

A STUDY OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES OF SUCs AND DECS - SUPERVISED COLLEGES IN WESTERN VISAYAS¹

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This study was designed primarily to determine whether there was a gap between the perceived and the preferred extent of use of public relations activities of key officials of SUCs and DECS-supervised government colleges in Western Visayas. These activities were for four purposes: information, promotion, correction, and interpretation. More specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. Are there gaps between the perceived and preferred extent of use of public relations activities of the key officials?
2. Are there significant differences between the perceived and preferred extent of use of activities of key officials on the four purposes of public relations of state-supported institutions of higher in Western Visayas?
3. Are there significant variations in the perceived/preferred extent of use of public relations activities of key officials, when these were grouped according to:
 - 3.1 type of school
 - 3.2 program thrust
 - 3.3 province
 - 3.4 educational qualification
 - 3.5 number of years of experience
 - 3.6 type of position

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4. Are the perceptions/preferences of extent of use of public relations activities of key officials related to the selected institutional variables? (e.g. type of school, program thrust, and provinces where the colleges are located)
5. Are the perceptions/preferences of extent of use of public relations activities of key officials related to personal variables, when these are taken altogether?
6. How much of the variations in perceived/preferred extent of use of public relations activities of key officials can be attributed to the combined influence of personal variables?

The normative survey method was used. The respondents were 298 key officials of seven SUCs and fifteen DECS-supervised government colleges in Western Visayas.

FINDINGS

1. Of the public relations activities for information, there were “very narrow gaps” between perceived and preferred extent of use of six activities. There were “narrow gaps” between perceived and preferred extent of use of thirteen activities. There was a “wide gap” for one activity.
2. There were “very narrow gaps” between perceived and preferred extent of the use of eleven activities for promotion, while there were “narrow gaps” in eight activities and a wide gap in one activity.
3. There were “narrow gaps” between the perceived and preferred extent of use of fourteen activities for correction: “very narrow gaps” in five activities, and a “wide gap” in one.
4. There were “narrow gaps” between the perceived and preferred use of of eight activities for interpretation. In twelve activities there were “narrow gaps”.
5. The means of the preference scores of key officials in the four purposes of public relations were higher than the means of their perception scores.

The key officials tended to prefer that the public relations activities be done "always"; they perceived these activities as being done "frequently". The differences were significant at 5% level.

6. When the key officials were classified according to selected institutional variables such as type of school, program thrust and province where the schools are located, no significant differences were noted in the perceived public relations activities. Whether the key officials came from DECS-supervised government colleges or SUCs; fisheries, trade, agriculture or academic; or were in colleges found in Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo or Negros Occidental, they have almost the same perception in regard to public relations activities
7. The differences in the perceived public relations activities for information, promotion, and interpretation of groups of key officials formed according to educational qualification were significant. The master's degree holders group got the highest mean perception scores in these three purposes of public relations, followed by the doctor's degree holders. The bachelor's degree holders got the lowest mean perception scores. The differences were significant at 5% level.

The three groups of key officials formed according to educational qualifications, however, did not differ in their perception of the activities for correction. The doctor's degree, the master's degree and bachelor's degree holders have almost the same perception in regard to public relations activities.

8. There were significant differences found in the public relations activities preferred by key officials when classified according to number of years of experience. The group of key officials who have 16-20 years of experiences got higher perception scores in activities under information and interpretation than the three groups composed of key officials with experience of 5 years and below; 6-10; 11-15; and 21 years and above. The group of key officials who have five years experience or less got the lowest mean perception scores in the activities for two purposes of public relations activities. The differences between the mean perception scores were found significant at 5% level.

9. The association between perceived use of public relations activities for interpretation and province where the schools are located was slight but significant. The perceived extent of use of public relations activities for information, promotion, and correction was independent of the three selected institutional variables --- type of school, program thrust and province.
10. The preferred extent of use of public relations activities was observed to be independent of the three selected institutional variables.
11. Personal variables were found to be significantly related to the perceived extent of use of public relations activities of key officials. The variation in the perception scores in information, promotion and correction was attributable to the combined influence of educational qualification, number of years of experience, and type of position.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study, the investigator made the following conclusions:

1. There was a narrow gap between the perceived and preferred extent of use of public relations activities of key officials of SUCs and DECS-supervised government colleges.
2. Most of the activities in which narrow gaps between perceived and preferred extent of use of public relations were found for interpretation, for promotion and information.
3. There were similarities between the perceived and preferred use of public relations activities of key officials, when they were grouped according to selected institutional and personal variables used in this study.
4. Of the three institutional variables used: namely, type of school, program thrusts, and province where the colleges are situated, only the variable of province where the schools are located was associated with the key officials' preferred extent of use of activities in interpretation.

5. The personal variables used; namely, educational qualification and number of years of experience were found to be associated with the perceived extent of use of activities for information, promotion, correction and interpretation.
6. The preferred extent of use of activities of key officials was not associated with any of the personal and institutional variables used in this study.
7. The influence of the personal variables, when taken altogether, on the key officials' perceived extent of use of activities was small, while the influence on the preferred use of activities was negligible and insignificant.

In the light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. A joint Regional Seminar-Workshop of DECS, Region VI and PASUC VI (Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges) in Western Visayas should be conducted among key officials of SUCs and DECS- supervised government colleges on the role of public relations in educational management, including the planning of integrated policies in school public relations program and the strategies that would reduce the narrow gap between perceived and preferred extent of use of public relations activities of the key officials.
2. A review of the graduate curriculum in educational/school administration should be made to determine whether or not a course in school public relations is included.
3. Though not directly supported by the data of this study, a recommendation for a creation of a separate unit in public relations in every SUC and DECS-supervised government college is made here, in view of the need to have an integrated public relations program and for effective planning, coordination of public relations activities directed to the different publics like alumni, students and government officials and others.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. An assessment of public relations program of SUCs and DECS-supervised government colleges should be made to determine the effects of the public relations program on employment of graduates, budget, alumni support, etc.

2. A factorial analysis of the purposes underlying the different school public relations activities should be undertaken to better understand the concept of public relations.