

PUBLIC RELATIONS FUNCTIONS OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN ADAMAWA STATE OF NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR IMPROVED PUBLIC SUPPORT

K.H. Bulama, (Ph.D) and T.J. Tika

Abstract

The study attempted to determine the performance of public relations functions of technical and vocational education teachers. The population of the study was made up of 148 teachers and 39 principals and vice principals of the three technical colleges and 10 Basic Engineering Skills Training (BEST) centres of Adamawa State of Nigeria. Survey design was used in conducting the research. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by four experts in technology education and public relations. The reliability of the instrument was established using Kuder Richardson's K-K21. The reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data generated by the research questions, while Z-test and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient were used to test the two null hypotheses. Findings showed that the Technical and Vocational Education teachers are hardly involved in performing public relations activities. It was also found that teachers with higher educational qualifications were more involved in public relations activities compared to those with lower educational qualifications where the functions were performed. Among the recommendations made was the need to incorporate public relations activities in the responsibility of TVE teachers to ensure effective performance of public relations activities.

Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) is a vital form of education which provides trained manpower needed for technological and industrial development. The impact of this form of education on any nation depends on the level of support from both the public and private sectors in addition to the effort made by government. Banjo (1994) is of the view that TVE plays vital roles in the development of the society because individuals acquire specific skills which enable them perform specialized services of economic value to the society. Anaele (2000) sees this form of education as a pivot on which technological advancement revolves.

The overall goal of TVE is to provide service to the society with the view of improving it scientifically, technologically and economically (FGN, 2004). The society is made up of the public who benefit directly from this form of education. The public for educational institution according Ajala (2001) includes the immediate community, parents/guardians, school board, organizations, the media, industries and government.

Despite the very important role that TVE plays in the overall economic development of the society; the public in Nigeria seem to misunderstand it and does not appreciate its role in the transformation of the society. Olaitan (1982) made an overview of the situation of TVE in Nigeria when he pointed out that this form of education has been taken to mean education for the mentally

retarded, physically handicapped and socially maladjusted students. The works of Bulus (1991), Lucy (1994) and Okoro (1999) strongly support this negative image of TVE in Nigeria.

Technical and vocational education teachers are closer to the public than any of the personnel involved in the development and implementation of technical and vocational education curriculum and are therefore in a better position to enlighten the public on the importance of this form of education (Uga 1983). Alton and Calfrey (1986), Keen, Clive and John (1987), supported the idea of the performance of public relations activities by technical vocational teachers in their communities. Alton and Calfrey (1986) suggested that the teachers should concentrate their public relations activities on business organizations, industries, parents/guardians of students and social and religious organizations. Making the desired commitment by the teachers may attract public support for technical and vocational education.

Although technical and vocational education teachers are believed to be the most suitable group of people to improve the image of this form of education, Uwadiae (1992) in a study carried out using teachers of agriculture found that teachers are most of the time, not involved in public relations activities except the ones that form part of their professional requirements. Uwadiae's finding agreed with Adeogun (1999) who found out that teachers most of the time, are committed to discharging their professional responsibilities.

The Institute of Public Relations in Robert (1994) defined public relations as a planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and the public. A more appropriate definition is that of Calfrey and Alton (1986). They defined public relations as "that field of action which concern itself with the relations of an individual, an idea, an institution with the public upon which it depends for visibility" (P.252). They stressed that for this action to be effective, it must be a two-way relationship between the school and the public.

Ajala (2001) advised that if public relations activities are to be effective and efficient, teachers should in the first place, define the public relations problems that need public education. After defining the problem, proper planning of public relations strategies should be done. The next step is the implementation of public relations process and, lastly, the whole process should be evaluated to determine the area that needs improvement.

Seital (1987) noted that community relation involves orchestrating interaction with the community, through distribution of publications such as newsletter, prospectus, report, etc. to the educated members of the community.

Other community relations activities includes Staging of projects exhibitions during festivals, the use of parents' Teachers Association (PTA) forum and involving students in community development activities.

From the review, it is clear that technical and vocational education is not given its proper place in the society. Alton and Calfrey (1986), Uwadiae (1992) and Okoro (1999) agreed that technical and vocational teachers are in the best position to enlighten the society. The question one is left to ask is; are the teachers involved in public relations functions?

Objectives

This study was designed to determine whether technical and vocational education teachers perform public relations functions and the need for curriculum improvement to include Public Relations activities. Specifically the study:

- (i) determined the frequency of performance of public relations functions by the technical and vocational teachers with business organization and industries.
- (ii) determine the frequency of performance of public relations functions by TVE teachers within their immediate communities.
- (iii) determine the frequency of performance of public relations functions by the TVE teachers with the students' parents/guardians.
- (iv) find out if there is a significant relationship between the qualification of the teachers and performance of public relations functions.
- (v) find out how the administrators perceive the performance of public relations functions by the TVE teachers.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. How frequent do technical and vocational education teachers perform public relations activities with business organizations and industries?
2. How frequent do TVE teachers perform public relations activities with their immediate communities?
3. How frequent do TVE teachers perform public relations activities with parents/guardians of their students?

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. They are

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between the performance of public relations functions and the qualifications of the teachers.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the response of the administrators and teachers on the frequency of performance of public relations by the teachers.

Methodology

The population of the study comprised the 148 technical and vocational teachers in the three state Technical Colleges and the Basic Engineering Skills Training (BEST) Centres in the five educational zones of Adamawa State, Nigeria. The population consists of all the 39 principals and their assistants or vice principals. No sampling was carried out as the entire population was used for the study.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire adapted from standardized public relations checklist for technical and vocational education teachers (Alton and Calfrey, 1986). It was validated by three experts in technology education and one public relations expert. Revisions in the instrument were made based on the expert's suggestions. The reliability of the instrument was established using Kuder Richardson formular K-K21. The reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained.

The data was collected by the researcher and four trained research assistants. A total of 148 copies of the questionnaire was distributed to the teachers, out of which 133 was returned representing 89.9 percent recovery. While 39 questionnaire was distributed to the principals and their assistants,

out of this number 35 was recovered representing 89.7 percent. The total of 168 questionnaires was used for the data analysis.

Mean and standard deviation was used to analyse research questions one to four. The mean of the four point scale (2.50) was used as a cut-off point (decision point). Thus any item having a mean of 2.50 and above indicated that such public relations activity was performed frequently while items having a mean below 2.50 indicated that such public relations activity was seldomly performed or not performed at all. Hypothesis one was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 0.05 level of significance while hypothesis two (Ho₂) was tested using the Z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Result and Discussion

Tables 1 to 4 presents the result of the analysis. They are presented according to the order in which the research questions and hypotheses were presented.

Research Question One

How frequent do technical and vocational education teachers perform public relations functions related to business organizations and industries?

Table 1

The means and standard deviations of teachers' response on the frequency of performance of public relations functions concerning business organizations and industries.

S/No	Public relations functions	\bar{X}	S	Remark
1.	Organizing career guidance for the benefit of the students.	1.35	0.98	Seldomly Performed
2.	Personal contact with persons in the industries	2.16	0.96	Seldomly performed
3.	Making job analysis for the benefit of the students	2.30	0.90	Seldomly performed
4.	Personal contact with persons in the business sector	2.30	0.87	Seldomly performed
5.	Participating in cooperative work activities with industries and business organizations	2.05	0.87	Seldomly performed
6.	Receiving occupational training during long vocations	1.94	0.88	Not performed
7.	Providing local firms with information about school programmes and activities	1.77	0.82	Not performed
8.	Soliciting the cooperation of local firms to sponsor students operated business venture for educational purpose.	1.38	0.69	Seldomly performed

Public Relations Functions of Technical and Vocational Education Teachers in Adamawa State of Nigeria: Implications for Improved Public Support

9.	Using local businessmen and industry staff as resource persons during speech and prize-giving days.	1.72	0.84	Seldomly performed
10.	Participation in business survey (Job, equipment survey or need assessment)	1.97	0.92	
11.	Serving as consultants to business firms and industries (employee training business adviser etc.)	1.85	0.90	Seldomly performed
12.	Soliciting for business firms/industry sponsored instructional materials	1.69	0.67	Seldomly performed
13.	Organizing business/industry sponsored product exhibitions in school	1.66	0.75	Seldomly performed
14.	Placing students in business organizations/industries for industrial training	3.32	0.86	Frequently performed

Data in Table 1 shows that out of 14 public relations functions which the teachers are expected to perform 11 were seldomly performed, two were not performed, while only one was performed.

Research Question Two

How frequent do technical and vocational teachers perform public relations functions within their immediate communities?

Table 2: The means and standard deviations of teachers on the frequency of performance of public relations functions within their immediate communities.

S/No	Public relations functions	\bar{X}	S	Remark
1.	Participation in social associations activities	2.43	0.74	Seldomly performed
2.	Participation in trade associations e.g. Block/Bricklayer, mechanics associations etc.	1.90	0.87	Seldomly performed
3.	Participation in activities of religious organizations	3.26	0.85	Frequency performed
4.	Participation in general community development activities	2.68	0.80	Frequently performed
5.	Organizing students to participate activities e.g. repair of public facilities.	2.47	0.99	Frequency performed
6.	Organizing exhibitions of students' projects at fairs and festivals in the community	1.92	1.02	Seldomly performed
7.	Involving members of the community in the	2.15	0.83	Seldomly performed

	organization of speech and prize giving days.			
8.	Contacts with electronics and print media editors through news and talks on technical and vocation education programme	1.77	0.98	Seldomly performed
9.	Providing information regarding students qualifications for jobs when requested by employees or employment bodies in the community.	1.75	0.89	Seldomly performed
10.	Display of posters and hand bills emphasizing the value of technical and vocational Education in the society	1.83	1.01	Seldomly performed

Data in Table 2. shows that out of the 10 public relations functions, which the teachers are expected to perform. Six were seldomly performed while four were frequently performed.

Research Question Three

How frequent do technical and vocational teachers perform public relations functions in relation to parent/guardians of the students?

Table 3: The mean responses and standard Deviation of teachers on the performance of public relations functions concerning to the parents/guardians of students.

S/No	Public relations functions	X	SO	Remark
1.	Sending students progress report to parents/guardians	3.12	0.83	Frequently performed
2.	Sending bulletins and other information to parents/guardians on school activities.	2.13	1.18	Seldomly performed
3.	Invitation to parents/guardian to visit the school for programme activities.	2.91	0.81	Frequently performed
4.	Hospitable reception of parents/guardians during visitation to school.	3.02	0.88	Frequently performed
5.	Encouraging the participation of parents/guardians in Parents Teachers Association activities.	2.97	0.88	Seldomly performed
6.	Facilitating parental involvements in curriculum planning	1.72	0.69	Frequently perf.
7.	Involving parents/guardians in organizing fund raising for facility development and procurement of instructional materials.	2.34	0.99	Seldomly performed

Public Relations Functions of Technical and Vocational Education Teachers in Adamawa State of Nigeria: Implications for Improved Public Support

Data in Table 3 shows that out of the seven public relations functions, which the teachers are expected to perform, three were seldomly performed while four were frequently performed.

Hypothesis One

At 0.05 level of significance there is a relationship between the qualification of technical and vocational education teachers and their performance of public relations functions.

From the analysis the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is $r=+0.393$. The critical value for r at 29 degree of freedom (df) is $+0.367$. The r -cal. Is greater than the r -critical. Therefore H_{01} is rejected. Appendix A shows the data analysis for testing hypothesis 1

Hypothesis Two

At 0.05 level of significance there is a significant difference in the mean response of the administrators and teachers on the kind or level of public relation performed by teachers.

Table 4: Z-test of difference between the mean response of Administrators and teachers on performance of public Relations functions by the teachers.

Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	N	Degree of freedom (df)	Standard error	z-cal	z-cri	Decision
Administrators	6.28	4.58	35					
Teachers	2.78	2,78	133	166	1.65	2.098	1.960	Significant

Table 4 shows that the Z-cal is greater than the Z-cri at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore null hypothesis 2 (H_{02}) is rejected.

Major Findings of the Study

- (1) Technical and vocational teachers are not involved in performing public relations functions concerning business organizations and industries. The only aspect they are involved in is the placement of students for industrial training scheme.
- (2) TVE teachers do participate in social and religious functions in their immediate communities as a result of demand by their communities. One area that that appears as performance of public relations functions in their communities is organizing students to serve the communities in areas such as building drainage, electrifying public buildings etc.
- (3) TVE teachers perform public relations functions that are related to the parents/guardians. They perform these functions through sending students academic progress to parents/guardians, encouraging parents to participate in PTA activities and hospitable reception of parents/guardians when they visit schools.

- (4) The level of educational qualification is a significant factor in the performance of public relations functions by TVE teachers. It was found that teachers with higher qualifications perform more of the public relations functions than teacher with lower qualification.
- (5) Significant differences do exist between the opinion of the administrators and those of the TVE teachers on the frequency of public relations functions they perform.

Technical and vocational education teachers are not deliberately involved in the performance of public relations contact with business organizations and industries with the aim of soliciting for their support for this form of education. The only aspect of the functions frequently performed by the teachers is the placement of students on industrial training programmes. It was evident that the teachers perform this function because it is part of their school programme. This confirms Adeogun's (1999) assertion that professional teachers are most of the time, active in discharging their professional responsibilities.

The performance of public relations functions by teachers within their immediate communities was below average. Only three out of the 10 functions were said to have been performed. Two of the functions are social and religious responsibilities which an individual is expected to perform in his community. This is in agreement with the view of Akin (1989) who pointed out that for a nation to develop, individuals should discharge their civic responsibilities through forming productive organizations that would transform their communities. The non performance of the seven public relations functions by technical vocational education teachers might have contributed to the sustenance of negative attitude of the public toward this form of education.

The close contact between parents and teachers may have contributed to the frequent performance of public relations functions with the parents/guardians of the students. They relate with them by sending students progress reports, encouraging parents to participate actively in Parent Teachers Association (PTA) activities and hospitable reception of parents/guardians when they visit schools. This agrees with the assertion by Calfrey and Alton (1986) that parents/guardians have the right to be well informed about the activities of their children in technical and vocational schools. A keen look at the public relations functions performed by the teachers reveal that the functions are incorporated in their duties in the school. It may be pointed out however that the performance of these functions are carried out they are part of the school programme. This is in agreement with Adeogun (1999) who commended teachers for discharging their professional responsibilities with high level of commitment.

The findings show that there is a significant relationship between the educational qualification of the teachers and the performance of public relations functions. Teachers with higher qualifications tend to perform public relations functions more frequently than those with lower qualifications. This finding is in agreement with Hallak (1990) who posited that the quality of any education system depends on the quality of her teachers. It is also in agreement with Babalola (1998) and Oyeriyi (1998) who in separate studies found a positive relationship between high level of manpower and quality of products and services.

The difference in the mean response of teachers and administrators on the performance of public relations functions by teachers does not agree with the current literature. This finding is in disagreement with that of Uwadiae (1992) who found that the views of administrators agree with that

of the teachers on the matter. This study found that the functions the teachers admitted to have performed are part of their duties and school programme.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Technical and vocational education is an important instrument for societal transformation. Therefore, improving its poor image through public relations activities is of paramount importance. The technical and vocational education teachers are in better position to carry out this responsibility since they are at the implementation end of any curriculum or any school programme developed. Review made in this study revealed that technical and vocational education is perceived negatively by the public. The public seem to be ignorant of the vital role this form of education plays in the industrial and economic development of nations. Technical and vocational education teachers are in the best position to enlighten the public on the importance of this form of education. This study revealed that TVE teachers in Adamawa State are not deliberately involved in public relations activities that would lead to appreciation and support of technical and vocational education.

It is therefore necessary that technical and vocational education teachers at college level need to be utilized very effectively as public relations personnels so that required information can effectively be provided for the public with regards to this form of education. Recommendations are hereby presented for consideration by stakeholders in technical and vocational education.

- i. Public relations activities should be incorporated into professional responsibilities of technical and vocational education teachers for effective performance.
- ii. Technical and vocational education teachers should be motivated through payment of special allowance for performing public relations functions.
- iii. Adequate materials that would facilitate public relations activities should be provided for the teachers.
- iv. Technical and vocational subject/education teachers should register with the National Association of Technology Teachers (NATT) so that they can perform public relations activities under the auspices of the association
- v. Technical teacher training institutions should incorporate public relations activities into the teacher-training curriculum.

References

- Adeogun, A.A. (1999). The quality of teachers as correlates of effective implementation of senior secondary school curriculum in Lagos State. *Nigeria Journal of Curriculum studies*, 6(1) 69-72.
- Ajala, V.O. (2001). *Public relation*. Ibadan; May Best Publications.
- Akinseide, S.I. (1989). Effective implementation of 6-3-3-4 system in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of curriculum studies* (special Edition). 74-80.
- Anaele, E (2001), Role of practical work in Teaching Block laying and concreting in Technical Colleges. *Nigeria Journal of Education*1(1) 67-73.

- Banjo, J.A. (1994). Reshaping technical education in Nigeria. *West African Journal of Education*, 8(1), 15-19.
- Babalola, V.O. (1998), Towards result oriented implementation of the 6-3-3-4 system of education in Nigeria. *Nigeria Journal of Curriculum Studies* (Special Edition), 32-38.
- Bulus, F. (1991) *Guidance Practice in School* Jos. Ehindo Nig. Ltd.
- Calfrey, C.C. & Alton, V.F. (1986). *Vocational Education; Concept and operation*. New York: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National Policy on Education* (Revised) Abuja: NERDC Press
- Hanak, J.& Coilods F. (1980). *Education work and employment* Paris: UNESCO. IIEP
- Keen, C, Clive S.S.John (1987). *Public policy management in Colleges, Polytechnics and Universities*. England: Height Publication.
- Okorie, J.U. (2001). *Vocational industrial education* Bauchi: League of Researchers
- Okoro, O.M. (1999). *Principles and Methods in Vocational and Technical Education*. Enugu: University Trust Publishers.
- Olaitan, S.O. Famiwole, (1998). A proposed vocational technical education structure for technological development in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies*; (Special Edition), 53-63.
- Oyeniyi, A.O. (1998). Implementation issues of the 6-3-3-4 system of education in Nigeria. *Nigeria Journal of curriculum studies* (Special Edition), 64-66.
- Uga, O. (1983). *Curriculum development for Africa*. Ibadan Africana FEP Publishers
- Uwadiae, S.A. (1992); An investigation of the Public Relations Functions of Relations Functions of secondary. School Teachers of Agriculture in Edo and Delta states of Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Technical Education*, 19, 140 - 146.
- Robert, C.A. (1994). *Modern business administration* London *Financial Times*, pitman Publishing
- Seital, F.P. (1987). *The practice of public relations* Ohio: Merrill Publishing Company

APPENDIX A

PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION COEFFICIENT THE DEVIATION FROM THE MEAN METHOD COMPUTATION USED FOR TESTING HYPOTHESIS 1

S/NO	Graduates (X)	Under-graduates (Y)	X-X	Y-Y	(X-X)(YY)	(X-X) ²	(Y-Y) ²
1	171	114	-10.03	+8.03	-80.54	100.60	64.48
2	172	55	-9.03	-50.97	+460.26	81.54	2597.94
3	152	108	-29.03	+2.03	-58.93	842.74	4.12
4	150	83	-31.03	-22.97	+712.76	962.82	527.62
5	149	87	-32.03	-18.97	+607.61	1025.92	359.86
6	167	103	-14.03	-2.97	+41.67	196.84	8.82
7	153	88	-28.03	17.97	+503.69	785.68	322.92
8	162	94	-19.03	-11.97	+227.78	362.14	143.28
9	153	78	-28.03	-27.97	+783.99	785.68	782.32
10	173	95	-8.03	-10.97	+88.09	64.48	120.34
11	162	88	-19.03	-17.97	+341.97	362.14	322.92
12	169	94	-12.03	-11.97	+143.99	144.72	143.28
13	162	91	-19.03	-14.97	+284.88	362.14	224.10
14	273	159	+91.97	+53.03	+145.00	8458.48	2812.18
15	218	155	136.97	149.03	+1812.64	1366.78	2403.94
16	175	97	-6.03	-8.97	+54.09	36.36	80.46
17	262	114	+80.95	+8.03	+650.03	6552.90	64.48
18	243	119	+61.97	+13.03	+807.47	3840.28	169.78
19	150	174	-31.03	+68.03	-2110.97	962.86	4628.08
20	166	106	-15.03	+0.03	-0.460	225.90	0.0009
21	145	75	-36.03	-30.97	+1115.85	1298.16	959.14
22	151	94	-30.03	-11.97	-359.46	901.80	143.28
23	164	80	-17.03	-25.97	+442.27	290.02	674.44
24	212	121	+30.97	+15.03	+465.48	959.14	225.90
25	262	151	+80.97	+45.03	+364.08	6556.14	2027.70
26	183	112	+1.97	+6.03	+1102.41	4765.14	255.04
28	222	118	+40.97	+12.03	+492.87	144.72	144.72
29	248	146	+66.97	+40.03	+2680.81	1602.4	1602.40
30	148	88	-33.03	-17.97	+593.55	322.92	322.92
31	183	108	+1.97	+2.03	+3.99	3.8809	4.12
	X 181.0319Y 105.99				Σ=12328.75	Σ=44369.48	Σ=22176/9 4

$$r = \frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2 \sum(y - \bar{y})^2}} = \frac{1232.75}{\sqrt{39671.99 \times 22176.94}} = 0.393$$