

Bule Hora University
College of Social Sciences and Humanities

Department of Journalism and Communication
Introduction to Public Relations and Practical
Attachment

/For Third Year English Language and
Literature Department /Students/

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Chapter 1
The Concept of Public Relations

What is Public Relations Mean
for You?

Try to Define Public Relations
By your Own words

Cont...

Public relations mean different things to different people. Some scholars consider it as a **philosophical** and **moral** concept. Others define it by looking at what public relations do in practice.

The basic purpose of public relations is, more or less the same in all sectors- governments, public and private concerns, and other institutions.

Cont...

Many scholars have tried to define public relations by some of its most visible techniques and tactics, such as publicity in a newspaper, a television interview with an organizations spokesperson, or the appearance of a celebrity at a special event.

These people failed to understand that public relations is a process involving many subtle and far reaching aspects. It includes research and analysis, policy formation, programming, communications and feedback from numerous publics.

Cont...

Generally speaking, public relations practitioners operate on two distinct levels: as advisers to their clients or to an organization's top managements and as technicians who produce and disseminate messages in multiple media channels.

PR definitions by Scholars

1. Rex F Harlow, a pioneer public relations educator, compiled more than **500** definitions from almost as many sources.

After analyzing 472 definitions he produced a definition that includes both **conceptual** and **operational elements**.

2. Cutlip, Center and Broom (2000) define public relations as a management function that establish and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends.

Cont...

3. Robert L. Heath also define public relations as a set of management, supervisory, and technical functions that foster an organization's ability to strategically listen to, appreciate, and respond to those persons whose mutually beneficial relationships with the organization are necessary if it is to achieve its missions and values.

Definition of PR in Summary

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

Modern Shorthand Definitions of PR

The British Institute of Public Relations gives a comprehensive definition of public relations: “A public relations is a deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics. Public relations has also been defined as:

- Persuasive communication designed to **influence specific publics.**
- The winning of public **acceptance** by **acceptable performance.**
- Doing **good** and **getting** credit for it
(**Performance then Recognition**)

Cont...

Perhaps the best way to approach a definition of public relations, according to **Sharpe**, is to consider it as a process that “harmonizes” **long term** relationships among individuals and organizations in society. Sharpe applies five principles to this process:

- *Honest communication for **credibility***
- *Openness and consistency of actions for **confidence***
- *Fairness of actions for **reciprocity and good will***
- *Continuous two way communication to **prevent alienation and build relationships***
- *Environmental **research** and **evaluation** to*

The key words to remember in defining PR

- **Deliberate:** Public relations activity is intentional. It is designed to influence, gain understanding, provide information, and obtain feedback (reaction from those affected by the activity).
- **Planned:** Public relations activity is **organized, solutions** to problems, is **systematic**, requiring **research** and **analysis**.
- **Performance:** Effective public relations is based on actual policies and performance.
- **Public Interest:** The rationale for any public relations activity is to serve the public interest, and not simply to achieve benefits for the organization.

Cont...

- **Two-way Communication:** The ability to listen is an essential part of communication expertise.
- **Management Function:** Public relations is most effective when it is part of the decision making of top management.

In General Public Relations is;

*deliberate.....planned performance
.....public interest.....two-way
communication.....management
function.*

1.2 Misconception

Some common PR
misconceptions:

1. Public Relations is All About The Spin:

“Spinning” is providing a biased interpretation of a story to persuade public opinion (for a more in-depth look at spinning, watch Wag the Dog).

In reality, public relations professionals work to share accurate information about a client and their story.

2. Public Relations and Marketing is the Same Thing

The main difference lies within the final goal:

Marketing aims to sell a product or service while public relations builds relationships with key audiences.

The major purpose of marketing is to make money for the organization by increasing the slope of demand curve. While the major purpose of public relations is to save money for the organization by building relationships with publics that constrain or enhance the ability of the organization to meet its mission.

3. We Spend all of Our Time on the Internet

This is partially true depending on your specific industry role and client.

Digital media has taken over a huge part of the communications world, and it is the best place for continuously monitoring a client's brand.

1.3. The Evolution of Public Relations

Ancient Beginnings

It is believed that understanding public relations' historical context is vital to the professionalization of today's practice.

Although opinions differ about the exact origins of public relations, it is generally accepted that public relations has existed in some shape or form since the beginning of civilization itself.

The underlying goal of public relations is to influence the public and mold their opinions. Public relations has been utilized by individuals, corporations, and groups throughout history to induce understanding and develop good rapport with another target population.

The Growth of Modern Public Relations and key Personalities

Public Relations as a career and modern public relations in general, belongs itself to three key Personalities:

1. Carl Byoir

2. Edward L. Bernays

3. Ivy Lee

1. Carl Byoir

He seemed destined for greatness. In 1917, Byoir was asked to join the World War I Committee on Public Communication. It was there that he made his greatest contribution to the war effort. He designed a campaign that targeted non-English speaking draft-eligible men; the campaign was a success and added 75,000 men to the United States' war effort.

2. Edward L. Bernays

known as the father of modern public relations. He invented techniques that are staples of today's public relations career field.

He is credited with getting women to smoke and bacon and eggs a part of American breakfasts.

To do all of this he linked female smoking with female liberation, and used the testimony of medical professionals to prove a hearty breakfast was a healthy breakfast.

3.Ivy Lee

He the man who convinced America that the Rockefellers were not heartless "Scrooges" and pushed many other big businesses onto the American people.

Lee was never loved by America.

He also accidentally aligned himself with Germany during the time after World War I. His goal was to end the worldwide depression through an end of reparations and war debt payments from Germany. However, this correlated his name to the likes of Hitler and caused the latter part of his life to be shadowed by this misunderstanding.

1.4. Roles and Responsibilities of PR Officer

Four major public relations roles and responsibilities are the following:

Communication Technician

Communication technicians are hired to write and edit employee newsletters, to write news releases and feature stories, to develop Web-site content, and to deal with media contents.

Expert Prescriber

Top management leaves public relations in the hands of the expert and assumes a relatively passive role. Practitioners operating as expert practitioners define the problem, develop the program, and take full responsibility for its implementation.

Cont...

Communication Facilitator

They cast practitioners as **sensitive listeners and information brokers**. Communication facilitator serves as liaisons, interpreters, and mediators between an organization and its publics. They maintain **two-way communication and facilitate exchange** by removing barriers in relationships and by keeping channels of communication open.

The **goal** is to provide both **management and publics** the **information** they need for making decisions of mutual interest.

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Problem- Solving facilitators

When practitioners assume the role of problem-solving facilitator, they **collaborate** with other managers to **define** and **solve problems**.

They become part of the **strategic planning** team. **Collaboration** and **consultation** begin with the first question and continue until the final program evaluation.



Qualities, Attitudes and Abilities of Public Relations

Speed and Accuracy

The Power of Influencers

Transparency

Chapter 2

2.1. Public Relations Research: The Key to Strategy

Effective public relations is a process, and the essential first step is research. Today research is a necessary and integral part of the planning, program development, and evaluation process. Before any public relations program can be undertaken, information must be gathered, data collected, and interpretation done.

Research is a term used to describe the systematic gathering of information and data prior to, during, and after an endeavour.

2.2. Importance of Research in Public Relations

Research is an essential part of public relations management.

Research makes communication two-way by collecting information from publics rather than one-way, which is a simple dissemination of information. Research allows us to engage in dialogue with publics, understanding their beliefs and values, and working to build understanding on their part of the internal workings and policies of the organization.

2.3. Purpose and Forms of Research

- The purpose of research is to allow us to develop strategy in public relations in order to
- (a) Conduct campaigns with specific purpose and targeted goals,
- (b) Operate as a part of the overall strategic management function in an organization, and
- (c) measure the effectiveness of public relations efforts.

Formal Research

Research in public relations can be formal or informal.

Formal research normally takes place in order to generate numbers and statistics that we can use to both target communications and measure results. Formal research also is used to gain a deeper, qualitative understanding of the issue of concern, to ascertain the range of consumer responses, and to elicit in-depth opinion data.

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Formal research is planned research of a quantitative or qualitative nature, normally asking specific questions about topics of concern for the organization. Formal research is both formative, at the outset of a public relations initiative, and evaluative, to determine the degree of change attributable to public relations activities.

Informal Research

Informal research is collected on an ongoing basis by most public relations managers, from sources of both inside and outside of their organizations. Informal research usually gathers information and opinions through conversations. It consists of asking questions, talking to members of publics or employees in the organization to find out their concerns, reading e-mails from customers or comment cards, and other informal methods, such as scanning the news and trade press.

The Importance of research

Effective public relations is a process, and the essential first step is research. Today research is a necessary and integral part of the planning, program development, and evaluation process. Before any public relations program can be undertaken, information must be gathered, data collected, and interpretation done.

Without research, Practitioners are limited to asserting that they know the situation and can recommend a solution.

Why Research is Necessary

1. Research can prevent organization from wasting time, effort, and money in attacking perceived image problems that are not readily solved by extensive public relations programs.
2. To communicate effectively it is necessary to have a detailed knowledge of audience.
3. Research can provide the facts on which a public relations program is based. Communication audit, focus group discussion, in-depth interviews, telephone interviews and other data gathering instruments can be used.

What Research Can Accomplish

- Identify opinion leaders who can influence target publics.
- Reduce costs by concentrating on valid objectives and key audiences.
- Help pretest messages and proposed communication channels on a pilot basis before implementing an entire program
- Help determine the timing of a public relations program to take advantage of current public interests and concerns.
- Achieve two-way communication. Feedback from audiences can fine-tune messages and generate mutual understanding

Types of Public Relations Research

According to Seitel (1992) research is conducted to do three things: (1) describe a process, situation, or phenomenon; (2) explain why something is happening, what its causes are, and what effect it will have and (3) predict what probably will happen if we do or don't take action. Most research in public relations is either theoretical or applied.

1. Applied Research

Applied research solves practical problems. In public relations work, applied research can be either strategic or evaluative. Both applications are designed to answer specific practical questions.

I. Strategic Research is used primarily in program development, to determine program objectives, develop message strategies, or establish benchmarks. It often examines the tools and techniques of public relations. For example, a firm that wants to know how employees rate its candor in internal publications would first conduct strategic research to find out where it stands.



Cont...

II. Evaluative research sometimes called summative research is conducted primarily to determine whether a public relations program has **accomplished its goals and objectives.**

2. Theoretical Research

Theoretical research aids understanding of a public relations process. It is more abstract and conceptual than applied research. It helps build theories in public relations work in areas such as why people communicate, how public opinion is formed, and how a public is created.

Formative Research

Formative Research, the focus is on the preliminary work of communication planning, which is the need to gather information and analyze the situation.

Proactive Research

Many organizations today incorporate proactive public relations as part of their advertising strategies. A proactive public relations strategy helps to strengthen the image and brand of an organization through the use of communicating through the media at no additional cost.

Reactive Public Relations

In contrast to proactive public relations, reactive public relations involve an organization or individual defending against a negative event or any negative publicity that has occurred.

PR planning

Marketing experts will tell you that a well-planned public relations campaigns are often far more effective than advertising. In developing and creating the core of your public relations campaign you can use the six easy steps:

Step 1: Define and write down your objectives for your public relations or media plan.

Step 2: Define your goals in achieving this objective.

Step 3: Determine who your target audience consists of

PR Communications

Public relations are the strategic management of relationships between an organization and its diverse publics, through the use of communication, to achieve mutual understanding, realize organizational goals, and serve the public interest.

PR Evaluation

Evaluation of public relations activities is important in measuring a firm's success. PR professionals should, therefore, measure the outcome of PR activities against a client's expected business goals.

UNIT THREE

CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Organizational communication is the exchange of information, ideas, and views within and outside the organization. Organizational communication indicates communication not only in business but also in hospitals, churches, government agencies, military organization, and academic institutions. Every organization whether business or non-business has some specific goals and stakeholders. Attainment of those goals depends on successful communication with the respective stakeholder groups.

Forms of organizational communication

From a broader perspective, organizational communication takes three different forms such as:

1. Internal operational communication
2. External operational communication and
3. Personal communication

1. Internal operational communication

Communication that occurs for carrying out operations of the organization is known as internal **operational communication**.

Cont...

Internal members of the organization such as **workers, managers, board of directors, member of trade unions** etc. are the participants of internal communication. This type of organizational communication takes the form of oral and written.

Oral communication occurs through face to face conversation, telephone, meeting etc.

Written communication is done through orders, instructions, reports, memos, letters etc.

In modern time, many organizations provide **intranet** facility for internal electronic communication.

External operational communication

Communication with the external parties or groups is known as external operational communication.

External parties include customers, suppliers, government agencies, regulatory authority, local community, special interest group and the general public.

Personal communication

Communication that occurs for exchanging personal information, ideas and feelings rather than business related information is termed as personal communication. Not all communication that occurs in business is personal.

- **Organizational communication** is important because it significantly impacts three very important areas of an organization:

1. Employee engagement
2. Customer satisfaction
3. Public perceptions

Employee Engagement

Simply defined, employee engagement is how willingly and enthusiastically an organization's employees focus exclusively on the task at hand. Going beyond devotion and dedication, which can be tied to obligation, engagement is directly tied to how valued your employees feel.

Customers Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is how a person is satisfied with an organization, it be their service, their product, and/or their interactions with the organization.

Cont...

Organizational Perception

Even though there are countless organizations you've never done business with, there are chances you still have an opinion about them, for better or worse. What's so fascinating about how we develop these perceptions is it's NOT based on any direct experience. It's often based on the stories we've heard, the articles we've read, the advertisements we've seen, or the social media sites we've visited.

Types of Organizational Communication

Communication within an organization happens in a number of different ways, which is why it's so important to realize the types of communication that are happening and the correct way to communicate within those **realms/domain of activity/**.

The way you communicate with co-workers or peers should be different than how you communicate with your manager or the company president. Many other factors come in to play as well, including the values of the company and nonverbal communication.

1. Formal and Informal Communication

Formal communication is associated with the formal organizational structure of the company. Ideally, communication flows **smoothly, accurately and timely** through the **proper channel** appropriate to the specific company.

Formal Communication can have Several Forms

- Meetings
- Conferences
- Telephone calls
- Company newsletters
- Performance reviews

Cont...

The strength of formal communication is that it standardizes communication, ideally benefiting the clarity of each message. Its primary weakness is that it undermines the free and uninterrupted flow of communication, which is what defines informal communication.

Cont...

Informal communication includes casual/unconcerned/, social and personal messages in the organization. Also referred to as the grapevine/unofficial rumors/, informal communication and messages involve person-to-person communication networks of employees that are not officially sanctioned by the organization. This type of communication cannot be prevented. The strength and weakness of informal communication is that it is spontaneous and quick. This can lead to meaningful insights or inaccurate, misinterpreted and distorted information.

2. Downward, Upward or Horizontal Communication

There are three general types of directional communication that take place in organizations.

1. Downward communication flows from superiors to subordinates.

This typically takes the form of orders, instructions and policy directives to people at lower levels in the company. Example;

Feedback on job performance and information about policy and procedures

Cont...

2.Upward communication :It flows from subordinates to superiors.

This is the opposite of downward communication; it originates from people at lower levels and is directed to those who are above them. Example **suggestion statements, reactions, reports and proposals.**

3.Horizontal communication: It flows from people who are on the same level of the organization. This type of directional communication enables people to interact with their peers without involving people at other levels in the company. **Example: the communication between subordinates of one boss or between managers**



Organizational Structure

**What is an
Organizational
Structure?????**

Cont...

An organizational structure is a system that outlines how certain activities are directed in order to achieve the goals of an organization.

These activities can include rules, roles and responsibilities. The organizational structure also determines how information flows from level to level within the company.

Centralized vs. Decentralized Organizational Structures

At its highest level, an organizational structure is either centralized or decentralized. Traditionally, organizations have been structured with centralized leadership and a defined chain of command.

Example: in a **centralized structure**, decisions **flow from the top down**, while in a **decentralized structure**, the decisions are made at various levels.

Common Types of Organizational Structures

Four types of common organizational structures are implemented in the real world.

The first, and most common, is a functional structure.

It is a bureaucratic organizational structure and breaks up a company based on the specialization of its workforce. Most small-to-medium sized businesses implement a functional structure. Dividing the firm into departments consisting of marketing, sales and operations is the act of using a bureaucratic organizational structure.

Cont...

The **second** type is common among large companies with many business units. Called the **divisional or multidivisional structure**, a company that uses this method structures its leadership team based **on the products, projects or subsidiaries they operate.**

Autarchy, a newer structure, is the third type and is used among many startups.

As the name alludes, it flattens the hierarchy and chain of command and gives its employees a lot of autonomy. Companies that use this type of structure have a high speed of implementation.

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The fourth and final organizational structure is **a matrix structure.**

It is also the most confusing and the least used. This structure matrixes employee across different superiors, divisions or departments. An employee working for a matrixes company, for example, may have duties in both sales and customer service.

PR departments and its structure

PR Directorate Director
Experts Team Leader
Broadcast media ,Print media and social media
experts

- Reporters
- Editors
- Camera Man

Supportive Staff

- Secretary

UNIT FOUR

4.COMPONENTS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC PUBLIC RELATIONS

What is Public Relations Component mean?

Write the components of PR that you Know

Five Minutes Discussion

The Components of Public Relations

Counseling:

Providing advice to management concerning policies, relationships, and communications.

Research: Determining attitudes and behaviors of publics in order to plan public relations strategies. Such research can be used to:

1. Generate mutual understanding
2. Influence and persuade publics

Cont...

Media Relations

Publicity: Disseminating planned messages through selected media to further the organization's interest.

Community Relations: Planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organization and the community.

Issue Management: Identifying and addressing issues of public concern that affect the organization.

Example :Environmental affairs

Corporate Communication

Corporate communication is an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible, so as to create a favorable basis for relationships with groups upon which the company is dependent.

Corporate communication definition is that it is a key aspect of the corporate work industry and can be defined as a management function or a department within a work place.

Is Corporate Communication Important for Enterprises?

Corporate Communication is Important for the Enterprises To Perform the Following Activities:

- 1. Corporate Branding:**
- 2. Corporate Identity and Organizational Identity**
- 3. Corporate Responsibility**
- 4. Corporate Reputation**

Cont...

1. Corporate Branding: Branding is imperative to a company as it defines who they are, their products, their message, and their overall goal to the general public. It is how they are defined in the media and how they are viewed by other competition enterprises. The function of the **corporate communication** department is to create favorable association surrounding the enterprise, and create a **positive and respected reputation** both within the enterprise and externally, with competitors and the general public.

Cont...

2. Corporate Identity and Organizational Identity

Corporate identity refers to the uniqueness of the organization. This is related to the corporation's image, both externally and internally, and its reputation. **Organizational Identity** refers to the characteristics of the corporation, and what its employees, buyers, and investors believe are central and distinctive. They are the fundamental communications that employees believe are integral to the corporation's function.

Cont...

3. Corporate Responsibility

Corporate responsibility refers to a corporation's respect for the general public's or society's interests. This part of corporate communications makes the corporation look beyond its traditions and adapt to social implications and changes.

4. Corporate Reputation

The reputation of a corporation can make or break its future in the world. Reputations are not only defined by the general public, but by the corporation's stakeholders and investors.

Public Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility

The practice of corporate social responsibility is usually regarded as a public relations function because this is where a company meets the public outside of the usual roles of producers and customers.

Issues Management

Issues management is 'the process of identifying issues, analyzing those issues, setting priorities, selecting program strategy options, implementing a program of action and evaluating effectiveness'.

Cont...

The term 'issues management' refers simultaneously to a perspective on the business-society interface and to a set of concrete management tools.

- Issues management is a long-term strategic management practice. Significant changes or issues which may affect the organization are identified, and long-term strategic decisions are taken which may involve changes in policy and practice.
- Issues management is by definition a multidisciplinary perspective, as issues tend to impact numerous stakeholders simultaneously, and cannot be managed unless all corporate disciplines cooperate in coordinated fashion

Cont...

As a set of tools, issues management involves:

- (a) Tools for environmental scanning and tracing nascent issues;
- (b) Tools for positioning the corporation's vis-à-vis issues, stakeholders, and their interests;
- (c) Tools for managing issues, such as communication strategies and platform building.

Stakeholder Public Relations-Media Relations

The terms stakeholder and public are often used interchangeably, but they shouldn't be. Stakeholders have been identified in the business literature according to their relationships to organizations. Publics, in the public relations and other mass media literature, are often identified according to their relationship to messages.

The most quoted definition of a stakeholder in business literature is that given by Freeman, who says a stakeholder is "any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives."

PR Stakeholders

When working in PR you will encounter a number of different stakeholders. Stakeholder management is one of the key tenets of PR. Stakeholders are the people or organizations who may have a material, professional, legal or political interest in the activities and performance of you and your organization.

There are three main types of stakeholder:

Internal

External

Interface

Cont...

Internal - people and departments within your organization. They are your colleagues. They rely on or use the work you produce - for example, your manager is a stakeholder and other departments who require the services of the PR department are stakeholders.

External - people and organizations outside your organization. They may be customers, clients, suppliers and other key individuals or organizations who take an interest in or are affected by your work.

Interface - stakeholders who function both internally and externally - for example, an organization with a large trade union presence or shareholders who are also employees

Media Relations

Different organizations must address a wide variety of constituent audiences, but they share the press in common. The press is not only one of the most important groups with which an organization must communicate; it also is one of the easiest groups to apply to the Internet.

Cont...

Employee/Member Relations: Responding to concerns, informing and motivating an organization's employees or members.

Community Relations: Planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organization and the community.

Cont...

Financial Relations. Creating and maintaining investor confidence and building good relationships with the financial community. Also known as Investor Relations or Shareholder Relations.

Consumer/customer public relations/
Business-to-business public relations

Crisis Management

What is Crisis Mean??
How we Manage Crisis??
??????????

Definition of Crisis

Crisis is defined as an extraordinary event or serious of events that adversely affects the integrity of the product; the reputation or financial stability of the organization; or the health or well-being of employees, the community, or the public at large.

In other words, we can say that crisis occur in an organization when the reputation of a company, industry, product or service is in jeopardy

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During times of crisis, the media play an important role in the communication process. It is clear that people become more media-dependent as they actively seek information to confirm what has happened and learn the reasons for the problem.

The mass media, responding to heightened public interest, also demand more information from the organization involved. In many cases, it is the public relations spokesperson who must handle a barrage of requests for information within a matter of hours.

Crisis Management

Here are some guidelines for communicating effectively and establishing credibility with the press:

Never say “No comment.” the public tend to feel that “no comment” almost always means that the organization is guilty of wrongdoing.

Always try to be helpful:

Be familiar with print and broadcast deadlines

Establish good rapport and credibility with the media before a crisis hits.

Chapter 5

5. Publics, Public opinion and Persuasion in Public Relations

5.1. Meaning, Characteristics and Categories of Publics

The word 'public' is generally used to refer to a large group of people. It is sometimes used as synonymous with crowd. The members of the public need not collect together in one place. They may be dispersed and not know each other. D/t Scholar's define the word public Differently as the following;

Cont...

1. According to Anderson and Parker, “A public is that form of collectivity which includes a number of dispersed and non-organized individuals who are faced with an issue about which there may be differences of opinion.”

2. According to Kimball Young, “Public refers to a rather loosely organized and conjoined grouping of people with a common interest.”

3. Ginsberg defines public as “an unorganized and amorphous aggregation of individuals who are bound together by common opinion and desires, but are too numerous for each to maintain personal relations with the others.”



Cont...

4. According to Mazumdar “The public is an aggregation of persons, moving in a common universe of discourse, confronted by an issue or a value, divided in their opinions regarding ways to meet the issue or to appraise the value, and engaging in discussion.”

The above definitions make it clear that what makes the people to constitute a public is their, common interest in an issue.

What is Public Opinion?

To start with, the term public opinion is somewhat hard to define and extremely difficult to measure at any given moment.

Public pinion is the sum total of individual opinions on an issue affecting those individuals.

Public opinion is a collection of views held by persons interested in the subject.

The following statements most commonly appear when you read the literature on public opinion.

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Public opinion is the collective expression of opinion of many individuals bound into a group by common aims, aspirations, needs and ideals.

People who are interested or who have vested or self-interest in an issue - or who can be affected by the outcome of the issue - form public opinion on that particular item.

Psychologically, opinion is basically determined by self-interest. Events, words, or any other stimuli affect opinion only insofar as their relationship to self interest or a general concern is apparent.

Opinion Leaders as Catalysts

Public opinion on an issue may have its roots in self-interest or in events, but the primary catalyst is ***public discussion***. Only in this way does opinion begin to crystallize and pollsters can measure it. Serving as catalysts for the formation of public opinion are people who are knowledgeable and articulate about specific issues. They are called ***opinion leaders***.

Cont...

Social sociologists describe opinion leaders as:-

- A. highly interested in the subject or issue.
- B. better informed on the issue than the average person.
- C. avid consumers of the mass media.
- D. early adopters of new idea and,
- E. good organizers who can get other people to take action



Types of Leaders
Sociologists traditionally have defined two types of leaders.]]]]]]]]]]

1. Formal Opinion Leaders

2. Informal Opinion Leaders

1. Formal Opinion Leaders

So called because of their positions as elected officials, presidents of companies, or heads of membership groups. Often news members ask them for statements when specific issues relates to their areas of responsibility or concern. People in formal leadership position are called ***power leaders***.

Cont...

2. Informal Opinion Leaders

Have influence with peers because of some special characteristic. They may be ***role models*** who are admired or imitated, or *opinion leaders* because they can exert peer pressure on others to go along with something.

In general, informal opinion leaders exert considerable influence on their peer groups by being highly informed, articulate and credible on particular issues.

