

**AN EVALUATION OF PUBLIC RELATION PRACTICE IN A STATE
CORPORATION: A CASE OF KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
CENTER**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work that has not been presented in any other university for examination purposes.

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DEDICATION

To my Husband, Nelson who has tirelessly encouraged me to further my studies.

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I would like to thank Almighty God for giving me good health, a sound mind, patience and time while writing this thesis. I am also grateful to my supervisors Prof. B. Malakwen and the late Dr. Jane Malel for their guidance, untiring support and follow up in writing this thesis. The feedback I received on the field of communication and the quality of the work has made this thesis a reality. Am also grateful to my family for believing in me and according me space and moral support. Also, my year mates for walking the journey with me. Finally, I would like to thank the Moi University fraternity, all lecturers, head of ICT and administration staff in the Department of Communication Studies and university library management for providing research guide and resourceful material that has enabled me writes this thesis.

ABSTRACT

Effective government public relations aimed to build public trust and opinion, inform citizens about policies, and deliver messages through various techniques such as news media, social media, public pronouncements, and other communication strategies. However, most state corporations in Kenya faced reputational challenges, exacerbated by a lack of structured public relations practices, particularly during times of public crisis. In many cases, public relations and marketing functions were merged, with roles undertaken by employees who lacked formal PR training, leading to the neglect of essential public relations practices. Against this backdrop, this study evaluated public relations practices in a Kenyan state corporation; Kenyatta International Convention Center (KICC). The study sought to determine the extent to which public relations practices have been adopted at the Kenyatta International Convention Center, identify the factors that influence public relations practice at KICC, and find out strategies that can be applied to enhance public relation practice at KICC. The study was guided by the situational theory, relationship management theory, and systems theory of publics. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, employing a sequential explanatory design with a case study methodology. Data collection involved questionnaires and interviews, with a purposive sampling used to select all 13 public relations officers for interviews. Similarly, 112 marketing officers participated in filling questionnaires ensuring comprehensive data collection from the target population. Quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, whereas qualitative data from interviews were analyzed thematically and presented narratively. The study's key findings revealed that KICC had integrated public relations practices into its operations. However, despite possessing technical capacity, technological support, and an enabling organizational culture and structure, KICC had not fully implemented the requisite public relation practices to enhance their communication effectiveness. The study concluded that KICC, could improve public relations by leveraging digital platforms, creating online content and conversations, disseminating news, and hosting events through social media channels. Based on these findings, the study recommended that KICC should strengthen stakeholder engagement, develop comprehensive public relations strategies, embrace digital PR, foster media relations, invest in professional development, cultivate a positive organizational culture, and streamline organizational structures to enhance public relations practices.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

IPRA	International Public Relations Association
ISD	Information Service Department
KICC	Kenyatta International Convention Center
KIMC	Kenya Institute of Mass Communication
KPMG	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
M I C E	Meetings, Incentive, Conferences and Exhibitions
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
PPS	Presidential Press Service
PR	Public Relations
PRO	Public Relation Officer
PRSK	Public Relations Society of Kenya
USIA	United States Information Agency
USIS	United States Information Service

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Marketing: These are activities of a company associated with buying and selling a product or service; it includes advertising, selling and delivering products to people.

Public: refers to a group of people or the general population sharing common interests, spaces, or concerns within society

Public Relation: Public relations, is defined as a method that can be used by an individual or organization to create public awareness.

Public Relation Officers: Refers to an employee who is tasked with responsibility of creating good relationship with customers, government agencies and publics.

State Corporations: The term refers to a legal body created by the government with the intention of serving a particular sector of the economy in this case KICC is under hospitality or tourism sector.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview of the study

Public Relations (PR) is a strategic communication process aimed at fostering mutual understanding and goodwill between organizations and their various stakeholders (Rahi, 2016). PR activities include trade shows, campaigns, and public engagements designed to build positive relationships and enhance brand visibility. In the modern competitive business environment, PR is essential for building brand loyalty, influencing public perception, and gaining a competitive edge (Naumovska & Blazeska, 2016).

Unlike traditional advertising, PR is often more cost-effective and credible, primarily because messages are typically relayed through trusted third-party channels such as news media (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 2006). Organizations globally now prioritize PR as a means to cultivate strong stakeholder relationships and promote cooperation (Naumovska & Blazeska, 2016).

PR is a planned and sustained effort that supports organizational management in shaping communication and relationships based on facts and mutual interests (Jefkins & Yadin, 1999). Its rapid growth is attributed to increasing recognition of its value across public and private sectors (Thaker, 2018). Institutions like the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) and the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) exemplify this growth (Agustina et al., 2020). PR professionals influence strategic decisions, support

leadership, and guide public opinion through targeted strategies and tactics (Yang et al., 2016).

1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Global perspective on Public Relation

Public relation as a practice is undergoing a professionalization process in many countries. This professionalization occurs when there is a specialized knowledge in an area that identifies who is qualified to provide a service. There is a great presence of public relations professionals in the management of government information and communication globally. Using PR in the running and management of these States has professionalized how the citizens receive, consume and share government information to cause understanding (Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly 2014).

In the United Kingdom, the Chief Information Officer also known as the press secretary serves as a key public relations (PR) advisor to the Minister of State. Their responsibilities include drafting official speeches, issuing media statements, and offering strategic PR counsel (Ambrosio-Albalá *et al.*, 2019). Additionally, government PR officers work to enhance public perception of government initiatives by communicating policies, explaining strategic objectives, and reporting on the progress of public projects in a non-partisan manner.

Public relations in government is non-political and focuses on informing the public about legislative functions, policy directions, and upcoming projects, while also providing civic education on government matters (Fortunatta *et al.*, 2019).

In the United States, the primary PR arm of the federal government is the United States Information Agency (USIA), which employs over 15,000 PR professionals in more than 129 countries. The agency's core mandate is to communicate U.S. government policies, promote American cultural values, and represent federal institutions to both domestic and international audiences.

The rationale behind PR in the USA ensures democracy is practiced through the free flow of information and access of it among the public, accountability of government on the people it serves and that the public have a right of access to information. As taxpayers of the state, they need to know how their public finance are utilized. The USIA helps in interpreting the government of America's policies to the other countries in the world and giving the feedback directly to the World. The USIA operates through the voice of America radio station and world net which as a television station covers majorly on the USA public strategic policies (Laugesen, 2016). Overseas, the USIA operates as United States information service (USIS) and is led by public affair relation officers. USIS has a role to play in communicating and advising the ambassadors and diplomatic organizations on the USA interest as well as improving relationships with countries where they are based and as well as countering adverse propagandas in those countries (Fossler-Lussier, 2016).

According to a report by the Chinese Public Relations Association (CPRS), the number of public relations practitioners in public organizations in China has grown from 1,000 in 2005 to 6,000 in 2018 (Feng & Sun, 2019). This rapid expansion has been driven by the growing use of public relations strategies by public organizations to enhance their reputation and strengthen relationships with stakeholders. In particular, public

organizations in China have increasingly embraced digital public relations, with the use of social media, blogs, and other online platforms to build relationships and share information (Feng & Sun, 2019). Furthermore, public organizations in China have begun to focus more on reputation management and crisis communication, with the aim of addressing potential risks and protecting the organization's public image (Feng & Sun, 2019).

1.1.2 Regional Perspective on Public Relation

Public relations practices in public organizations in Africa have evolved over the decades, from being a largely ignored aspect of management in the early 2000s to a more prominent role in the 2010s (Banda, 2015). During this period, public relations practitioners have become more involved in strategic decision-making processes, and the profession has become more widely accepted and respected in Africa (Uwizeye, 2016). As a result, public relations practitioners in African countries now have access to a wide range of resources, including professional organizations, conferences and seminars, and research grants (Banda, 2015). Additionally, public relations practitioners have become more adept at using digital tools and social media platforms to engage with stakeholders (Uwizeye, 2016). These developments have enabled public relations practitioners in African countries to better understand their audiences and develop more effective strategies for communication and engagement.

In Ghana, the Information Services Department (ISD) serves as the official public relations agency responsible for supporting government ministries and departments in their communication efforts. The ISD disseminates information on government programs and

policies, aiming to shape a favorable national and international image through its various channels. These include radio; primarily through the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, print media, television, and online platforms. Additionally, the department employs face-to-face communication strategies such as drama, cinema, and film production to engage directly with the public (Hormeku, 2016).

In Nigeria, public relations practices within public institutions are largely driven by the need to enhance organizational visibility, support transparency in governance, and cultivate a positive institutional image (Rufai and Oluwabunmi, 2018). Public organizations are increasingly adopting PR strategies to inform the public, foster stakeholder engagement, and strengthen relationships with citizens (Nwabuisi and Olajide, 2015).

Similarly, in Uganda, the integration of public relations into public institutions is gaining momentum. Katusiime *et al.* (2020) observed that government bodies are recognizing the strategic importance of PR in improving their public image and building trust with stakeholders, reflecting a growing commitment to institutional transparency and communication effectiveness.

1.1.3 Kenyan Perspective on Public Relation

During the colonial era in Kenya, the British administration recognized the strategic value of fostering effective interpersonal and social relationships with indigenous communities including Africans, Indians, and Arabs (Kiambi, 2014). However, long before the advent of formal Public Relations (PR) practices, native Kenyan societies had developed their own communication systems resembling PR. Community gatherings served as platforms

for disseminating crucial messages, with leaders such as elders, advisors, orators, and masters of ceremonies playing central roles (Mak'Ochieng, 2016). Cultural elements like song, dance, and storytelling were instrumental in conveying messages, resolving conflicts, and reinforcing social values functions closely aligned with contemporary PR practices (Njoroge, 2019).

The colonial administration systematically employed PR strategies to improve cooperation and establish legitimacy among local populations. Through tools such as public addresses, circulars, and community forums, British officials attempted to manage perceptions and promote their policies in a palatable manner (Ochieng, 2020). These structured communication approaches were essential in sustaining administrative control and cultivating acceptance of colonial governance (Ombati & Mogambi, 2017). The articulation of persuasive messages by credible spokespersons which is a core aspect of modern PR was also evident in both indigenous and colonial communication practices, highlighting the deep-rooted history of PR-like methods in Kenya's sociopolitical evolution.

Following Kenya's independence in 1963, Jomo Kenyatta, the nation's first president, prioritized addressing illiteracy, poverty, and disease (Kiambi, 2014). Archival records from the Kenya National Archives reveal that public relations played a vital role in shaping Kenya's national image both locally and internationally, fostering goodwill between the government and citizens, and managing public perception following national crises (Mwangi, 2021). Recognizing the strategic value of PR, government ministries were established, and communication structures were developed. Correspondence among senior

officials highlighted the growing demand for PR functions, leading to the formal establishment of the Department of Public Relations within the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism in 1965 (Kioko, 2018). By 1968, nearly all government ministries had designated PR officers, demonstrating the administration's commitment to structured public communication (Kiambi, 2014).

During President Moi's 24-year tenure, Kenya witnessed limited political and socioeconomic progress, a period characterized by restricted public information and authoritarian rule. The suppression of free speech and strict control over state communication constrained the growth of PR. Moi's administration centralized all public information dissemination through the Presidential Press Service (PPS), limiting the role of PR professionals in fostering transparency (Ng'ang'a, 2017). The suppression of public discourse and media independence led to widespread misinformation and eroded public trust in government communications.

Under President Mwai Kibaki's leadership (2002–2013), Kenya adopted more transparent and progressive communication policies. Unlike his predecessor, Kibaki promoted media freedom and facilitated foreign investment in the communication sector. This liberalized environment attracted top international PR firms, such as Hill & Knowlton and Burson-Marsteller, to establish offices in Nairobi (Kiambi, 2014). His administration also institutionalized government communication by appointing Dr. Alfred Mutua as the first official government spokesperson, ushering in a new era of proactive, transparent public relations. Ministries and security agencies began providing regular briefings, including updates on operations such as counterterrorism efforts in Somalia (Omondi, 2022).

Today, PR is an integral part of both public and private institutions in Kenya. Professionals operate as communication officers, consultants, and strategists. The formation of the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) in 1971 underscored the profession's growth, promoting ethical practices and communication excellence (Mungai, 2017). Institutions like the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC) further support PR capacity building (Okello, 2023). Effective PR involves strategic engagement with stakeholders to foster trust and mutual understanding (Black, 2012). As Kraft and Furlong (2019) note, PR professionals serve as counselors to management, helping align organizational goals with public expectations and preventing reputational risks.

Public relations in state corporations aim at achieving mutual understanding between their agencies and publics by following a strategic public relations process (Reddi, 2019). Reddi continues to add that, PR is essentially an incredibly dynamic, fast-moving industry. Modern public relations practitioners are facing more difficulties and challenges as information speed and globalization alter the pace and landscape of the profession. Hence, academic theory is vital in modern PR because its aim is to assist practitioners in the practice of PR, making them better and more effective practicing in the dynamic nature of the industry. This study therefore sought to evaluate the practice of public relations at Kenyatta International Convention Center (KICC).

1.1.4 State Corporations

State corporations have long been an integral part of Kenya's public sector, dating back to the colonial era and continuing into the post-independence period. According to the State

Corporations Act, Cap 446, a state corporation is defined as a body corporate established by the government to perform specific functions as outlined in the enabling legal instrument. These entities are created to serve as public corporate bodies tasked with achieving strategic socio-economic objectives and policies of the government, while enjoying a degree of operational autonomy to enhance efficiency and effectiveness (Republic of Kenya, 1986).

The primary rationale for establishing state corporations lies in the need to deliver public services in a manner that is autonomous, results-oriented, and accountable—principles that are often challenging to achieve within traditional government bureaucracies. These organizations are designed to operate with a commercial or semi-commercial orientation while maintaining public service obligations. The guiding principles for their establishment include operational autonomy, value for money, performance measurement, and enhanced service delivery (Mwenda, 2010).

Each state corporation operates under a specific mandate as stipulated by its founding legislation or legal notice. This mandate outlines the scope of the corporation's responsibilities, its objectives, and the framework within which it must operate. These mandates are aligned with broader national development goals, as articulated in Kenya's Vision 2030 and other policy documents.

It is also important to note that under the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, state corporations are not classified as state organs. Instead, they are categorized as distinct legal entities that operate independently of mainstream government departments, although they remain accountable to the government through their respective parent ministries and oversight

bodies (Dhanesh, 2017; Republic of Kenya, 2010). The corporations are therefore expected to perform their mandate in line with the strategic objective of their parent ministry. However, as has been observed, some of these state corporations have not been able to attain their objectives and goals set leading to decline in performance and over reliance to the National Treasury for funding of projects. According to Richards, Yeoh, Chong and Popovič (2019), the decline in performance has been moderately attributed to lack in the practice associated with strategic communication with stakeholders.

1.1.5 Kenyatta International Convention Center (KICC)

The Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) is a state corporation located in Nairobi's Central Business District. Originally constructed in 1969, the facility was officially opened on 11th September 1973 by the late President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. That same month, it hosted its first major international event the Annual Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund marking one of the earliest and largest international conferences held in Africa (KICC, 2017).

As an iconic architectural landmark in East and Central Africa, KICC has long symbolized national pride for Kenya. Initially managed as a government department under various ministries, its control was transferred in 1991 to the then ruling party, KANU, which used it as its headquarters. The Government of Kenya officially reclaimed the facility on 11th February 2003, reinstating its public ownership and strategic role in promoting Kenya as a premier conference and tourism destination (KICC, 2017).

KICC was transformed from a Government Department in the Ministry of Tourism to a State Corporation in July 2004; vide KICC Order 2004 of Legal Notice No. 77, following

recommendations of the Task Force appointed by the Minister-in-charge of Tourism, to look into transformation of KICC into a parastatal. With the enactment of Tourism Act of 2011, the Corporation's name changed to Kenyatta International Convention Centre, charged to promote the business of meetings, conventions and exhibitions through the development of the National Meetings, Incentive travel, Conferences and Exhibitions (M.I.C.E) strategy.

KICC has now become an internationally renowned venue for conferences, meetings, exhibitions and special events within walking distances of several five-star hotels. Kenya has a large potential for M.I.C.E business, as a major product, owing to its location and ease of international connections. However, to fully realize the potential of M.I.C.E business, it has to benchmark against such leading M.I.C.E. destinations like South Africa, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Europe and America (KICC, 2017).

The Kenyatta International Convention Centre has moved to establish strategic partnerships with various organizations. These organizations include; Kenya Tourism Board, Kenya Airways, Capital FM, Kenya Film Censorship Board, the Kenya Utalii College, Brand Kenya Board, various hotels and Government Square Security Committee. Others include Directorate of Public Works, Stadia Management Board, Bomas of Kenya, COTU and Mombasa County Government. These partnerships are aimed at enhancing service delivery in the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) business.

Given its strategic role in enhancing these partnerships and service delivery as well as investments in the country, an effective and robust communication strategic is necessary to support the process of strategic decision-making that is key to enhanced performance and cause visibility of its services. While, several authors have pointed out on different factors affecting public relations functions in state corporations, the focus has not provided the factors as far as KICC is concerned. It is against this background that researcher focused on the evaluation of public relations practice at KICC.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Public Relations (PR) has long been recognized as an essential function in organizational management, particularly in government and public service sectors. According to the Deloitte Survey (2018), effective PR can influence up to 40% of an organization's performance and employee job commitment, underscoring its strategic significance. PR serves several critical roles, including advising leadership, fostering communication, and enhancing an institution's public image. Despite its acknowledged value, state corporations in Kenya have not fully institutionalized or standardized PR practices resulting in a lack of clarity regarding their contribution to organizational management and service delivery. At Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC), a state corporation in Kenya, PR practices tend to focus predominantly on media-driven publicity rather than a strategic approach to communication management. PR professionals at KICC mainly rely on mass media to build the organization's image, with little consideration given to a proactive, issue-management framework. This practice reflects a reactive approach to PR, where

media publicity is considered the primary tool to shape public behavior and perceptions, rather than leveraging PR as a comprehensive management function.

Moreover, several challenges hinder the effective implementation of PR at KICC. First, there is a notable lack of adequate budgetary allocation, which limits the training, staffing, and research necessary for building a robust PR strategy (Muhia, 2010). Additionally, PR and marketing roles overlap within the organization, causing a misallocation of resources and focus, where neither function is given the attention, it requires for success (PRSK, 2019). Furthermore, there is no clear institutional framework or mandate guiding the planning and evaluation of PR practices at KICC. This lack of structure is consistent with findings from the Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology (2019), which reported that PR efforts at many public institutions, including KICC, are reactive rather than strategic. The reactive nature of PR practice has been noted by Imbamba and Kimile (2017), who argue that PR professionals in many organizations focus on addressing issues only after they have escalated, rather than identifying and addressing potential problems early on. Similarly, Nyakamba and Gitau (2018) highlighted that PR practitioners in the Ministry of Youth were aware of the importance of evaluating their PR efforts but struggled to convince top management to allocate sufficient resources to support such initiatives.

While these challenges are not unique to KICC, there has been limited empirical research focusing specifically on the role of PR practice in the management of KICC. Previous studies, such as those by Muhia (2010) and Nyakamba and Gitau (2018), mainly concentrated on PR practices within ministries and departments, without examining the

distinct challenges faced by state corporations, such as KICC. Furthermore, the research that does exist on PR practices within public institutions has largely focused on issues such as communication channels, resource limitations, and evaluation methods, without exploring the strategic integration of PR within the broader management framework. According to a report by the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK, 2019), no clear mandate exists regarding how PR should be utilized in the management of corporations. This gap in the literature shows the need for studies that address how PR can be effectively integrated as a strategic management function within such institutions.

This study aimed to fill the research gap by focusing on the PR practices at KICC, providing an in-depth evaluation of how PR was planned, implemented, and evaluated. The research examined the challenges that KICC faced in its PR efforts, focusing on organizational culture, organizational structure, and the reactive nature of its PR practices. The study assessed how top management perceived the role of PR and identified ways to enhance its strategic contribution to the organization's overall performance. By doing so, the study offered insights into how PR could be repositioned from a media relations tool to a key element of strategic management, fostering better governance, stakeholder engagement, and overall organizational effectiveness in KICC. This research provided valuable recommendations for enhancing PR practices, not only at KICC but also for other state corporations in Kenya, contributing to the broader field of public relations in the public sector.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to evaluate public relations practice at Kenyatta International Convention Center (KICC).

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. To determine the extent Kenyatta International Convention Center has adopted public relation practice;
- ii. To establish factors that influence public relations practice at Kenyatta International Convention Center;
- iii. To find out strategies that can be applied to enhance public relation practice at Kenyatta International Convention Center.

1.5 Research Questions

- a) To what extent Kenyatta International Convention Center has adopted public relations practice?
- b) What are the factors that affect the practice of public relations in Kenyatta International Convention Center? and
- c) What strategies can be applied for enhancing PR practice at Kenyatta International Convention Center?

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 Policy Making

The study evaluated the practice of public relations at KICC. The study endeavored to stipulate the contribution of public relations and the level of its adoption at the KICC. This will inform an ideal positioning of the public relations function within the organizational hierarchy. The organization's management will benefit from the information collected in the study in understanding what the customer needs are, how they should be addressed and by so doing they will be in a better position to design better products and services for their publics.

1.6.2 Public Relations Experts

Public relations experts will find the study useful in that they will be informed by the study findings of the importance of being proactive in the industry. This ensures that the practice does not stifle the innovation momentum as long as it is beneficial to the various players in the industry. It will find it a good source of information on whether the industry is focusing on the right direction in order to remain relevant and fully utilized in institutions.

1.6.3 Researchers and scholars

It is envisioned that the study findings would serve as a stepping-stone to help future researchers interested in studying PR to select measures that would effectively meet their needs as the study is rapidly evolving especially with growth of business exhibitions, local, as well as international tourism industry in Kenya. Other researchers will also use this study to identify gaps that exist in the area of MICE products and public relations for further research.

1.6.4 The Public

It is envisioned that the study shall facilitate a PR function awareness to the public that truly communicate the position of the organization on public service delivery issues and effectively responds to the expectations of the customers of KICC.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The contextual scope of this study was focused on evaluating the practice of public relations (PR) at the Kenyatta International Convention Center (KICC), a key government service provider. The adoption and effective implementation of PR techniques are crucial in aligning public and private interests within the institution, thereby fostering growth and development. Given that government and public services have been prominent users of PR techniques, the study aimed to understand how KICC utilizes PR to bridge the gap between its services and the expectations of the public.

The geographical scope was limited to KICC in Nairobi, which was chosen due to its central role as a state corporation providing services to both local and international clients. The importance of evaluating PR effectiveness at KICC was showed by the organization's focus on maintaining high customer satisfaction and retention levels, given its diverse clientele. The study assessed KICC's efforts in ensuring a positive public perception, maintaining service standards, and fostering long-term relationships with both local and international stakeholders. These objectives are aligned with KICC's overarching goal of achieving organizational success by delivering excellent customer relations.

In terms of the subject scope, the study focused on PR professionals, marketers, and middle managers who practice PR within KICC. These individuals directly contribute to the PR efforts and play key roles in shaping the institution's external communication strategies.

Regarding the methodological scope, the study utilized a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to gain a comprehensive understanding of PR practices at KICC. This methodological framework was selected to offer a nuanced analysis of the strategies, challenges, and factors influencing PR effectiveness at KICC, providing insights that could inform improvements not only at KICC but also in similar state corporations in Kenya.

1.8 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

1.8.1 Limitations

One of the key limitations of this study was the researcher's employment within the public service, which introduced the potential for bias in data collection. As an insider within the public sector, the researcher faced the possibility of not fully highlighting the weaknesses of the service, particularly where PR practices at KICC were concerned. To address this risk, the researcher adhered strictly to principles of ethics; accountability, accuracy, transparency, and objectivity throughout the data collection process. The researcher made deliberate efforts to ensure that all data was gathered in an impartial manner, and that the analysis of the findings was based on the evidence collected rather than personal biases. Furthermore, the study was limited geographically to KICC in Nairobi, meaning that

findings may not be fully generalizable to other state corporations in Kenya or to similar institutions in different regions.

Another limitation was related to confidentiality concerns from some senior managers within KICC. Due to the sensitive nature of the data, several senior managers were initially hesitant to provide detailed responses, which could have impacted the richness of the information gathered from this group. To mitigate this challenge, the researcher leveraged her public relations skills and professional network within KICC to build trust and encourage participation. By clearly communicating the academic purpose of the study and emphasizing that the responses would be kept confidential, the researcher was able to enhance response rates and ensure that senior managers were comfortable sharing their insights.

1.8.2 Delimitations

The scope of this study was deliberately delimited to the PR practices at KICC. Although PR is widely practiced across various state corporations, this study focused specifically on KICC due to its role as a major service provider to both local and international clients. This delimitation allowed for a focused and in-depth analysis of how PR is managed within a government institution, which was crucial for understanding the challenges and strategies that could be applied to enhance PR practices at KICC.

Additionally, the study delimited its participant group to PR professionals, marketers, and middle managers at KICC who actively practice or influence the PR efforts within the

organization. This specific group was chosen because of their direct involvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation of PR strategies, ensuring that the data collected was relevant and authentic to the study's objectives.

To minimize any potential bias, the researcher took several steps throughout the study. First, the researcher maintained a neutral and objective stance during the data collection process, ensuring that responses were not influenced by personal opinions or expectations. The use of mixed-methods (both quantitative and qualitative data collection) helped to triangulate the findings and provided a balanced perspective on the PR practices at KICC. Additionally, confidentiality and anonymity were emphasized to participants, which helped to reduce the risk of social desirability bias, where participants might have provided answers, they believed were expected of them rather than their true opinions. The researcher also ensured that all findings were presented honestly, reflecting both the strengths and weaknesses of the PR practices at KICC, thus upholding the study's integrity.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provided a review of the literature on the field of public relations (PR), its development, and standards of evidence. It examined the process of applying these standards to review empirical research studies and used the results from this review to summarize what was known and how well it was understood within the particular topic of investigation. The chapter analyzed the observations and opinions related to the study as presented by various scholars. By reviewing the literature, the study gained insights into past work, trends, and records relevant to the proposed research. The review also helped identify key areas for further research, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of previous studies. Additionally, through this review, the researcher was able to identify the gaps that the study aimed to address.

2.1 Concept of Public Relations

Public relation (PR) is fundamentally about managing the communication between an organization and its publics. According to the International Association for Public Relations (IAPR, 2020), PR involves overseeing this communication to foster positive relationships and achieve mutual understanding between an organization and its stakeholders. Ferguson (2018) defines PR as the practice of managing and disseminating information from an organization or individual to the public, aiming to shape public perception and influence attitudes. Unlike publicity, which is often uncontrolled and

externally funded, PR is an internally managed practice that is carefully crafted and strategically implemented to align organizational goals with public interests.

A well-executed PR strategy can help reconcile private organizational interests with public concerns, thereby contributing to the growth and development of the organization. The link between effective management, strong employee relations, and positive job satisfaction directly impacts organizational outcomes such as productivity, employee retention, and overall effectiveness (Okigbo & Onoja, 2017). PR, as an essential communication tool, helps organizations maintain a favorable public image, which can influence their success in the marketplace and enhance their credibility among stakeholders.

Broom and Dozier (2017) further emphasize that PR is the art and science of managing information flow between an organization and its publics. It encompasses a range of communication strategies designed to foster a positive organizational image, while also addressing public inquiries and feedback. Effective PR practices make use of various channels, including traditional news media, social media platforms, and special events, to engage diverse audiences and communicate key messages.

Ferguson (2017) also highlights that PR is a strategic communication process aimed at building and nurturing mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their key publics. It requires a deep understanding of the organization's mission and objectives, as well as the needs and interests of the target audience. PR practitioners must craft messages that resonate with their publics, employing creative communication strategies to achieve their objectives while remaining responsive to public feedback.

From my perspective, PR is not only about shaping public perception but also about creating a consistent and transparent communication framework that aligns with the organization's values and goals. It involves a proactive approach to managing the organization's reputation, addressing public concerns, and fostering trust with both internal and external stakeholders. When done effectively, PR helps build long-lasting relationships, ensuring the organization remains responsive, relevant, and respected in its field.

2.2 Situating the Study to the field of Communication

This study was situated within the field of Communication Studies, focusing on how individuals within an organization behave and influence the communication dynamics with the public. Specifically, the research was anchored in the area of external communication, as the public relations activities at KICC were directed at clients and institutions both within and outside Kenya. Consequently, the communication practices between KICC and its clients formed the foundation for analyzing external communication. The study aimed to systematically evaluate KICC as an institution, exploring how and why its publics communicated as they did, both individually and collectively.

2.3 Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on Situation Theory, Relationship Management Theory, and Systems Theory, which are essential in evaluating PR practices at KICC. Situation Theory explains how public awareness and engagement in PR efforts depend on problem recognition and constraint perception, making it relevant for understanding public interaction within KICC. Relationship Management Theory highlights the importance of fostering trust, transparency, and long-term relationships between organizations and their

stakeholders, which is crucial for effective PR practices at KICC. Systems Theory views PR as an interconnected function within an organization, emphasizing the need for KICC to integrate PR into broader operational strategies to enhance communication and stakeholder engagement.

2.3.1 Situation Theory of Publics

Grunig (1990) pioneered the Situation theory that postulates that in PR exercise it is important to determine first the variables to establish the channels that are appropriate for a particular communication scenario. The implication of correct variable determination is important to determine the already active public as well as the public that requires persuasion or passive public. The theory considered the determination of the level of involvement of the publics, problem recognition and constraint recognition of problem as key variables.

The theory categorizes the public into three distinct groups: the first group is affected by a problem but remains unaware of it; the second group is aware of the problem but takes no action in response; and the third group is not only aware of the issue but also understands it and actively engages with it through feedback mechanisms such as comments, lawsuits, or other forms of response (Shen & Wang, 2019). It is crucial for an organization to classify its public based on their level of awareness and involvement (activeness). This classification ensures that communication strategies are directed at the appropriate target groups, preventing the waste of resources on audiences who are not engaged with the issue at hand. Individuals who are more involved in a specific issue tend to prefer information that is detailed, comprehensive, and well-supported with arguments. This group is more

likely to seek out and process extensive information on the subject, as they have a deeper understanding of the issue (Werder, 2020).

The other independent variable considered is the problem recognition. Under this variable, it is noted that people have different level of understanding a problem and no matter the extent of problem recognition at some point everyone will be aware through seeking information or by chance getting across it. Finally, problem constraint is the perceived difficult by the public in taking actions or changes in behavior. In situations where individuals see their behaviors as limited by factors beyond their own control, it is important to cause a change of personality before any significant behavior change that may come. Where constraints are perceived very high there is also a high likelihood of lack in effective communication (Meng *et al.*, 2016).

Situation Theory of Publics is based on the idea that publics are formed and maintained by the interaction between the organization and its environment. This theory states that the publics of a public organization are shaped by the interaction between the organization and its environment, which includes its stakeholders, its competitors, its suppliers, its partners, its customers and its media. This theory can inform a study on public relations in public organizations by helping researchers understand how the organization interacts with its environment, and how this interaction shapes the publics of the organization. It can also help researchers uncover the motivations behind different publics, as well as their expectations, needs, and preferences.

Additionally, it can help researchers analyze the effectiveness of public relations strategies in different public organizations. Finally, this theory can also help researchers evaluate the impact of public relations activities on the publics of public organizations. When communicating in an organization, this theory helps in identifying the publics and creating communication that suits the publics intended to receive. KICC, which offers hospitality services, has a task to carry out in knowing its targeted audience by classifying the audience correctly. This will cause efficiency and enhance the effectiveness of public relation.

2.3.2 Relationship Management Theory

Relationship Management Theory was developed by Ledingham and Bruning in 1998. They introduced this theory to emphasize the role of public relations in managing and maintaining long-term relationships between organizations and their stakeholders, shifting the focus from media relations to relationship-building as a core function of PR. The theory proposes that relationship is an on-going process that requires close management to shape expectations. A relationship between organizations with the stakeholders only builds when an organization becomes cognizant of the fact that it is interdependent on other institutional stakeholders (Debnath, *et al.* 2016).

An organization starts in re-building a symbiotic relationship in case the previous relationship was not desirable. It arranges for public participation or dialogue with the public seeking to do field fact finding and tracking for activities. The organization might also have a platform through which the services recipient can give their feedback, which

has a role in evaluating, and monitoring the success of a particular platform meant to build relationship. Public relation is one of the ways through which an organization builds relationship with its clients or other institutions. Public relationship therefore serves to update other institutions of the new policies as well as new or existing products and services line. This practice helps in establishing customers' loyalty with external institutions. On the other hand, an institution that builds better relationship with internal employees through continuous management of relationship such as upcoming training and opportunities for career growth will equally build better employees' commitment (Forkmann *et al.*, 2016).

Relationship management theory can be used to inform a study on public relations in public organizations by providing an understanding of how relationships between an organization and its stakeholders, including the public, can be managed and maintained. This theory posits that managing relationships is an essential component of public relations and that the relationship should be built on trust and mutual understanding. It also suggests that public relations should be tailored to the needs of each stakeholder, as different stakeholders have different interests and concerns that must be addressed. Finally, it emphasizes the importance of communication in building and maintaining relationships, as well as in managing any conflicts that may arise.

The theory on relationship management can enable KICC as a state corporation to design strategies in building customers loyalty and employees' loyalty as well as building general brand loyalty for its MICE products. Therefore, this theory, affirms the use of stakeholder relations as a strategy to improve public relations practices at KICC.

2.3.3 Systems Theory

The major proponents of this theory are Grunig, Grunig and Dozier (2006) who contends that Systems theory is useful in public relations because it gives a way to think about relationships. The open systems view of an organization posits that all organizations must have support and feedback from their environment in order to survive. All organizations are seen as systems interacting with the larger systems (environment and engaging in life sustaining processes of exchange). Generally, systems theory looks at organizations as made up of interrelated parts, adapting and adjusting to changes in the political, economic, and social environments in which they operate. Institutions have recognizable boundaries, and a communication structure that guides the parts of the organization to achieve institutional goals (Schneider *et al.*, 2017).

Leaders of an organization create and maintain these internal structures. Organizations depend on their environments for several essential resources: customers who purchase the product or service, suppliers who provide materials, employees who provide labor or management, shareholders who invest, and governments that regulate. Public relations' essential role is to help organizations adjust and adapt to changes in an organization's environment. The systems approach is an external standard that measures effectiveness based on long-term growth or sustainability (Jung & Vakharia, 2019).

According to Jung and Vakharia (2019) systems perspective emphasizes the interdependence of organizations with their environments, in that they depend on resources from their environments, such as raw materials, a source of employees, and clients or customers for the services or products they produce. The environment needs the

organization for its products and services. Organizations with open systems use public relations professionals to bring back information on how productive their relationships are with clients, customers, and other stakeholders. Organizations with closed systems do not seek new information. The decision makers operate on what happened in the past or on their personal preferences.

Organizations are part of a greater environment made up of many systems. The environment imposes constraints on organizations. For example, customers can boycott an organization's products. The courts can make a business pay damages to people who are injured by its products. Banks can choose not to lend money to an organization with reputation issues. When system theory is used, it is possible to identify organizations stakeholders and by spanning organizational boundaries it can identify each side's relationship needs. If decision makers keep their systems open, they allow for the two-way flow of resources and information between the organization and its environment.

They use that information for adapting to the environment, or they may use the incoming information to try to control the environment. Most effective organizations, according to systems theory, adapt to their environments. If the organization is unable to adapt to the environmental variation, then it will eventually cease to exist. The public relations professional engaged in an organization that takes a systems approach is continually focusing on feedback as a way of measuring organizational success (Belliger & Krieger, 2016).

Systems theory achieves insights into communication, and is especially influential on organizational communication, systems theory explains how and why people form groups, each of which is a system as well as part of a larger system. Its focus is on the whole system rather than on its parts, and how the said parts interact to affect the whole system (Jung & Vakharia, 2019).

System theory can be used to inform public relations practices in public institutions by providing a framework for understanding the interrelationships between the various components of the institution. It looks at the relationships between the people, structure, processes and technology that make up the organization and how they interact with each other. This understanding can help public relations practitioners identify communication strategies that effectively reach the desired target audiences and identify potential issues that could arise during the process. Additionally, system theory can help public relations practitioners better understand how the institution is perceived by the public and how best to influence the way it is viewed. Applying the open systems approach to this study requires a purposeful sensing of the environment to anticipate and detect changes that affect the organization's relationships with its publics. Ultimately, the systems approach should serve as the foundation for a more effective management practice. Ideal models of public relation interaction are created at KICC upon this basis.

2.3.3 Justification of the above theories in relation to PR practices

The three theories; Situational Theory of Publics, Relationship Management Theory, and Systems Theory as discussed above collectively provide a robust foundation for this study.

The Situational Theory of Publics is essential in understanding and segmenting audiences based on their awareness, involvement, and perceived constraints. This theory allows PR practitioners at KICC to classify their audiences into active, aware, or latent publics, enabling targeted and efficient communication strategies. For example, in promoting KICC's MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) services, it is vital to differentiate between publics who are unaware of these offerings, those who are aware but not engaged, and those actively seeking such services. Recognizing the level of problem awareness and removing barriers to participation can significantly enhance public engagement and improve strategic communication outcomes.

The Relationship Management Theory complements this by emphasizing the importance of building and maintaining long-term, mutually beneficial relationships between the organization and its publics. In the context of KICC, successful PR is not only about disseminating information but also about fostering trust, commitment, openness, and dialogue with stakeholders such as event organizers, government agencies, local communities, and international partners. This theory underlines that strong relationships result in greater public support, positive reputation, and enhanced institutional credibility, which are vital for sustaining KICC's operations and public image.

Meanwhile, the Systems Theory views KICC as an open system that interacts dynamically with its internal and external environment. This theory emphasizes the interdependence between the organization and its publics, suggesting that for KICC to function effectively, it must continuously adapt to feedback, environmental changes, and stakeholder expectations. PR plays a critical role as the communication channel that facilitates this

adaptive process. By monitoring trends, managing feedback loops, and aligning PR strategies with organizational goals, KICC ensures it remains responsive and accountable to its stakeholders.

In summary, these three theories collectively guide PR practices at KICC by offering strategic tools for audience segmentation (Situational Theory), fostering stakeholder relationships (Relationship Management Theory), and promoting adaptive communication and responsiveness (Systems Theory). Their integration supports evidence-based decision-making, enhances public engagement, and strengthens institutional reputation, image and performance.

2.4 Empirical Review

2.4.1 Adoption of Public Relations Practice in public Sector

Public relation has been adopted by many organizations and individuals to create awareness about particular brands in the market, goods and services as well as new developments in the world we are living in, this is primarily because we are living in a society that is connected both locally and globally or simply put internally and externally. In fact, individuals as well as companies have engaged the adoption of public relations as a means of not only publishing useful information, but most organization adopt the use of public relations as a means of providing continuous two-way communication between the organization and their target audiences (Deepak, & Jeyakumar, 2019).

The extent of public relations use in an organization is characterized by several factors that include the ability of the organization to attract new customers, increase customer loyalty, as well as create a good reputation for the company (Sisson, 2017). Foroudi (2019) concurred that for an organization to be successful in executing the public relations function there is need to create a public relations department that is specifically tasked with handling matters to do with public relations. The ability of an organization to create a public relations department enables the organization to be ahead of the park when it comes to handling its publics.

Holbeche (2018) argues that the extent of public relations in an organization is seen in the manner in which an organization is able to have basic components that include the image and quality of public relations. In addition, the extent of public relations in an organization is characterized by the perception of the organization towards public relations especially concerning its lower cadre employees and managers. The manner in which managers conceive and apply public relation in their activities clearly shows the level of adoption of the practice.

Holbeche (2018) affirms that indeed the extent of public relations and reputation of an organization are linked to each other. This is to mean that an organization cannot be able to maintain a good reputation if the organization leadership does not support public relations and vice-versa. He further argues that public relations is a strategic asset to an organization and is unique and inimitable, which means that it plays a central role in gaining competitive advantages and improving business performance (Goodman, 2019).

A study carried out by Kunczik (2016) sought to establish adoption of public relations among teenagers in Ukraine and was able to establish that public relations has been adopted to a very large extent by teenagers in Ukraine. The study however established that many dot.com brands are yet to achieve the level of familiarity necessary to enhance public relations. The study concluded that public relations help organizations to enhance their identity and image effectively, which therefore makes it possible for clients to know it truly exist. The ability of an organization to have an identity is, as a result of having effective public relations goals which are different from others.

Vujnovic and Kruckeberg (2019) studied the extent of public relations in public organizations in Taiwan. The study establish that public relations is an essential aspect given the role it plays when it comes to influencing preference of consumers for company products. This therefore means that public relations if well adopted by an organization will enable ease in adoption of product lines, which then are often connected to price as well. The study concludes that public relations in an organization is measured in the manner in which the organization developed offerings to the various segment, as well as the degree of essentiality which is considered to be a very big potential added value to the consumers. Public relations in an organization however, will most likely raise the cost of the product and make it less affordable for the consumer.

Albanna (2019) studied the use of social media in public relations practice in Jordanian Non-Profit Organizations. The study revealed that organizations that have successfully implemented public relations strategy in their core business have achieved a shift from a focus on product to access. The study further argues that firms need to put more

consideration on public relations to be able to effectively market their products and as such make it possible for those consumers to be able to have access and knowledge of products that would otherwise be unavailable. In addition to public relations focus, organizations need also to enhance product-focus that includes quality features. This means that organizations are required to enhance public relations to be able to effectively promote their products in the market and enhance their market presence.

2.4.2 Factors Affecting Effective Practice of Public Relations

2.4.2.1 Technical capacity

Gascó-Hernández *et al.* (2018) examined the impact of technical skills on public relations within government institutions in Italy. The study highlighted a recurring challenge in these institutions: the quality of public relations efforts is often compromised due to a lack of essential skills and competencies among employees. The authors contend that many public servants lack the specialized training and practical experience necessary for effective PR practice. As a result, their limited proficiency in public relations contributes to ineffective communication strategies and poor stakeholder engagement. The study emphasizes the need for targeted training programs to build technical capacity and improve the overall effectiveness of public relations in the public sector. This is often a challenging task especially in the quest to achieve an effective performance of public relations and therefore makes it difficult for any management team to achieve success in public relations. The study concluded that the effectiveness of public relations in many organizations is significantly undermined by the lack of necessary skills among employees.

This skills gap has had a profound impact on the organizations' ability to communicate effectively with their stakeholders. Without the requisite expertise in public relations, employees struggle to craft and deliver strategic messages, manage the organization's image, and respond appropriately to public concerns. As a result, communication efforts become disjointed, less impactful, and fail to build strong relationships with the public. The findings underscore the critical importance of investing in professional training and capacity building to enhance communication effectiveness and strengthen public relations outcomes.

Matongolo *et al.* (2018) carried out a study on employer branding and talent retention. The study was conducted in higher learning institution among 112 staff working in public institutions. The study established that a positive relationship between successful public relations and employees' capabilities in Uganda. The study further revealed that the ability to adapt to changing market environment is a key determinant of the quality of service delivered to customers. In this regard, the study recommends that since public relations makes it possible for organizations to respond to situations in the market place, there is need for organizations to recruit, train and retain competent staff who will play an essential role in securing the reputation of the organization and its product in the long term.

Watuka (2018) studied the influence of corporate reputational risk management on strategy implementation in Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG) Kenya. He examined the strategic dimensions of public relations at KPMG. The study revealed that for organization to be successful in their public relations performance there is a need to recruit and retain highly skilled employees. The study therefore proposes the need to have qualified staff on

board to succeed in public relations. In addition, the study recommends that for an organization to be successful in their performance of public relations there is need for it to empower employees through training and strategic placement in departments that directly deal with its publics. Similarly, there is need for the organization to place great emphasis on recruiting and retaining the qualified staff.

2.4.2.2 Technology support

Technology support refers to the assistance provided to users in the installation, configuration, maintenance, and troubleshooting of hardware, software, and digital services, aimed at ensuring optimal performance and minimizing downtime in technology-dependent environments (Laudon & Laudon, 2020). This support is essential in enhancing user productivity and ensuring that technological tools effectively support organizational goals. Kim (2016) argued that public relations, is made successful by proper and informed use of information technology tools. Their descriptive study among 512 communication officers sought to investigate public institutions that have adopted electronic tools in the management of their public relations in the United Kingdom, where it was revealed that online intermediaries are playing a very important role when it comes to enhancing public relations practice in public organizations. This was achieved through the supply of inter-organizational information, as well as the provision of trust when it comes to aggregating information. The study concluded that in the modern-day business environment people have adopted the use of social networks, mobile phones as well as cameras and videos when it comes to information sharing, these platforms therefore can as well be adopted in enhancing public relations by public organizations.

Uche Sunday *et al.* (2019) studied the influence of technology on effectiveness of public relations among building and construction consultancy firms in Nigeria. The study was cross sectional in nature and involved 541 public officers in the firms. The study established that technology positively affects public relations strategies adopted by the consultancy firms. Sarkar (2016) supported Uche Sunday *et al.* (2019) that traditional intermediaries in public relations are likely to be by-passed by new forms of electronic communications. It means that the various public relations functions will become part of the electronic markets within time.

The study recommends the need for organizations to adopt the use of new technologies in the marketplace to be able to be successful in public relations. Wiyono *et al.* (2019) argued that technology influences public relations in public organizations especially in the times of crisis where people directly involved in a crisis are increasingly experiencing trauma. This is normally in cases where there is the sharing of news on the internet as well as other media. It means therefore that an organizations or governments reputation is likely to be threatened in the event that wrong information is shared.

2.4.2.3 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that shape the behavior and interactions of individuals within an organization. It encompasses the unwritten rules and social dynamics that influence how employees communicate, make decisions, and approach their work. A strong organizational culture aligns employee behavior with the organization's goals and can significantly impact employee satisfaction,

productivity, and overall organizational performance (Schein, 2017). It evolves over time and is influenced by leadership style, company history, and the external environment.

Daniel (2017) conducted a study on the impact of corporate culture on the effectiveness of public relations in commercial banks in Ethiopia. The primary aim of the research was to explore how internal marketing influences employee productivity. An exploratory case study design was adopted to examine the relationship between corporate culture and the effectiveness of public relations. A probability sampling method was used to select 20 senior managers, representing 10% of the total 202 senior managers across selected banks. Data was gathered through individual interviews and focus group discussions, allowing for comparative analysis and enhancing the reliability of findings.

The study revealed a positive relationship between organizational culture and the effectiveness of public relations. It emphasized that to improve employee commitment and performance, it is essential to shape and reinforce organizational values. Daniel concluded that organizations, by themselves, do not possess intrinsic values; rather, values are introduced and nurtured by the individuals who work within them. Therefore, a firm's culture is a reflection of its people. Managers face the complex task of aligning institutional goals—such as vision, targets, and tasks with the personal values of employees. Ultimately, the organization's true value lies in its intangible assets, including customer loyalty, employee expertise, intellectual property, and overall reputation.

Lindgren (2019) studied the influence of organization culture on effectiveness of internal public relations. The study explored the effectiveness of Canadian forest advisory

committees for advancing sustainability. The study was conducted among 123 corporate chief information officers in Canada forestry department. The study argument was that for effective public relations in any organization, need to develop a top to bottom approach in communication to be successful in public relations. This is very important for the members of an organization to be able to properly have an understanding of public relations performance. There is also the need for managers in public institutions to adapt to information sharing as a way of enhancing public relations performance. A two-way communication was also found desirable in receiving feedback among employees at low level and enhancing evaluation and analysis of public relations. This is primarily because effective communication skills are essential when it comes to information dissemination in an organization, especially downward communication.

2.3.2.4 Organizational Structure

Organizational structure is the formal system that outlines roles, responsibilities, communication, and authority within an organization to achieve objectives (Robbins & Coulter, 2018). Ani *et al.* (2018) studied the influence of organizational structure on public relations in Japan. The study gathered data from information officers working in vehicle manufacturing companies in Tokyo. The study was cross-sectional study. Results of the study from questionnaire administered in the field to measure implications of organizational structure revealed that horizontal organizational structure was more effective in ensuring communication internally, better distribution of responsibility among peer employees and flexibility on reporting.

The study however concluded that a horizontal organizational structure would be appropriate in private sectors as compared to public sector, which is large and has a more complicated communication strategy due to numbers. The study concluded that a choice of organizational structure is based on different circumstance and nature of organization. Vertical approach is more appropriate among public institution that dictates for a controlled structure to monitor activities unlike private sector that seeks a mentoring culture or market-oriented culture to counter communication effectively.

Nyanchama (2017) studied the factors influencing public relations at Kisii University. The study was cross-sectional in nature involving 43 information officers in the university. The data for the study was collected using semi-structured questionnaires on perceptions about organizational structure and effectiveness of public relations. The study revealed that choice of an organizational structure has a significant effect on public relation effectiveness. The study further revealed that a flat organizational structure as opposed to a vertical or tall organizational structure had a more profound positive effect on public relation performance. Flat organizational structure was found to be appropriate in ensuring flexibility in decision-making, faster communication and response to emerging incidences. A flat organizational structure was found to help in addressing customer challenges promptly; addressing employing concerns that impact on customer and employee's loyalty.

2.3.3 Improving Public Relations Practice

2.3.3.1 Management Engagement

Management engagement was a strategy that could be adopted to enhance public relations practice. Ideally, this was because the management of public organizations was required to

engage all employees to promote employee buy-in, which in turn made it possible for the organization to succeed in its efforts to improve public relations practice (Sakali, 2017). The most critical part that many public institutions in Kenya had overlooked in public relations practice was the ability to engage employees at all levels. In addition, there had been a lack of a first-touch team of managers capable of delivering outstanding quality public relations. This ideally would have enabled senior management to receive concerns raised regarding public relations, yet in many cases, managers lacked sufficient time to interact with lower-ranking staff. When this category of staff became disgruntled, it often led to the spread of distorted information, resulting in confusion and unachieved targets (Sakali, 2017).

Employee engagement on public relations also allows employees to take responsibility of tasks that are assigned to them and this helps to enhance the public relations practice in public organizations. In addition, employee engagement enables employees to develop a feeling of being part of created ideas and approved the decisions made with regards to public relations strategies adopted by organizations. Most public organizations have had to place public relations thinking perspective as an integral management approach that should not be blurred at the managerial level. This primarily is because most of those in positions of management believe they are solely responsible for public relations in the public sector (Ngarachu, 2018).

2.3.3.2 Coaching and Mentoring of Employees on Public Relations

Organizations aiming to implement effective public relations strategies must prioritize the development of coaching and mentoring frameworks. In the context of public institutions, structured leadership and team development are essential to ensure public relations functions are both proactive and responsive. According to Reddi (2019), organizations that invest in building coaching and mentoring competencies foster stronger public relations teams capable of engaging target publics more effectively. These programs not only enhance individual capabilities but also improve overall team performance in strategic communication efforts.

Moreover, continuous training and capacity building have been identified as crucial elements in the success of public relations within the public sector. Institutions that prioritize such initiatives tend to outperform their counterparts in delivering consistent and impactful messaging (Reddi, 2019). Berger and Erzikova (2019) emphasize that coaching and mentoring enable employees to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement through ongoing feedback, which is essential in the dynamic field of public relations. This interactive learning process builds communication resilience and fosters organizational adaptability.

Furthermore, studies by L'Etang (2013) and Gregory (2015) support the notion that modern public relations practice requires an integrated learning culture where knowledge is continuously shared across departments. Managers therefore play a critical role in initiating coaching and mentoring systems that align with organizational goals, enhance communication competencies, and create sustainable public engagement strategies.

2.3.3.3 Employee Empowerment

Employee empowerment is considered as one of the best ways to build public relations practice. This is primarily because employees who are empowered will feel that they are part of the decision making of the organization and as such, they will develop good ways of working to ensure successful public relations practice is achieved (Erzikova & Martinelli, 2020). In Kenya, public institutions employees especially those at the lower level shy away from taking responsibility of their actions because of the feeling that they are not well empowered. This goes a long way in affecting public relations performance as minimal exchange of information occurs. Organizations in the public sector do not see the need to empower their employees at all. Most of the organization's management develop fear instead and threaten to terminate the contracts failure to follow the set rules and guidelines. This therefore has gone a long way to make employees contribute less even when they have good ideas that would foster improvement in their daily tasks thus most of these staffs would prefer following the rules and eventually take no responsibilities in their performance (Ngarachu, 2018).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 presents the conceptual framework that was adopted in this particular study. It shows a relationship between adoption of PR, factors affecting PR practice and strategies that can be used to enhance PR practice at KICC. The factors include technical capacities of the employees, the use of technology, organizational culture of the institution, and organization structure.

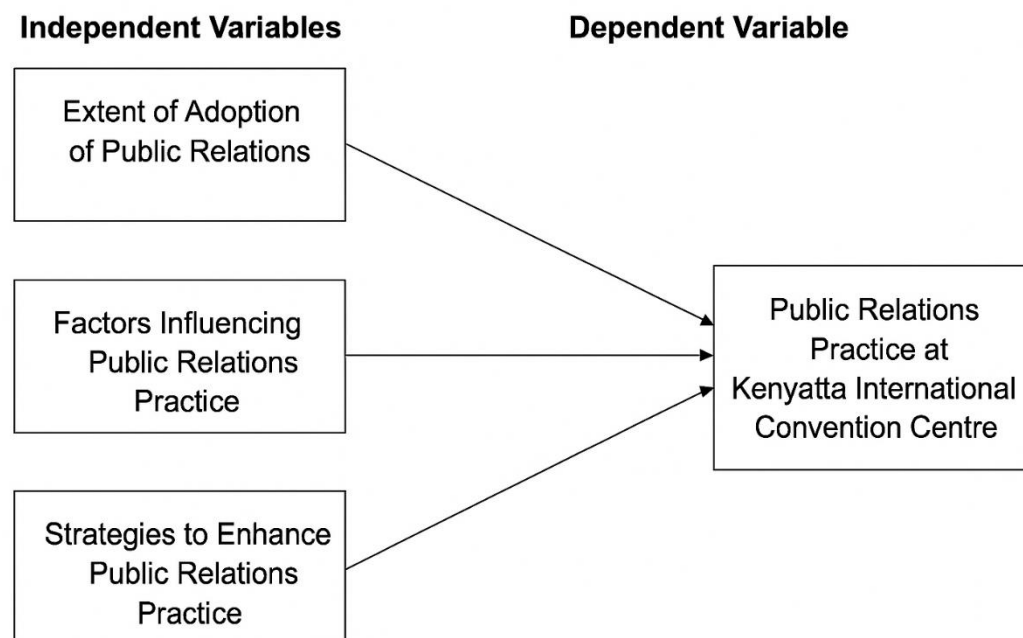


Figure 2.1 – Conceptual framework

Source: (Author, 2023)

2.5 Research Gaps

Nyakamba and Gitau (2018) studied contributions and challenges associated with measurement and evaluation of public relations in the ministry of Youth, that noted that public relation practitioners were aware of the role of evaluation of public relation officers however they were unable to convince top management to support them with finances and time allocation to carry out evaluations. Muhia (2010) studied the role of public relation in public sector where the study compared communication studies between ministry of defense and police department in Kenya. The study revealed that PR plays critical role in enhancing social harmony and confidence between the service providers and recipients.

These studies among others were not narrowed on practices of public relationship rather they considered the role played by public relations. On the other hand, they focused on ministries and not state corporations, which is an interesting area to be studied. Other studies carried out in developed countries were mainly in private sector Ani *et al.* (2018) who studied the influence of organizational structure on public relations in manufacturing sector. The private sector is mainly profit oriented and does not operate like a public entity that has to operate either through a charter provision guided by an Act of the parliament and takes the interest of the public first and the government.

2.6 Summary of Literature Review

The reviewed literature underscores that public relations (PR) practices encompass various communication channels, including print media, radio, television, mobile platforms, and increasingly, social media. These channels are instrumental in building and maintaining relationships with diverse stakeholders such as clients, government agencies, and the general public.

The literature also identifies several key factors that influence the effectiveness of public relations, particularly in public institutions like the Kenyatta International Convention Center. One major factor is the level of technological support available. This includes the accessibility of electronic devices, availability and reliability of internet infrastructure, and the ability to utilize digital platforms for real-time feedback and press engagements.

Another critical factor is the technical competence of public relations personnel. This includes formal communication skills, proficiency in digital tools, and public speaking abilities. These skills are essential in delivering consistent and professional messaging that aligns with institutional goals.

Organizational structure and culture also significantly impact public relations performance. Structures that promote open communication, flexibility, and timely feedback tend to enhance the effectiveness of PR efforts. Similarly, cultures that support transparency, inclusiveness, and innovation such as; market-oriented or adhocracy cultures—tend to create an environment where PR can thrive. Market-oriented cultures focus on competitive positioning, while adhocracy cultures encourage creativity and adaptability, both of which are crucial for effective public engagement.

Lastly, theoretical perspectives such as Situational theory, Relationship Management Theory, and Systems Theory offer useful lenses for understanding how organizations like KICC can successfully manage relationships with key stakeholders; including employees, government entities, and surrounding communities through strategic public relations and corporate social responsibility initiatives.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explores research methodology that was adopted in the process of carrying out this study. The first part of this chapter presents the research design, which was followed by the population of the study, and thereafter the sampling techniques. The chapter then presents the data collection techniques as well as the data analysis techniques notwithstanding the research procedures.

3.1 Research Design

Kothari (2004) defines research design as a strategic framework for gathering and utilizing data to attain precise information or test hypotheses effectively. This study employed a mixed methodological approach, specifically adopting explanatory-sequential design. This design, categorized as an explanatory sequential design in mixed methods research, involves a quantitative phase preceding a qualitative one (Fetters, Curry, & Creswell, 2013). The data collection unfolded in two consecutive phases over a period of time. Initially, quantitative data was collected from marketing staff through questionnaires and subsequently analyzed. In the second phase, qualitative data was gathered from PR staff through interviews. The explanatory sequential design was chosen to provide a understanding by sequentially integrating qualitative insights to explain and interpret quantitative findings, thereby proving an in-depth understanding which enriched the overall research outcomes.

3.2 Research Approach

The study utilized a mixed methods approach through adopting both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Quantitative research is a formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data are used to obtain information about the phenomena under investigation. This study used this approach to describe variables and examine the relationships amongst the variables (Rensburg *et al.* 2009). Qualitative research on the other hand explores attitudes, behaviors and experiences (Dawson, 2009) and focuses on meaning and understanding. This study adopted an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, where data collection was conducted in two distinct phases. First, quantitative data was collected and analyzed, followed by qualitative data collection to further explain or expand on the quantitative findings, as illustrated in Figure 3.1 below.

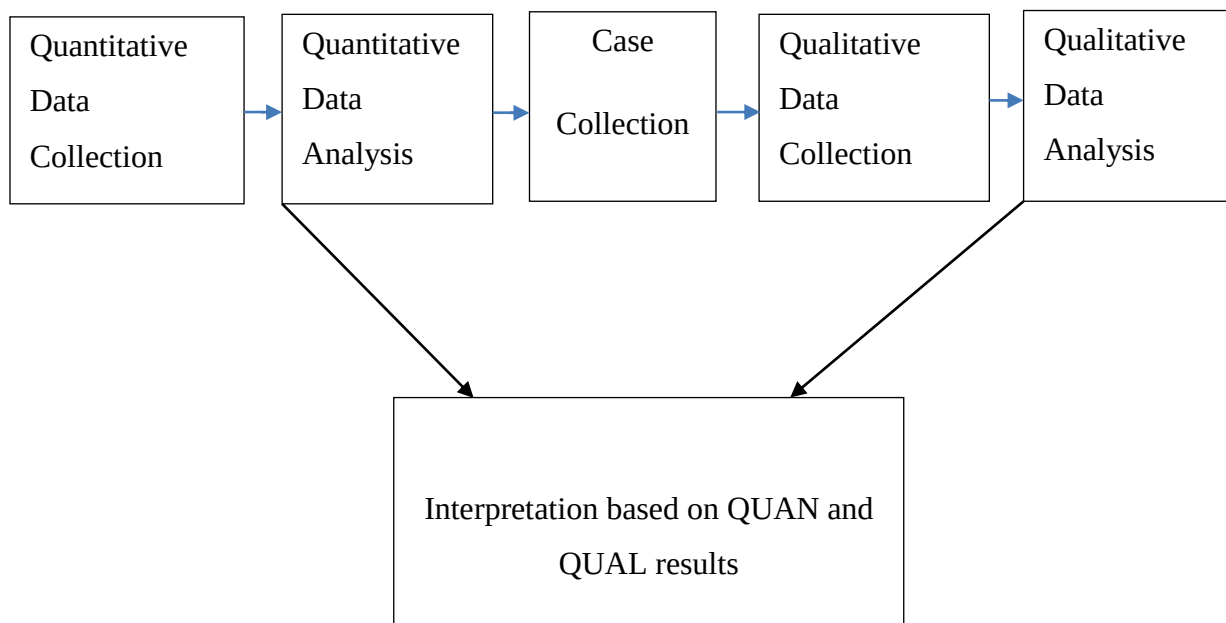


Figure 3.1 - Explanatory Sequential Mixed Approach Design

3.3 Target Population

A population can be described as a total collection of elements from which the researcher selects so as to make inferences from (Tobi & Kampen, 2018). The research was concerned with gathering their input concerning the practice of public relations at KICC from communication officers working at the public relation officers at KICC. According to KICC Human resource department 2019 there were 13 public relation officers and 112 marketing officers tasked with sourcing, packaging and relaying public information on existing MICE services offered at KICC and capacity building seminars as well handling queries and building a positive image on KICC. The study therefore targeted a total of 125 employees which included 13 PR staff and 112 marketing staff.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample size

Abutabenjeh and Jaradat (2018) noted that sampling techniques to mean methods used by research in the determination of the elements to be used as a representative sample. The sample size depends on what one wants to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what was useful, what had credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources. In this study, purposive sampling was solely employed to select participants based on their relevance to the study objectives. Specifically, thirteen (13) public relations officers were purposively selected for interviews due to their direct involvement in PR functions.

Additionally, a simple random sampling approach was adopted in selecting all the 112-marketing staff to participate in the study. This approach was justified by the manageable size of the target population and the need to capture comprehensive insights from all marketing personnel, who are key stakeholders in the implementation and effectiveness of public relations practices. The sampling method allowed the population of the 112 participants to an equal chance of being selected for a sample. This ensured the sample was representative minimizing bias and allowed for more statistically valid conclusions given that a complete list of the chosen population was available. The population ensured a more accurate and representative understanding of the PR dynamics at the organization. The sample distribution is summarized in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 – Sampling procedure

No.	Population category	Population	Sample procedure	Sample (s)
1.	PR officers	13	Purposive	13
2.	Marketing staff	112	Simple Random	112
Total		125		125

3.5 Research Instruments

The researcher collected data by use of questionnaire and face-to-face interviews. For quantitative data, a structured questionnaire with open and closed ended questions was designed to seek information from marketing staff. Through use of questionnaires, the researcher was able to contact the targeted population quickly, easily and efficiently using hand delivery questionnaire. Questionnaires are relatively quick and easy to prepare code and interpret, especially in the case of closed questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

For qualitative data, the researcher organized for in-depth interviews with the PR officers at KICC, since they could help give more elaborate and concrete information, discover how different groups think and feel about the issues at hand and why they hold certain opinions and to suggest potential solutions to problems identified. Questionnaires and interview guides were pre-tested for validity and reliability before distribution to participants.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Jones *et al.* (2018) noted that data collection methods are processes, which involve the gathering of facts that are presented to the researcher from the environment being studied.

The method relied on primary data which was collected through use of questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was self-administered via drop and pick method to the marketing staff. The participants were guided on how to fill out the questionnaires and given a time frame of three days to complete filling them before returning them for analysis. Similarly, interviews of PR officers were carried out by the researcher herself and all responses recorded for further actions.

3.7 Pilot Study

The pilot study involved collecting data from a small proportion of the sample before the actual data collection to assess the effectiveness of the research instruments (Sileyew, 2019). It aimed to review and refine the data collection tools by testing their validity and reliability. In this study, 13 participants representing 10% of the sample were selected from Utalii College, a parastatal offering hospitality services to the public, making it an ideal setting for pre-testing.

In addition to administering questionnaires, piloted interview was conducted with 1 selected participant to assess the clarity, relevance, and sequencing of the interview questions. These pilot interviews provided valuable feedback on the appropriateness of the language used, the flow of questions, and whether the items effectively elicited the intended responses. Interviewee highlighted areas where questions were ambiguous or too broad, enabling the researcher to rephrase or restructure such items for better comprehension and focus.

The combined findings from both the questionnaire and the pilot interview helped the researcher identify areas needing clarification or modification, ensuring that participants in the main study would clearly understand all the questions. Consequently, the research instruments were refined and adjusted accordingly before their actual use. However, the pilot study results were not included in the final research analysis, although reliability measures on factors and indicators were incorporated under descriptive statistics to inform the validity of the final tools.

3.7.1 Validity Test

Sileyew (2019) describe research validity to mean the degree to which an instrument measures what it implies to measure. Validity of the research instrument was tested by improving on research questions that were perceived ambiguous or had errors of omission or commission. To achieve this, content validity was adopted by considering the opinions and advice from research experts in the university together with guidance from the supervisor also helped in improving the questionnaire.

3.7.2 Reliability of Research Instrument

Sileyew (2019) describe reliability to mean the measure of the degree to which instrument yields consistent results of data; when repeated trial is carried out. Reliability of research instruments revolves around the consistent nature of the research instrument items that are adopted by the researcher. In this study internal consistency was adopted to test for reliability through Cronbach's alpha test at α at 0.7, from the findings all the variables met the threshold in accordance to Zabala *et al.* (2018).

3.8 Data Analysis

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. For quantitative data, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 was used to conduct the analysis. This involved both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis included measures such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to summarize and describe patterns within the data. Inferential analysis was conducted using correlation and regression tests to examine relationships among the study variables and to test hypotheses.

In contrast, qualitative data derived from interview transcripts was analyzed using narrative analysis. Guided by the works of Bailey (2008) and Klenke (2008), the qualitative analysis focused on capturing participants' experiences and perspectives. This approach involved organizing non-numeric data to identify themes, patterns, and meanings that emerged from the participants' responses. The narrative method provided deeper insights into the context and underlying dynamics influencing public relations practices at the Kenyatta International Convention Center.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

To uphold ethical standards in the study, participation was entirely voluntary, with no form of coercion. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained by ensuring that all potential participants fully understood the purpose of the study and the nature of the questions involved.

The researcher secured a permission letter from the management of the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC), which was presented to participants as part of the approval process. Additionally, a letter of introduction was prepared to brief participants on the objectives of the study and the intended outcomes.

Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly observed. Participants were instructed not to write their names on the questionnaire, and no identifying information was collected. As a result, participants' identities were not disclosed in any reports or publications arising from the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents an analysis of the data that was gathered using the research tools as discussed in chapter three. First section 4.2 provides information on the response rate of participants. Section 4.3 then presents and discusses the demographic characteristics of the participants including; gender, age distribution, and level of formal education attained, period of service, and duties at work place. Section 4.4 presents the extent of adoption of public relation practice by KICC. Section 4.5 presents the factors affecting the effective practice of public relations at KICC and finally 4.6 discusses strategies for enhancing public relations practice at KICC.

4.2 Response rate

The researcher distributed 112 questionnaires and 108 were returned representing 96.4%. However, 4 of the questionnaires representing 3.6% were not returned by the participants occasioned by their absence due to overseas travel for official duty. Usually, a response rate of 70% and above is ideal for a study since it provides an excellent representation of the population and helps avoid bias (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Thus, a response rate of 96.4% was found suitable for analysis and making interpretations and conclusions for this study. The response rate for each category of the respondent is presented on Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 - Response rate for the participants during the study

Participants	Total	Returned	Response rate
Marketing Officers	112	108	96.4%
Public relations Officers	13	13	100%
Total	125	121	96.8%

Source: (Author, 2023)

4.3 Demographic Information

4.3.1 Gender representation

The participants were asked to state their gender. The findings revealed that majority of them 63(58.3%) were female while 45(41.7%) were male. Thus, this study gave almost equal representation to both genders to avoid biasness as shown in figure 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 – Gender proportion

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	45	41.7
Female	63	58.3
Total	108	100.0

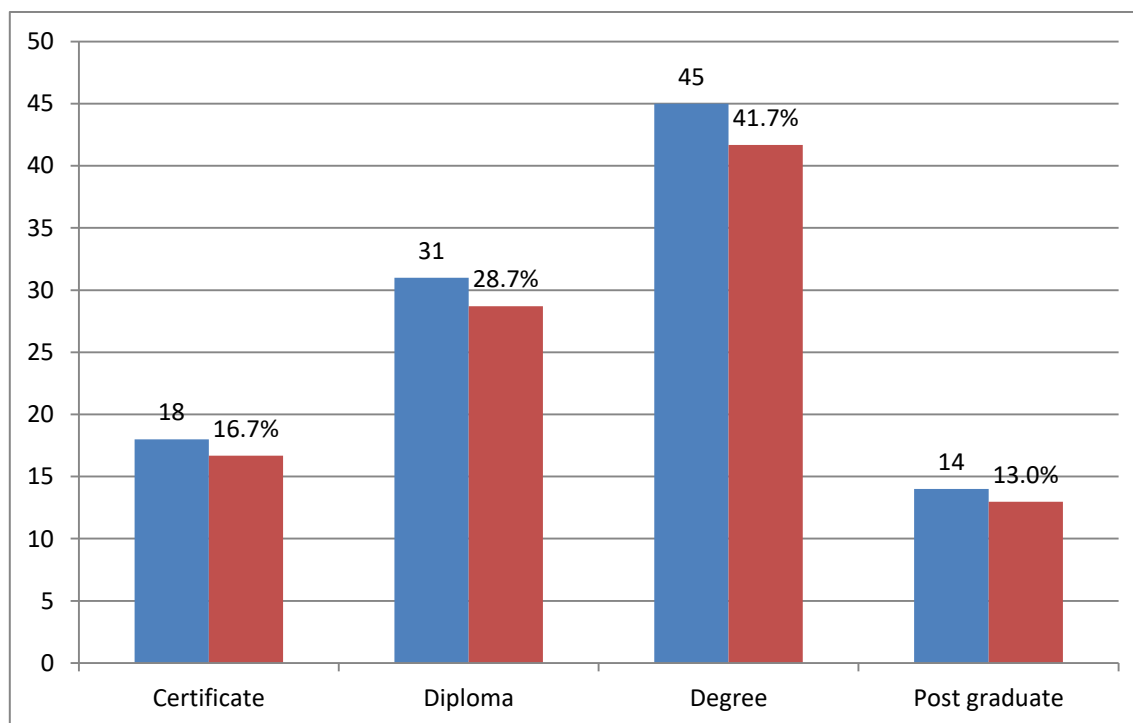
Source: (Author, 2023)

4.3.2 Level of Education

The researcher sought to determine the level of education for all the participants, majority of them 45(41.7%) were graduate, 31(28.7%) had obtained various college trainings at Diploma level, 18(16.7%) had certificate qualifications, while a few 14(13.0%) had

postgraduate degrees as shown in figure 4.1. This implies that most of the participants were knowledgeable enough to provide the required data/information relating to the variables under study.

Figure 4.1 – Education level



Source: (Author, 2023)

4.3.3 Period served in PR position

The participants were asked to state the period they have served in Public relations positions. The findings revealed that majority of them 42(38.9%) have served for period between 16 to 20 years, while 20(18.5%) have served for a period over 20 years, 19(17.6%) have served for a period between 11 to 15 years, 18(16.7%) have served for a period between 6 to 10 years and a few of them 9(8.3%) have served for a period less than 5 years as shown in figure 4.3 below. Thus, the participants in this

study have a good experience and well informed about PR practices in public institutions.

Table 4.3 – Period served in PR position

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0-5 years	9	8.3
6-10 years	18	16.7
11-15 years	19	17.6
16-20 years	42	38.9
Over 20 years	20	18.5
Total	108	100.0

Source: (Author, 2023)

4.3.4 Duties at work place

First the researcher inquired from the participants about their duties at workplace. The results indicated that majority 36(33.3%) have been assigned media relation activities, 27(25.0%) are responsible in managing website and social media, 18(16.7%) organize events, while 13(12.0%) deal with internal communication and some few participants have been assigned Corporate social responsibility docket as shown in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 – Duties of PR staff

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Internal communication	13	12.0
Writing and editing Journals	5	4.6
Organizing events	18	16.7
Media relations	36	33.3
Corporate Social Responsibility	9	8.3
Managing website and Social media	27	25.0
Total	108	100.0

Source: (Author, 2023)

4.4 Adoption of public relations at Kenyatta International Convention Center

The adoption of public relations (PR) practices in public organizations has become increasingly important in today's society. The first objective of this study was to determine the extent of the adoption of public relations at Kenyatta International Convention Center. The descriptive findings revealed that KICC use customer's comments digitally which provide feedback to monitor their operations and progress ($M=4.1$, $SD=0.9$), and that they have adopted the use of Corporate events ($M=4.0$, $SD=0.9$) and conference for PR ($M=4.1$, $SD=1.0$).

Furthermore, the findings showed that KICC also uses public communication officers/spokesperson to communicate organization's affairs to the public ($M=4.1$, $SD=1.0$) and that they have also embraced social media to engage clients ($M=4.0$, $SD=0.9$). Similarly, the organization has created positive opportunities through customer relations and engagement ($M=4.2$, $SD=1.1$) and have a strategic communication policy that supports PR practices ($M=4.0$, $SD=0.9$) and also, the organization has set up a strategic communication team in place ($M=4.4$, $SD=1.0$).

However, it was not clear whether KICC have partnered with private sector to foster success on strategic communication ($M=3.1$, $SD=0.8$) and whether they periodically conduct a media impact analysis ($M=3.3$, $SD=1.1$). Overall, the results showed that KICC as one of the public organizations in Kenya that has adopted PR practices in its operations (Aggregate Mean =3.9, Std. Dev=1.1) as shown in table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5 - Adoption of public relations (PR) practices at KICC

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Sample (N)
Our institution use feedback to monitor progress through customers comments digitally	4.1	.9	108
We partner with private sector to foster success on strategic communication	3.1	.8	108
We use of corporate events for PR	4.0	.9	108
We use of conferences for PR	4.0	1.0	108
We have also adopted use of public communication officers/spokesperson	4.1	1.0	108
We also engage customers through social media	4.0	.9	108
We use call agents to engage customers to solve their issues	3.2	1.1	108
Our organization has created positive opportunities through customer relations and engagement	4.2	1.1	108
We have a strategic communication policy that supports PR practices	4.0	.9	108
We have set up a strategic communication team in place	4.4	1.0	108
We periodically conduct a media impact analysis	3.3	1.1	108
Aggregate Mean & Std. Dev.	3.9	1.0	

Source: (Author, 2023)

The interviews of PR officers revealed that use of social media for PR practice is popular, with Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Google Ads being prevalent platforms.

One of the interviewees had this to say:

“ Yes. We often use social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and mostly we use whatsApp groups to pass messages to our audience. This has also been extended to include text/email notifications, webinars, mailing campaigns, and branded partnership platforms like Google Ads.” Participants 1

“.....Yes, we usually use when communicating informally with our customers. For such cases, we usually use WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook platforms. However, despite the benefits of social media, traditional channels of communication are still important to us.....Respondent 6.

The findings revealed that KICC engages in PR practices through social media platforms, indicating a shift towards contemporary communication channels. Although traditional communication methods still hold some relevance, the prevalence of informal customer interaction via social media signifies a significant portion of the overall PR strategy. This implies that PR officers at KICC possess substantial access to diverse communication tools, particularly those associated with digital platforms. The reliance on social media aligns with the evolving landscape of public relations, emphasizing immediate and interactive communication.

This shift is consistent with existing literature emphasizing the growing role of social media in modern PR strategies (Kent & Taylor, 2022; Lovejoy *et al.*, 2012). The study findings resonate with the literature's recognition of social media as a dynamic and influential tool for fostering direct engagement with audiences, enhancing organizational transparency, and building positive relationships (Waters *et al.*, 2019; Macnamara, 2014). Consequently, KICC's adoption of social media in PR practices underscores a strategic alignment with contemporary communication trends, enhancing their ability to effectively connect with and influence their audiences.

4.4.1 Channels of communication media used to interact with audience at KICC

To further get insights about the adoption of public relations (PR) practices at KICC, researcher sought to establish the frequency at which channels of communication is used at

KICC. The findings showed that dialogues through formal, informal meetings and calls are mostly used within the organization, 90(83.3%), and similarly, use of social media interaction e.g., Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp platform is also often used as one of the media channels of communication at KICC, 81(75.0%). However, feedback mechanism, use of question and answer sessions and public participations forums are rarely used at KICC 63(58.3%). Furthermore, the findings revealed that focused group discussions are never used as channels of media in communication at KICC, 45(41.6%) as shown in table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6 - Frequency of use of channels of media in communication at KICC

	Often	Rarely	Never	Sample(N)
Use of social media interaction e.g Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp platform	81(75.0%)	27(25.0%)	0	108
Provision of Feedback mechanism	18(16.6%)	63(58.3%)	27(25.0%)	108
Dialogue or calls	90(83.3%)	18(16.6%)	0	108
Use of focused group discussion	18(16.6%)	45(41.6%)	45(41.6%)	108
Use of question and answer sessions	36(33.3%)	54(50.0%)	18(16.6%)	108
Carrying out public participation forums	18(16.6%)	63(58.3%)	27(25.0%)	108

Source: (Author, 2023)

The above findings paint a picture of a PR department that has found savvy ways to connect with its audiences. Both modern, technology-based platforms (e.g. emails, online chats and text messages), and traditional communication mediums (e.g., KBC, Citizen and

NTV) are combined to create a dynamic, intentional approach to messaging and PR practice at KICC.

Participants interviewed had to say this:

“.....We use variety of channels of communication media, including phone calls, text messages, emails and social media tools; such variety of communication channels have been adopted in order to reach different audiences of varying levels of accessibility and suitability.....” Respondent 1.

“ We use mainstream media like KBC, Citizen and NTV especially when communicating members of public on urgent message....” Respondent 2.

“ Now days, social media platforms have simplified our communication; we now days rely on social media communication and in some cases, we communicate through phone calls and sending of e-mails and text messages.....” Respondent 3.

This study revealed that KICC strategically incorporates both social media platforms and mainstream media outlets in its communication strategy, aiming to connect with diverse audiences and demographics. The utilization of social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, allows for direct engagement with the public, fostering interactive communication and relationship-building. Concurrently, the integration of mainstream media outlets such as newspapers, TV stations, and online news sites taps into established audience trust, offering public organizations a valuable opportunity to leverage the credibility associated with these channels.

These findings align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of a multi-channel approach in contemporary communication strategies (Bortree & Seltzer, 2019; Thackeray *et al.*, 2012). The study underscores the significance of leveraging both social media and traditional media to maximize reach and credibility, recognizing the unique strengths each platform brings to the communication landscape. By adopting a dual-channel approach,

KICC aligns with best practices in public relations, acknowledging the diverse preferences and habits of their target audience while capitalizing on the strengths of both digital and traditional communication channels.

4.4.2 Frequency of using classical channels in passing information

Classical channels in passing information, such as press releases, traditional media outlets, and face-to-face interactions, continue to play a significant role in PR practice for public organizations. This study sought to determine the frequency of using classical channels in passing information at KICC. The results showed that KICC regularly use Television, 54(50.0%) and Newspapers channels, 55(50.9%). On the other hand, the use of film recording/ documentaries, 81(75.0%) and radio stations 63(58.3%) are rarely used as channels of communication. Lastly, the use of press releases is rarely used but to a large extent not used by KICC to pass information 63(58.3%) as shown in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7 – Frequency of using Classical channels

	Regularly	Rarely	Never	Sample(N)
Use of television	54(50.0%)	45(41.6%)	9(8.3%)	108
Through radio stations	9(8.3%)	63 (58.3%)	36(33.3%)	108
Use of Newspapers	55(50.9%)	44(40.7%)	9(8.3%)	108
Press releases	9(8.3%)	36(33.3%)	63(58.3%)	108
Use of film recording / documentaries	18(16.6%)	81(75.0%)	9(8.3%)	108
Use of business magazines	9(8.3%)	81(75.0%)	18(16.6%)	108

Source: (Author, 2023)

The findings indicate that classical communication channels continue to provide significant advantages in today's communication landscape. Traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio remain particularly influential due to their established credibility and broad audience reach. These platforms are often regarded as trusted sources of information by the public. By leveraging both traditional media and other classical channels like press releases, public organizations can enhance the visibility and credibility of their messages through association with reputable and widely recognized communication platforms.

Participants interviewed had to say this:

“ Our organization still use classical channels to pass information to the public; depending on the need, we rarely use them on daily basis but sometimes once a week or even monthly....’ Respondent 7.

“ We rarely utilize the classical channels of communication in our organization, this is because of the increasing popularity of such user-friendly communication tools as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Youtube. Social media has become an efficient, cost-effective tool for companies to quickly connect with their consumers and directly market products or services.....”, Response 4

This study revealed that public organizations employ a hybrid approach, combining classical communication channels with contemporary digital tools, particularly favoring user-friendly platforms like Social Media. While periodic use of traditional channels persists, the increasing reliance on digital communication tools, such as social media, underscores a shift towards more interactive and accessible methods to engage consumers. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing the importance of integrating traditional and digital communication strategies for comprehensive outreach (Cornelissen, 2017; Van Ruler, Vercic, & Sriramesh, 2019).

The findings emphasize the strategic value of adopting a diversified communication approach, acknowledging the varied preferences of audiences and ensuring a more effective connection with consumers in today's technologically advanced and diverse communication landscape. Integrating classical and modern channels allows public organizations to navigate a dynamic media environment, enhancing their ability to disseminate information effectively and maximize the impact of their messages.

4.5 Factors that influence Public Relations Practice at KICC

The second objective of this study was to establish key factors that influence PR practice at KICC. This is elaborated below:

4.5.1 Technical capacity

The technical capacity of a public organization plays a significant role in determining the effectiveness of its PR practice. Technical capacity refers to the organization's ability to utilize and leverage various technological tools, platforms, and systems to enhance communication, engagement, and information dissemination (Matongolo *et al.*, 2018). The results in this study established that technical capacity has allowed public relations team to build trust with the public by demonstrating their ability to handle crisis (M=4.4, SD=1.0), and also enhanced the credibility of public relations officers by showing their competencies & professionalism (M=3.8, SD=1.0) and has helped our public relations officers to effectively communicate with their target audiences (M=3.9, SD=1.1).

Furthermore, technical capacity provided to PR staff at KICC has enabled public relations department to create meaningful engagement with target audiences (M=4.1, SD=0.9) and also allowed public relations officers to measure the success of their campaigns (M=4.0,

SD=1.0). In general, technical capacity enables public organizations to reach wider audiences, tailor messages, and gather valuable data-driven insights (Aggregate Mean =4.0, Std. Dev=1.0) as shown in table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8 - Technical capacity

	Mean	Std. Dev	Sample(N)
Technical capacity has allowed public relations team to build trust with the public by demonstrating their ability to handle crisis	4.4	1.0	108
Technical capacity has enhanced the credibility of public relations officers by showing their competencies & professionalism	3.8	1.0	108
Technical capacity has helped our public relations officers to effectively communicate with their target audiences	3.9	1.1	108
Technical capacity has enabled our public relations officers to create meaningful engagement with target audiences	4.1	.9	108
Technical capacity has allowed our public relations officers to measure the success of their campaigns	4.0	1.0	108
Aggregate Mean & Std. Dev.	4.0	1.0	

Source: (Author, 2023)

However, there is still room for improvement on technical capacity at KICC, to ensure that they achieve effectiveness in PR practice. For example, the use of social media platforms, website management systems, customer relationship management (CRM) tools, and analytics software can help streamline PR activities, monitor public sentiment, and measure the impact of communication efforts.

On areas of improvement, Interviewees has to say this:

“ to improve technical capacity of communication officers, I suggest that they participate in professional development programs such as short professional trainings, seminars and workshops....” Respondent 5.

“.....Communication officers need to stay abreast of ever-changing best practices, advances in technology and consumer behaviors with outside research and informal exploration of internet resources.....” Respondent 4.

“.....Communication officers need to build relationships in the professional industry through associations, conferences and direct conversing with experts in the media and communications field. Additionally, they should be involved in complex projects that analyze models, results and other technical measurements to ensure the highest efficacy of corporate communication plans.....” Respondent 9.

Thus, the findings showed that technical capacity can be improved through professional development programs such as short professional trainings, seminars and workshops. Additionally, they need to stay updated with best practices, technology, and consumer behavior through outside research and exploration of the Internet. Furthermore, they should build external relationships within the industry and partake in complex projects to ensure highest effective communication plans.

4.5.2 Technology support

Technology support plays a crucial role in enhancing PR practice in public organizations. With the rapid advancement of technology, public organizations can leverage various tools and platforms to streamline their PR activities, reach wider audiences, and strengthen their communication efforts. The findings in this study revealed that technology has enabled digital PR campaigns to reach a larger audience and create more visibility for KICC ($M=4.8$, $SD=1.0$) and has provided tools to automate tasks and streamline processes, allowing PR teams to do more with fewer resources ($M=4.0$, $SD=1.0$) and allowed PR team to measure the success of their efforts more accurately and in real-time ($M=4.4$, $SD=1.1$).

Similarly, it was established that technology has allowed for seamless integration of online and offline PR efforts and strategies, resulting in more effective campaigns in the organization (M=3.9, SD=1.2) and provided more opportunities for brands to engage with their audiences, resulting in more meaningful relationships (M=4.5, SD=1.1). In general, technology support has enabled efficient management of PR campaigns, including content creation, distribution, and analysis at KICC (Aggregate Mean =4.1, Std. Dev=1.0) as elaborated in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9 – Technology support

	Mean	Std. ev.	Sample(N)
Technology has enabled digital PR campaigns to reach a larger audience and create more visibility for our organization	4.8	1.0	108
Technology has provided tools to automate tasks and streamline processes, allowing PR teams to do more with fewer resources	4.0	1.0	108
Technology has allowed our PR team to measure the success of their efforts more accurately and in real-time	4.4	1.1	108
Technology has allowed for seamless integration of online and offline PR efforts and strategies, resulting in more effective campaigns in our organization	3.9	1.2	108
Technology has provided more opportunities for brands to engage with their audiences, resulting in more meaningful relationships	4.5	1.1	108
Aggregate Mean & Std. Dev.	4.3	1.0	

Source: (Author, 2023)

Additionally, this study established that technology support facilitates real-time communication and enables KICC to respond promptly to public inquiries, concerns, or crises. Interviewees had to say this on ways of enhancing use of technology to improve PR practices at KICC:

“.....Leverage modern social media networks, including mainstream networks, industry forums, and niche communities, to more accurately target and reach target audiences. Also, utilize applications such as: website accelerators, workflow automations, email management, and audience segmentation to streamline the outreach process” Respondent 10.

“ Create content in user-friendly formats designed for engaged social media interaction such as live-streaming, polls, contests, and audio & video blogs. Similarly, utilize data-backed target definition and demographic research to create a tailored plan of approach for PR initiatives” Participants 11

“.....Optimize visuals to reduce time spent sending messages from campaign to campaign and ensuring brand compliance across channels. More importantly, automate workflows, such as contact and customer communications through the deployment of a robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.....” Respondent 7.

Therefore, this study suggest that it is important to leverage on modern social media networks, create content tailored for social media interaction, optimize visuals for brand compliance, and deploy a robust CRM for communication automation to enhance use of technology in PR at KICC. These strategies will make PR more effective, accurate, and cost-efficient. Similarly, these approaches will also reduce the amount of time invested in each campaign, and allows more creative and up-to-date strategies to be implemented in a timely fashion. Altogether, an effective deployment of technological measures is expected to enhance PR for KICC into the future. By harnessing the power of technology, public organizations can enhance their PR effectiveness, build stronger relationships with stakeholders, and adapt to the evolving communication landscape in an efficient and strategic manner.

4.5.3 Organizational culture

Organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping PR practice in public organizations. The culture within an organization sets the tone for how communication is valued and practiced (Daniel, 2017). The findings in this study showed that organizational culture at KICC has ensured that everyone works with the same shared beliefs and principles (M=4.0, SD=1.0) and has encouraged employees to be loyal and motivated to achieve the company's objectives (M=4.2, SD=1.0) and also has set the standards of professionalism within the organization (M=4.1, SD=1.0).

Additionally, it was established that KICC has a strong culture that encourages employees to work together in an efficient and productive manner (M=4.1, SD=0.9) and that the culture at KICC has created a platform for effective communication between employees, thus, ensuring that everyone is on the same page (M=3.8, SD=1.1). This study established that KICC has supportive and open organizational culture that fosters transparent communication, collaboration, and trust, which are essential for successful PR efforts (Aggregate Mean =4.0, Std. Dev=1.0) as shown in table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10 – Organizational culture

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Sample(N)
Organizational culture in our organization has ensured that everyone works with the same shared beliefs and principles	4.0	1.0	108
The culture in our organization has encouraged our employees to be loyal and motivated to achieve the company's objectives	4.2	1.0	108
Our organizational culture has set the standards of professionalism within the organization	4.1	1.0	108
Our organization has a strong culture that encourages employees to work together in an efficient and productive manner	4.1	.9	108
The culture in our organization has created a platform for effective communication between employees, thus, ensuring that everyone is on the same page	3.8	1.1	108
Aggregate Mean & Std. Dev.	4.0	1.0	

Source: (Author, 2023)

Interviews of PR officers revealed that organizational culture has influenced PR practice at KICC, by fostering an ethical and positive culture within the organization, which has resulted in better relationships with its employees, customers, and other stakeholders that contributes to the development of effective PR strategies.

This is what the PR officers had to say:

“.....Organizational culture has a direct influence on the practice of PR and how PR is managed in an organization. KICC has established clear and honest methods of practices and procedures internally and externally which have assisted in fostering union between PR strategy and organizational culture, setting a baseline for effective PR.....” Respondent 6.

“ Yes, organizational culture has a relationship with effectiveness of PR; at KICC we have established a positive culture, which reflects a strong, ethical attitude towards employees, customers, and other stakeholders.....” Participants 2.

Thus, this study revealed that by fostering a culture that values communication, collaboration, and adaptation, public organizations can create an environment that enhances the effective PR practice and builds stronger relationships with stakeholders.

4.5.4 Organizational structure

Organizational structure plays a key role in ensuring effective PR practice in public organizations. The structure determines how communication flows within the organization, the level of autonomy given to PR professionals, and the integration of PR function with other departments. The findings of this study revealed that organizational structure has helped our PR team to streamline the workflow and improve efficiency ($M=4.1$, $SD=0.9$), and has helped our PR team in making decisions in a timely manner and with the appropriate level of authority ($M=3.9$, $SD=0.7$) and helped PR officers to establish expectations and accountability ($M=3.8$, $SD=1.0$). However, there was uncertainty whether organizational structure has helped PR team to establish channels of communication ($M=2.9$, $SD=0.8$) and whether organizational structure has helped PR officers to foster collaboration and teamwork ($M=3.1$, $SD=0.8$) as shown in table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11 – Organizational structure

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Sample (N)
Our organizational structure has helped our PR team to streamline the workflow and improve efficiency	4.1	.9	108
The organizational structure adopted has helped our PR team to establish channels of communication; to ensure that information flows smoothly with all stakeholders	2.9	.8	108
Our organizational structure has helped our PR officers to foster collaboration and teamwork	3.1	.8	108
Our organizational structure has helped our PR team in making decisions in a timely manner and with the appropriate level of authority	3.9	.7	108
Organizational structure has helped our PR officers to establish expectations and accountability	3.8	1.0	108
Aggregate Mean & Std. Dev.	3.6	.8	

Source: (Author, 2023)

Furthermore, interviews of PR officers revealed that organizational structure have a great impact on PR effectiveness in organizations. This is what one of the interviewees had to say:

“.....Yes, organizational structure have an impact on PR effectiveness. The way an organization is structured will determine how communication moves through the organization, how information is strategically shared, and how relationships with various publics can be maintained. Having clear reporting lines, well-defined responsibilities, and appropriate channels for Public Relations activities ensures that recognizable and meaningful opportunities for progress can be identified and seized.....” Respondent 10.

This study therefore, showed that an organizational structure that promotes communication, collaboration, and agility can enhance the effectiveness of PR practice in public organizations, allowing for strategic and timely communication with stakeholders.

4.5.5 Correlation analysis

The study sought to determine the relationships that exist between the factors of PR and the effective practice of PR in State Corporations in Kenya. The findings showed that there is strong significant relationship between technical capacity and the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r=0.663$, $p<0.006$).

Similarly, the findings showed that technology support has moderate significant relationship with the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r=0.586$, $p<0.000$), while organizational culture showed a strong significant relationship with the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r=0.798$, $p<0.000$) and finally, organizational structure showed a weak but positive significant relationship with the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r=0.116$, $p<0.035$) as presented in table 4.12 below.

The presented findings underscored the pivotal role of various predictors, including technical capacity, technology support, organizational culture, and organizational structure, in shaping the effectiveness of public relations at KICC. This aligns with established literature highlighting the significance of these factors in influencing the success of public relations initiatives within organizations (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Botan & Hazleton, 2016). Technical capacity and technology support are essential in navigating the evolving landscape of communication technologies, ensuring the integration of efficient and modern tools.

Organizational culture plays a crucial role by shaping the values and communication norms, while organizational structure provides the framework for streamlined and effective PR operations. Recognizing and addressing these predictors is essential for KICC to enhance its PR effectiveness, fostering a strategic alignment with the broader theoretical understanding of effective public relations within organizational contexts.

Table 4.12 – Correlation matrix

		Technical capacity	Technolog y support	Organizati on culture	Organizati on structure	PR effectiven ess
PR effectiveness	Pearson	.663**	.586**	.798**	.116	1
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.000	.000	.035	
	N	108	108	108	108	108

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: (Author, 2023)

4.6 Strategies for enhancing public relations practice at KICC

The final objective of the study was to suggest strategies that can be implemented to enhance PR practice at KICC. The findings showed that there was agreement that PR practice can be enhanced by leveraging on social media to build relationships, create conversations, and share news 45(41.6%), and also by hosting events to create buzz, build relationships, and create opportunities to engage with customers and the public 54(50.0%). Similarly, there was agreement that creation of high-quality content that informs and educates audience, 54(50.0%) and by responding to feedback and criticism effectively, 72(66.8%) and developing relationships with key journalists and media outlets 63(58.3%) will ultimately enhance PR practice at KICC as shown in table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13 – Strategies for enhancing public relations practice

	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree	Sample (N)
Utilize Social Media: Leverage on social media to build relationships, create conversations, and share news.	18(16.7%)	45(41.6%)	45(41.6%)	108
Host Events: Host events to create buzz, build relationships, and create opportunities to engage with your customers and the public	9(8.3%)	45(41.6%)	54(50.0%)	108
Engage in Community Outreach: Give back to the community by engaging in volunteer activities and support events.	18(16.7%)	45(41.6%)	45(41.6%)	108
Develop Quality Content: Create high-quality content that informs and educates your audience	18(16.7%)	54(50.0%)	36(33.3%)	108
Respond to Feedback: Respond to feedback and criticism quickly and effectively.	27(25.0%)	72(66.8%)	9(8.3%)	108
Leverage Media Relations: Develop relationships with key journalists and media outlets to increase your visibility	9(8.3%)	36(33.3%)	63(58.3%)	108

Source: (Author, 2023)

Thus, this study suggests the utilization of social media, hosting of events, engaging in community outreach, development of quality content, effective response to feedback and leveraging on media relations as the best strategies for enhancing PR practices in KICC.

This was collaborated through the interviews of PR officers who had this to say:

“.....Public institutions like KICC and others should develop a consistent branding strategy for all public communication materials, including uniforms, letterhead, and other communications tools. They also need to participate in events and stay connected to vital resources in the public relations field” Participants 1

“ the best strategy to enhance public relation practice is to utilize social media, websites, and other digital tools to efficiently communicate messages and create a two-way dialogue with the public.....” Participants 13.

“..... public organizations should invest in training for anyone responsible for public relations management. This can help ensure that public communication efforts are effective, well-planned, and professional.....” Participants 12

By adhering to the above strategies, public organizations can enhance their public relations practices and improve their visibility. The findings of this study proposed strategic measures for public organizations to enhance their public relations practices. It recommends the cultivation of consistent branding, active participation in community events, utilization of social media and digital tools, and investment in training initiatives. These recommendations resonate with existing literature, as scholars emphasize the importance of strategic communication, consistent branding (Guth & Marsh, 2013), community engagement (Hon & Grunig, 1999), and the integration of digital communication tools (Grunig, 2013) in effective public relations.

By adopting such holistic approaches, organizations can professionalize their communication efforts, ensuring a well-planned and coherent public relations strategy. This not only aligns with theoretical frameworks but also addresses practical challenges faced by public organizations in the contemporary communication landscape. Through consistent branding and active community engagement, organizations can build credibility and trust, while leveraging digital tools ensures adaptability to evolving communication trends. Investing in training further empowers PR professionals to navigate the complexities of modern communication, ultimately fostering better relationships with the public and enhancing the overall effectiveness of public relations practices.

4.7 Discussion of the findings

Based on the findings presented in the study, it is evident that Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) has strategically embraced a variety of public relations (PR) practices that reflect both traditional and contemporary communication trends. The study revealed that classical communication channels such as television, newspapers, and, to a lesser extent, radio continue to play an important role in public engagement, offering credibility and extensive reach. These findings are supported by literature emphasizing that traditional media remains a trusted source of information for the public due to its longstanding reputation and influence (McQuail, 2010).

At the same time, KICC has made significant strides in adopting digital and interactive PR strategies, particularly through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram. These platforms facilitate real-time interaction and two-way communication with audiences, consistent with Kent and Taylor's (2022) dialogic theory of public relations, which underscores the importance of maintaining open channels for mutual dialogue between organizations and their publics.

Moreover, the study's indication that KICC integrates both classical and digital channels confirms the viability of a hybrid communication strategy. This aligns with research by Bortree and Seltzer (2019), which advocates for a multi-channel communication approach to maximize message dissemination and cater to diverse audience preferences. The combination of mainstream media (e.g., KBC and Citizen TV) with digital tools (e.g., Google Ads, webinars, and WhatsApp groups) allows KICC to enhance both the visibility

and credibility of its messages, a practice also echoed in the work of Cornelissen (2017), who emphasizes strategic integration for effective corporate communication.

Despite the prominence of social media, findings also showed that traditional channels are selectively used depending on audience and context, reflecting a tailored communication strategy. This nuanced use of media channels mirrors Macnamara's (2014) suggestion that modern PR should be adaptive, data-informed, and audience-centric. Thus, the findings from KICC align well with current public relations literature that recommends an integrated approach combining both classical and digital tools. By leveraging the strengths of each, KICC not only reinforces its public image but also builds meaningful relationships with diverse stakeholders in a dynamic communication environment.

The study findings reveal that the Kenya International Convention Centre (KICC) is one of the public organizations in Kenya that has embraced public relations practices in its operations. This indicates the recognition of the importance of effective communication and relationship management in achieving organizational goals and maintaining a positive image. The findings are affirmed by Olubunmi, Olumuyiwa, & Olawumi, (2018) opined that Public relations practices play a crucial role in managing organization's reputation. The organization can proactively engage with the media to ensure accurate and positive coverage of its activities, contributing to a favorable public perception. Additionally, PR practices enable organizations to respond promptly and effectively to any issues or crises that may arise, thereby mitigating potential damage to its reputation.

Furthermore, this study revealed that KICC uses variety of media channels for communication. They have adopted formal, informal meetings, phone calls and social media interaction e.g., Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp platforms among others. These findings have been echoed by Jin, Liu, & Austin, (2014) that public organizations can actively use social media as a communication channel in its PR practices. Social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, enable organizations to reach a wider audience, disseminate information about upcoming events, share updates, and engage with stakeholders in real-time. By leveraging the power of social media, public organizations can enhance its visibility, engage with its target audience, and build a community around its brand.

Furthermore, this study established that PR practices have facilitated stakeholder engagement and feedback mechanisms. Holbeche (2018) affirmed these findings that indeed the extent of public relations and reputation of an organization are linked to each other. This is to mean that an organization cannot be able to maintain a good reputation if the organization leadership does not support public relations and vice-versa. In another study, Goodman (2019) argued that public relations is a strategic asset to an organization and is inimitable, which means that it plays a central role in gaining competitive advantages and improving business performance. Therefore, these study findings demonstrated that KICC has embraced public relations practices in its operations. By adopting strategic communication and relationship management strategies, KICC can enhance its reputation, engage stakeholders, and achieve its organizational goals.

The findings established that technical capacity, technology support, organizational culture and organizational structure are key factors that determine effective PR practices at KICC. The study suggests that having competent and well-trained PR practitioners is essential for effectively executing PR strategies and activities. This includes proficiency in media relations, crisis management, stakeholder engagement, and strategic communication planning. The finding is affirmed by Gascó-Hernández, et al. (2018) who gave an argument that government institutions, should engage employees with the necessary skills as well as competencies that are essential for effective public relations.

Similarly, Matongolo et al. (2018) carried out a study on employer branding and talent retention and found that a positive relationship between successful public relations officers resulted in employee's capabilities in Uganda. The study further revealed that the ability to adapt to changing market environment is a key determinant of the quality of service delivered to customers. Thus, strengthening the technical capacity of PR teams can enable public institutions to navigate the complexities of communication and engage effectively with stakeholders.

Technology support is another critical factor identified in the study. It emphasizes the importance of having appropriate technological tools and resources to support PR activities. This is affirmed by Kim (2016) who argued that public relations, is made successful by proper and informed use of information technology tools. Similarly, Uche Sunday et al. (2019) found that technology positively affects public relations strategies adopted by the consultancy firms. Wiyono et al. (2019) argued that technology influences public relations in public organizations especially in the times of crisis where people

directly involved in a crisis are increasingly experiencing trauma. By leveraging technology, public institutions can enhance their ability to gather and analyze data, monitor public sentiment, and effectively manage their PR efforts across various channels.

Organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping the effectiveness of PR within institutions. This study established that a positive and supportive organizational culture that values open communication, transparency, and stakeholder engagement creates an environment conducive to effective PR practices. The findings as supported by Daniel (2017) established that organizational culture was positively linked to effectiveness of public relations. Similarly, Lindgren (2019) studied the influence of organizational culture on effectiveness of public relations. He argued that for effective public relations in any organization, there is need to develop a positive culture to top-bottom approach in communication to be successful in public relations. This involves fostering a culture that encourages PR professionals to proactively engage with stakeholders, share information, and contribute to decision-making processes. Alignment between PR goals and the overall organizational mission and values is crucial for ensuring a cohesive approach to communication.

The study findings also established the importance of organizational structure in driving PR effectiveness. It was revealed that a well-defined and coordinated organizational structure that clarifies roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines within the PR function is essential. Clear lines of communication and authority facilitate effective decision-making, coordination of PR activities, and responsiveness to emerging issues.

The findings are supported by Ani et al. (2018) who studied the influence of organizational structure on public relations in Japan. The study established that a choice of organizational structure is based on different circumstance and nature of organization. Vertical approach is more appropriate among public institution that dictates for a controlled structure to monitor activities unlike private sector that seeks a mentoring culture or market-oriented culture to counter communication effectively. Another study by Nyanchama (2017) revealed that a flat organizational structure as opposed to a vertical or tall organizational structure had a more profound positive effect on public relation performance. Therefore, an organizational structure that supports collaboration and cross-functional integration enables PR professionals to work closely with other departments to align messaging and achieve strategic communication objectives.

The findings of the study indicated that leveraging social media can significantly enhance public relations (PR) practice at KICC. The study suggested that public organizations like KICC can effectively build relationships, create online content or conversations, share news, and host events through social media platforms as a way of improving PR practice. Furthermore, the findings suggest that social media can be used as a platform to host events. Virtual events, webinars, live streams, and online Q&A sessions provide opportunities for organizations to engage with their audience, share expertise, and create valuable networking opportunities while causing efficiency in operations. Hosting events on social media expands the reach and accessibility of events, allowing organizations to connect with a broader audience and in real time.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the practice of public relation at KICC. This chapter provides the summary of the findings, discussion, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

5.2. Summary of findings

Public relations practice is one important aspect of strategic communication and relationships between an organization and its various stakeholders, including the public, media, employees, customers, investors, and the community at large. The first objective of this study was to find out the extent to which public relations has been adopted at Kenyatta International Convention Center. The findings revealed that KICC has adopted PR practices in its operations (Aggregate Mean =3.9, Std. Dev=1.1).

It was found that KICC use customer's comments obtained digitally to receive feedback from clients, which is eventually used to monitor the operations and progress of the institution. It was also established that they have adopted the use of corporate events, conference for PR and embraced social media to engage customers. However, it remains unclear whether KICC has collaborated with other private sector organizations to enhance its strategic communication and PR activities, or if they regularly conduct media impact analyses to assess the effectiveness of their PR practices.

Furthermore, the findings in this study showed that dialogues through formal, informal meetings and calls are mostly used within the organization, 90(83.3%), while use of social media interaction e.g., Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp platform are often used as one of the media channels of communication at KICC, 81(75.0%).

However, focused group discussions are never used as channels of media in communication at KICC, 45(41.6%). Thus, the findings revealed that both modern, technology-based platforms (e.g. emails, online chats and text messages), and traditional mainstream communication mediums (e.g., KBC, Citizen and NTV) are used to create a dynamic, intentional approach to messaging and PR practice at KICC. The traditional media outlets, including newspapers, television, and radio, have been adopted simply because they have established credibility and reach a wide audience, making them a trusted source of information for the public.

The second objective of this study was to establish factors that influence PR practice in Kenyatta International Convention Center. The findings showed that technical capacity has enabled the organizations to reach wider audiences, tailor messages, and gather valuable data-driven insights focusing on specific segment of audience (Aggregate Mean =4.0, Std. Dev=1.0). More so, the results showed that technical capacity has allowed public relations team to build trust with the public by demonstrating their ability to handle crisis. It has also enhanced the credibility of public relations officers by showing their competencies & professionalism and has helped them to effectively communicate with their target audiences.

The correlation results showed that there is strong significant relationship between technical capacity and the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r= 0.663$, $p<0.006$). This study suggested the use of social media platforms, website management systems, customer relationship management (CRM) tools, and analytics software to help streamline PR activities, monitor public sentiment, and enhance PR practices at KICC and all other state corporations.

Similarly, this study found that technology support has enabled efficient management of PR campaigns, including content creation, distribution, and analysis at KICC (Aggregate Mean =4.1, Std. Dev=1.0). It was found that technology has enabled digital PR campaigns to reach a larger audience and create more visibility of the organization and also provided tools to automate tasks and streamline processes, allowing PR teams to do more with fewer resources. Further, technology support was found to have allowed for seamless integration of online and offline PR efforts, resulting in more effective campaigns within the organization and providing more opportunities for brands to engage with audiences, resulting in more meaningful relationships.

It was also established that technology facilitates real-time communication and enables organizations to respond promptly to public inquiries, concerns, or crises. However, correlation results showed that technology support has moderate significant relationship with the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r=0.586$, $p<0.000$). More findings showed that organizational culture at KICC has ensured that everyone works with the same shared beliefs and principles. KICC has supportive and open organizational culture that fosters transparent communication, collaboration, and trust, which are essential for successful PR practice (Aggregate Mean =4.0, Std. Dev=1.0).

Additionally, it was established that KICC has a strong culture that encourages employees to work together in an efficient and productive manner creating a platform for effective communication between employees and other stakeholders. According to PR officers who participated in the study, organizational culture has influenced PR effectiveness at KICC, by fostering an ethical and positive culture within the organization, which has resulted in better relationships with its employees, customers, and other stakeholders that contributes to the development of effective PR strategies. More importantly, correlation results showed that organizational culture showed a strong significant relationship with the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r=0.798$, $p<0.000$).

Organizational structure is another factor that was explored in this study. Results of the study revealed that organizational structure has helped PR team to streamline the workflow and improve efficiency ($M=4.1$, $SD=0.9$), and has helped our PR team in making decisions in a timely manner and with the appropriate level of authority and to establish expectations and accountability ($M=3.8$, $SD=1.0$). Thus, the findings in this study concluded an organizational structure that promotes communication, collaboration, and agility can enhance the effectiveness of PR practice in public organizations, allowing for strategic and timely communication with stakeholders. However, correlation results showed that organizational structure showed a weak but positive significant relationship with the effective practice of public relations (Pearson's $r=0.116$, $p<0.035$).

The third objective of the study was to find out strategies that can be applied to enhance PR practice in Kenyatta International Convention Center. The findings showed that PR practice can be improved by leveraging on social media to build relationships, creating online content or conversations, and sharing news 45(41.6%), and also by hosting events to

create buzz, build relationships, and create opportunities to engage with customers and the public 54(50.0%).

Similarly, PR practice can be enhanced by creating high-quality content that informs and educates audience, 54(50.0%) and by responding to feedback and criticism effectively, 72(66.8%) and finally developing relationships with key journalists and media outlets 63(58.3%), for collaborations geared towards enhancing PR practices. This study gave the following suggestions to enhance PR practice: utilization of social media, hosting of events, engaging in community outreach, development of quality content, effective response to feedback and leveraging on media relations as the best strategies for enhancing PR practices in state corporations in Kenya.

5.3 Conclusion

The study findings revealed that Kenya International Convention Centre (KICC) has embraced public relations practices. This indicates the recognition of the importance of effective communication and relationship management in achieving organizational goals and maintaining a positive image. A public relations practice has played a crucial role in managing KICC's reputation. The organization can proactively engage with the media to ensure accurate and positive coverage of its activities, contributing to a favorable public perception.

Additionally, PR practice has enabled KICC to respond promptly and effectively to any issues or crises that may arise, thereby mitigating potential damage to its reputation. The adoption of PR practices by KICC also reflects the evolving nature of public organizations in Kenya. As the importance of effective communication and reputation management

becomes increasingly recognized, more public entities are integrating PR principles into their operations to ensure transparency, accountability, and trustworthiness

The study findings indicate that several key factors play a significant role in determining the effectiveness of public relations (PR) in state corporations. These factors include technical capacity, technology support, organizational culture, and organizational structure. In conclusion, the study findings highlighted the significance of technical capacity, technology support, organizational culture, and organizational structure in determining the effectiveness of practice of PR in KICC. Recognizing and addressing these factors can contribute to more successful PR practices, enabling KICC to build strong relationships with stakeholders, manage their reputation, and achieve their communication goals.

One key finding is that social media provides an opportunity to build relationships with stakeholders. By engaging with the target audience on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, organizations can establish direct and interactive communication channels. This allows for two-way communication, fostering engagement, trust, and a sense of community. Building relationships through social media enables organizations to effectively listen to and respond to the needs and concerns of their stakeholders.

Another finding is the importance of creating online content or conversations. Social media platforms offer organizations the ability to share informative, relevant, and engaging content with their audience. By producing and sharing valuable content, such as blog posts, videos, infographics, and articles, organizations can position themselves as industry

thought leaders, provide insights, and address key topics of interest. This facilitates meaningful conversations and strengthens the organization's reputation and credibility.

In conclusion, the study findings highlight the effectiveness of leveraging social media in enhancing PR practice. By utilizing social media platforms, organizations can build relationships, create online content or conversations, share news, and host events. These practices enable organizations to engage with their stakeholders directly, position themselves as industry leaders, disseminate information efficiently, and foster a sense of community.

5.4 Study Recommendations

5.4.1 Practice recommendations

Based on the study's findings, which highlight that the Kenya International Convention Centre (KICC) has adopted PR practices in its operations, the following recommendations are made to further enhance and optimize their PR efforts:

1. **Strengthen Media Relations:** Building and nurturing positive media relationships is essential for effective PR. KICC should prioritize establishing strong ties with the media by providing timely and accurate information, organizing press conferences, and offering exclusive access to key events, particularly those related to Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE). By cultivating these relationships, KICC can secure favorable media coverage, boost its reputation, and increase its visibility among both local and global audiences.
2. **Invest in Professional Development:** Continuous professional development for KICC's PR team is vital to keep up with the latest trends and best practices in the

field. Investing in training programs, workshops, and industry conferences will equip the PR team with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles. This will empower them to strategize, execute, and assess PR initiatives with greater effectiveness, ultimately enhancing the overall impact of KICC's communication efforts.

3. **Embrace Technology Integration:** KICC should assess and invest in relevant technologies that can optimize their PR activities. This could include media monitoring and analysis tools, social media management platforms, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and other digital tools that support PR goals. By integrating these technologies, KICC can streamline communication, track media coverage, and improve engagement with their target audiences, ensuring alignment with their broader PR objectives.
4. **Optimize Organizational Structure:** A thorough review of the current organizational structure should be conducted to ensure it supports effective PR practices. This includes evaluating the positioning of the PR function within the hierarchy, defining reporting lines, and enhancing coordination with other departments. Establishing clear communication channels, fostering collaboration, and optimizing decision-making processes will ensure that PR activities are well-integrated and aligned with KICC's strategic goals.

5.4.2 Policy Recommendation

To enhance the PR practices at KICC, it is recommended that the organization develop a comprehensive PR policy that fosters collaboration between departments and external stakeholders. This policy should prioritize the establishment of strong media relationships,

outline guidelines for timely information dissemination, and ensure the regular evaluation of media impact. Additionally, KICC should implement a professional development framework for its PR team, focusing on continuous learning and skill enhancement. Incorporating technology tools for media monitoring and analysis, along with a review of the organizational structure to improve coordination and communication, will further support effective PR practices.

5.5 Theoretical implications

The findings of the study have significant implications for both the Situational Theory of Publics and the Relationship Management Theory in the context of KICC's PR practices.

The Situational Theory of Publics emphasizes the importance of understanding the levels of awareness and involvement of different publics in relation to an organization's issues. The study's recommendation to foster stronger media relations aligns with this theory, as it encourages KICC to identify and segment its key publics—media outlets, stakeholders, and potential clients—based on their interests and the extent of their engagement with the organization. By tailoring PR efforts to address the specific needs of these publics, KICC can effectively manage communication flows and mitigate potential risks.

Similarly, the Relationship Management Theory focuses on the quality of relationships between organizations and their publics. The study's findings highlight the need for KICC to prioritize long-term relationship building with media and other stakeholders through consistent communication and transparency. By investing in professional development and adopting new technologies, KICC can enhance its ability to maintain and strengthen these relationships, thereby fostering mutual trust and satisfaction. This aligns with the theory's

emphasis on maintaining positive and productive interactions to ensure ongoing support and engagement from key publics.

The findings revealed that Systems theory as well offers a valuable lens for understanding and enhancing public relations (PR) practice at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC). The corporations have a complex system comprising various interconnected parts such as management, staff, event organizers, caterers, attendees, government agencies, local and global communities, suppliers, as well as the media. All these publics emphasized on their interdependence, meaning actions in one area can have ripple effects across the entire system, a negative experience for an event organizer can influence KICC's reputation and future business.

5.6 Recommendations for further study

This study recommends conducting a more comprehensive study to be undertaken, which can be extended to other state corporations across Kenya. A comparative study can be carried out to evaluate the PR practices of KICC alongside those of other similar international organizations. Additionally, researchers could explore the impact and effectiveness of social media strategies in enhancing PR practices within state corporations. By analyzing social media presence, content, engagement metrics, and user feedback, such a study can assess how social media contributes to building brand awareness and reputation in public institutions. This comparative research would offer valuable insights into the most effective social media platforms, content formats, and engagement strategies that can drive success in PR efforts across all state corporations in Kenya.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Introductory Letter

My name is Cecilia Kahaki Mbothu, A post graduate student Moi University, Nairobi campus in the department of Publishing, Journalism and Communication Studies, School of Information Sciences of Moi University. I am pursuing a Masters degree in Communication Studies. My school requires me to write a research project on **EXAMINATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES IN STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA: A CASE OF KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER**. To accomplish this task I am seeking your help in responding to the questions in the questionnaire attached here under. I will be glad if you can spare you twenty minutes in providing required information.

Yours Faithfully,

Cecilia Kahaki Mbothu

Cell: 0722319986

Appendix II: Questionnaire for Marketing Officers

Please tick where appropriate or give a brief opinion about the subject matter. You are allowed to cite brief examples.

Section One: Demographic Data

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. Age: 18-25 () 26-35 () 3 6-45 () 46-55 () 56 - 60 ()
3. How long have you served in PR section?

 0-5 yrs [] 6-10yrs [] 11 – 15yrs [] 6-20yrs [] Over 20 years []
4. Level of education:

 Secondary ()

 Certificate ()

 Diploma ()

 Degree ()

 Post Graduate ()
5. Indicate your duties at your place of work

 Internal communication ()

 Writing and editing journals ()

 Organizing events ()

 Media relations ()

 Corporate social responsibility ()

 Managing websites and social media ()

Section Two: Adoption of Public Relations Practice by KICC

6. Using a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate the extent to which the following public relations practices have been adopted at KICC. Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Statement on adoption of public relation practice by KICC	1	2	3	4	5
--	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Our institution use feedback to monitor progress through customers comments digitally

We partner with private sector to foster success on strategic communication

We use of corporate events for PR

We use of conferences for PR

We have also adopted use of public communication officers/spokesperson

We also engage customers through social media

We use call agents to engage customers to solve their issues

Our organization has created positive opportunities through customer relations and engagement

We have a strategic communication policy that supports PR practices

We have set up a strategic communication team in place

We periodically conduct a media impact analysis

7. Please indicate the frequency with which the following channels of media in communication are used to interact with the recipients of your services: Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Often, 2. Rarely, 3. Never

Statement on interactive channel	Often	rarely	Never used
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Use of social media interaction e.g Facebook, twitter,

WhatsApp platform

Provision of Feedback mechanism

Dialogue or calls

Use of focused group discussion

Use of question and answer sessions

Carrying out public participation forums

8. Please show how frequently your organization uses the following classical channels to pass information to your publics: Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Regularly, 2. Rarely, 3. Never

Statement on classical channel	Regularly	Rarely	Never used
---------------------------------------	------------------	---------------	-------------------

Use of television

Through radio stations

Use of Newspapers

Use of you tube

Use of film recording / documentaries

Use of business magazines

Section Two: Factors Affecting the Effective Practice of Public Relations at KICC

a. Technical capacity and public relation effectiveness

9. Please indicate the extent to which the following technical skills are important in ensuring effective public relation: Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Statement on Technical capacity	1	2	3	4	5
--	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Technical capacity has allowed public relations team to build trust with the public by demonstrating their ability to handle crisis

Technical capacity has enhanced the credibility of public relations officers by showing their competencies & professionalism

Technical capacity has helped our public relations officers to effectively communicate with their target audiences

Technical capacity has enabled our public

relations officers to create meaningful engagement with target audiences

Technical capacity has allowed our public relations officers to measure the success of their campaigns

b. Technology support and public relation effectiveness

10. Please indicate the extent to which the following technology support are important in ensuring effective public relation: Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Statement on Technology support	1	2	3	4	5
--	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Technology has enabled digital PR campaigns to reach a larger audience and create more visibility for our organization

Technology has provided tools to automate tasks and streamline processes, allowing PR teams to do more with fewer resources

Technology has allowed our PR team to measure the success of their efforts more accurately and in real-time

Technology has allowed for seamless integration of online and offline PR efforts and

strategies, resulting in more effective campaigns in our organization

Technology has provided more opportunities for brands to engage with their audiences, resulting in more meaningful relationships

c. Organizational culture and public relation effectiveness

11. Please indicate the extent to which organization culture influence public relation effectiveness at KICC. Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Statement on Organizational culture	1	2	3	4	5
--	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Organizational culture in our organization has ensured that everyone works with the same shared beliefs and principles

The culture in our organization has encouraged our employees to be loyal and motivated to achieve the company's objectives

Our organizational culture has set the standards of professionalism within the organization

Our organization has a strong culture that encourages employees to work together in an

efficient and productive manner

The culture in our organization has created a platform for effective communication between employees, thus, ensuring that everyone is on the same page

d. Organizational structure and public relation effectiveness

12. Please indicate how the following organizational structure affects public relation effectiveness at KICC: Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Statement on Organizational structure	1	2	3	4	5
--	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Our organizational structure has helped our PR team to streamline the workflow and improve efficiency

The organizational structure adopted has helped our PR team to establish channels of communication; to ensure that information flows smoothly with all stakeholders

Our organizational structure has helped our PR officers to foster collaboration and teamwork

Our organizational structure has helped our PR team in making decisions in a timely manner

and with the appropriate level of authority

Organizational structure has helped our PR officers to establish expectations and accountability

d. Effectiveness of public relations

13. Please indicate how effective public relation has been on achievement at KICC:

Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Statement on PR effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5
--------------------------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Our PR team monitor and analyze media coverage to identify the amount of positive or negative press that our company receives

We often carry out website analytics; track web traffic, page views and downloads of press releases and other content to evaluate the effectiveness of our public relations efforts

We often measure social media engagement: monitor likes, shares, comments and other engagement metrics on social media

We analyze sentiment scores to gauge how people are responding to our company

We send out surveys to customers, employees, partners, and other stakeholders to measure their level of satisfaction with our public relations efforts

Section Four: Ways of Enhancing public relations practice at KICC?

14. State the level of agreement on the following ways of Enhancing public relations practice in your organizations: Use the ratings criteria below.

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Ways of Enhancing public relations practice

1 2 3 4 5

Utilize Social Media: Leverage social media to build relationships, create conversations, and share news.

Host Events: Host events to create buzz, build relationships, and create opportunities to engage with your customers and the public

Engage in Community Outreach: Give back to the community by engaging in volunteer activities and support events.

Develop Quality Content: Create high-quality content that informs and educates your audience

Respond to Feedback: Respond to feedback and criticism quickly and

effectively.

Leverage Media Relations: Develop relationships with key journalists

and media outlets to increase your visibility

16. What other strategies can be implemented to improve public relations practice at KICC?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your participation.

-----End-----

Appendix III: Interview questions PR Officers at KICC

- i. Which channels of communication media are used to interact with your audiences?
- ii. Do you use Social media in your PR practices? If yes, which ones?
- iii. How frequently your organization uses the following classical channels to pass information to your publics?
- iv. Which are some of the areas that can be improved to enhance technical capacity of communication officers at KICC?
- v. What can be done to enhance utilization of technology to improve PR practices at KICC? Kindly explain
- vi. Do you think organizational culture influence PR effectiveness in your organization? Kindly elaborate
- vii. Do you think organizational structure influence PR effectiveness in your organization? Kindly give details

Appendix IV – Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 228342	Date of Issue: 21/February/2023
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms. Cecilia Kahaki Mbothu of Moi University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: EXAMINATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA: CASE STUDY OF KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE for the period ending : 21/February/2024.	
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THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
 Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) herein after referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of International treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way;
 - i. Endanger national security
 - ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
 - iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
 - iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
 - v. Adversely affect the environment
 - vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
 - vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
 - viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. The license any rights thereunder are non-transferable
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

National Commission for Science, Technology and
 Innovation(NACOSTI),
 Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
 P. O. Box 30623 - 00100 Nairobi, KENYA
 Telephone: 020 4007000, 0713788787, 0735404245
 E-mail: dg@nacosti.go.ke
 Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

Appendix V – Letter of Authorization

The Kenyatta International
Convention Centre
Africa's Premier Meeting Venue

KICC/5/73/Vol.IV

23rd March 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH AT
KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE (KICC)**

Dear Ms. Mbothu,

We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 20th March, 2023, requesting permission to conduct academic research at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) as part of your Masters Degree thesis on "Status of Public Relations in State Corporations – A Case Study of KICC."

We are pleased to inform you that your request has been approved. You are hereby authorized to engage with our staff to collecting data and Interviews that is necessary for your research. Kindly ensure the process adheres to ethical research standards and maintains confidentiality considering KICC is a public institution.

For coordination purposes, liaise with **Ms. Silvia Mochorwa Cell No. 0724274170** to schedule meetings and ensure minimal disruption to operations.

Should you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

You may also consider to share the final finding of the research.

Yours faithfully,

Nana Gecaga
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



PLAGIARISM REPORT



SR488

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