Preamble

The practice of Public Relations is as old as the human civilization is as a matter of fact. It was practiced in the Roman and Greek empires to build constant rapport between the rulers and people. In ancient India, Buddha and Mahaveera had reached out to the people and propagated their religious philosophies through public addresses and contacts. In the medieval period, the rulers had practiced Public Relations to obtain the support of the people for their administrative endeavors. The colonial forces had also relied upon the people to manage the administration and collect revenues. Especially after the World War – II, Public Relations had evolved from top-down communication to two-way persuasive communication. Public Relations are practiced on the basis of several dimensions, approaches, tools and technologies. The development of Public Relations is amplified in this article on the basis of a historical perspective.

Concept of Public Relations

Public Relations are the art or science of developing reciprocal understanding and goodwill (Webster’s Third New International Dictionary). This definition is centered on mutual understanding and goodwill between an organization and constituent publics.

Public Relations are efforts to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics (British Institute of Public Relations). The mutual dependence of people and organizations was the foundation of Public Relations.
Public Relations are the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and plans and executes a programme of action to earn public understanding and acceptance (PR News). The profession of Public Relations was carried out to reach out to the various publics and elicit their support for the organizational endeavors.

Public Relations are concerned with or devoted to creating mutual understanding among groups and institutions (Public Relations Society of America). Modern organizations depend on people to achieve their goals on the basis of establishing mutually beneficial relationship. The practitioners function as an intermediary between organization and its publics. It is based on the realization that Public Relations attempts to put the broad interest of the public first before the special interest of the organization.

**History of Public Relations in the World**

The history of Greece contains the fact that certain ethical considerations had guided the practice of Public Relations through persuasive communication (Crable and Vibbert, 1986:09). The clay tablet found in ancient Iraq reveals that Iraq had promoted modern agricultural techniques through the practice of Public Relations (Freitag and Stokes, 2009:21).

In the ancient times, pamphlets were used as the primary means of publicity for raising funds for religious activities according to a plaque from Harvard quoting a passage from the fund raising pamphlet (Smith, 2004:50). Public Relations were not developed as a systematic profession in the ancient times. But, there were early forms of public influence and communications management in ancient civilizations (Dozier et. al, 2013:14). The archival records indicate that ancient Greek cities had produced sophisticated rhetoric, as analyzed by Isocrates, Plato and Aristotle. They had dealt with establishing relationship between the state and people (Marsh, 2013:39).

The Babylonian, Egyptian and Persian leaders had created pyramids, obelisks and statues to promote their divine right to lead. Additionally, claims of magic or religious authority were used to persuade the public of a king or pharaoh's right to rule. The need for informing people, persuading people and integrating people were the three main elements of Public Relations which are as old as society (Bernays, 2013:02).
In Rome, Julius Caesar wrote the first campaign biography to emphasize and promote his military successes. He used newsletters and poems to promote political propaganda which is closely associated with the practice of Public Relations in ancient times (Smith, 2013:51). In medieval Europe, trained craftsmen were organized into guilds to manage the collective reputation of the organizations represented by them. The Lord Chancellors had acted as mediators between rulers and subjects in England (Cutlip, 1994:10).

Pope Urban II's recruitment for the crusades was also related to Public Relations effort (L'Etang, 2012:36). Pope Gregory XV founded the term ‘propaganda’ which was confined to congregation for propagating the faith. Trained missionaries were employed to spread Christianity as religious propagandists (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2011:30).

The first newsletter and the first daily newspaper were founded in Germany in 1609 and 1615 respectively to tackle the political opposition. The publicity bureau called Information and Propaganda was created to support the endeavors of French government (Chinowth, 2010:06). In the mid-1600s England had used pamphlets in times of civil war to attack or defend the monarchy respectively (Peacey, 2004:45). John Milton had led the democratic movement in England and utilized the political propaganda as the principal tool for the establishment of republic through freedom of speech and expression (Forsyth, 2008:20).

There are historical references about the efforts of Harvard University which had deputed three preachers to England in 1641 to raise money for missionary activities among the Indians. The use of fund-raising brochures clearly demonstrated the Public Relations efforts for philanthropic mission (Troianovski, 2006:57). Maria Theresa of the Austrian Empire had used pamphlet in 1738 to advocate for an alliance between the British, Dutch and Austrian governments (Jacob, 1991:28). The historical documents clearly state that systematic forms of Public Relations had begun for social and political movements in Europe (Black, 1963:04).

The Society for effecting the abolition of the slave trade was established in England in 1787. The organization had also published books, posters and hosted public lectures in England advocating against slavery (Wilberforce, 2011:60). It had primarily depended on publicity and propaganda materials which were principal tools of Public Relations (Horton and Horton, 2013:27).
The movement to abolish slavery had begun in 1833 through the establishment of the American Anti-Slavery Society. It had used certain instruments of propaganda such as petitions, pamphlets, political lobbying, local societies, and boycotts (Diggs-Brown, 2011:12). The movement had received wide support due to practice of Public Relations in France, Australia and Europe. There was an extensive anti-British propaganda in the United States which emphasized that the British should collect tax without proper representation. It had paved the way for a democratic revolution and drafting of United States Constitution (du Plessis, 2001:15). The political propaganda was the major instrument of the organizers of propaganda which was a powerful tool of Public Relations.

American Revolution was funded by French aristocrat Marquis de Lafayette in 1820s. He had carried out an extensive propaganda against colonialism and stood by the democratic movement. It was supported by effective political propaganda (Olasky, 1987:41). In the 1860s, the major railway companies building the Transcontinental Railroad, California and the Union Pacific Railroad, New York had carried out systematic fund raising activities to construct the 1,776-mile-long railroad. The organizers had persuaded the bond buyers to contribute funds by using modern Public Relations strategies (Wood, 2009:61).

In 1870s, Europe had witnessed environmental campaigns on the basis of media relations strategies (Ruler and Vercic, 2004:47). Industrial films, brochures, interviews and press conferences were used as effective tools of environmental propaganda by the organizers. The Westinghouse Electric Corporation had established the first US corporate PR department was established in 1889 (Lawrence and Weber, 2014:34). Prominent industrial organization George Westinghouse had established the first public relations department in the same year to organize publicity services in favor of the products.

Planned, systematic and organized Public Relations profession was not established in the world till mid-1900. The Publicity Bureau in Boston was the first venture which paved the way for the beginnings of the Public Relations vocation in America. The practice of Public Relations was developed in the UK and the US simultaneously (L'Etang, 2004:35). The profession of Public Relations was recognized in the industrial organizations in a formal way (Ewen, 2008:18). The profession had come into existence mainly to defend the corporate interests against sensational and hyper-critical news articles (Tedlow, 1976:55).
The Publicity Bureau was established by Ivy Lee, former Boston journalist in order to render organized publicity support for various business endeavors (Manning, 2004:38). Scholars have noted that Ivy Lee founded the profession of Public Relations. He also published a Declaration of Principles dealing with the practice of Public Relations.

Credit goes to Ivy Lee for formulating the ethics of Public Relations on the basis of truthful presentation of facts and views. He also developed modern press release on the basis of two-way-street philosophy of both listening to and communicating with the public (Levy, 2006:37). In 1906, Ivy Lee undertook the positive media coverage on Pennsylvania Railroads and prepared grounds for effective media relations which are an important component of modern Public Relations.

Ivy Lee also supported the Rockefeller family by extending publicity support to their coal mining operation in 1914 (Hallahan, 2002:22). Lee warned that the Rockefellers were losing public support and developed a strategy to boost their morale and image (Heath, 2005:25). He called upon them to understand the importance of the grievances of the affected persons consequent on mining and adopt corrective measures. Edward Bernays worked in the propaganda department of American military service. He did pioneering work on the theoretical aspect of Public Relations. He is also considered as the founder of modern Public Relations by some scholars and practitioners. He also wrote the first textbook on Public Relations and taught the first college course at New York University in 1923 (Turow, 2011:58).

Edward Bernays also authored prominent books namely Crystallizing Public Opinion (1923), Propaganda (1928) and The Engineering of Consent (1947). He considered Public Relations as an applied social science which drew insights from psychology, sociology and other disciplines to scientifically manage the Public Relations. Ivy Lee, Edward Bernays and Walter Lippmann had played a vital role in providing a sound framework for the practice of Public Relations in the world (Edgett, 2002:17). Edward Bernays contributed a systematic ethical framework for advocacy in Public Relations. He proposed about 10 professional criteria for ethically desirable advocacy in the context of Public Relations.

The works of Walter Lippmann namely Public Opinion (1922) and The Phantom Public (1925) provided new insights to the practice of Public Relations (Oliver, 2004:42). He coined the term ‘manufacture of consent’ which is a democratic
right of the people based on healthy propaganda. Lee, Bernays and Lippmann are indeed the trio of Public Relations in the global context.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson were the first Presidents to emphasize the use of publicity in America. They used the media to promote the government centered Public Relations (Heath and Coombs, 2006:26). The Public Relations had emerged with a focus on basic, applied, ethical and strategic dimensions. In 1930s, Public Relations had grown in Europe and America as a prominent organizational function (O'Rourke, 2007:43). The World War I witnessed large-scale propaganda campaigns carried out by specialists (Haste, 1977:23).

Germany created the German Information Bureau to produce publicity materials and persuade America to remain neutral in the conflict (Smith, 2013:51). France had created a propaganda agency in 1914 to promote the political interest of the French (Zeman, 1978:62). The British had also created a war propaganda agency called the Wellington House in September 1914 to give a fitting reply to Germany's propaganda (Sanders and Taylor, 1982:49). The Germans had resorted to violent propaganda in order to establish their political and military supremacy in the world (Moyer, 1995:40).

Italy had created Padua Commission in 1918 which led Allied propaganda against Austria-Hungary (Cornwall, 2000:08). Austria-Hungary had used propaganda tactics to contain the dominance of Italy. Publicity had become an important component of Public Relations in Europe. Countries like Austria, Hungary and Italy had used propaganda techniques to gain an upper hand at the international level. The United States had declared war on Germany in 1917 (Fleming, 2003:19). President Woodrow Wilson created the US propaganda agency namely Creel Propaganda Commission to present the American point of view and gain international support.

A team of trained propaganda volunteers was entrusted with the task of promoting American interest in times of War. There was a shift in Public Relations theory from objective presentation to emotional appeal (Welch, 1993:59). The British propaganda had gained an upper hand over the German propaganda and earned victory for the British in the War. The Nazi propaganda and other tools of fascism had attracted strong international criticism.

The liberal democratic countries had primarily used propaganda techniques to support war efforts (Heath, 1991:24). Radio broadcasting had become the principal
tool of political propaganda during the World War-I. The British and American propaganda virtually crushed the German propaganda since they primarily focused on freedom of speech, international collaboration and industrial production for the benefit of mankind.

The war centric publicity and propaganda efforts carried out by various countries had paved the way for newfound professionalism and ethics across the globe. The practice of public relations had become ubiquitous to reach political, activist and corporate objectives. The World War II heralded a new age of democracy in the world. Many countries became politically independent, established legislatures, created governance and development bodies and practiced Public Relations in a planned way. A new generation of PR practitioners emerged in the government and industrial organization in 1950s. The role of Public Relations was expanded to other spheres of human life.

The International Association of Business Communicators was founded in 1970. The process of industrialization had contributed significantly towards the development of Public Relations as an organized profession. Several universities had started Journalism and Mass Communication courses and imparted practical education in advertising and Public Relations. Europe and America were in the frontline in respect of both formal education and practice of Public Relations in 1960s and 1970s. Several developing nations including India also followed the suit in this regard.

The quantum of foreign investments had increased in 1980s. The business and industrial organizations had gained new opportunities to providing services in strategic communications consultancy in order to meet the local market challenges in Public Relations. The international and national businesses were also expanded considerably in the world. This development paved the way for the growth of Public Relations as an organizational management function in the decade of 1980s.

The unique interplay between political system and economic system impacts the public relations process whether in the corporate, nonprofit, or governmental realm in profound and identifiable ways (Duhe and Krishnamurthy, 2009:16). Political economy and Public Relations have significant association. The globalization of economy has brought about the development of Public Relations in corporate houses.

The democratization of the world in the 20th Century, especially after World War II, has motivated modern organizations to accord greater importance to public opinion. During the 1990s specialties for communicating to certain audiences and within certain market segments emerged, such as investor relations or technology PR (Lattimore et. al, 2014:33). In the age of economic liberalization, corporate houses realized the significance of Public Relations and established corporate communication divisions. They also recruited PR professionals to manage both internal publics and external publics in a systematic way. They also provided publicity and advertising materials which suited the convenience of target audience.

The rapid expansion of new communication technologies such as satellite television and the Internet have contributed to the need for global Public Relations by disseminating information about products, services and life styles. The key to success of the management and thereby the company, lies in the ability to use Public Relations strategies effectively for creating a desirable image of the company.

The corporate houses recruited specialized Public Relations professionals to cater to the needs of employees, investors, suppliers, distributors, customers, government professionals, local citizens and other stakeholders (Perkins, 2015:46). Media directories, fax machines, documentaries, company laptops, conferences, digital media, hospitality management, campaign management and reputation management were the principal avenues of Public Relations in this period.

Most interactions took place online and not in person, personalizing and humanizing the brand for successful business management (Connors, 2014:07). In the early 2000s, PR in Latin America began developing at a pace on par with industrialized nations (Freitag and Stokes, 2009:21). The emergence of digital and social media widened the horizon of Public Relations. The corporate houses started utilizing the new media tools and technologies to interact with the stakeholders of
business management. Public Relations were redefined in the age of social media application.

Public Relations are a strategic communication which is used by different types of organizations to establish and maintain symbiotic relationships with relevant publics (Sriramesh, 2008:52). The need for cross-national communication also provided the catalyst for public relations scholarship to expand its horizons by focusing on public relations practices in hitherto ignored regions of the world such as Asia, Latin America, and Africa. This also resulted in a growth in publications on global Public Relation (Sriramesh, 2009:53). The changing global scenario, increase in democratization, formation of trading blocks and increased commercial interactions among countries have played a significant role in the current area of globalization thereby also contributing to the importance of global public relations (Sriramesh, 2010:54).

The body of knowledge of public relations has grown from strength to strength during the last four decades. There is a significant broadening of the horizons of the field owing principally to globalization (Krishnamurthy and Stumberger, 2017:32). Public Relations have gained increased importance in 21st century as a prominent organizational persuasive communication. There are visible differences in the use of public relations in an integrated marketing environment (Dougherty, 2017:13). The potential application of PR in the process of strategic management is seldom questioned.

Public Relations has emerged as a prominent discipline and enabled the modern organizations to expand their networks and operations on the basis of meaningful human interactions (Thurlow et. al, 2018:56). The scholars and professionals have a responsibility of providing critical insights into public relations theory and practice in order to develop the profession on the basis of appropriate future directions. Modern political parties need effective Public Relations strategies and campaigns to win elections in a highly competitive environment (Aras, 2018:01). They make use of specialists in image building and manage the elections effectively.
Public Relations have gained new momentum in the 21st century on the basis of professional approaches and people centric services (Johnston, 2019:29). The digital media and social media have facilitated two-way communication between the organizations and publics. It has found a significant place in modern corporate environment as a prominent management function.

In modern organizations, PR practitioners help their clients to reach their target audience positively and often utilize the media to provide a third-party endorsement for the organizational products and services (Carr, 2019:05). Public Relations have grown as a dynamic profession and means of rapport development between the corporations and various publics. It is inevitable for building and maintaining sustainable relationships for better organizational management and business promotion endeavors.

**Conclusion**

Public Relations are a strategic communication process companies, individuals and organizations use to build mutually beneficial relationships with the public. A public relations specialist drafts a specialized communication plan and uses media and other direct and indirect mediums to create and maintain a positive brand image and a strong relationship with the target audience (Pahwa, 2020:44). Public Relations are practiced to maintain a positive reputation of the brand and strategic relationship with the internal and external publics who matter most from organizational development point of view in the new millennium.

The future of public relations is determined by digitalization specific networking and application of strategic communication (Ryabicheva, 2020:48). There is a greater measurability in the practice of Public Relations. The corporate leaders and professionals have to enhance the status of the profession (Bhimani, 2020:03). They should realize that a great profession can be built on the basis of noble thoughts and deeds which are professionally sound and socially beneficial in the new millennium. The corporate leaders, executives and practitioners have a great social responsibility in the refinement of the practice of Public Relations.

Modern organizations are passing through many testing and trying times in the new millennium due to several complexities and challenges. These organizations are shifting their priorities from focusing within the national boundaries to the borderless international communications and transactions. Corporate leaders, human resources
management professionals and Public Relations practitioners have agreed that Public Relations should be practiced vigorously in modern organizations in order to enlist the active participation of various stakeholders in the organizational development. Several public and private corporate houses have come into existence to conduct their businesses through applied Public Relations and strategic employee relations.

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