

Impact of Public Relations Channels on Institutional Image in a School of General Education

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of public relations channels at the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation and their impact on shaping a positive organizational image. The objectives are to explore suitable public relations channels, evaluate their outcomes, and develop strategies to optimize the effectiveness of these channels in enhancing the school's image. The study surveyed 377 students, sampled from a population of 34,600 enrolled students, using Krejcie and Morgan's table and simple random sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

The findings reveal that respondents prioritize accessing public relations content through online platforms, with peak engagement occurring daily between 6:01 PM and 9:00 PM. Satisfaction with the content was high, particularly in terms of aesthetics and speed of presentation. Utilizing modern and engaging content through online platforms not only enhances information reception and engagement behaviors but also significantly contributes to building a positive organizational image.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Teaching management, HyFlex Learning

1. Introduction

The School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation serves as a key support unit for the management of teaching and learning in the General Education category at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Entrusted by the university, it oversees the administration of general education courses for regular undergraduate programs. Currently, the school has implemented a structured teaching and learning model for these courses, with pre-determined schedules specifying the date, time, and location for each semester. This ensures that students are well-informed and can attend classes accordingly. However, there has been a noticeable decline in student attendance in recent years, and this trend is expected to continue, prompting the need for proactive measures to address this challenge.

Public relations channels are essential for effectively disseminating news, information, and updates about activities to students of the General Education Department. Developing high-quality public relations materials is crucial not only for sharing information but also for enhancing the organization's image. Media development must align with current trends to ensure that target audience—whether student, stakeholder, or the public—can easily access and effectively utilize the information to their advantage. This process typically includes several key stages: conducting market analysis to understand the target audience and their needs, planning communication strategies, designing media formats, creating relevant content,

producing and developing media, and conducting quality inspections and evaluations to ensure effectiveness.

Media channels encompass a wide range of tools and platforms, including traditional outlets such as television, radio, and newspapers, as well as digital platforms like social media, websites, and blogs. These channels serve as bridges between the organization and its audience, fostering awareness and interest in the organization's services, programs, or initiatives. By leveraging diverse media channels, the General Education Department can strengthen its connection with its target audience and ensure that its message reaches them effectively.

For these reasons, the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation has formulated an operational plan to enhance its public relations materials, with the goal of establishing a positive institutional image. This plan emphasizes creating and improving diverse, engaging materials that cater to the needs of stakeholders and align with modern educational standards. By doing so, the school aims to elevate the university's educational quality, ensuring it remains relevant and responsive to the evolving expectations of today's learners.

In line with this objective, this research seeks to examine the impact of various public relations channels to identify and develop the most effective strategies for fostering a strong institutional image. A positive image, in turn, has the potential to significantly enhance student engagement and participation.

1.1 Research Objective

This research study aimed to:

1. To analyze public relations media channels that contribute to building a positive image for the School of General Education.
2. To assess the effectiveness of existing public relations media channels in enhancing the School of General Education's image.
3. To develop and optimize the most effective public relations media channels for the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation, ensuring maximum impact and efficiency.

2. Literature Review

The impact of public relations (PR) channels on the institutional image of general education schools is a multifaceted subject that has garnered significant attention in academic literature. Effective PR strategies are crucial for educational institutions aiming to enhance their reputation, attract prospective students, and engage stakeholders. This literature review examines key studies that explore the relationship between PR channels and institutional image in the context of general education.

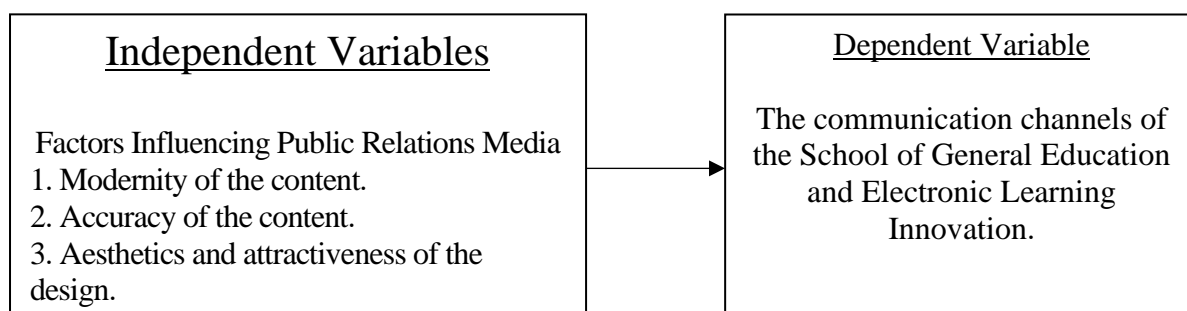
Public relations in higher education encompasses strategic communication efforts designed to build and maintain a positive institutional image. According to Smith and Johnson (2018), PR activities such as campus tours, alumni engagement, and media coverage are instrumental in shaping perceptions of educational institutions. These initiatives provide tangible experiences that influence stakeholders' views and contribute to a favorable institutional image. In addition, media coverage plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception of educational institutions. AKCG (2023) emphasizes that securing media coverage through broadcast and print media, as well as online platforms, enhances brand visibility and credibility. Sharing news about student achievements, institutional milestones, and research developments through these channels can significantly bolster an institution's image.

The advent of digital media has transformed PR strategies in higher education. Chou and Zhang (2019) highlight that a dynamic online presence, including websites and social media platforms, is essential for engaging tech-savvy prospective students. Effective use of digital channels not only increases transparency and accessibility but also allows institutions to reach a broader audience, thereby enhancing their image. Moreover, alumni relations are a critical component of PR strategies aimed at improving institutional image. Positive word-of-mouth from alumni serves as powerful social proof, influencing prospective students' enrollment decisions. Jones and Lee (2023) found that effective PR activities that generate positive buzz can sway student choices toward enrolling in a particular institution. Despite the benefits, PR strategies in higher education face challenges such as information overload and ethical dilemmas. Kim and Lee (2018) note that the abundance of PR materials can overwhelm prospective students, making it difficult for institutions to stand out. Additionally, ethical considerations, including transparency and honesty in communication, are vital to maintaining trust and credibility. Lastly, evaluating the effectiveness of PR strategies is essential for continuous improvement. Brown and Anderson (2020) discuss the challenges in measuring PR's impact due to the lack of standardized metrics. They advocate for the development of common evaluation frameworks to assess PR outcomes accurately.

In summary, the literature highlights the profound impact of public relations (PR) channels on shaping the institutional image of general education schools. Strategic utilization of media coverage, digital platforms, and alumni relations plays a pivotal role in enhancing an institution's reputation. However, challenges such as information overload and ethical considerations require careful management. Continuous evaluation of PR effectiveness remains essential for refining strategies and ensuring the achievement of desired outcomes.

3. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Impact of Public Relations Channels on Institutional Image in a School of General Education



The conceptual framework for this research explores the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The independent variable includes general demographic information, such as students' gender, age, and faculty affiliation. The dependent variable focuses on student behavior in using public relations media, which is analyzed across several subcategories: access channels, access characteristics, frequency of access, and timeframe of access.

4. Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design, utilizing a questionnaire to gather opinions from undergraduate students enrolled in general education courses at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. A sample of 377 students was selected using simple random sampling, with stratification based on academic year and faculty affiliation to ensure a representative distribution.

Research Instrument:

The primary data collection tool for this study was a structured questionnaire divided into three sections:

1. General Information:
This section captured demographic details such as the respondent's gender, age, and faculty affiliation.
2. Opinions on Media Perception Channels:
This section focused on participants' perceptions of media channels, including the frequency of receiving information through various channels.
3. Satisfaction with Public Relations Content:
This section assessed satisfaction levels with the content of public relations materials. Media satisfaction was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represented "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represented "Strongly Agree."

Data Collection:

Data were gathered using online questionnaires, comprising both primary data from the selected sample and secondary data sourced from related documents and literature.

Data Analysis:

The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using a statistical software program, SPSS. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were employed to present the findings in a clear and comprehensible manner. Satisfaction levels were categorized based on score ranges, as outlined in Table 1.

Duration and Location of the Study

The study is scheduled to take place from January 1 to July 20, 2024, at the School of General Education Building, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

Table 1. Statistics and definition in key studies

Statistics	Definition	Reference
Mean		
4.50 – 5.00	Very Satisfied	(Best, J.W., 1981)
3.50 – 4.49	Satisfied	
2.50 – 3.49	Neutral	
1.50 - 2.49	Dissatisfied	
1.00 – 1.49	Very Dissatisfied	
Median		
≥ 4.00	High Level of Important	(Ab Latif, R., Dahlan, A., Mulud, Z. A., & Nor, M. Z. M. , 2017)
≤ 3.50	Low Level of Important	
Standard Deviation: S.D.		
0.00 – 1.00	High Consensus	(Henning, J. I., & Jordaan, H., 2016)
1.01 – 1.49	Moderate Consensus	
1.50 – 2.00	Low Consensus	
> 2.00	Without Consensus	

5. Results

This research aimed to identify and analyze the channels through which public relations media of the School of General Education influence the perception of a positive institutional image. The findings are presented in four sections as follows:

1. Respondents' Information:
This section provides demographic and background data about the respondents.
2. Comments on Media Perception Channels:
This section analyzes feedback on the frequency of use of various channels for accessing public relations media of the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.
3. Satisfaction with Media Content:
This section evaluates respondents' satisfaction with the content of the public relations media accessed through each channel, specifically for the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation.
4. Other Suggestions:
This section captures additional feedback or recommendations from respondents to improve the effectiveness of public relations media.

To ensure clarity in the interpretation of the data analysis, the researcher employed the following symbols and abbreviations:

- \bar{x} (Mean): Represents the average value.
- N: Denotes the population or sample size.
- S.D. (Standard Deviation): Indicates the variability or dispersion of the data.

Part 1: Respondents' Data

Data for this section was collected through an online questionnaire, with a total of 377 respondents participating. The general demographic information of the respondents is summarized as follows:

Table 1. the frequency and percentage distribution of the general demographic information of online respondents.

Nature of Personal Information	Quantity(N=377)	percent
1. Gender		
male	152	40.32
female	225	59.68
Total	377	100
2. Age		
17 years	53	14.06
18 years	143	37.93
19 years	102	27.06
20 years and older	71	18.83
Not specified	8	2.12
combine	377	100
3. Faculty of study		
Faculty of Education	77	20.42
Faculty of Fine Arts	23	6.10
Faculty of Science and Technology	36	9.55
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	98	25.99

Nature of Personal Information	Quantity(N=377)	percent
Faculty of Industrial Technology	83	22.02
Faculty of Management Science	60	15.92
Total	377	100.00

From table 1, the analysis of the general characteristics of the 377 respondents regarding their satisfaction with video-based teaching and learning materials provided by the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for the academic year 2021 revealed the following:

- Most respondents were female, accounting for 225 individuals or 59.68% of the sample.
- Most respondents were 143 years old, representing 37.93% of the sample.

Part 2: Feedback on Public Relations Media Channels

This section focuses on respondents' feedback regarding the frequency of using various channels to perceive public relations media from the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

Table 2. Number and percentage of respondents classified by access channels

Access channels	Number of people	Percent
Publications	56	14.85
Television Media	79	20.95
Signage Media	81	21.49
Online Media	161	42.71
Total	377	100.00

From Table 2, it is evident that most respondents access public relations news through online channels, accounting for 161 individuals (42.71%). This is followed by signage media with 81 respondents (21.49%), television media with 79 respondents (20.95%), and publication media with 56 respondents (14.85%).

Table 3. Number and percentage of respondents classified according to characteristics of accessing media

Characteristics of accessing media	Number of people	Percent
Every day	138	36.60
5 - 6 days/week	95	25.20
3 - 4 days/week	71	18.83
1 - 2 days/week	35	9.28
More than 1 week	38	10.08
Total	377	100.00

From Table 3, it is evident that most respondents access public relations news every day, accounting for 138 individuals (36.60%). This is followed by 5-6 days/week with 95 respondents (25.20%), 3-4 days/week with 71 respondents (18.83%), 1-2 days/week with 35 respondents (9.28%), and more than 1 week with 38 respondents (10.08%).

Table 4. Number and percentage of respondents classified by frequency of access to public relations media per day

Frequency of accessing media per day	Number of people	Percent
1 time	189	50.13
2 - 5 times	142	37.67
6 - 10 times	29	7.69
More than 10 times	17	4.51
Total	377	100.00

From Table 4, it is evident that most respondents access public relations news 1 time/day, accounting for 189 individuals (50.13%). This is followed by 2-5 times with 142 respondents (37.67%), 6-10 times with 29 respondents (7.69%), and more than 10 times with 17 respondents (4.51%).

Table 5. Number and percentage of respondents Classified by access time-interval

Timeframe for accessing media per day	Number of people	Percent
06.00 - 09.00	17	4.51
09.01 - 12.00	21	5.57
12.01 - 15.00	109	28.91
15.01 - 18.00	32	8.49
18.01 - 21.00	156	41.38
21.01 - 24.00	42	11.14
Total	377	100.00

From Table 5, it is evident that most timeframe is 18.01-21.00, accounting for 156 individuals (41.38%). This is followed by 12.01-15.00 with 109 respondents (28.91%), 21.01-24.00 with 42 respondents (11.14%), 15.01-18.00 with 32 respondents (8.49%), 9.01-12.00 with 21 respondents (5.57%), and 6.00-9.00 with 17 respondents (4.51%).

Part 3: The following outlines respondents' satisfaction with the content of public relations media accessed through various channels, specifically for the School of General Education and Electronic Learning Innovation at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

Table 6. Students' satisfaction with public relations media

Lists	\bar{x}	S.D.	Satisfy Level
Clarity and accuracy of content in public relations media	4.35	0.115	satisfied
Relevance of media content to the target audience	4.08	0.025	satisfied
Engaging and creative content in public relations media	4.25	0.152	satisfied
Timeliness of information in public relations media	4.11	0.067	satisfied
Speed of presentation	4.46	0.321	satisfied
Aesthetic appeal of public relations media.	4.62	0.097	very satisfied
Total	4.31	0.103	satisfied

Table 6. presents the average analysis of satisfaction with the content of the public relations media. Overall, respondents expressed satisfaction with the media. Analyzing specific aspects revealed the following. Aesthetic appeal of public relations media was at the very satisfied level ($\bar{x} = 4.62$, S.D.= 0.097); followed by the speed of presentation at a satisfied level, ($\bar{x} = 4.46$, S.D.= 0.321); the clarity and accuracy of the content in the public relations media is at a satisfied, ($\bar{x} = 4.35$, S.D.= 0.115), respectively.

6. Conclusion

Most respondents were female, accounting for 59.68%, and most were 18 years old, representing 37.93%. In terms of access to public relations materials, most respondents preferred online channels (42.71%), followed by signage media (21.49%) and television media (20.95%). Most respondents accessed online public relations materials daily, accounting for 36.60%, followed by those who accessed them 5–6 days per week (25.20%). A significant portion accessed the materials once a day (50.13%). The most common time for accessing the media was between 6:01 PM and 9:00 PM, reported by 41.38% of respondents. Respondents expressed high satisfaction with the content of public relations materials, with an overall average satisfaction score of 4.28. Aesthetic appeal received the highest satisfaction level, with an average score of 4.62. Speed of presentation and clarity of content were also rated highly, with average scores of 4.46 and 4.35, respectively.

The findings highlight that most respondents focused on accessing public relations materials through online channels, particularly during the evening hours (6:01 PM–9:00 PM). Satisfaction with the content was notably high, especially regarding the aesthetics and speed of presentation, which were identified as key factors influencing overall satisfaction. These elements are crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of public relations materials and meeting audience expectations.

The findings align with the study by Somdet Rungsrisawat (2024), which focuses on communication processes aimed at promoting lifelong learning. The study emphasizes the importance of selecting effective communication channels that meet the needs of target audiences appropriately. In particular, online media has become a widely preferred channel in the current era due to its ability to reach audiences quickly, conveniently, and across diverse locations.

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