INFLUENCE OF PR STRATEGIES ON THE SUCCESS OF CEO'S IMAGE IN SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS IN KENYA

Carol Njoroge and Prof. Levy Obonyo

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INFLUENCE OF PR STRATEGIES ON THE SUCCESS OF CEO'S IMAGE IN SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS IN KENYA

[1*]Carol Njoroge
Post Graduate Student: Daystar University
[*]Corresponding Author's Email: carolenjoroge@gmail.com

[2]Prof. Levy Obonyo
Lecturer: Daystar University

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of PR strategies on the success of CEO's image in selected organizationsin Kenya

Methodology: The current research adopted both quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method) using the survey research design. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews. The entire population in this research was all corporate companies that have participated in the COYA awards in the last five years. However, the sample population in this study was selected Public Relations departments and selected CEOs whose organizations had successfully been recognized as either top- ranking or bottom ranking the COYA annual awards in the last five years. The sampling approach that was used in this study is non-probability sampling, and the researcher used purposive sampling.The process of data analysis included organizing, analyzing and summarizing all the findings. Quantitative data was analyzed by the use descriptive statistics and presented in form of frequency tables, charts, and graph.

Results: Results indicate that the majority of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the PR department is involved in training the CEO in public speaking skills to mould his image(46%), that the PR deprtment is involved in training the CEO in non verbal skills to mold his image to the public(43%), that CEO is consitently trained on interpersonal interaction(44%), that the CEO is coached on the communication words to boost his image to the public(44%). Results further indicate that a majority of respondents strongly agreed with the statament that the PR department helps the CEO to select venues and props before addressing the public(58%), that the PR department shapes the CEO media and public appearances (63%) and that the PR department trains the CEO in corporate dressing and image marketing.

Recommendations: The study recommends that since there seems to be a positive relationship between organization performance and the CEOs positive image, then PR departments and CEOs should seriously emphasize on the important role of PR department in shaping the CEOs image.

Keywords: *PR strategies,CEO's image*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Across the globe, in Africa and in Kenya there is a marked increase in annual award schemes recognizing successful corporate organizations. Forbes 'top 100 CEO's' is probably the world's most notable and since 1997 Fortune/Hay group has been conducting global survey of corporate reputations. The top executives and directors from these eligible companies, with the help of financial analysts, "aim at identifying companies that enjoy the strongest reputation within their industries and across the boardso as to be recognized by this awarding body" (Mathews, 1997, p.8). In Africa, there are a number of awards that recognize successful corporate organization and Investor Index award is one such example. This award recognizes "the continent's institutions for good management and innovative ideas", while exploring investment partnership in the developing countries (Sun, 2009, p. 4).

Kenya is no exemption when it comes to the annual awards that are held during gala nights that are presided in a ceremony that is full of pomp and color (Karangi, 2009). Most of these awards seek to recognize successful organizations in different capacities, and they include: The Company of the Year Award (COYA) by the Kenya Institute of Management (KIM), the African Aviation Award (AAA) run by a UK publication magazine, Public Relations Awards of the Year (PRAY) run by the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) and the 'Top 100 companies' by KPMG and Nation Media Group (Onyango, 2009).

PRAY distinguishes and showcases the best in the public relations profession in Kenya (Mutie, 2008).The corporate communication appeal is a great factor that influences positive corporate image. It refers to the stakeholders' feelings of respect and liking for the company (Moffit, 1993). Therefore, there is need to understand the mission of any PR officer in an organization. Foremost, as explained by Marston (1963), in *the nature of Public Relations*, the work of any PR personnel is to exert influence on public opinion and at the same time to maintain a persuasion objective that includes maintaining a favorable opinion, creating opinion where none exists and being neutral to hostile opinion. Cutlip et. al. defines Public Relations as persuasive publicity or "inducing the public to have understanding for and goodwill towards the organization" (1994, p2). Therefore, crafting the strategy that shapes the image and identity of the organization is one of the most important responsibilities for a PR officer. Often times this image "helps an organization to differentiate itself from others, while the identity enables the organization to integrate itself from within" (Black, 1972, p. 5) and manage the adaptation and retention processes.

Thus, the superseding deductions that can be derived from the different scholars is that the image of an organization is influenced by several factors and the public relations practitioner in any organization contributes to how these factors are perceived by the public (Gayle, 2007) and they become the driving force in creating the corporate image of that organization.

1.2 Problem Statement

Conger & Kanungo (1987) argue that leadership plays a big role in how the organization is perceived by the public and this perception helps in improving the corporate image and brand of that organization. Collins (2001) seems to hold the same opinion as Conger & Kanungo; he

identified a typical pattern of leadership behavior in those large organizations as "stunningly transforming from being good performers to great performers" (p. 65).

 It is important to understand that leadership is not the only factor that influences the image of an organization. Key factors include: the direct experience of the products from the consumers, work place environment, word of mouth and news communicated by the mass media, the organization visibility and the emotional appeal by the public (Burson- Marsteller, 2003). In addition, Black (1972) argues that crafting the strategy that shapes the image of the organization is one of the most important responsibilities of a PR officer (Black, 1972, p.5).   Thus, the superseding deductions that can be derived from the different scholars is that the image of the organization is influenced by several factors and the public relations practitioners in any organization contribute to how these factors are perceived by the public.

In view of the challenges faced by different corporate organizations, the researcher has noted several gaps. In the first place, the activities and strategies of the PR department help in influencing the image of the CEO to the public. Secondly, is the fact that PR strategies have been used to enhance the public's perception of the CEO at the expense of the organization resulting in two separate brand entities, that is, an enhanced CEO's image that does not result or enhance the organizations brand entity.

Therefore, the researcher will seek to investigate the PR strategies used by Kenyan organizations in building the image of their CEOs.

1.3 Objective of the Study

I.   To identify PR strategies used by PR practitioners in building the image of the CEO.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Leadership

Before attempting to study the role of PR in creating and shaping the corporate image of the executive officer in this case the leader of the organization, it is important to define the concept of leadership and its meaning within an organization (Bennis, 1989). A survey of scholarship write ups on leadership in the past century reveals different kinds of thinking about leadership. The great man theory of leadership of the 'born leader' concept is still highly ranked among leadership scholars. In this school of thought a leader would be defined as "that man with special in-born leadership characteristics" and this is a person whose belief and behavior amongst his community results in cataclysmic change in the way things are being done (Bass, 1990). Later on, social Darwinist's opposed to this idea of the 'natural leader' proposed that "leadership is both a function of the traits and the emergence of those traits in a given situation or environment" (Rosenbach & Taylor, 1989) and this is when someone at any level within an organization leads by virtue of meeting the needs of his or her team or followers.

2.2 Defining Organization Leadership

In the context of this study, leadership is based on the assumption that it involves a process whereby influence is exerted by one person to the rest of the people to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or in an organization (Yukl, 1994). In addition,

Adair defines organizational leadership 'as the art of influencing, directing, guiding and controlling others in such a way as to obtain their willingness, obedience, confidence, respect and loyal co-operation in accomplishment of an objective' (Adair, 2002, p. 234).

2.3 Public Relations defined

Public Relations practice is understood as communication that 'uses the persuasion strategies, to inform, educate and create understanding to all the publics' (Cutlip et. al. 1994, p.2). Well other scholars continue to define PR as the persuasive publicity of 'inducing the public to have understanding for and goodwill toward the organization at all times' (Cutlip et al. 1994). This means that the Public Relations practitioner has a need to create a mutual understanding between the organization and the public hence create a two-way communication flow, and increasing identity and loyalty among these publics (Hunt & Grunig, 1994).

On the other hand, Lages and Simkin (2003) propose that PR scholars conceptualize PR as a management discipline, which is a change from the traditional view of PR as mainly a communication activity. They also agree with Hutton (199) who defines PR as the 'management of communication between an organization and its publics', further Lages and Simkin (2003) define PR as a 'relationship management', which implies that the focus of public relations is the management of an organization's relationships with its publics through the four-step management process of analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation (p. 8).

2.4 Strategies in Corporate communication

The term strategy, from the Greek word for generalship, has been adapted to fields other than warfare and also in organizational context. In communication, strategy would be taken to mean an indication of an organization's positioning for the future, the 'what' rather than the 'how' (Drucker, 1988). However, Gruing understands strategy to mean an approach, design or system that directs the course of action in a specific situation (Grunig & Repper, 1992). On the other hand, Mintzberg states that strategy determines success; it is seen as the primary determinant of success or failure in fulfilling the mission and achieving the organization's goals and objectives (Mintzberg, 1994).

Over the last thirty years or so strategy has become established as a legitimate field of research and managerial practice. Although there are varied views on the use of strategy within the communication, Mintzerberg has argued that 'the concept of strategy itself is defined as a plan or a ploy to specifically maneuver to outwit an opponent or competitor' from what the organization intends to do or is currently doing (Mintzberg, 1994). Within the corporate communication, the role of strategy is perceived to be a 'boundary spanning' function and it plays a key role in the process of managing the environmental interaction. This means that 'the strategic planners within the organization operate as the interface between the organization and its environment to help gather, relay and interpret information from the environment to the organization' (Wilcox, at. el. p.41, 1989).

On the other hand, Tibble states that "strategy is determined by first identifying key strategic issues that are of critical importance to the organization in achieving the corporate vision and mission" (Tibble, 1997). Once the strategy has been decided upon, it can be used to make long

term goals and objectives (Digman, 1990). The decision made at this stage mainly focuses on how to turn strategy into a reality and a long-term organizations goals are.

Wells et. al (2003) describe three categories that divide the strategies of PR, depending on the amount of control the company has in its communication. He continues to list these strategies as follows:

Controlled PR – this is when a company can control the use and placement of their PR tools they are utilizing controlled channels and the examples of these strategies are: publications, annual reports, displays, exhibits, product placements, speakers, photographs and staged events.

Uncontrolled PR – this when companies relies on the use and placement of their PR to media via uncontrolled channels and the examples of these strategies are: publicity, news releases, press conferences and media advisory, impression management, image building, talk and interview shows.

Semi-controlled PR – this is when some aspects of the PR activities are controlled and initiated by the company but other aspects remain uncontrolled and some examples include: special events and sponsorship, interpersonal communication, public speaking, electronic communication and word of mouth. When utilizing the above-mentioned strategies, PR teams need to work closely with the marketing department so as to bring out the positive message from the organization.

2.5 Role of PR practitioners in assisting CEOS on image building and maintenance

Communication function

PR professional need to be responsible not only for the messages but the effectiveness and the shills shown by the organization in communicating with its audiences and they also need to play a coaching role towards their CEOs. This is not just about communicating with the press and the media; it is facilitating and assisting the CEO to portray organization in the positive way to the public's.

Helping CEOs to create a listening organization

In the study by Murry and White (2005) CEOs accept that they are largely responsible for managing their company's reputation. To do this properly requires managing their company's greatest asses in a systematic way; they need to know the real problems and issues that are affecting the organization and they can only gather this information through the help of their communication officers.

Assisting CEOs to develop personal brands

CEOs need the help of PR practitioners to develop their personal brands and articulate their points of view. It can form a critical part of providing genuine leadership be enabling the CEO to be seen as stand up and standing out to the stakeholders there by enhancing loyalty and building trust amongst all the public's.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The current research adopted both quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method) using the survey research design. To this end the researcher used self-administered questionnaires and in cases where this is not applicable due to time constraints the questionnaires was sent via email as well as interviews with selected CEO's.

The entire population in this research was all corporate companies that have participated in the COYA awards in the last five years. However, the sample population in this study was selected Public Relations departments and selected CEOs whose organizations had successfully been recognized as either top- ranking or bottom ranking the COYA annual awards in the last five years. The sampling approach that was used in this study is non-probability sampling, and the researcher used purposive sampling.The process of data analysis included organizing, analyzing and summarizing all the findings. Data organizing and coding was done by the researcher in the following ways. Quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed by the use descriptive statistics and presented in form of frequency tables, charts, and graph.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Field Report

As the researcher and research assistance embarked on the field work, they were able to identify twenty out of fifty companies that have participated in the COYA awards each year. In the last five years, two hundred and fifty (250) companies have taken part in the COYA awards. In total, the researcher was able to sample at least a hundred (100) companies, which is, forty percent (40%), of the entire population.

During the entire process of distributing questionnaires to the PRO's, the researcher realized that there was a big knowledge gap between the CEO's office and the PR departments.

Most of the PRO's seemed to think that the CEO was too senior to them to really even consider the input of PRO department towards their image. However, the researcher also found that there were certain organizations whose PR department was charged with the responsibility of enhancing and building the CEO image and also seemed to understand what their role is when it comes to corporate image maintenance. Suffice it to say that the PRO's who seemed to understand their specific role in corporate image and maintenance seemed to more exposed in terms of their educational level as demonstrated by the data findings. Majority of these respondents, thirty five percent (35%), were masters holders and they had worked in their respective organizations for more than four years. The respondents, five percent (5%), who were still not experienced in the industry, seemed to think that media relations as the only PR activities and strategies that can be utilized to shape the image of the CEO.

To some of the respondents who seemed to be unaware of issues related to PR, the questionnaire seemed to be a source of information. This is because they did not seem to understand that there are other different ways of enhancing the CEO's image towards the public, other than through media relations and CSR activities. A significant number of respondents seemed to think that the work of PR department was restricted to marketing and adverting roles. This group of

respondents was not aware that other roles of PR department include shaping policy, strategic planning, management of corporate reputation and image.

It was evident from the interviews that some of the CEO's did not seem to understand fully the role of the PRO in defining their image to the public. Many of the CEO's were more concerned with the role of PR in enhancing the profits and losses of the organization and not how the PRO department influences their own personal image to the public. However, the study identified a few CEOs who seemed to understand the role that PRO's play in enhancing their own personal image to the public. These findings are consistent with those discussed in the main data analysis.

As anticipated, majority of the PROs had busy schedules which led to a slowdown of the data collection exercise. In some cases, the PRO's had to fill the questions during the presence of either the researcher or assistance. Furthermore, some respondents also requested for anonymity and confidentiality due to fear of victimization.

The section below dealt with both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The quantitative data was generated from questionnaires while the qualitative data was generated form the interviews. The CEOs of eight major companies that had taken part in the COYA awards since its inception were interviewed face-to face by the researcher through the help of the research assistants. The purpose of the interviews was to determine what CEOs perceive to be the value of public relations, the extent of their own involvement in corporate image and branding and how they asses the contribution that Public relations makes to their overall business and organizational performance. The qualitative and wide ranging findings have been analyzed and presented here as paraphrased and generalized to several issues.

4.2 Existence of positive public perception of corporate image

The study sought to establish if a perceived positive corporate image existed. The findings are presented in figure 1 below.
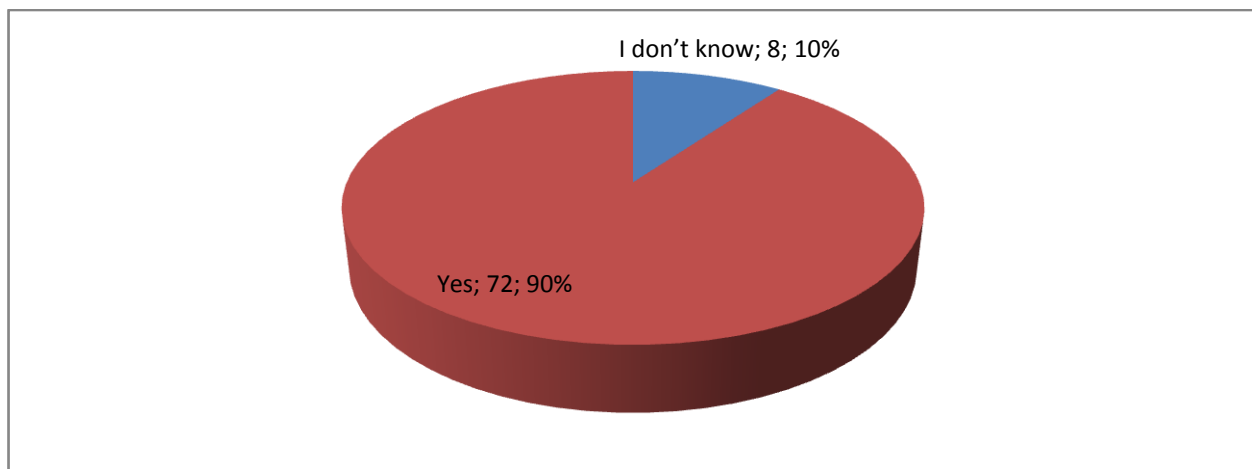

Figure1: Existence of Positive public perception of corporate image

The results from this study reveal that there existed a positive public perception of corporate image in the firms under study as indicated by the majority of respondents (90%) which concurs with what (Gregory & Wiechman, 1998) state that 'whatever the perspective, image advertising

when properly executed, can help propel the corporation dramatically towards its corporate goals.

4.3 Existence of Positive public perception of CEOs image

The study sought to establish if a perceived positive CEO image existed. The findings are presented in figure 2 below.
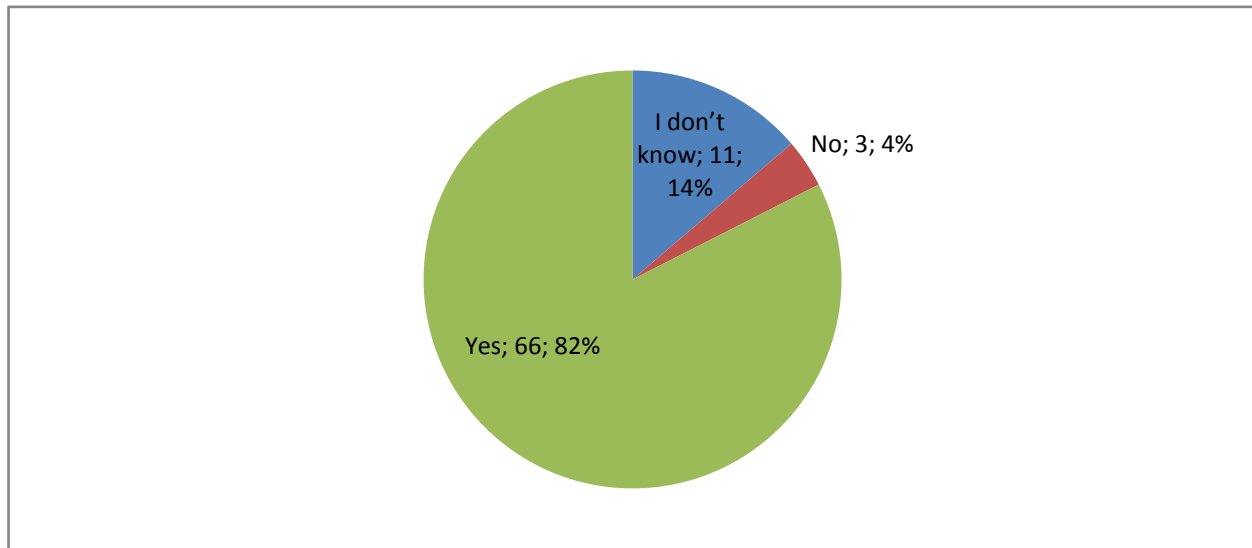

Figure 2: Existence of Positive public perception of CEOs image

The results from this study reveal that there existed a positive public perception of CEOs image as indicated by the majority of respondents (82%). According to Lazarus (2003) he argues that 'today's brand corporate and product are inextricably linked to the CEOs image and behavior (p. 194). In essence, 'the CEO is often seen as an ambassador or endorser of the corporate brand and the product brand, therefore, brand management of the CEO is now an important task' (Lazarus, 2003, p. 194)

4.4 CEO consulting PR department before public appearances

The study sought to establish whether the CEO consults the PR department before public appearances. The findings are presented in figure 3 below.
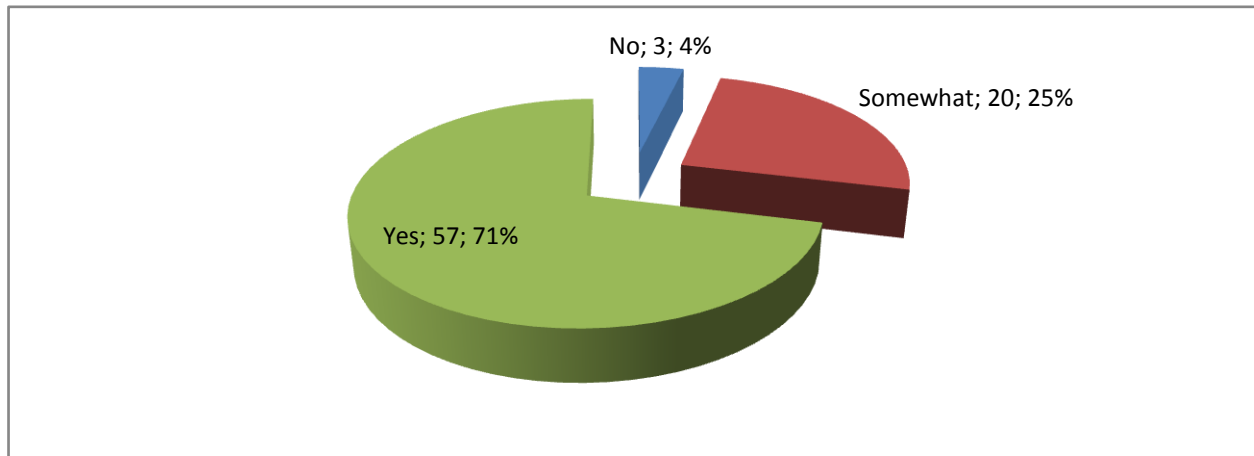
Figure 3: CEO consults the PR department before public appearances.

Results reveal that a majority of more than half (71%) of respondents indicated that the CEO consults the PR department before public appearances. Nakra (2000) agrees with this view, and states that PR activities must be involved early in the planning process when developing strategies for building and maintaining the corporate image and reputation.

4.5 Projected CEOs image is a result of PR efforts

The study sought to establish whether the projected CEOs image was a result of PR efforts. The findings are presented in figure 4 below.
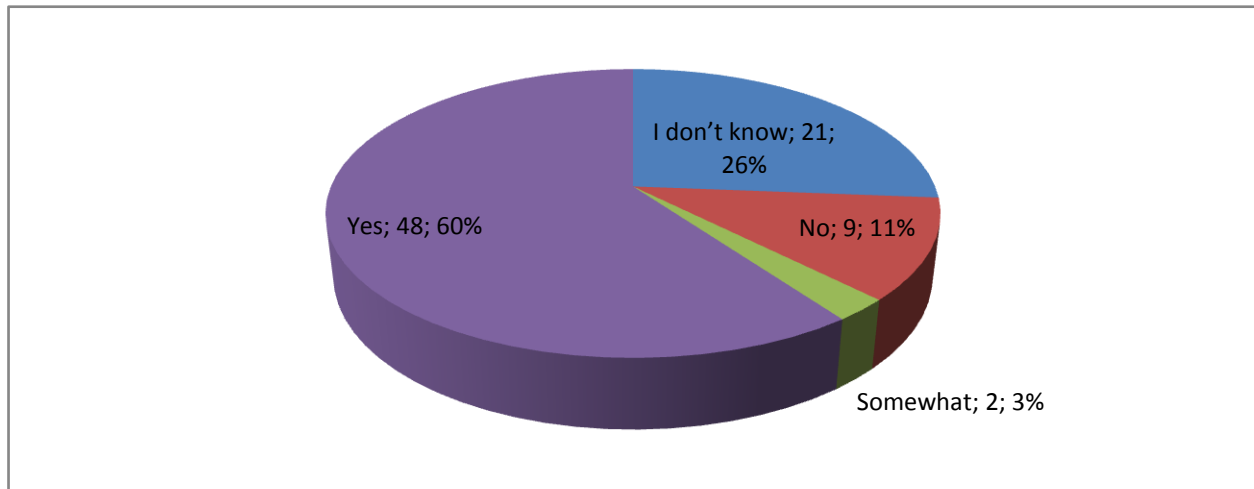

Figure 4: Projected CEOs image is a result of PR efforts

A majority of slightly more than half (60%), indicated that the projected CEOs image was a result of PR efforts. According to Wells et.al (2003) PR objectives are designed to make changes in the public's knowledge, attitudes and behaviors related to a company, brand or organization. Usually these objectives focus on creating credibility, delivering information and building

positive corporate image of the organization as well as that of the CEO. On the other hand, Bruijns(2003) argues that a correlation does in fact exist between CEO image, corporate reputation and corporate performance and that intangible asset (i.e. image, symbolic leadership) are significantly responsible in gaining competitive advantage in today's competitive markets.

4.6 Factors contributing to positive corporate image of CEO

The study sought to establish whether the projected CEOs image was a result of PR efforts. The findings are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Factors contributing to positive corporate image of CEO

Contributing factors to positive CEO image	Total	Percentage
employee retention	1	1%
good stock market price	1	1%
Media attention and Publications	20	25%
No response	9	11%
Organization profitability	4	5%
Organizational Brand	1	1%
PRDepartment Support	33	41%
Product development and good customer service	4	5%
quality assurance	3	4%
Training by PR department	4	5%
Grand Total	**80**	**100%**

Results reveal that some of the factors contributing to the positive image of the CEO include Public Relations department support (41%), media attantion and publications(25%), product development and good customer service(5%), training by public relations department(5%), organization profitability(5%), quality assurance(4%), organization brand(1%), good stock market price (1%) and employee retention (1%) respectively. A small percentage of non responses (11%) implied that the there were some PR respondents who were unaware of other factors that contribute to positive image of the CEO In other studies used in the literature review, it shows that within the corporate communication, the role of strategy is perceived to be a 'boundary spanning' function and it plays a key role in the process of managing the environmental interaction. This means that 'the strategic planners within the organization operate as the interface between the organization and its environment to help gather, relay and interpret information from the environment to the organization' (Wilcox, at. el. p.41, 1989).

Interview results on the question on drivers of good corporate image yielded a variety of answers that tended to agree with the questionaire results . However, an indepth examination of the interview answers implied that while media attention and publications featured in almost every CEO's answer, the perfomance of the organization as shown by profitability , quality products, customer satisafaction and employee morale was a signifcant driver of good corporate image. It was in only one instance that a CEO indicated that PR department support and CEO training by PR department was a driver to good corporate image. This findings were best expressed by the follwing CEOs;

" employee morale, stock market price, media attention and publications" (CEO 1)

"organization profitability, organization brand, media attention and publications" (CEO 2)

"PR Department Support, CEO Training by PR department, quality products, stellar performance" (CEO 4)

"Employee morale, customer satisfaction, profitability, Media attention and Publications" (CEO 6).

Majority of the CEOs recognized that public relations activities enhance what is already there and they don't necessarily substitute for great services and the reputation of the organization. However, the consensus was that the work of public relations department is to ensure that the leadership of the organization communicates effectively with all the stakeholders, both by coaching management into better communication performers to both the internal and external publics. Frost & Cooke also affirm that 'there is much more to be gained by understanding how PR has been used to influence and create the CEOs charismatic image to the public; and how the leader's charismatic image influences the organizational over all corporate image (Frost & Cooke, 1999) then it seems that CEOs views are of the same mind set as of the scholars above.

Some of the CEOs agreed that a good image cannot be built by public relations alone; it has to be earned by the organization through the way it operates and the services that it provides. The PR department can help to raise the bar for a good image among the public but it cannot portray an organization as something it is not, as one CEO put it 'you have to live the image that you want to have of that organization', and this continues to emphasis what the roles of the PR personnel in most organizations are perceived to be, they are mainly seen as the liaisons officers who keep a continuous two-way communication flowing between the organization and its stakeholders (Cutlip et al., 1994).

4.7 PR-led CEO image proposition

The study sought to establish whether the PR-led CEO image proposition held as argued in literature review. The findings are presented in figure 5 below.
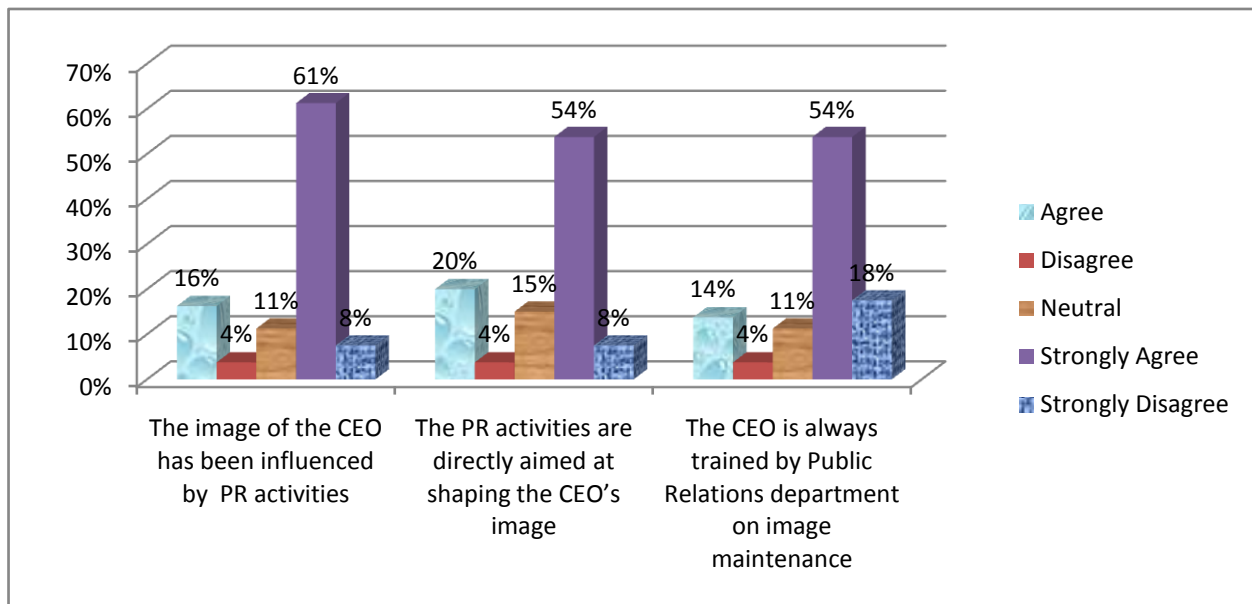
Figure 5: PR-led CEO image proposition

Findings reveal that the majority of respondents, 61%, strongly agreed that the image of the CEO has been influenced by PR activities. Meanwhile, 54% strongly agreed that the pr activities are directly aimed at shaping the CEOs image. Similar findings (54%) were also found to apply to the statement that the CEO is always trained by Public Relations department on image maintenance.

The findings imply that the PR-Led CEO image proposition holds true and this is in relation with what Jefkins & Yadin argue 'that it always the task of the PR manager to establish and maintain a correct image of the organization and of its policies, products, services and personnel which contributes to the overall corporate image (Jefkins & Yadin, 1998). Thus far, it shows that PR influences public opinion with informing, promoting, understanding and interpreting the different messages they send to the public, thereby being able to shape their opinion at all times.

There were some interview results that tended to agree with this proposition. On the question of whether the CEOs believed that good PR strategies help to deliver a good corporate image of the CEO some CEOs, most CEOs (4 of the 8 CEOs) answered in the affirmative. In one instance a CEO explained that his agreement with the question was;

> *"Primarily because a good image does not spring from nowhere, it has to be cultivated with the help of clear strategies. For instance, displaying the CEO as innovative and possessing good leadership qualities" (CEO 1).*

In another instance, CEOs explained that the reasons why he agreed with the question was because;

"It is evident that PR strategy may help deliver a good corporate image. For instance, how can one explain the observation that in the case of safaricom, only the former CEO Michael Joseph and the current CEO make important media briefings on behalf of the company. I think it is a strategy to make their image stick to the minds of consumers and other stakeholders". (CEO 4)

"For instance, in the case of organizations such as KWS, you really can't say it is the product that catapults the image of the CEO. After all, wildlife and the tourism product is not used by the majority of Kenyans, so why the hype about the CEO?." (CEO 6).

4.8 Organization led-CEO image proposition

The study sought to establish whether the Organization-led CEO image proposition held as argued in literature review. The findings are presented in figure 6 below
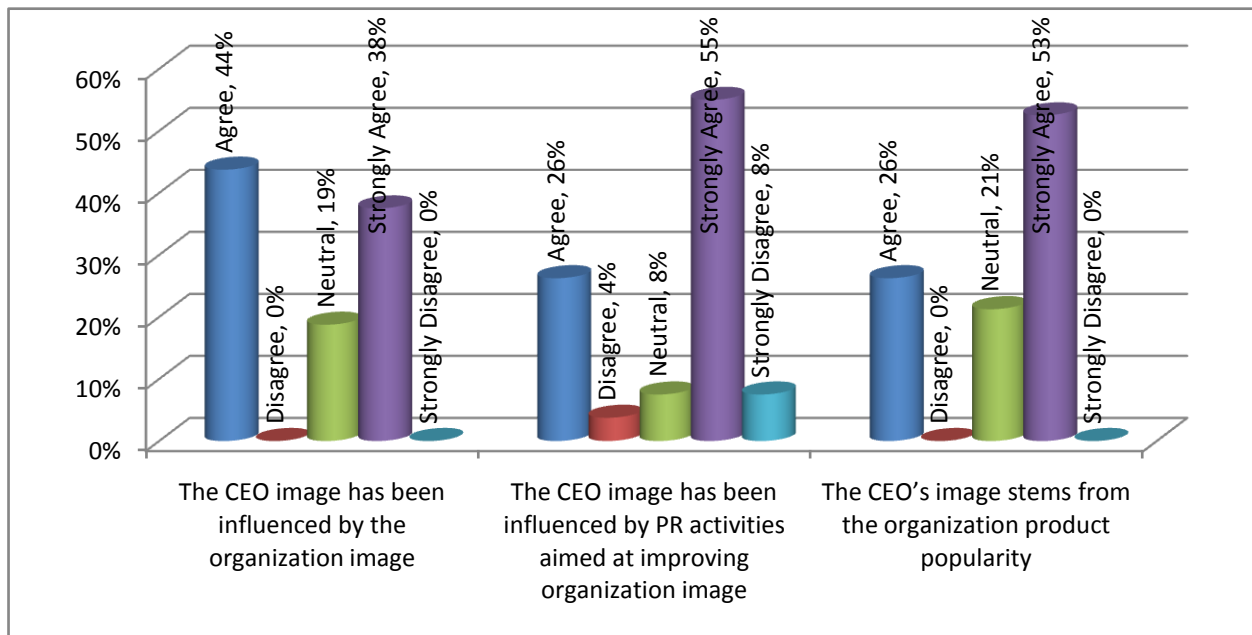

Figure6: Organization led-CEO image proposition

A majority for less than half (44%) agreed with the statement that the CEO image has been influenced by the organization image. A majority of slightly more than half 55% strongly agreed with the statement that the CEO image has been influenced by PR activities aimed at improving organization image. A majority of slightly more than half 53% strongly agreed with the statement that the CEO image stems from the organization product popularity.

The Organization-led CEO image proposition was also supported by some CEOs who seem to disagree with the PR led image proposition by answering negatively to the question of whether CEOs believed that good PR strategies help to deliver a good corporate image of the CEO some CEOs. This was best demonstrated by the following responses;

"Take the Obama case for example. He is the CEO of America, which may analogously be compared to a blue-chip company. While you may attribute his image to good PR strategies, I think there are other factors that come into play. For instance, the image of the organization" (CEO 8)

"Strategy has very little got to do with the CEO image. The CEO image is derived from the company's success in the market place. You really cannot separate the CEOs image from the company'simage" (CE O 2)

4.9 Irrelevance of PR proposition

The study sought to establish whether the Irrelevance of PR proposition held as argued in literature review. The findings are presented in figure 7 below
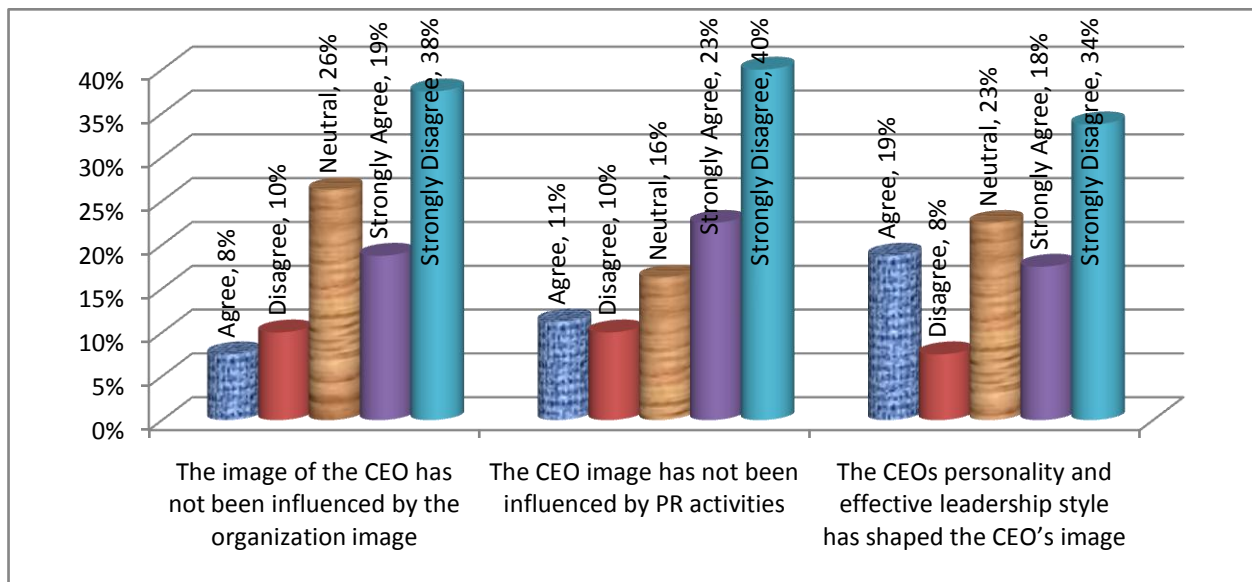

Figure 7: Irrelevance of PR proposition

A majority of less than half (38%) strongly disagreed with the statement that the image of the CEO has not been influenced by the organization image. Meanwhile a majority of less than half (40%) also strongly disagreed with the statement that the CEO image has not been influenced by PR activities and 34% also strongly disagreed with the statement that the CEO personality and effective leadership style has shaped the CEO image. The finding implies that the irrelevance of PR proposition does not hold.

The irrelevance of PR proposition also had some followers among the CEOs. Several CEOs discounted the role of PR in building a CEOs image. The answers that best demonstrated this position were as follows;

"A charismatic CEO will always be famous whether there is a good PR strategy or not. (CEO 7)

"But good PR strategies are watered down by organization politics and power games. You only need to look at boardroom wars and notice that if a board war exists, then no strategy can save the image of the

CEO. Take for instance Uchumi supermarkets before it was delisted from the Nairobi stock Exchange"
(CEO, 5)

4.10 PR STRATEGIES AIMED AT BUILDING CEOs IMAGE

One of the objectives of the study was to identify the PR strategies and campaigns that are being used by PR practitioners to build the image of the CEO. The findings were given in table 2 below.

Table 2: PR Strategies Aimed at Building CEOs Image

	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
The PR department is involved in training the CEO in public speaking skills to mould his image	22-28%	9-11%	12-15%	37-46%
The PR department is involved in training the CEO in non-verbal skills to mold his image to the public	10-13%	12-15%	24-30%	34-43%
The CEO is consistently trained on interpersonal interaction	13-16%	9-11%	23-29%	35-44%
The CEO is trained effectively to being able to use his/her rhetoric skill by the PR department	16-20%	12-15%	20-25%	32-40%
The CEO is coached on the communication's words to boost his image to the public	8-10%	18-23%	19-24%	35-44%
The PR department helps the CEO to select venues, props before addressing the public	16-20%	6-8%	12-15%	46-58%
The PR department shapes the CEO's media and public appearances	15-19%	6-8%	9-11%	50-63%
The PR department trains the CEO in corporate dressing and image marketing.	10-13%	11-14%	18-23%	41-51%

The majority of respondents (46%)strongly agreed with the statement that the PR department is involved in training the CEO in public speaking skills to mould his image. A majority of less than half (43%) strongly agreed with the statement that the PR deprtment is involved in training the CEO in non verbal skills to mold his image to the public. A majority of less than half (44%) strongly agreed with the statament that the CEO is consitently trained on interpersonal interaction. A majority of less than half (44%) strongly agreed with the statament that the CEO is coached on the communication words to boost his image to the public.

A majority of more than half (58%) strogly agreed with the statament that the PR deprtment helps the CEO to select venues and props before addressing the public. A majority of more than half (63%) strongly agreed with the statement that the PR department shapes the CEO media and public appearances. Lastly, the a majority of slightly more than half (51%) strongly agreed with the statement that the PR department trains the CEO in corporate dressing and image marketing. The finding implies that PR practictioners play very important roles aimed at building the CEO image.

The above finding continues to hold strong to the school of thought by Lazarus that good public relations can help to train and rehearse these CEOs to perform better and 'this person who helps in communication this image must have equal status to the information officer so as to have any effective on their work to the CEO (Lazarus, 2003, p. 18). Thus far, it shows that PR influences public opinion with informing, promoting, understanding and interpreting the different messages they send to the public, thereby being able to shape their opinion at all times. However, the responses may be far from the reality on the ground since PR is a new field or paradigm in Kenya.

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of the findings

Results indicate that the majority of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the PR department is involved in training the CEO in public speaking skills to mould his image(46%), that the PR deprtment is involved in training the CEO in non verbal skills to mold his image to the public(43%), that CEO is consitently trained on interpersonal interaction(44%), that the CEO is coached on the communication words to boost his image to the public(44%). Results further indicate that a majority of respondents strongly agreed with the statament that the PR department helps the CEO to select venues and props before addressing the public(58%), that the PR department shapes the CEO media and public appearances (63%) and that the PR department trains the CEO in corporate dressing and image marketing.

Other strategies used by PR departments include outsourcing CEO training to PR consultancy firms, holding media briefings, public awareness, organizing workshops and seminars, maintaining good rapport with CEO, regulating media interaction, and CSR activities. The study identified internal and external PR strategies aimed at building a positive CEOs image to include team building activities, CSR activities, CEO image support, publications, seminars, organizational performance, training, corporate memberships clubs, conferences, education tours, foundations, forums, outsourcing CEO consultancy to PR consultancy firms.

The finding implies that PR practictioners play very important roles aimed at building the CEO image. The findings further imply that PR strategies mentioned above are an important aspect of shaping the CEOs image. This findings are further supported in other parts of this study that suggest that majority of responndets agree to the PR-led CEO image proposition, the Organization led-ceo image proposition but strongly disagree to Irrelevance of PR proposition.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concludes that the PR strategies used in building the image of the CEO include (a) training the CEO in public speaking skills to mould his image(b), training the CEO in non verbal skills to mold his image to the public(c) consitently training CEO on interpersonal interaction(d), coaching CEO on the communication words to boost his image to the public(e) helping CEO to select venues and props before addressing the public(f) PR department shaping the CEO media and public appearances (g) training the CEO in corporate dressing and image marketing (h) team building activities, (i) CSR activities, (j)CEO image support, (k)publications,(l) seminars, (m) organizational performance,(n) training, (o) corporate memberships clubs,

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(p)conferences, education tours, (q) foundations,(r) forums, (s)outsourcing CEO consultancy to PR consultancy firms.

5.3 Recommendations

Specifically, it is recommended that PR departments should put in place the following PR strategies (a) training the CEO in public speaking skills to mould his image(b), training the CEO in non verbal skills to mold his image to the public(c) consitently training CEO on interpersonal interaction(d), coaching CEO on the communication words to boost his image to the public(e) helping CEO to select venues and props before addressing the public(f) PR department shaping the CEO media and public appearances (g) training the CEO in corporate dressing and image marketing (h) team building activities, (i) CSR activities, (j)CEO image support, (k)publications,(l) seminars, (m) organizational performance,(n) training, (o) corporate memberships clubs, (p)conferences, education tours, (q) foundations,(r) forums, (s)outsourcing CEO consultancy to PR consultancy firms.

The study also recommends that since there seems to be a positive relationship between organization performance and the CEOs positive image, then PR departments and CEOs should seriously emphasize on the important role of PR department in shaping the CEOs image.

5.4 Suggested areas of further research

The current study recommends a regression analysis that may demonstrate the sensitivity of organization performance to CEO image.   The study also recommends the adoption of the balance score card concept to organizational performance in a bid to test the relationship between CEOs image and organization performance.   The current study should also be replicated across different sampling frames such as the firms listed on the Nairobi securities exchange and the Kenya association of manufacturers list.

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