Public Relations Officer as the head is responsible directly to the Vice chancellor as the Chief Executive Officer of the University.

Osuji (1999: 57) states that “*the entire university depends on its public relations to provide its image relations needs*”. In the same means, the University’s Public Relations unit gives advice to the institution’s management on public relations matters, writing rejoinders, organizing press briefings and conferences, planning special events such as convocations, matriculations, endowment and development fund raising, university games, anniversary celebrations, meetings of Vice Chancellor or Registrars, visits of top government and diplomatic personalities, international figures, planning and publication of university newspapers, magazines, monitoring activities on the campus, collection and collation of information and research materials, providing vital information to the vice chancellor or other departments, interacting with students unions and other informal bodies in the campus. He also answers questions from parent and guardians of students and must always accompany the vice chancellor to meetings particularly where issues affecting students, staff, and communities are to be discussed. All these jobs are targeted at managing the image of the University.

8.1: The Implementation Structure

The implementation of corporate social responsibility is carried out by the Public Relations and protocol unit which is charged with the responsibility of establishing and maintaining mutual understanding between the university and its publics. The unit is structured into administrative and protocol section;

Community Relations section; and Current Affair/News production section.

a) **Administrative and Protocol section.** The administrative and protocol section is currently manned by an administration personnel. However, in an ideal situation, it should be manned by the experienced public relations man and report to the public relations officer (PRO) of the university is in reverse handled by an administrator. The unit is responsible for all protocol arrangements of the university especially as it borders on the office of the Vice Chancellor. Some of such duties include:

- i. Visiting of top government officials, traditional leaders, political leaders, academic dons, courtesy calls, student union leaders, and other publics of the university.
- ii. Organizing meetings, including council meetings, management meetings, committees, special events such as accreditation, convocations, matriculations, accommodation of guests of the university, receptions and social occasions etc.

These jobs are really supposed to be public relations activities that are usually capitalized on, for the making and sustenance of the institutional image and reputation.

b) **Community Relations Section.** As pointed out by Osuji (1999: 104), a community's perception of a company derives principally from the organizations employees who are ambassadors to the community. The Community Relations unit of Public Relations department of Kogi State University, to a large extent, is concerned with securing mutual understanding and cooperation between the university and its publics especially the host community, Anyigba and her environs. This university seems to be the only major industry to the community where it is located. Therefore, it is a major source of revenue to employees of the university and other enterprises. The community relations unit handles the following:

- ✓ Participate in recruitment of labour, thus reducing unemployment to a large scale in the host community, Anyigba and environs.
- ✓ Workers exposure to academic functions such as lectures, seminars, awareness forums, social function e.g. convocations etc.
- ✓ Donation of pipe- borne water, electricity extension project and graded the few roads around the university in order to better the lives of the community people.
- ✓ Regular consultation with the leaders of host community and other influential groups in the community. The university management should be able to pay attention to their opinions. Such meeting would also form a forum where decisions of management on certain policies can be relayed to the community leader in order to foster mutual understanding.
- ✓ Scholarship award to deserving children of the community can also be granted by the university authority in order to further the education of their words, thus fostering good relations.

c) **Current Affair/News Production Section:** This section is responsible for all interpretative writings and news publication for correct information to its publics. The Public Relations department of KSU is into 3 major news publications namely: *KSU weekly* which features current events in and around the university within the week of publication, the *KSU News Flash* which is expected to be a monthly publication that will herald the numerous activities within and without the university. It is controlled by the Assistant PRO (APRO) who is also responsible for all forms of media relations.

9.0: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

9.1: Research Design

The study is based on survey research design. The data for this research work were sourced from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources of data include questionnaire, oral interview and personal observation. While the secondary sources of data include government documents, text books, and journals. This involves gathering data from sampled respondents using the instruments of questionnaire, interview and personal observation.

9.2: Population/Sample Sizes

Anyigba has an estimated population of 72,000 (Ministry of Information, 2002), while 2006 population census puts the population of Anyigba at 81,323 (NPC, 2006). The population of Anyigba was estimated to be 82,909 in 2010 (Tifwa and Davwar, 2010). For the purpose of this study, Anyigba population was projected to 84,975 using the national population growth rate of 2.5%.

The sample size for this research work was restricted to the population of the study area. A number of models have been developed to estimate sample size. In determining the sample size that is adequate for this research work, the model developed by Taro Yamane (1967) was used. The formula is stated as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{84,975}{1 + 84,975 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{84,975}{1 + 84,975 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{84,975}{1 + 207.3}$$

$$n = \frac{84,975}{208.3}$$

$$n = 408$$

Where; n – The desired sample size

N – The population size under study

e – The limit of tolerable error assumed to be 0.05

1 – Unity (always constant) in value

The sample size derived from Taro Yamane's formula for this study is 408. However, this figure was approximated to 400. For the purpose of questionnaire administration, 400 questionnaires were administered to respondents in the study area based on the stratified zones.

9.3: Sample Procedure

The study is conducted in Anyigba, Kogi State, where the university is located, and its environ. For the purpose of this study, Anyigba was divided or stratified into four zones in order to ensure efficient questionnaire administration and data collection.

These zones are:

Zone A – the University campus, University village, and Ojikpadala, axis.

Zone B – Ajetachi, Ofejikpi, Anokwu I and Anokwu II axis.

Zone C – Apata-Okene, Abuja, Agudoko, and Omedo axis.

Zone D – Obeya, Ogane-Aji, Iji, and Agala axis.

Furthermore, Simple random sampling technique was employed in administering the copies of questionnaires to respondents in the stratified zones in the study area.

10.0: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section deals with the analysis of data collected in line with the research objectives and hypotheses. The study seeks to examine corporate social responsibility: A study of Kogi State University. . In analyzing both the primary and secondary data for this research work, the use of tables and percentages were used. Chi-square was used to test the hypothesis.

Table 10.1: Are you aware of Kogi State University's corporate social responsibility programme?

Options	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	375	93.75
No	25	6.25
No response	-	-
Total	400	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2012

Table 10.1, above indicates that the respondents have adequate understanding and knowledge of the concept of corporate social responsibility. This can be justified by the total number of 375 respondents representing 93.75 percent who gave their affirmation to the above assertion. While 25 respondents being 6.25 percent said that they are not aware of the concept of corporate social responsibility.

Table 10.2: Has Kogi State University Management carried out enough corporate social responsibility related project/programme in the host communities?

Options	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	130	32.5
No	215	53.75
No response	55	13.75
Total	400	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2012

Table 10.2 above shows that KSU has not carried out enough CSR related project/programme to its host community. And this can be justified by the fact that a total number of 205 respondents, which represents 53.75% affirmed to the above assertion.

Table 10.3: Do you think Kogi State University has encountered any challenge in a bid to carrying out CSR project/programme in its host community?

Options	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	220	55
No	155	38.75
No response	25	6.25
Total	400	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2012.

Table 10.3 above shows that the Kogi State University have had challenges in a bid to carrying out its CSR project/programme in its host community. And this can be buttressed by the fact that a total number of 220 respondents, representing 55 percent of the sampled population gave their affirmation to the above assertion. Findings reveal that the challenges encountered by KSU was due to the fact that the impacts of CSR projects were not adequately felt.

Table 10.4: How can you rate Kogi State University's corporate social responsibility project/programme in its host community?

Options	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very good	10	2.5
Good	95	23.8
Fairly good	105	26.25
Poor	190	47.5
Total	400	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2012

Table 10.4 above shows that the impact of KSU's corporate social responsibility to the host community is poor. And this can be proved by the total of 190 respondents, which represents 47.5 percent who affirmed to the above assertion. This is attributed to the fact that public awareness of CSR projects/programme in its host communities is low and that the university did not do enough in respect of its CSR. The panacea to this is for the University to embark on a comprehensive project awareness campaign and/or re-engineering its CSR strategies to embark on projects that will benefit the entire community in their own interest.

Chi Square test for table 10.0 (Contingency Table)

Options	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Very good	10	2.5
Good	95	23.8
Fairly good	105	26.25
Poor	190	47.5
Total	400	100

Source: table 10.4

$$\text{Computed } X^2 = \sum \frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$$

Where; X^2 = Chi Square
 o = Observed Frequencies
 e = Expected Frequencies

Options	Observed Frequency(o)	Expected Frequency(e)	(o-e) ²	(o-e) ²	(o-e) ² /e
Very good	10	100	-90	8100	81
Good	95	100	-5	25	0.25
Fairly good	190	100	90	8100	81
Poor	105	100	5	25	0.25
Total	400			X²	127.5

The degree of freedom is determined with the following formula:

$$df = (r-1) (c-1)$$

Where, r = row total

$$df = (4-1) (1-1)$$

$$x^2 (3) = 0.05 = 7.837$$

With the 3 degree of freedom at 5percent level of significance, the table value is 7.837 while the calculate value of 127.5.

Decision Rule:

Since the chi-square value calculated is greater than the table value, we reject Ho (null hypothesis) and accept Hi (alternative hypothesis) which states that host community has not felt any significant impact of KSU's

corporate social responsibility.

11.0 FINDINGS

CSR in Kogi State University when assessed based on performance, will be commended despite the many constraints facing it. For instance, in terms of her primary task of redeeming the negative image and reputation of the university both within and outside Nigeria, the unit has done fairly well. Information about the university's new policy and activities has been published to the consumption of the institutions publics through various designed media. The internal publics are continually informed through the *KSU News Flash Publication* and the *KSU weekly*. These news publications have no doubt, been able to harmonize relationship between the staff/students and top management. This practice was not there a few years before the creation of the public relations unit. On information management, the unit has engaged in other publications such as "29 giant strides in 29 Months". The publication in 2008 was targeted at informing the university's publics of the current development. The media relations programme of public relations unit was able to sell a new image and reputation of the university through the accreditation of courses, and aggressive improvement of basic infrastructure on campus.

The media relations programmes such as international press conference which was organized by the Public Relations unit during the last convocation ceremony, press releases, local and national news and magazine publication, Radio and TV commercials etc. Today, the hitherto "glorify secondary school" is now seen as an Institution of "academic excellence"

11.1 Areas of corporate social responsibility in KSU

➤ **Access to Water Supply:** The University have to a great extent contributed immensely in ensured that its staff and students have access to potable water supply, by constricting several boreholes on campus. These boreholes are not only opening to staff and students of the university but also to the whole community at large.

➤ **Access to the University Stadium:** The university stadium which has been built to promote sporting activities on campus have to a great extent projected the good image of the university in terms of its corporate social responsibility to its host community by giving the host community liberty to make use of the facility whenever they deem it fit. Activities such as campaign rally, crusade, annual, Igala Socio-political gathering like italo, football matches among others have been hold in the stadium at various occasions.

➤ **School Auditorium**

The school auditorium which is specifically meant to serve the university is also open to the host community. Members of the host community have the liberty of hosting wedding receptions, seminars, conferences, beauty pageants, and exhibitions.

➤ **Mosque and Churches:** Apart from the educational role the university is playing to the host community, members of the public have also enjoyed the privilege of building worships centers such as churches and mosque on the university campus. There is a mosque opposite the university clinic and another that is under construction which is opposite the university auditorium. You also have churches like the Catholic Church, chapel of restoration, church and a host of other student fellowships on campus.

➤ **Provision of Weather Data:** The weather station which is managed by the department of geography and planning of the university have played a great role in providing weather data not only to the university but also to the host community the weather data are accessible to farmers and other corporate bodies especially for agricultural planning and other purposes

➤ **Provision of Food:** In a boil to ensuring that there is basic food need at the grass root, the university has ventured into producing packaged water confectionaries and processed casher nuts for consumption by the host community. This have to some extent reduced the hurdle of getting some of these products from other suppliers.

➤ **Production of Poultry:** As part of its corporate social responsibility, the department of agriculture have contributed immensely in terms of production of poultry, cattle, eggs, and veterinary services which access is not restricted to staffs and students only but also to the host community.

➤ **Educational Role:** In addition to the tertiary education services offered by the institution, the management also established staff school to cater for the education of the pre-nursery, primary and secondary school pupils and students of which the admission is open to both wards of staff and non-staff (residents of the host community) to advance their academics.

➤ **Commercial Cyclist:** Apart from creating job opportunity for residents of the most community, The University has also created an enabling environment for commercial motor cyclist to work on campus thereby alleviating them from poverty.

➤ **Fire Service:** In view of the diverse role the university is playing to the host community, the university has also not relented in its effort on ensuring the safety of live and property. The fire service departments of the university have curtailed various fire incidences in the host community.

The fire service department in the month of September 2012 went to curtail a fire outbreak along Dekina road, precisely opposite the central garage/motor park.

➤ **HIV/AIDS Initiative:** The institution is committed to the promotion of preventive measures against HIV/AIDS including information and awareness campaigns for employers, their families, students and immediate communities, as well as to the promotion of voluntary and counseling and testing (VCT).

Apart from the above role which the university has played in terms of its CRS, it has been recently involved in mediation in order to achieve peace from a few social crises that cropped up around the university. Some of such crises include:

- i) **Road Traffic Accident:** An incident occurred in 2007 where a speeding vehicle knocked down two students on a motor bike in front of the university main gate where one of the students died leading to a rampage by the students. Unfortunately too, the convoy of Enugu state Governor, Sullivan Chime, on their way to Abuja opened fire at the rampaging students in front of the university and killed another student. This crisis which could have escalated across the country was tactically handled and affected families and persons were compensated accordingly. This is one of the most recent problems the management of the university successfully handled using her image management instrument.
- ii) **Invasion of the university by thugs of Anyigba:** The incident took place in 2009 where a group of armed youths from Anyigba town tramped into the senate building to question the university management over the result of post UME which according to them, did not favour Anyigba candidates. With Public Relations strategies, this crisis was resolved in conjunction with all stakeholders within and outside Anyigba.
- iii) **Attack on the faculty of Agriculture:** The locals of Abadigba, Ojikpadala and Egume communities whose lands were occupied by the university invaded the Faculty of Agriculture in series. This was due to undue delayed payment of compensation by the state government to the supposed land owners. A proper mediation was made by the university management through her Public Relations unit and the continued attack on the faculty ceased, as the land owners were compensated accordingly.
- iv) **Other crises which were adequately managed include,** university union e.g. ASUU, NASU, SSANU etc, students protest due to poor power and inadequate water supply on campus, students and Okada riders clash where a solution was devised by creating a union of 'campus Okada' just to mention a few crises. Beside crises management, the public relation unit of Kogi State University (KSU) has severally packaged the university in various social and academic function especially ceremonies and functions such as book presentation/donations, matriculation ceremonies, convocation, awareness campaigns/promotion, seminars etc.

11.2: Problems Of CSR In Kogi State University

Like most image management situations, Kogi State University has faced various problems which impede the needed accelerated progress in its job of image making. Some peculiar problems include the following:

- i. **Inadequate manpower:** The analysis of the organogram of the public relations functions demand delineation of responsibility. This simply means more professionals to handle different jobs including technical crew, planning research and documentation etc. More so, the entire staff of the department is not only six but inexperienced ones are up to four.
- ii. **Inadequate fund:** An ideal public relations unit demands enough fund to function effectively. The public relations unit of the university is not adequately funded. For public relations to function effectively, it would require a special and separate funding and some kind of autonomy. Public relations is involved in publications, running of commercials i.e. media relations, protocol etc which may not need a defined procedural request for funds as it is the case with KSU.
- iii. **Releasing of belated information:** Quite often, information published in the *KSU weekly* is belated. This in all ramifications is never a credit to public relations practice anywhere. Timeliness is one of the principles of effective communication. It is expected that news release by public relation be timely to avoid boredom.
- iv. **Undue Interference:** Request for implementation of programmes has often received undue hindrance and delay from principal officers of the university due to varying interest. This of course is not healthy to affective public relation functioning in the university.
- v. **Unskilled staff:** The entire public relations unit in KSU is comprised of six personnel out of which only the two principal officers, the PRO and his Assistant are trained professionals in the field of public relations. Other members of the unit who are predominantly junior staff are either partially knowledgeable in communication techniques or totally inexperienced. The selection process of staff recruitment for the department has often been carried out without regard to professionalism. More so, the staffing of the department has been neglected by the university management hence the gross shortage of man power and inexperienced staff. Public relations unit have been very effective in all organization without which a lot of organizations will not survive because they need public relation to make a better link between the organization and its public.

Using Kogi State University as a case study, it is through the Public Relations Unit that the immediate problems of the image management can be solved. Without the help of public relation however, there can be no effective relations between the organization and its publics especially the host community.

12.0: CONCLUSION

CSR which is the key function of public relations is an essential aspect of management. However, many people including top Management Executives are skeptical about the ability of Public Relations practitioners to perform this management functions because of the existence of many half-baked Public Relations Practitioners. Findings in this study have revealed that most publics' of Nigerian universities perceived corporate social responsibility in a positive light. This indeed is a welcome development since corporate social responsibility promotes image, assist in managing crisis, and guarantees the success of organizations as well as building lasting relationship between an academic institution and its key publics by ensuring good communication through effective dialogue.

It will therefore do a lot of good if the management of Nigerian higher institutions become conscious of the usefulness of CSR in keeping them abreast with the psychology, socio-economic and political value of their activities and the overall achievement of the institutional strategic objectives. This will help to eradicate the ignorance of not knowing about the existence of CSR in Nigerian higher institutions based on the fact that the publics are a key factor for the existence of academic institutions in Nigeria.

13.0: RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the foregoing, the following are the recommendations:

- i) Since public relations are a pro-active, deliberate and strategic step taken to induce favorable image for an organization, it is advisable that higher institutions should constantly survey the opinions or feelings of its internal and external publics so that it can reflect the conduct that could sustain a harmonious relationship.
- ii) The university authority should properly equip the public relations unit with both human (professional) and material resources to make them fully effective and efficient enough for the job of corporate image management for KSU.
- iii) Heading off conflicts and crises is part of the public relations tasks. There is need for continuous fact-finding and monitoring to unravel crisis areas at early stage. Feedback mechanism should therefore be instituted for this purpose. Inability to provide response from various public is a result of communications breakdowns and wasted efforts. We need to begin by studying the dispositions of those we want to address.
- iv) The publics must be specially be attended to for the maximum effect in persuasion for useful contributions to public desire.
- v) There is also need for more effective communication for mobilization and building of corporate image. It is not enough for the public to only know about the reforms, but very important for them to understand the mission/strategic objectives of the reform, and to own the programme itself.
- vi) Professional Public Relation Practitioners who properly understand the concept of image making should be engaged in carrying out corporate social responsibility activities in the tertiary institutions for this purpose.

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