

Knowledge Management Capabilities and Public Relations: Identifying the Role of Public Relations Officers in University of Pakistan

Abstract

This research examines the effects of knowledge management capabilities in determining the roles and work duties of Public Relations Officers (PROs) in universities of Pakistan. It is an attempt to identify the existing cultural, structural and technological levels of knowledge management of the PR practitioners in universities. Framework of Knowledge management approach has been applied to propose policies and strategies to the higher-level management in universities for PR practices. An online survey was conducted to collect the response of public relations officers working in Higher Education Commission (HEC) recognized public and private universities. Results of the study suggest that Results of the study suggest that job experience is not an obligatory prerequisite to perform the professional PR roles at universities. Furthermore, this study also concludes that PR professionals can perform their jobs even in the absence of advanced technology. Moreover, this research also nullifies the strong acuity of the presence of a dedicated PR office in the university to perform PR tasks.

Keywords: Public Relations, PR Roles, Knowledge Management Capabilities, Universities, Higher Educational Commission

INTRODUCTION

The key role of Public relations in an organization is to transmit goodwill, build and

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sustain a favourable association with all stakeholders or publics who are related to a particular organization. PR specialists range from spokespersons to mass-media managers, promoters and event organizers. This job is related to media, staff, patrons, suppliers, watchdogs, and any organization with individual organisation or association needs to construct positive connections (Toth et al.1998). PR professionals explore situations, plan, apply a mixture of capacities to produce a range of communiqué tools, and conclusively evaluate their endeavours (Turk, 2000). Public relations acknowledges in America as shaggy grounding and with political motives (Lattimore et al., 2007). In reality, "the Federalist Papers" is acknowledged as history's most productive PR job which resulted to the approval of the United States of America and its Constitution (p. 21). This is the time when PR finally is acknowledged as something beneficial for public, moreover, Public relations' predecessors begin to lead the precise and target practice of PR for the benefit of the public good. However, regardless of this contemporary concept, initially PR is not considered as the need of a common man (Newsom et al., 2009). According to Guth and Marsh (2006), initially the tool of public relations is used politically, and similarly during wars; it is used in WW-I ("The Creel Committee") and during the WW-II ("The Office of War Information"), during both wars the purpose is to gain the public support and sympathies. As stated by Lattimore et al. (2007), in the beginning several scholars regard PR as a propaganda tool, the marketers and press gentry disregard the perception of public relations, and gradually it is comprehended that press gentry exploited, disgraced and tricked the PR practices for their own good (p. 22).

In effort to regain and recover the public relations' image, the period of five decades between the World War-II and the eruption of internet is categorized as the PR's image recovery era (Lattimore et al., 2007, p. 33). According to Deemer (2012) after long standard practices of PR many are yet to be impressed, it has also become evident that some methods required to be devised to determine the standard ethical practices of PR. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) is setup to testify and certify public relations practitioners, and this establishment carry professed professionalization to its practice (Guth & Marsh, 2006). Even though participation and membership is not compulsory, but it has become an imperative step to set the standard in PR practices (Deemer, 2012). The public relations' practice could not sweepingly convince the citizens of U.S.A. regarding the PR practice; numerous Americans all the same feel to be tricked from the PR professionals (Grunig et al., 2002). Most of the American seems to be logically when they perceive that the public relations efforts for the celebrities are not credible (Seitel, 2007). In accordance with Deemer (2012) the public relations practices are striving to create,

sustain, and strengthen the relationships with the publics of a firm or organization positively, it is still a very hard and constant but necessary task to change the perception of PR practice. According to Wilcox et al. (2006) the thought of having a discourse with people is gaining acceptance as a new idea in 1960s. Because building the relationships is an ultimate goal of public relations, therefore, the discourse process help to achieve the objective in a best way (Guth & Marsh, 2006). Those who are intended to practice this way, endeavour for feedback to lay the foundation for future communication on the basis of given feedback (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Guth and Marsh (2006) stated that currently most of the practitioners considered this the best practice, and Deemer (2012) also marked further modifications. Traditionally, the decisions of public relations used to be taken intuitively as the guiding source with almost no prior research (Seitel, 2007). Wilcox et al., (2006) conclude that nowadays research is commonly acknowledged by PR practitioners as an essential measure of planning, development of program, and process of evaluation (p. 129). Even though, it is yet to be clear that these modifications in PR practices are the real cause of speedy development of the practice, but the existence of the growth is irrefutable (Deemer, 2012). The study of White and Parks (2010) found that most of the respondents did not regard the public relations practice as a truth hiding activity, and considered it an important and positive. Nevertheless, according to these respondents PR professionals are trying to convey the respective agenda of organizations (White & Park, 2010). Supporting the an upsurge of ethical behaviour in PR practices, Kang (2010) found that every so often due to the unresolved ethical conflicts and instead of participating in unethical behaviours, PR professionals resign from their jobs.

Public Relations Roles

The roles PR professionals play within their respective departments. Research on roles of PR is among the greatly and repeatedly researched fields in the literature of public relations (Pasadeos, Renfro, & Hanily, 1999). Consistent with Toth, et al. (1998), there are several reasons to consider the study on public relations practitioners' roles to the knowledge of PR. One important rationale to research the PR roles is because the study on roles of PR made it doable to relate PR work to comprehensive examination of how outstandingly PR departments were established in organizations (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995). According to Dozier (1992), while exercising PR, the individual's behaviour patterns' constructs organizations are called PR roles. Furthermore, Dozier debated on the PR roles that separate the individuals within organizations additionally described organizations' hopes from

their staffs. Dozier also stated that roles of PR are the foundation to comprehend the purpose of public relations. PR roles are insistent activities which are executed to lay out structure or model of practice (Holtzhausen, Petersen, & Tindall, 2003). The roles of individual PR professional would, consequently, help models of PR practice (Castelli, 2007). Research on roles of public relations initiated by Broom and Smith (1979), their experimental study is about the perceptions of clients about job responsibilities of the professional. Broom and Smith's research explored four PR roles, and they identified these four roles of PR as the facilitator of problem-resolving process, expert prescriber, facilitator of communication process, and communication technician (Brooms & Smith, 1979). The responsibility of expert prescriber's role is to independently describe and solve the problems of public relations. The expert prescriber works as an authority to identify and solve the problems of public relations.

Broom (1982) agreed that the practitioners of public relations frequently perform several roles, however he debated that a PR professional can be categorized concerning to his/her role. Grunig, Toth, and Hon (2001) discussed that PR professionals be likely to perform both technical and managerial tasks, whereas they also argued that the two main identified roles are not mutually exclusive. Dozier (1984) defined that manager communications worked as decision-maker, planner, and problem-solver. The functioning professionals in an organization as PR managers are expected to be well-informed about public relations' innovations and also to advise the management opting dynamic methodologies to handle the old problems of PR (Dozier, 1984).

PR professionals are supposed to partake in policymaking process in the organizations (Castelli, 2007). The participation of PR professionals in decision-making practice in institutes is categorized as a level where PR professional partake in management get-togethers to discuss the main problems, adopt new strategies, accept new techniques, apply innovative programs, and evaluate the outcomes of programs (Broom & Dozier, 1986). The communication technician's role designates the PR professional as a technical facilities provider, he has also to generate the collateral resources required to apply a public relations or communication program which was planned by performing another role of communication (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002). The communiqué technician could be hypothesized because "beginning professional" supposed to carry out foundational study to prepare the PR materials (Castelli, 2007). Moreover, PR technicians are also supposed to treat the images or write the press-release and material related to designing and producing the brochure. Planning and strategic management are high-level functions of

organizations strongly linked to communication management and public relations excellence (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995). According to the strategic management definition of Higgins (1979) it is the “process of managing the pursuit of the accomplishment of organizational mission coincident with managing the relationship of the organization to its environment” (p. 49).

Knowledge Management in Public Relations

The society’s capability and success is generally depends upon the leveraging of resources which consist of geographic location, natural resources, resources, and capability of people (Wiig, 2002). Its style and efficiency determine the culture, success, quality of life, and viability of society (Wilcox et al., 2006); furthermore, all by different emphases reliant on the agendas and culture of the society, it performs as an educator, pace setter, implementer, planner, disciplinarian, and peacemaker. According to Wiig (2002), a competent public administrator with adequate capacity and guidance can make the society great. He further stated that an inept or non-adaptive one can take the society towards the severe decay, even destruction. The expansive arena of KM hosts the new possibilities, practices, and capabilities to assist public professionals to unlimited advantage (Wiig, 2002). It became new obligation of managing knowledge for strengthening the effectiveness of public service and improving the being served society (Böhme and Stehr 1986).

The objectives of knowledge management are to increase sustained viability and effectiveness of any institution be it a single individual, commercial corporation, a country, or a fragment of society, moreover, KM essentially be completely associated to the organisation’s principal objectives (Wiig, 2002). Consistent with Tiwana (2000), a just, stable, secure, and organized society is needed to preparing organizations, citizens, and public agencies as effective strategic partners. Moreover, its core purpose is to create comprehensive public thoughts to involve them in healthy public debates and policy development. According to Wiig (2002) it also encourages participation in the practices to hypothesize, plan, adopt, apply publics’ initiatives to perceive communal strategies and to offer backing an organization. Wiig (2002) concluded that a successful society can be developed by making its knowledge workers more competent and developing its citizens institutionally more competitive.

In recent times, knowledge’ roles and organization’s understanding for performance became clearer, whereas, beforehand, managerial stress was positioned on noticeable work (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). As stated by Klein (1998) latterly the role of information was included, at present, the knowledge is being focused. The

knowledge and capability always affect the excellence of work (Klein, 1998). There is a light focus on obscure work, especially on in what way professionals think and apply knowledge while performing everyday jobs (Schön, 1983). The increasingly demanding and challenging market, greater knowledge understanding, deeper business functions' insights, exhaustive work and people's way of thinking, learning, and applying knowledge that is to say cognitive sciences (Schön, 1983; Halpern, 1989; Brown and Duguid, 2000; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Damasio, 1994, 1999; Wiig, 1994; Klein, 1998). Knowledge management emerged to generate and influence the intellectual assets into public management and business equation (OECD, 2000; Allee, 1998; Wiig, 1994; Reich, 1991; Böhme & Stehr, 1986). IT is employed widely to support knowledge management while several information managing tools are promoted as KM tools, but debatably they are not (Igbaria & Shayo, 2007). It us essentially be comprehended that knowledge is definitely not the same as information and in the same way information management and KM are different (GartnerGroup, 1997).

Conventionally, main focus is on structure, a system's modules that enforce processes decided by the facilitators, enablers, and drivers (Schön, 1983). According to Halpern (1989) "The knowledge perspective makes it possible to shift the focus to components that determine the effectiveness of what" the actions should be, i.e. what should be implemented." Wiig (2002) also proposed that knowledge management governing related practices and connections provide organization-wide infrastructure, support, and leadership. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) stated that promoting integrative organizational knowledge- accepting culture including; supportive environment, mutually and ethical courteous behaviour, insignificant lobbying, teamwork, and a mutual emphasis on delivering excellent work without postponement to be precise getting the appropriate thing done swiftly and with as diminutive hassle as possible. In accordance with Liebowitz (1999) there is need to providing the mutual understanding of organizational objective, individual roles, and current direction to support the individual and organization's own interest.

Wiig (2002) advised that employees should be placed in such situations where they could explore their potential capabilities; moreover, they should be motivated and given permission while providing the supportive environments where they could perform and understand their organizational policies and guidelines to serve it with improvisations. With the inclusion of considerable IT applications, Tiwana (2000) suggested four main functional areas to build corroborative infrastructure capabilities (1) administration roles to lead and endure KM-oriented endeavours in

the organization from organization view and objectives, (2) employees or infrastructure works to support objectives of knowledge management and individualistic activities of several forms comprising endorsing capabilities similar to special skilled groups, originations, and technical facilities, (3) Operational affairs to get and produce knowledge and to captivate, coordinate, disseminate, and deploy it, (4) realizing the importance of knowledge-based investments to understand how to control the services and knowledge in practice. Broadly knowledge management acknowledges that organizational strategy is determined in the meeting room or by decision makers, even so, frequently putting the strategy into practice is accomplished on small level by the people and public officials as portion of their day-to-day work (Wiig, 2002). Public officials must coordinate, lead, and take initiatives to utilize the best effective methods and to determine that society is appropriately being served (Tiwana, 2000).

Knowledge management's conceptual leadership essentially be resided with public administrations, and all the stakeholders should be taken on board, therefore, a small public relation office or entity should be established to the support the practice of KM (Wiig, 2002). The functions of this particular facility required to be innovative, supportive, and collaborative (Liebowitz, 1999). Essentially, it should cooperate with different business communities and groups of citizen to determine capabilities, joint programs, needs, opportunities, and constraints analysis, moreover, with the knowledge management's broad vision the office must facilitate and maintain its implementation across all organizational entities (Wiig, 2002). To allow uniform access, interoperability, knowledge sharing, and collaboration it must protect the shared resources (Brown and Duguid, 2000). The extensive efforts are required to build the infrastructure for the practice of KM within public relations; consequently, in several areas technology progresses quickly and dynamic approaches and self-motivated capabilities appear frequently OECD (2000).

According to Wiig (2002), Technology-centred knowledge management tools are narrow and developing however, existing practices of knowledge management, methods, tools, and approaches are valuable and beneficial and have supported organizations to help through better effectiveness. The new advancements in the field of KM practices make its implementation more concentrated, more effective, and less intensive resource and continuation of these improvements are appraised (Böhme and Stehr, 1986). The applications of knowledge management practices strengthened by knowledge management methods, containing IT-centred tools, are successfully vital to follow organizational objectives in a modern society (Thierauf, 1999). The world is experiencing a developing understanding for knowledge

management to touch its possibilities, the practices of KM need to be comprehensive and broad, additionally, every individual, department, and each agency needs to integrate and consider KM into their day-to-day life, nevertheless, it is very essential to start target clear and small goals(Wiig, 2002). Following hypotheses have been derived from the above literature.

H1: There is significant relationship of knowledge management capabilities and communication liaison.

H2: There is significant relationship of knowledge management capabilities and communication Technician.

H3: There is significant relationship of knowledge management capabilities and communication Manager.

H4: There is significant relationship of knowledge management capabilities and media relations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

PR officers from of public and private universities of Pakistan were target population. Only those universities were selected that have been ranked by Higher Education Commission (HEC) in the 5th official ranking for 2016-17. This study has utilized an adopted questionnaire and followed the quantitative method to study the association between knowledge management capability and its impacts on university PROs' role and work duties. And by using simple random probability sampling technique, researcher distributed one hundred and twenty nine questionnaires. Moreover, current research employed following data analysis methods to achieve its objectives. One hundred and twenty nine adopted questionnaires were distributed while (Numbers out of 129) verifiable surveys were received at 65.11%. With intentions to evaluate practices of knowledge management's impacts on roles of university public relations officers, cross tab, descriptive statistics, technique of structural equation modelling, and Pearson's moment correlation were employed to examine knowledge management capabilities' arbitration effect and demographics on PR practitioners' roles in universities. 54 Items were determined to collect data from PR practitioners of public and private universities of Pakistan; moreover, this survey employed 5-points Likert scale to evaluate the responses. **Measures of the Study**All three measures of infrastructural knowledge management capabilities (IKMC) and process based knowledge management capabilities (PKMC) have been measured utilizing the five-item scale developed by Gold et al. (2001) to examine the responses.

Infrastructural knowledge management capabilities (IKMC)

Cultural Infrastructure

The respondents' answers were recorded on 5-item Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Price & Mueller, 1986). An exemplary item was "My University understands the importance of knowledge to corporate success". This study also computed the coefficient alpha to measure the consistency of this scale. The consistency of this scale in this research was .91.

Structural Infrastructure

The responses were recorded on 5-item Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. An exemplary item was "My University has structure for facilitating the discovery of new knowledge". This study also computed the coefficient alpha to measure the consistency of this scale. The consistency of this scale in this research was .91.

Technological Infrastructure

The responses were recorded on 5-item Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. An exemplary item was "My University has technology for searching for new knowledge". This study also computed the coefficient alpha to measure the consistency of this scale. The consistency of this scale in this research was .91.

Process Based Knowledge Management Capabilities (PKMC)

Acquisition-Oriented Processes

This research recorded responses on the 5-item Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Price & Mueller, 1986). An exemplary item was "My University has a process for exchanging knowledge with our stakeholders." This study utilized the higher factor loading five-item scale developed by Gold et al. (2001) to examine the responses regarding acquisition-based processes. This research also computed coefficient alpha to examine reliability of this scale. In present study the reliability of this scale was .91.

Conversion-Based Processes

The responses were recorded on 5-item Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. An exemplary item was "My University has process for filtering knowledge". This study also computed the coefficient alpha to measure the consistency of this scale. The consistency of this scale in this research was .91.

Application-Based Processes

The responses were recorded on 5-item Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. An exemplary item was “My University has process for applying knowledge learned from mistakes”. This study also computed the coefficient alpha to measure the consistency of this scale. The consistency of this scale in this research was .91.

Protection-Based Processes

The responses were recorded on 5-item Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. An exemplary item was “My University has process for protecting misuse of knowledge inside the University”. This study also computed the coefficient alpha to measure the consistency of this scale. The consistency of this scale in this research was .91.

Public Relations Officers’ Roles: including; Communications Liaison, Communications Technician, Communications Manager, and Media Relations were dignified with 15-item Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This survey examined four typical PRO’s roles with 15 questions, and all these were originally advanced by (Broom, 1982; Broom & Smith, 1979) to test the public relations professionals’ distinctive role activities. The target population was requested to respond to the survey based upon, “your role in the communications department and the kind of expertise your department has, rate how often you are dis/agree each of the following items.” An exemplary item was “I make communication policy decisions for my University”. The consistency of this scale in this research was .91

Data Analysis

Data Screening and Missing Values

This research distributed 129 surveys to public relation officers of public and private universities of Pakistan out of which 84 surveys were received at 65.11% response rate. Researcher verified all the questionnaires during the process of data selection. All questionnaires were assigned values and codes. In this research, 1 survey was chucked out as a consequence of missing values or incomplete during the data analysis. Therefore, the missing values were manually treated by employing the method of case list-wise deletion. This very method involved all those questionnaires which had missing values were deleted from the statistical analysis. In that process, a single variable’s only missing value became the reason for a questionnaire to be omitted from the analysis. There are several practical advantages

of the method of list-wise deletion and one of them is this that this method may be employed in different multivariate methods and normally no further computations is required in it.

Sample Description

The data shows the sample description of PROs' demographics (age, gender, marital status, qualification, designation, and job experience) from public and private universities of Pakistan. This research contains total of 84 completed surveys which were chosen after missing values' treatment, from which eight respondents were between 20-29 years of rove and 40 PROs were in the rove of 30-39 years old whereas 25 PROs 40-49 were years and the remaining 11 PROs were between 50-59 years old. And from the obtained marital status, 15.5% of PROs were single and 84.5% were married. The current study obtained more information on qualification and found that 4.8% of PROs were BA/BS, 60.7% had Masters' degree, 23.8% were M. Phil, and 10.7% PROs were Ph. D in 84 public and private universities of Pakistan. Other information was obtained about the designation of public relations officers, 57.1% PROs were working as Public Relation Officers, 36.9% had Additional Charge as PRO while 6.0% were Registrar as PRO. This study also obtained information on the experience of job and found that 28.6*% of the PROs were in the rove of 1-5 years of experience, 28.6% of the PROs were in the rove of 6-10 years of experience, 17.9% had 11-15 years of experience, whereas 25.0% had more than 15 years of experience. With the purpose to know the existence of a dedicated office of public relations office in the university this study also collected information, resultantly and found that 70% universities have a dedicated PR office whereas 30% universities do not have.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

With intentions to explore KM capabilities' (Process & Infrastructural) impact on public relations practitioners' role, Pearson moment correlation and a descriptive statistics were performed. Moreover, for the verification of variables' association, descriptive statistics and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient were analysed and determined to reckon variables' standard deviation and mean values. Five point Likert scale was used against each question item.

Variables	Means	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Gender	1.20	.40															
2. Age	2.46	.84	-.49**														
3. Marital Status	1.15	.36	.44**	-.55**													
4. Qualification	2.40	.75	.05	-.21	-.06												
5. Designation	1.49	.61	.13	-.07	-.13	.22*											
6. Job experience	3.39	1.15	-.20	.69**	-.23*	-.19	-.16										
7. Does your University have a dedicated PR Office?	1.30	.46	.13	-.02	-.14	.14	.68**	-.02									
8. Culture	1.73	.61	.12	-.23*	.09	.24*	.15	-.21	.23*								
9. Structure	1.75	.32	.07	.03	.10	-.29**	.06	-.12	-.19	.35**							
10. Technology	2.04	.71	.31**	-.38**	.30**	.15	.07	-.39**	.26*	.66**	.11						
11. Acquisition	1.83	.68	.16	-.17	.18	.32**	.08	-.14	.24*	.75**	.18	.65**					
12. Conversion	1.83	.68	.16	-.17	.18	.32**	.08	-.14	.24*	.75**	.18	.65**	1.00**				
13. Application	1.86	.54	.15	-.15	.22*	.24*	.11	-.06	.22*	.81**	.22*	.65**	.70**	.70**			
14. Protection	1.91	.67	.16	-.09	.14	.25*	.12	-.02	.07	.73**	.31**	.53**	.72**	.72**	.71**		
15. Roles	1.88	.53	.21	-.33**	.29**	.21	-.02	-.19	-.05	.69**	.29**	.49**	.65**	.65**	.70**	.77**	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
 c. Listwise N=84

*Correlation is significant at .05 level of significance

** Correlation is significant at .01 level of significance

This study has employed ten variables including demographic and Communications Liaison, Communications Technician, Communications Manager, and Media Relations to measure knowledge management capabilities (Infrastructural & Process) and their impacts on the roles and work duties of PROs. The concerned table shows mean values of the effective responses that represent target population's leaning and standard deviation of each variable represents overall difference of each respondent against each variable. Furthermore, the details are provided in the Table 5.3. Designation is negatively significantly correlated with roles at value -.02. Job experience is also negatively significantly correlated with roles at value -.19, and is highly negatively significantly correlated with technology at value -.39. And the existence of a dedicated office in the university is also negatively significantly correlated with roles at value -.05, and is positive but weak correlation respectively with culture, technology, acquisition, conversion, and application at values .23, .26, .24, .24, and .22.

Regression Analysis

In addition to Pearson correlation, a Regression was also executed to examine the information to attain understated objectives of this research.

Table: Model summary of IV and DV’s correlation coefficient and coefficient of determination

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.806 ^a	.649	.622	.32778

a. Predictors: (Constant), Protection, Structure, Technology, Application, Conversion, Culture

□ Dependent Variable: PR roles

R (correlation coefficient)

R=.806 indicates a significant correlation between Culture, Structure, Technology, Conversion, Application, and Protection and PR roles.

R square (coefficient of determination)

R square elucidates the overall difference in dependent variable described by the independent variables. R square = .649 verifies 64.9% variation in PR roles confirmed by Culture, Structure, Technology, Conversion, Application, and Protection as independent variables.

Table: ANOVA confirming significance level of anticipated hypotheses

ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.297	6	2.550	23.730	.000b
	Residual	8.273	77	.107		
	Total	23.570	83			

a. Dependent Variable: PR roles

b. Predictors: (Constant), Culture, Structure, Technology, Conversion, Application, and Protection

Overall significance

In ANOVA table significance value is .000 which confirms high rate of significance of anticipated hypotheses. It also assures Culture, Structure, Technology, Conversion, Application, and Protection as independent variables have very strong and significant impact on PR roles.

Table: Regression analysis of IVs on DV

		Coefficients ^a				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.374	.230		1.622	.109
	Culture	.080	.123	.091	.648	.519
	Structure	.077	.123	.047	.627	.532
	Technology	-.040	.073	-.053	-.546	.586
	Conversion	.072	.092	.092	.788	.433
	Application	.245	.124	.248	1.965	.053
	Protection	.380	.089	.475	4.256	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Roles

Regression constant

A= .374 is the common value of roles when the value of Culture, Structure, Technology, Conversion, Application, and Protection is zero.

Regression coefficient

$\beta_{\text{Culture}} = .080$ shows that the culture will have the impact on PR roles' by 8.0%.

$\beta_{\text{Structure}} = .077$ confirms that structure has an impact on the roles to 7.7%.

$\beta_{\text{Technology}} = -.040$ explores that technology have negative impact on the PR roles to 26.2%.

$\beta_{\text{Conversion}} = .072$ validates that there is a margin of 7.2% to increasing the conversion to upturn impact on the roles.

$\beta_{\text{Application}} = .245$ assures that the considerably application impacts the roles by 24.5 %.

$\beta_{\text{Protection}} = .380$ indicates that protection is very insignificantly impacting the roles by 38.0%.

Overall significance

PR roles = .080 (Culture) + .077 (Structure) + -.040 (Technology) + .072 (Conversion) + .245 (Application) + .380 (Protection).

One per cent change in Culture, Structure, Technology, Conversion, Application, and Protection will carry .080, .077, -.040, .072, .245, and .380 per cent changes respectively in PR roles. It means that Culture, Structure, Technology, Conversion, Application, and Protection have significant impacts on PR Roles. It confirms the anticipated hypothesis 3, 4, 5, and 6. The growing concept of Knowledge management from the late 1970s, is considered relevantly a contemporary concept and the mainstream scholars have discussed the different context of knowledge management i.e. information technology, knowledge sharing, databases,

organizational relationship culture, policies and strategies, knowledge management as tools, knowledge management as processes, knowledge management as systems, acquisition and attainment of knowledge, organizational learning, source of creating organizational values. There may be exceptional studies in which knowledge management was considered in PR roles' perspective. Therefore, maximum knowledge management variables were included in this research, which might play substantial role to "impact of knowledge management capabilities on Public Relations roles". This research offers an insight of the being practiced PR roles to the PR professionals and higher-level management to devise policies and strategies for implementation of knowledge management.

Infrastructural Capabilities of knowledge have contributed significantly and positively to public relations roles of the PR professionals. Correspondingly, unambiguity, knowledge characteristics and higher modularity may enhance knowledge integration between different departments within universities and different communities outside of the university. While depending upon universities' innovation and knowledge management capabilities, infrastructural capabilities also can enhance the learning process within the universities. Knowledge integration of PR officers in universities has very important impact on public relations roles. There is needed to have a process with the purpose to enhance the organizational knowledge capabilities, therefore practices of knowledge management can professionally be apprehended, integrated, pooled, applied, protected and reconciled (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Leonard, 1995; Davenport et al., 1996; Szulanski, 1996; Nonaka & Konno, 1998; Almeida, 1996; Appleyard, 1996; Grant, 1996)

This study found that sharing of knowledge within and outside the universities with other stakeholders will facilitate the relationship between knowledge infrastructure capabilities and PR roles for the reason that knowledge infrastructure capabilities have potential to transmute PR roles into an organizational culture. Consequently, PR roles and their standard practices can facilitate the relationship between universities' internal and external positive image and knowledge infrastructure capabilities. PR officers' role is to reasonably interact with different communities within and outside of the universities and they are also to share suitable knowledge with the concerning publics, so it depends on the PR officers' approach whether they have potential to share the fitting knowledge with the concerning publics or not. Moreover, universities' complex administrative structure, business expansions, competencies, globalization, and transforming universities from learning based to knowledge based organizations is vitally essential especially in today's globalization age. Consequently, every organization needs to prioritise and encourage their

officials' autonomy, openness, collaboration, trust, creativity, authenticity, try-outs and efficacious application of knowledge management (Singh & Sharma, 2011). It is very difficult without substantial involvement of PR officers with intentions to transforming universities from old-fashioned environments to dynamic knowledge based hubs. Knowledge process capabilities have very significant impact on public relations roles. On the words of Smith (2005) who found that institutional success devolves on imagining about communication networks of internal officials and their knowledge dissemination strategies which powerfully depend on strategic resources. Moreover, public relations roles are significantly correlated with KM capabilities. Consistent with Choo and Neto (2010) knowledge management intends to establish a self-motivated environment of learning to use, inspire, and share knowledge. Concerned universities in following knowledge based modernisations may hope to have such self-motivated knowledge management setting and structure where PR professionals may be able to assist to analyse, introduce, and discuss enabling factors that are believed to be vital for creating interaction network needed to manage specific PR problems.

Knowledge management as a whole can facilitate the liaison between universities and PR officers. Process capabilities of knowledge and will potentially transform knowledge management capabilities into dynamic public relations practices in universities. Ahmad and Schroeder (2011) concluded that without substantial contribution of staffs it is very difficult to implement knowledge or transmute institution from old-fashioned environment to vibrant knowledge-based institution. Nevertheless, university management should formulate such strategies which possibly can involve and engaged professionals in self-motivated activities to share the accepted wisdom for university's growth. According to Lin (2007) the support of higher management and knowledge ability are two key institutional aspects that positively act in distributing knowledge among staffs and inter-departments for the effectiveness and innovation of institutional developments. The result prove that successful practices of knowledge management bring institutional change, can improve leadership role, develop the culture of university, encourage learning from other sources outside the university and creativity, need to open the ways of knowledge acquisition in universities, this will definitely help the higher educational institutes to become effective knowledge management based organizations.

This research also concludes in the words of Andrews, Cameron and Harris (2008) managing complex situations in different organizational environment and culture for change management in organization. PR officers with the help of knowledge management capabilities can learn such skills and gain knowledge which they

consequently practice with different approaches. Consequently, these professional practices would en route universities for competitive advantages. This is a fact proved in this study that appropriate knowledge sharing practices enhance effective organizational inter-departmental communication. Furthermore, the suitable knowledge sharing by PR officers enhance PR officers' productivity and dedication in organization. Consistent with Plessis (2007) there are several factors that successfully and strongly impact the knowledge management implementation in the context of organization. Rahe (2009) concluded that misunderstanding overlay only when the possibility of individual's mind-set rises even though, they have refined ways to apply and handle knowledge.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the practices of PR practitioners to measure the knowledge management capabilities' impact on the role and responsibilities and state of public relations relationships with internal hierarchy. The study also establishes diversified link to the relationship factors identified by Grunig and Huang (2000) and by Hon and Grunig (1999). This study helps to show the reliability of the scale as called for by Hon and Grunig. It is one of the growing collection of studies that tries to measure public relationships in real life settings. Furthermore, such work may also help university leaders to develop more innovative approaches to achieve diversity by significantly acknowledging PROs to bring the contemporary public relations tools and measures into play, which will ultimately help universities of all regions to become better didactic partners and professional contributors to their institutions and other organizations in different part of the world respectively.

Recommendations

- There is need to create an integrated and efficient institutional process to successfully practice the knowledge management
- Transform your university from traditional to dynamic organization
- Encourage and create the opportunity for your PR officers to enhance their knowledge
- Always appreciate positive and self-initiated changes by PR officials for successful knowledge management implementation
- There is a margin of increasing efficiency of leadership by updating about contemporary global university standards
- Management should avoid snapshot and judgmental decisions
- PR officers need to accurate their information to make practice of knowledge management applicable

- Higher management should enhance adaptive openness, flexible and trust worthy operational environment
- PR officers should be given full and frequent access of information from internal and concerning governmental departments
- There is need to increase knowledge implementation from external knowledge sources like magazines, journals, and newspapers
- PR officers should share knowledge frequently with external stakeholders by holding quarterly press briefing to media
- Universities' higher management should transform their structure of institutes from centralized to decentralized
- Higher management of the universities should cultivate such learning environment in which PR officers should be given driving role to engage other staffs in different learning activities
- Universities should develop environment of information transmission from upper to lower and lower to upper levels
- Higher management of universities needs to appreciate innovative ideas and knowledge management practices of PR officials
- University management should provide supportable training of other staffs to use the system of knowledge management
- Universities need to update their networks and databases frequently
- Universities should facilitate and encourage the environment of collaborative working with other universities
- There is need to lessen the inter-departmental communication gaps for organizational success and strength
- There is need to advance research and development methods for knowledge management effectiveness
- There is need to include the knowledge management subject in mass communication discipline
- Every university necessarily have to have a dedicated PR office to better coordinate with the society
- HEC should obligate the presence of dedicated PR office in every university

Practical Implications

Every educational institute always preferred to lower or remove the communication, coordination and integration gaps between senior and junior management and precisely the practical role and awareness of PROs about their recommended roles. PROs real involvement in policymaking and application of standard expertise including technical and managerial nuts and bolts to better the profession's fundamental worth. Many researches including this one endorsed that the standard

practices of public relations in an institute should be practiced as an indispensable factor to run an organizational structure.

Future Research

Future study should categorize the type of university (public or private) and comparison and effects of their public relations roles be evaluated. A new scale can be padded to conclude public relations officials' awareness of globally practiced PR roles and knowledge management capabilities and their preparedness about them; it is also be contingent to the efforts of higher management of their respective universities. Nonetheless, a few researchers believe that another scale can examine a public relation role which is missing from current public relationship measures (Taylor, Kent & White, 2001). Scholars recommend that exchange of ideas is a key to attain shared satisfaction for publics and organizations (Kent & Taylor, 2002; Esrock & Leichty, 2000; Esrock & Leichty, 1998). According to Kent and Taylor the new research needs to comprise public relations' role. Aiming to build the positive image, the communication gap's analysis is essential between PROs and top-tier management which may assist public relation researchers and professionals to develop balanced strategies and policies to shape more supportive relationship (Kent & Taylor, 2002). Many scholars concluded that the measure of public/organizational antiquity is absent from the theory of relationship (Coombs & Holladay, 2001). As stated by Coombs and Holladay the people's opinions about the organizations depend upon their interactive history with the particular organization.

They also validated that people have constructive relations with organizations, and are further eager to contemplate positively during and after crisis in the organizations and vice versa if those views were previously adverse. Forthcoming researchers may explore further this aspect and possibly will develop scales that would measure public relation roles to see how relations between PROs and top-tier management work. Moreover, different institutes may also accept the current or future scales to conclude employees' perceptions on diversity and organizational support to become an improved global professional member. Scholars clearly need to make a distinction that relationship constituents documented by the eastern researchers may not be applicable in other parts of the world. Nevertheless, these factors can be foundational stone for international researchers who may augment and elucidate the occurrences in their parts of the world, which resultantly may provide the distinguishing evidences of more hypothetically distinguished relationship aspects. Although, leading to the greater understanding of PROs' roles, this research can also lead to the greater relationship between executive management and PR professionals globally. Finally, continuous study may help to establish public

relations' professional roles and can abridge the communication gaps between the concerns. This research can also be extended to the different regions of the world with their respective universities' PROs. A comparative study of the two or more than two regions (continents) can be done to exchange the diversified practices of the respective regions to develop the universal standards for public relations practices in universities.

LIMITATIONS

Small Total Population

This study has few limitations. The study's first limitation was smaller number of population (N=129), consequently this research received lesser responses. Since 129 was total population, a small responses rate was expected. With 3 non-deliverable questionnaires moved out, the actual sample was 66.6%. The initial survey responses were 25, which later increased to 39 after two weeks. The initial response rate was 30.95% at the first reminder. As of the belittled received respondents, it's not recommended to extrapolate this research's outcomes to entire target population of PR professionals from public and private universities of Pakistan. This research only deals with the HEC's-2016 ranked universities, whereas the further study can include the unranked but chartered universities of Pakistan.

Survey Fatigue

This research also faced survey fatigue that is why the quantity of respondents declined during the survey. According to Castelli (2007) e-survey management experts indicated that in terms of time consumption the e-surveys should not exceed to 10-15 minutes for the possibility of screen fatigue. This survey was designed to not to exceed the 10 minutes' psychological survey fatigue time with 47 items, but it still depends on the respondents whether they take more than planned time or not. Future study with this type of respondents should emphasize on less time taking surveys. Moreover, there is need to add more PR role-based in the beginning of survey, as five respondents withdrew when they saw fewer question as compare to knowledge management capabilities. Subsequently, the Qualtrics (online survey monitoring and analysis platform) did not allow any respondents to skip any part of the survey; therefore they were allowed to withdraw from e-survey voluntarily.

Administration of Online Survey

Secondly, technical issues with administration of online survey were another limitation of this research. Technical issues arose when respondents did not receive surveys by emails from Qualtrics because of existence of spam or email filters. Consequently, non-participants were contacted individually to confirm if they

received survey, which might be another cause to have low response rate. To begin with and most obvious, this study cannot be generalized to PROs other than those living in the other regions of the continent. PROs working very close to the higher management and facing not any dearth in acquiring fitting knowledge and practicing it may have very unlike opinions about their relationship with the university and its higher management. Though the study had an acceptable response rate, generally the study depends on the conclusion of a small number of PROs. (The margin of error for a sample of this size using a 95% confidence interval ranges from four to seven (c.f. Broom & Dozier, 1990). Researchers must also keep in mind that terms like trust, commitment, satisfaction, control mutuality, exchange relationship, and communal relationship are difficult to define as well as difficult to measure due to their subjective natures. One more possible limitation of this study is the interrelationship of some of the factors. The high correlations found among some of the factors could mean discriminate validity. In any case, some researchers believe this same result is very vital because it demonstrates that these factors are closely related to each other (Jo, Hon & Brunner, 2004).

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