



Block

3

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN INDIA

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

This is the third block in the series of Course IV. In the earlier blocks, you have obtained insights into the nature of PR, its role, functions and basic principles.

In Block III, we shall take a broad look at the growth and development of PR in India. This block consists of **five** Units.

These are :

- Unit 1 : Origin of Public Relations
- Unit 2 : Growth of Public Relations in India
- Unit 3 : Professional Public Relations Organisations
- Unit 4 : Training and Research for Public Relations
- Unit 5 : Trends in Public Relations

In **Unit 1**, we take a look at the past to see how PR evolved, what factors and changes in the external environment led to its origin with particular reference to the West.

As a communication activity, however, PR has been present in some form or the other even in ancient times. In **Unit 2**, we shall examine the early stages of PR in India, its role in the national freedom movement, and also its growth in the post independent India.

Factors like the governmental support in setting up of mass communication infrastructure, the five-year plans, and rapid industrialisation helped to create a conducive environment for the growth of PR and the formation of professional bodies like the PRSI. The growth of PR in India is explained in **Unit 3**.

Like any other area of study, PR needs to be backed by adequate research and training facilities. **Unit 4** brings to you the need for a systematic approach to the PR training. It also assesses the existing infrastructure facilities in our country for the PR education and training as also their efficacy and inadequacies.

Unit 5 deals with the changing PR environment in the context of globalisation and new economic policy. PR is becoming more strategic. How far such changes in the external environment will effect the present and future trends in PR is also discussed.

UNIT 1 ORIGIN OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Origin of Public Relations
 - 1.2.1 PR in Early Societies and Modern Times
 - 1.2.2 Factors that Gave Rise to PR
- 1.3 Public Relations in the U.S.A.
 - 1.3.1 Period of Transition
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 - 1.3.3 The Great Depression : Concept of Social Responsibility
 - 1.3.4 World War - II and Post World War : PR Matures
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- 1.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.6 Glossary
- 1.7 Further Reading
- 1.8 Check Your Progress : Model Answers

1.0 OBJECTIVES

This is the first Unit of Block III of this course. In the first two blocks, we discussed the important definitions, the nature, ethics and scope of Public Relations, and the underlying principles governing Public Relations efforts. In this block, we shall discuss the growth and development of Public Relations both in the West as well as in India.

After studying this unit, you should be able to :

- trace the history of the PR movement, and mention factors that led to the evolution of PR;
- describe the early use of PR in the USA;
- explain how PR played a role in the World Wars I and II;
- analyse the evolution of the concept of "social responsibility" in PR;
- briefly recount the history of PR in ancient India;
- state the different stages of growth of PR in India;
- outline the first organizational PR attempt in the Indian Railways; and
- describe the role of PR in the World War I through the Government of India's Publicity and Information Department.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Having gone through two earlier blocks, you must now be familiar with the basics of PR-- its nature and the processes involved in the practice of PR. You have also seen how PR differs from advertising, and that it should not be confused with propaganda.

In this unit, we take a look back at the past, and try to reconstruct how PR evolved. PR is the newest area of the management discipline, and is considered a rather late arrival on the stage of our present day industrial society. In this unit, we shall examine what factors led to the origin of PR. Since PR, in the modern sense of the term, developed first in the United States, we shall therefore, begin with a study of its various phases of development in that country. Looking back at the past is not just an academic exercise. It should enable you to understand the strengths and weaknesses of PR. You would also be able to see clearly how the distinction between advertising and propaganda, on the one hand, and PR, on the other, gradually arose. By doing so, you would also be in a position to relate the subject of public relations to the existing social environment, and to appreciate that any modern management science needs to be studied in relation to the environment, and never in isolation.

1.2. ORIGIN OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations, is of recent origin, not only in India, but also in the West.

As mentioned earlier, PR relates itself to the social and economic environment. In America, PR developed as an off-shoot of the growing industrialization and modernization process noticeable in their large business corporations. Let us, therefore, try to find out the rationale behind this.

The fact that America is the world's leading exponent of the system of free and private enterprise, it was but logical that American business had a greater responsibility -- a responsibility to conduct its affairs in the "public interest" and to win "public understanding and support". This has been one of the very important factors that helped avert the tide of "socialism" sweeping the world in the 50s. America rose to the occasion, as its business had no recourse but to use PR effectively, forthrightly, and skillfully.

Writing the Introduction to the first edition of the "*Handbook of Public Relations*", in 1960, John Hill, was almost prophetic when he said :

"In such an unstable human environment, the American Corporation must find ways not only to earn profit that keeps it alive but also the means to achieve the economic stability that is absolutely essential to the security of corporate life and health.

"Around the globe, people are now rising in the underdeveloped nations to assert their own rightful intent to industrialize and to consume on a much larger scale. The destiny of our corporate system of free enterprise is inescapably related to these newly emerging determinations.... When we speak with pride of our own production records, we forget that we consume over three fourths of the world's available supply of key raw materials.... produced in other lands. Suppose other peoples move forward to consume at a similar rate?.... Even Nehru has ventured to enquire why America must consume so much... the one potent instrument left with us for coming to terms with conflicting opinion and concept, is public relations".

Veritably, America made PR their philosophy of life, and, more significantly, for their survival itself.

1.2.1 Public Relations in Early Societies and in Modern Times

Public relations is the twentieth century phenomenon, but traces of PR were present in human societies since the dawn of civilization.

The rulers of ancient Egypt, Babylon, Sumeria and other ancient kingdoms are known to have made systematic efforts to tell the people how great they were. In many cases, they succeeded in making the people believe that they had a mandate from the gods, or were

themselves god-like. The rulers of ancient kingdoms instinctively resorted to various forms of communication to maintain their hold over their kingdoms and their people.

Bards and wandering minstrels sang of the greatness and valour of kings and heroes, thus using the popular media of those days to communicate to the people, and create a favourable image of the rulers and the heroes. The Greeks are known to have realised the importance of the public opinion. So were the Romans, as is evident from certain phrases used in the writings of the medieval period. It was the Romans who coined the expression, 'Vox Populi, Vox Dei', which means that the Voice of People is the Voice of God.

Thus, we see that even though there were some rudimentary elements of PR in these activities, this was not PR in the sense that we now understand it.

As you all know, the Industrial Revolution began in the seventeenth century spreading across Europe, and reached North America by the eighteenth century. Mass production and selling of goods had already become a feature of the industrial societies of the world by the nineteenth century. Free enterprise and laissez-faire became the driving force for the manufacturing industries. A few people, enterprising enough, used their skills and expertise to harness the natural resources to produce marketable products. A new class of people emerged, ostensibly with the motive of serving the others in society. The reduced number of such entrepreneurs gave rise to monopolies in trade and commerce of different products. These captains of business and industry made huge profits by sheer dint of effort and aggressive marketing techniques, usually at the expense of the common man.

Advertising of goods also began towards the latter half of the nineteenth century. Yet, PR, did not emerge until quite some time later. Could you guess why, and offer plausible reasons?

1.2.2 Factors that Gave Rise to Public Relations

To find the answer to this question, one has to appreciate the fact that any form of human activity develops only as the need for it arises and only when a suitable environment has been created for it.

It was only when public opinion became a potent force in society that it became necessary for organizations to win the support and goodwill of the public. The public could only become such a force in society when certain democratic institutions had developed. The mass circulated newspapers, adult franchise, organs of elected representatives of the people, such as the parliament, the legislatures, elected local government institutions, made it possible for the common man to make his voice heard. The public opinion emerged as a force to be reckoned with.

We shall now be able to understand why winning public support and goodwill was not considered important by the captains of business and industry in the past. It was only when it became impossible to ignore or disregard public opinion that they began to look around for ways to woo the public. And this stage was reached only in the twentieth century, when the democratic institutions and the media of mass communications developed and began to make people more aware of what was happening around them. The development in levels of literacy and education, which made people conscious of their rights was also an important contributory factor.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note : i) Answers the following questions briefly in the space provided.
 ii) You may compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

1. State some basic elements of PR that were prevalent in the early civilized society.

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2. How did public opinion become a potent force?

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1.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE USA

The growth of PR, having extended over several decades, is difficult to pinpoint exact factors responsible for its development. The factors are varied, interdependent and complex. Basically, it may be said that power struggles served as catalysts for the growth of PR as every group, desirous of dominance, wanted to have the public opinion titled in its favour. This is what led to the use of PR techniques even earlier in the USA: in the American War of Independence, and, subsequently, in the Civil War.

As was inevitable, the settlers from Britain and other parts of Europe in the American colonies came into conflict with the British authorities. To win public support for their movement for independence the settlers used many techniques which were later to be adopted as the tools of public relations. Pamphlets and newspapers were widely circulated to further their cause. Letters were sent to important people within the country and abroad. The spoken word was also extensively used in the mass and committee meetings. Demonstrations were organized, plays were staged, and songs were composed and sung in support of their struggle.

The British authorities tried to curb the movement by enacting laws to censor the press by imposing taxes on the newspapers, and insisting on licences for publishing. The demand for a free press naturally became a rallying point for those demanding independence.

You might have heard of the famous "*Boston Tea Party*", a memorable event in the history of the American Revolution. In 1767, the British Parliament imposed duties on various imports into the American colonies. In the face of opposition, some of these were withdrawn, but not the duty on tea. To express their resentment and in support of the demand, "no taxation without representation", the people of the colonies boarded the British ships in the Boston harbour, and threw overboard their cargoes of tea. The staging of an "event" to dramatise a popular slogan has since become a standard PR device to attract public attention, and to rally the people in support of a campaign.

Similar use of the PR techniques was seen in the American Civil War (1861-65). One of the issues separating the North and the South of America was slavery. While the southern states, generally, supported the institution, the northern states pressed for its abolition. Both sides made extensive use of the PR techniques to win public support. All available means of communication were pressed into service, and appeals were made, separately, to various segments of the public, calculated to win them over.

While all these events were helping to develop some of the tools of PR, and prove their efficacy in harnessing the public support, this could not yet be called the "deliberate, planned and sustained effort" that emerged later, and developed into what we call PR.

1.3.1 Period of Transition

Surprising as it might seem, the dominant attitude of business and industry in the United States during the closing years of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth was exemplified in what has come to be known as "the public-be-damned" attitude.

The rapid expansion of trade and industry, the emergence of large corporations, controlling financial and physical assets unheard of before, gave the American businessmen a feeling that they were on top of the world. "Laissez faire" economic theories were favoured. Business wanted to be left upto itself, and was not prepared to brook any interference from the government. The public did not enter into their calculations, except as a market for their goods. In any case, selling was no problem. It was at this time that William Vanderbilt, the

head of the New York Central Railway, is reported to have used the expression “public-be-damned” in reply to a reporter, who asked him why he had withdrawn a railway service between New York and Chicago, despite its usefulness to the public.

The furore caused by this remark was unprecedented. This was because the United States was just entering a period when a free press was beginning to have its impact. A large number of writers came out with a series of exposures on the ways of big business and its unscrupulous methods of fleecing the public to enhance profits. This group of writers, amongst whom were Jack London, David Graham Phillips, Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair and Lincoln Stephens, popularly known as the muck-rakers, exposed the excesses and corruption prevailing at that time. The muck-rakers received some support from President Theodore Roosevelt, and later from President Wilson.

A new era had started. Every action of business and industry was now under scrutiny, and the public could no longer be brushed aside. The new era was based on the maxim “the-public-must-be-informed”. The ground for the emergence of Public Relations had been laid.

The study of the development of Public Relations in the United States would not be complete without reference to Ivy Lee, generally referred to as the father of Public Relations. Operating in the firm of Parker and Lee, it was he who impressed on American businessmen that the public was not to be ignored, rather the public had to be informed. His statement to the press on behalf of the mineowners, in 1906, and his “declaration of principles”, issued to the press the same year, are regarded as milestone in the development of Public Relations. The Declaration said : “This is not a secret bureau. All our work is done in the open. We aim to supply news. This is not an advertising agency. If you think any of our matter ought properly to go to your business office, do not use it. Our matter is accurate”. Ivy Lee’s open approach and forthrightness won him accolades from the media, which, in turn, help build a rapport between the organizations and the media.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note :** i) Fill in the blanks with appropriate phrases.
 ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Basically, it was that acted as catalysts in the growth of PR.
- 2) Some techniques used by settlers to win public support for independence movement included

- 3) The demand for free..... became synonymous with the demand for independence.
- 4) The group of writers, who wrote extensively exposing the unscrupulous ways of big business, came to be known as
- 5) One of the foremost pioneers who impressed upon the American business that public must be informed, was

1.3.2 Public Relations in World War I

The outbreak of World War I (1914-18) witnessed many significant developments in the field of public relations. For the first time in world history, a new kind of war started, a war in which the role of the people behind the battle lines, the people engaged in production, the people running the economy, was no less important than that of the combatants at the

front. This was a war that needed the total mobilization of the human resources for the effort behind the war.

The problem of persuading people within the country, people in neutral countries and even those in enemy countries became central to the war effort. You would easily appreciate that this represented both a challenge and an opportunity to all those who had acquired some experience and expertise in the field of public communication.

Soon after the United States entered the war (April 1917), the U.S. Government set up a 'Committee on Public Information' under the direction of George Greel, a former newspaper editor. Apart from the representatives of the government, there were many others with skills in this field, who were drawn into the activities of the Committee.

Amongst those who served on the Committee were people like Edward L. Bernays, and these men subsequently, emerged as the first generation of the PR professionals in the United States. The rich experience gained by them in the war years in communicating with the public, in persuading them to support the US war effort through contributions to the war bonds, by participation in the civil defence activities, and by keeping the wheels of production in America moving, proved extremely valuable. It was on the basis of this experience that they were able to make a lasting contribution to the theory and practice of public relations.

The techniques developed during the world war set an example to people in other countries also, and helped to spread the PR activities to other parts of the world.

1.3.3 The Great Depression : Concept of Social Responsibility

The economic crisis of 1929-33, generally referred to as the Great Depression, lent further support to the Public Relations Movement. Beginning in the United States, the crisis spread across the world, shaking the economies of every country. Stock markets crashed, banks closed their shutters, millionaires became paupers overnight, production came to a standstill in thousands of factories, and millions were thrown out of jobs. This event shattered the complacency of the businessmen and those in the government, who believed in laissez faire policies. It became clear to all that business could not be left alone. The government was forced to intervene. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, U.S. President between 1933-45, came out with his New Deal which involved massive spending by the government to revive the economy. Public criticism, expressed through books and newspapers and from other platforms, forced the government and the industry to review their policies and attitudes. It was against this background that the concept of social responsibility was born, a concept that is central to the practice of public relations. The basic idea behind this concept is that a business organization should not concern itself with profits alone. It owes a responsibility to society, to the public at large, and must discharge its debts to the public by working for the public interest.

Before public relations arrived at defining an ideal relationship between organizations and the press, there was a period characterised by the press agency. The term denoted the use of the press to further a cause by trickery and by use of methods that sometimes amounted to cheating or fooling the public. It was a systematic effort to divert public attitudes or to exaggerate. Practices such as the press agency gave a bad name to public relations because of the exploits of some press agents who became successful showmen. It was only the patient efforts of the genuine PR professionals like Ivy Lee, Edward Bernays and many others, that succeeded in giving the profession a good name.

1.3.4 World War-II and Post World War : PR Matures

By the time World War II started, Public Relations had already matured into an important profession. The invention of the radio and sound films, and further development in the techniques of printing, threw open vast opportunities of using public relations. The efficacy of public relations techniques in communicating with different sections of the public, in changing the public attitudes and winning support for a cause, or an organization, came to be recognised and appreciated. The American business magazine, 'Fortune', which had first taken note of the emergence of public relations, in 1938, was sufficiently interested in the profession to conduct a survey on PR in 1949. The results were published in its May issue.

The report stated that business in the United States was still in trouble, and that only good public relations, which denoted good performance, properly understood and appreciated, could assure its future.

By this time, PR had made its impact on university education, and had become an area of study. The American Journals, *Public Relations News* and *PR Journal*, began publication in 1944. The Public Relations Society of America, formed after the merger of some earlier organizations, was established in 1948.

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II set important world leaders thinking about the need of a better understanding and humane approach to international issues. This led to the setting up of the United Nations, in 1945, and its charter making the human being the axis, by reaffirming its faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, was a land mark. Its declaration of faith in human rights has been adopted in its International Code of Ethics by the public relations practitioners of all the member countries, comprising the International Public Relations Association (IPRA).

Check Your Progress 3

- Note :** i) Answer the following question in the space provided.
 ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) Briefly enumerate some of the stages through which PR passed before it matured as a full-fledged area of study?

.....

1.4 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ANCIENT INDIA

As in other countries, the PR techniques of Communication were instinctively used in ancient India. The best example is that of the Emperor Ashoka. His edicts inscribed on rocks, that have survived till this day, informed the people of the policies of the government, and exhorted them to carry out certain tasks.

Interestingly, an important principle of public relations was practised by Ashoka. The edicts for different regions were written in regional scripts that were in use in that region, making royal communication language and region-specific for better understanding and acceptability. We also have evidence of Mughal kings using spies to obtain direct feedback from the commoners.

1.4.1 The Philanthropic Stage

True to the Indian tradition and ethos, one of the pioneers of Indian industrialisation, Jamshedji Tata, builder of the Tata Iron and Steel Company, adopted a number of measures with great foresight that reflected his spirit of service to the community.

When he conceived his project, it was not limited to the construction of a factory. He had a vision of a township that would be full of shady avenues where the workmen employed in the factory could live in a serene and healthy atmosphere. Although he died before his vision could be translated into reality, his successors saw to it that this dream was realised. Not only was a beautiful township built for the employees, with the necessary civic amenities, but also numerous welfare schemes for the employees were adopted. A hospital was built, schools were set up and cordial relations with the employees and their families were established. Community relations and good employee relations, important aspects of public relations were, thus, spontaneously practised by the House of Tatas, long before professional PR arrived on the scene.

Check Your Progress 4

Note : i) Answer the following question in the space provided.
ii) Compare your answer with the answer given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Identify and list a few PR techniques that were in vogue during ancient and medieval times.

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1.4.2 Spontaneous PR : The Railways

In the Indian Railways, the public relations efforts in the pre-World War II period, were perhaps dictated by commercial needs. Having built the railways at a considerable cost, mainly for the purpose of carrying raw materials from the hinterland to the ports, the British companies which were then running the railways, realised that without promoting passenger traffic the railways would not be commercially viable. Records show that in the early 1920's the GIP Railway in India carried on a Public Relations campaign in England to attract tourists to India. For this purpose, they published pamphlets and carried out an advertising campaign. Within the country the Publicity Bureau of this railway company introduced a travelling cinema, which gave open air shows of films at fairs and festivals. Subsequently, publicity officers, with similar functions were deputed to other railways. The Railway Board established publicity bureaus in London and New York also. Both the bureaus used to advertise extensively in newspapers and journals. These offices also participated in exhibitions held abroad to popularise the Indian Railways, and attract the tourist traffic.

1.4.3 World War I : Government of India's Publicity and Information

Another form of public relations was practised directly by the Government during World War I. As in other parts of the world, the war made it necessary to mobilise public support, and the Government of India felt it necessary to disseminate information. It was also considered necessary to set up an organization to feed the press, and supply news about the war to the people. A Central Publicity Board was established. Again, as in other countries, a newspaper editor was appointed its Chairman. In this case, it was Sir Stanley Reed, Editor of The Times of India, Bombay. The Board had on it representatives from the army and the foreign and political departments of the Government of India. After the war this Board was dissolved and its functions were taken over by the Central Bureau of Information established in 1921. Professor Rushbrook Williams, from Allahabad, was appointed its first Director. In 1923, the Central Bureau was redesignated as the Directorate of Public Instruction. Later, as this nomenclature did not correctly reflect the activities of the department, the organization was renamed "The Directorate of Information and Broadcasting".

The following unit will deal in greater detail about the development of Public Relations in India.

Check Your Progress 5

Note : i) Answer the following question in the given space.
ii) Mention only the points briefly.

- 1) Could you briefly mention some of the PR activities that were carried on in India, prior to Independence?

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1.5 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, you have studied how public relations originated in the United States, and then spread to other industrialised countries. Later, as the rest of the world came under the orbit of the modern economic development, PR was accepted as an indispensable tool of the industry, government and all organizations, which wanted to function smoothly in society.

We have examined, in this Unit, the particular set of circumstances that gave rise to public relations, and we have seen that, like all sciences and professions, PR began to be used extensively only after the need for it arose, and after a certain environment conducive to its functioning had been created.

We further found that the environment in which PR can flourish has to be one where democratic institutions exist, where people are conscious of their rights and able to exercise them. The development of the media of mass communication has been crucial in this process of making public opinion a potent force.

We also saw that the two world wars accelerated the development of the tools and techniques of PR. The need for mobilising public opinion on a really massive scale during these wars, where the people in the rear were as important as the soldiers at the front, led to the governments attaching prime importance to public relations.

In this unit, you also studied the various phases in the development PR. There was the early phase, when business magnates had nothing but contempt for public opinion. They learnt from bitter experience that the public could not be ignored, and had to be kept informed. Then, there was a phase of 'press agency', during which PR meant manipulation of the press and the use of gimmicks to get free publicity in the newspapers. Gradually, we saw how the stage of mature public relations was reached, when it was realised that winning the understanding of the press and all other sections of the public by giving them information based on truth and facts was crucial.

We saw how, as in other parts of the world, a rudimentary form of PR was practised, instinctively, by some of our early rulers, notable amongst whom was Emperor Ashoka.

We also discussed the situation in pre-Independence India, where there was very little scope for the practice of PR since no democratic institutions existed, and even the media of mass communication were controlled by the alien rulers. Nevertheless, certain spontaneous expressions of the use of PR were to be found.

In this phase, certain philanthropic persons, with liberal ideas and imbued with the traditional spirit of service and feelings of patriotism used techniques of communication with different sections of the people. The example of Jamshedji Tata is the most outstanding in this regard.

Finally, we saw how the outbreak of the world war and the pressure on the government to mobilise public opinion quickened the pace of development of PR.

1.6 GLOSSARY

- Advertising :** Presenting persuasive messages to the public via paid space or broadcast time, to promote a concept, individual, company, product or service.
- Audience :** Usually refers to a group or groups that organizations are trying to reach through their public relations programmes and activities.
- Mass Communications :** Delivering information, ideas, and attitudes to a large and diversified audience through the use of the media developed for that purpose, both the printed and broadcast media.

Mass Medium :	Directed at and reaching a wide variety of people rather than directed towards a specific audience.
Media :	The mass communication outlets available for the delivery of a message, which includes newspapers, magazines, radio, television, etc.
Muck-rakers :	Journalists who specialise in exposures, confessions of corruption, and sordid activities in high places. 'Muck' means filth. The writers who made scandalous exposures came to be called the 'muck-rakers'. They helped to bring to public notice the corrupt practices of big business.
Press Agency :	Seeking of publicity by creating news of an exaggerated or dubious kind meant to distract the public.
Socialism :	Theory, principle or scheme of social organization, which places means of production and distribution in the hands of the community.
Bard :	Poet and singer.
Edict :	Order issued by kings.
Vox Populi :	(Latin) Voice of People.
Laissez Faire :	(French) A general principle of non-interference.
Event :	An item in a programme or campaign.
Propaganda :	Promoting of ideas to make converts; originally, it meant simply the spreading of a belief.
Public (Plural-Publics) :	Any group of people bound together with a common interest, which a public relations programme seeks to influence, <i>i.e.</i> , the employees, wholesalers, stockists, retailers, opinion makers, media, etc. The need to define the Public(s) is a primary function of a PR operations.
Public Relations :	Planned and organised programme of policies and conduct to develop public confidence and increase public understanding.

1.7 FURTHER READING

Lesly, Philip, 1992; *Lesly's Handbook of Public Relations and Communications*; Jaico Publications; New Delhi.

Mehta, D.S; 1980; *Public Relations in India*; Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd; New Delhi.

1.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) a) The rulers of ancient Egypt, Babylon, making systematic efforts to make people believe that they had divine authority to rule.
- b) Use of the bards to sing praises of a king's valour and accomplishments.
- c) Use of phrases like 'Vox populi', which denotes importance of the people's voice.

- 2) The Public opinion became a potent force with the establishment of the democratic institutions. As the printing press developed and mass circulation of information grew, it became possible for the common man's voice to be heard. Slowly it became impossible to disregard public opinion.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Power struggles
- 2) Pamphlets, newspapers, letters, spoken word, songs, meetings, staging of plays, demonstrations, etc.
- 3) Free Press
- 4) Muck-rakers
- 5) Ivy Lee

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) In ancient societies, efforts were made to propagate the image of the rulers in power. Power struggles and group conflicts led to the greater use of PR techniques.

The American War of Independence, the civil war contributed to the growth of PR by mobilizing human resources.

There was also the stage of Press Agency, when attempts were made to get publicity in the press by use of gimmicks.

Finally, there was the stage when growth of the mass media made it imperative for the business to become socially responsible, and heed public opinion. This environment, finally, led to development of PR.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Some of the techniques were:
 - a) messages for people inscribed on rocks,
 - b) civic amenities and welfare measures,
 - c) feedback from people through the use of spies, and
 - d) use of region specific dialect.

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) The ancient rulers practised PR techniques instinctively to stay in power and to stabilise themselves.

Later, the social reformers, philanthropists, patriots, practised various forms of the PR methods.

During World War I, public support for war needed mobilisation through persuasion.

The commercial requirement of the railways also led to promotional campaigns for increasing traffic.

UNIT 2 GROWTH OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN INDIA

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Growth of Public Relations in India
 - 2.2.1 PR and the National Movement
 - 2.2.2 Development of PR in the Post-Independence Period
- 2.3 Public Relations and Industrial Development in India
 - 2.3.1 Origins of PR Practice in India
 - 2.3.2 Need for PR Units in the Public Sector
- 2.4 Growth of the Press and Government Media Units
- 2.5 Emergence of Professionalism in Public Relations
- 2.6 Public Relations Education
- 2.7 Contemporary Public Relations Practice in India
- 2.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.9 Glossary
- 2.10 Further Reading
- 2.11 Check Your Progress : Model Answers

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit seeks to supplement Unit 1 in describing the growth of PR as a profession in India. After going through this unit, you should be able to :

- explain the use of PR techniques in the freedom movement;
- identify the factors that helped the growth of PR in the post independence era;
- explain the relationship between PR and a democratic set up;
- point out the role of government in the development of PR;
- match the growth of PR with industrial development in India;
- state the factors that created the need for PR in business;
- define the role of PRSI in contributing to the status of the PR profession;
- outline the stages in the emergence of professionalism in PR; and
- describe the state of contemporary PR practice in India.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we observed and inferred that the development of any discipline is dependent on the socio-economic environment.

Public relations being an area of activity that concerns human beings, it is only natural that the developments in a society determine the pace of growth of PR.

Public relations can grow and flourish only in a democracy. In this unit, we shall examine the growth and development of public relations under the following heads :

- 1) as a basic communication activity through the ages;

- 2) the early stages of PR;
- 3) its role in the Indian National movement;
- 4) the dawn of independence; and
- 5) the changes that took place in India in the post-independence period.

The Indian Constitution, framed by the Constituent Assembly, introduced, for the first time, adult franchise, and provided for an elected Parliament and elected State Legislatures. A programme of planned industrial development was taken up, with the public sector playing a pivotal and leading role in building up the infrastructure, and in providing an industrial base to the economy. We shall discuss how this contributed to the growth of PR in the industrial field, both in the public and private sectors.

We shall see how government helped the growth and spread of PR by setting up an infrastructure for mass communication, and also by directly promoting the development of electronic media. It should be obvious that without such an infrastructure and without the media of mass communication, the public relations practitioners would not have been able to play an effective role.

In the previous unit, we saw that in the United States, where PR was first practised, public relations did not emerge suddenly as a mature profession, it had to pass through a number of stages. Similarly, in the Indian context also, we shall study the various stages in the growth of PR as a profession.

2.2 GROWTH OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN INDIA

The various stages in the growth of PR in India and its links with changes in the political, social and economic environment will enable you to see clearly the relationship between developments in society and the stages of growth in PR.

A proper understanding of this mutual relationship will not only add to your knowledge about the origin and growth of PR, but will also provide valuable insights into the practice of public relations.

With the industrial development and introduction of modern management techniques, the need for public relations was felt as an essential aid in creating mutual understanding and faith between an organization and its various constituent 'publics'. You will be able to realise that public relations is equally useful to the government. In a developing country like India, which is beset with a multitude of problems, our government needs PR, perhaps more in comparison to the governments of highly developed countries.

Another interesting aspect of the situation is the mutual relationship between the media and public relations. As the existing media extend their reach and the new media come into existence, the public relations professionals are provided with new tools and new opportunities to reach out to the target audience.

2.2.1 PR and the National Movement

In the previous unit (Unit I: Origin of PR), we described the beginnings of public relation techniques in India, and brought the story up to the point of the First World War (1914-18). Before we take up the subject of PR in the post-independence phase, which is the main concern of this unit, we shall discuss briefly, the developments during World War II, and the use of PR techniques in the National Movement. This is necessary in order to complete the record of various stages in the development of public relations in India, as they have a bearing on the events that took place in the post-independence period.

Not much progress was made in the development of professional PR during the period between the two World Wars. The public did not have any forum for expressing themselves except for a few nationalist newspapers, which were often subject to harassment by the government. Many of these were also forced to close down.

During the Second World War, however, the government again felt the need to reach out to the public. To mobilize support in favour of the war effort was difficult in a situation, where the Indian National Congress and the national sentiments were, generally, against the war effort. The government, therefore, took a number of measures.

A Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was created, and the Directorate of Information, which had been formed already was amalgamated with the new ministry. The Ministry tried consciously through the use of PR techniques to create opinion in favour of the war effort. A National War Front was also set up, and a number of units were created under the Ministry, such as the War Purposes Exhibition Unit, the Films Division and the Central Bureau of Public Opinion. Just as in Europe and the United States, the need for mobilizing the public opinion in favour of the war effort gave a fillip to organised and conscious public relations activities in India also.

We would do well to take note of certain other features of the pre-independence phase, which influenced events in the period after independence, and are significant from the point of view of the growth of PR in India.

We have seen in Unit 1 how in the American War of Independence and, later, in the American Civil War, extensive use of the PR techniques was made even before professional PR arrived on the scene. In India too, we must not fail to note, the PR techniques played a significant role in the national movement. In particular, it would be extremely rewarding to consider briefly how our great national leader, Mahatma Gandhi, was able to communicate with the masses and win public support despite the problems of cultural and linguistic diversity overcoming the serious obstacles laid by the alien government. Many of the methods, adopted by him to communicate with the masses, are now part of the standard practice of PR all over the world.

First, the importance of getting the public to identify themselves with a cause, and with the leader espousing that cause. The London-educated Barrister had no hesitation in discarding his European dress and dressing himself in the briefest of garments such as the poorest of the poor use in our country. He realised that it was only by doing so that the masses would be able to identify themselves with him and the cause he represented.

Second, the use of symbols. Apart from the fact that the 'half-naked fakir' himself became a symbol around which the nation could rally. Mahatma Gandhi, a born communicator, understood the value of symbols. The 'charkha' (spinning wheel) symbol, which he adopted, became, as it were, the logo of the national movement, symbolising self-reliance and people's participation in the cause of the freedom struggle.

Third, the staging of 'events'. The 'Dandi March' to make salt, and, thus, throw a challenge to the British rulers was one such event, which captured the imagination of the whole nation. The 'bonfires' of foreign cloth was another such device. Like the Boston Tea Party, which we referred to in the previous unit, 'events' such as these, proved far more effective in taking the message to the masses than the routine harangues, printed posters or leaflets.

Mahatma Gandhi did not, however, neglect the conventional means of communication either. Besides, holding meetings, giving speeches, he regularly published a journal, *Harijan*, and continued throughout to write articles focussing attention on problems of interest to the people. Indeed, he made use of all possible media, and devised imaginative forms of communication to circumvent restrictions placed by the government on the official media.

This brief interlude, which might perhaps be considered a digression from the main story of the development of professional PR, has important lessons for the PR practitioners, and you would agree that we have much to learn from this unique example of Gandhiji's art of effective communications.

2.2.2 Development of PR in the Post-Independence Period

With the coming of Independence, the scenario changed completely. On the one hand, there was the tragedy of partition and widespread disturbances. On the other hand, the leaders of the national movement who had realised only too well the importance of communication

in winning the support of the people, set about the task of laying the foundations of the Indian state. The first task before the country was to frame a democratic Constitution, a task that was performed by the Constituent Assembly. This body, which had been set up in 1946, completed its task in November, 1949. The Constitution framed by it came into force on 26 January, 1950. It was under this Constitution that the new Indian Republic came into being. The Constitution proclaimed the Indian polity as a Parliamentary Democracy, federal in structure but with unitary features.

Significant, from the point of view of PR, were two features of the new Constitution. One was the guarantee of certain fundamental rights, including the right to freedom of speech and expression; freedom of assembly, association or union, of movement, residence and the right to practise any profession or occupation. The second was the adult suffrage, whereby all citizens who are not less than 18 years of age (originally it was 21 years but, in 1989, the franchise was extended), have the right to be registered as voters in any election to the Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies of the States.

With the establishment of an elected Parliament and elected legislative assemblies, along with the establishment of a free press, the two essential pre-requisites for the growth of PR had been fulfilled. The stage was now ripe for the development of the professional Public Relations in India.

Some other developments, which also contributed to a conducive environment for the spread of PR in the country, also need to be noted. One was the planned industrialization of the country, which started soon after independence, and the other was expansion of the diversification of the media. We shall discuss these two developments in the sections that follow.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note :** i) Answer the following questions in the space provided.
 ii) Compare your answers with the ones provided at the end of this unit.

1) How did World War II help in promoting use of the PR techniques?

.....

2) Enumerate some significant factors that enabled Gandhiji to successfully mobilize the masses for freedom.

.....

3) Which features of the Indian Constitution firmly laid the foundation for the growth of PR in India?

.....

2.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Prior to independence, there were very few industries in the country. We relied on imports to meet most of our requirements. In 1948, the total production of finished steel was only 845,000 tons, of cement only 1.6 million tons, and of coal only 29.8 million tons.

To correct this situation, the government set up the Planning Commission, in 1950. Its task was to prepare a blue print for development. By the end of the Second Plan (1957-62), a sea change had taken place in the industrial scenario as giant steel plants, heavy electrical and heavy engineering complexes began to emerge. The infrastructure was also developed with the expansion of roads, means of transport and communication, and increased power generation capacity.

The guidelines for the pattern of industrial development were provided by the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948. These were, later, more clearly defined in the *Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956*. These resolutions demarcated the respective areas for different sectors of industry. Certain important areas, termed the core sectors, were reserved for the public sector, *i.e.*, for undertakings set up and owned by the government, while others were open for the private sector. Within the private sector, there were industries reserved for the small scale sector.

The Government of India exercised a strict control over industry with the help of an Act passed in 1951, the *Industrial Development and Regulation Act*. It was made compulsory for an industry with a capital base above a certain limit to seek a licence from the government for its operations.

Subsequently, other legislations were introduced to control and regulate industry. Of the many pieces of legislation introduced, one could mention the *Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP)* and the *Foreign Exchange Act (FERA)*. Imports and exports, were strictly regulated by the Controller of Imports and Exports, and there was also a Controller of Capital Issues. The Companies' Act laid down an elaborate code for the functioning of companies including conditions under which the Directors to the Boards of companies could be appointed, and the emoluments that could be paid to them.

The adoption by the Parliament of this elaborate framework of legislation and the setting up of so many bodies to regulate the various aspects of the functioning of industry created a situation wherein it became necessary for industry to develop relations with the government, its many regulatory institutions and with the Parliament.

2.3.1 Origins of PR Practice in India

In the background of these developments, both the government and business organizations had to adopt conscious and deliberate policies and programmes of public relations. It is from this period of the fifties that the PR practice in the modern sense of the term began in India.

Large international companies, which already had their own expertise in Public Relations, began to make use of these techniques in India so that they would be able to survive and grow in the post-independence environment. In the fifties and early sixties, companies like Burmah Shell, ESSO, Dunlop, Philips, etc., set up departments to execute programmes of Public Relations to meet the new situation. Indian companies like the House of Tatas also began to set up their own public relations departments to carry on organised PR activity.

2.3.2 Need for PR Units in the Public Sector

Meanwhile, the Industrial Policy Resolutions that were passed had demarcated certain areas in which the private sector could play a part. Certain other industries were reserved for the public or the government sector, *e.g.*, public utilities like Post and Telegraphs, Power and Irrigation, the Railways, Defence Production establishments, etc., as also many departmental undertakings like the Integral Coach Factory. The objective set for public sector was 'to gain control of the commanding heights of the economy'. This resulted in the public sector

emerging as a major factor in the country's economic growth with increasing number of personnel employed and mounting investments.

The fact that these enterprises had been entirely financed by the government, made them constantly liable to public scrutiny. Besides many important policy decisions, being taken at the ministerial level, it involved an element of dual control.

The Parliament and its various committees were constantly monitoring the performance of these undertakings. The media too was watchful and quick to point out any failings and deficiency in the public sector.

On the other hand, public sector undertakings were in an advantageous position, as far as publicity was concerned. The entire government infrastructure of information and communication was available to them, and the government media such as the radio and television were accessible for publicity.

Public sector undertakings, therefore, as they came up, started setting up PR departments. However, this was done initially, in a haphazard manner with no uniform practice either in respect of the organizational structure of the departments or of the nature of the functions to be performed.

The Government of India had, meanwhile, set up a *Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE)* to monitor the functioning of the public enterprises, to set targets of performance, and to frame guidelines for running them.

In addition to this, the public sector undertakings felt the need for a platform to share their experiences, to coordinate their activities and to discuss common problems. For this purpose, a *Standing Committee on Public Enterprises (SCOPE)*, was set up with representatives of the important public enterprises. Under the auspices of these bodies, a number of meetings of PR professionals of various public undertakings were held to discuss the various problems faced by them, and to evolve a uniform set of guidelines.

The *Public Relations Society of India (PRSI)*, the central association of PR professionals and practitioners, in the private as well as the public sector, discussed, at its conferences and committee meetings, the problems of PR in the public sector.

The *Parliamentary Committee on Public Undertakings (CPU)* took note of all these deliberations, and discussed the problems and issues confronting public undertakings in respect of their relations with the public. In their 47th report to the Parliament, they recommended that "an expert's committee should be appointed to make a detailed study of the organizational structure of the public relations and publicity units in public undertakings and suggest guidelines for the set up of such organizations, keeping in view the need to inform the public not only of the products marketed but also of the functioning of the undertakings".

Other issues suggested for examination by the expert's committee were :

- a) the question of having a joint cadre of PR and publicity officers for the public undertakings;
- b) the minimum qualifications and experience required for the posts in the public relations and publicity departments in the public sector; and
- c) laying down certain broad guidelines for determining expenditure on PR and publicity in such undertakings.

The experts' committee, in its recommendations, pointed out clearly that "the continued existence and growth of any public sector undertaking depends on the sanction of the people, who are its owners. Therefore, every public undertaking has already a clear-cut duty marked out for it, to tender to the public a full and frank account, at all times, of the state of its business, its progress and problems". It also suggested guidelines on the functions and responsibilities of the PR and advertising departments in the PSUs and on the minimum qualifications of PR officers. It, however, felt that "a joint cadre was not really feasible in the foreseeable future", and that any practical guideline for expenditure could not be laid down as "the needs of different undertakings could vary".

An important result of these recommendations, which were accepted by *BPE* and *SCOPE*, and which were circulated to all PSUs, was that the PR departments were set up in almost every undertaking, and a more or less uniform pattern of functioning was established. This was an important step in the development of the PR profession in the country, as the number of PSUs was very large and dispersed all over the country. This was all the more significant, because while some private sector organizations had fairly elaborate and high level PR departments, many others ignored PR altogether, and felt they could get along with advertising and publicity alone.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note** i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

1) Why did the need arise for industry to maintain relations with the government?

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2) Briefly state the recommendations made by the expert committee on the organizational structure of the PR units in the public sector.

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2.4 GROWTH OF THE PRESS AND GOVERNMENT MEDIA UNITS

With the dawn of independence, a democratically elected government started functioning in India. Realising the importance of keeping people informed, the government began to develop infrastructure for a vast information and mass communication network to suit its objectives and priorities.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting serves as the nodal ministry in this field for setting up and monitoring the information network through its various media units like the PIB, DAVP, Akashvani, Doordarshan, Films Division, Publication Division, etc., a brief mention of which was made in Block II, Unit 2. More detailed information is provided for you in Units 1 and 2 of Block IV.

The Press

We have seen that the newspapers and journals existed even prior to Independence. There were, however, only a few papers, and of these some were either directly run by foreign interests or were influenced by them. Independent newspapers, which supported the national interest, were under constant threat, and had to face restrictions and harassments of many kinds.

It was only after Independence that there was a burgeoning of newspapers and magazines all over the country. The most rapid growth took place amongst the papers and journals in the regional languages. Although the press was now free, thanks to the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution, the government still had a role to play, especially in the matter of import and allotment of newsprint and printing machinery as foreign exchange was scarce, and the newsprint demand far exceeded the indigenous capacity.

In July 1956, the Government of India, established the office of the Registrar of Newspapers. All newspapers and journals are to be registered at this office. The number of newspapers and journals have steadily grown since Independence, and today there are nearly 25,000 papers including dailies, weeklies, fortnightlies and other periodicals with a circulation of over 60 million. Most of these are privately owned.

You will appreciate that without the existence of a network for the dissemination of information and without a variety of the media reaching out to the people, it would not have been possible for the PR practitioners to play their role of creating understanding between their organizations and the public through sustained, planned and deliberate efforts.

Activity 1

Make a general assessment of how the growth of the media has provided increased opportunities to the PR practitioners.

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Check Your Progress 3

Note : i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.
 ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) List some of the factors that helped the growth of Public Relations in the immediate post-independence period?

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2.5 EMERGENCE OF PROFESSIONALISM IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

You would have realised from the series of events recounted in the previous sections that the ground had been laid for the emergence of PR as a full-fledged profession in India. We have seen, in section 2.4, that as industrial development got underway in the post-independence period, and large professionally managed enterprises began to emerge, they began to feel the need for PR. In many private sector undertakings, in multi-national companies, and in the public sector undertakings the PR departments were set up, and a cadre of PR professionals emerged.

Since, in the initial stage, there were no clear-cut codes of professional practice, and no standards had been laid down, the first requirement was to set up such standards and codes. For this purpose it was also necessary to form an organization which would bring under its umbrella the public relations professionals from all fields. This led to the formation of a central PR organization of the PR professionals. The Public Relations Society of India was formed in Bombay, in 1958. The First All India Public Relations Conference was held in New Delhi, in April, 1968. This conference took note of the fact that while public relations had been gaining currency, the reputation of the profession was sullied by the operations of some lobbyists and fixers, who were using rather dubious methods to gain their ends.

Understandably, the concern of the First All India Public Relations Conference was the adoption of a code of ethics, and defining the parameters of the PR profession. By and large, this conference succeeded in achieving its goal, and Public Relations has, since, come to

be recognised as a profession that is playing a useful and, in many ways, a crucial role in modern society.

The PR profession in India has benefitted greatly from interaction with the PR professionals abroad. These contacts started in the sixties, and resulted in a meeting of the Council of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), held in Bombay, in 1974. This IPRA Council meeting synchronised with the Fourth All India PR Conference, which had for its central theme, "Towards a more responsible citizenship". Besides, it might be of interest to note that Prof. Scott Cutlip, a leading authority on PR in the USA, conducted a course on PR at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi, in 1969, which was attended by many of the leading professionals in the country.

Check Your Progress 4

Note : i) Fill in the blanks with appropriate words.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

- 1) In the initial stage, there was no clear cut
for PR.
- 2) The PRSI was set up in in.....
- 3) The code of ethics for the PR profession was adopted at the
- 4) The PR profession in India benefitted from
with the PR professionals abroad.

2.6 PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION

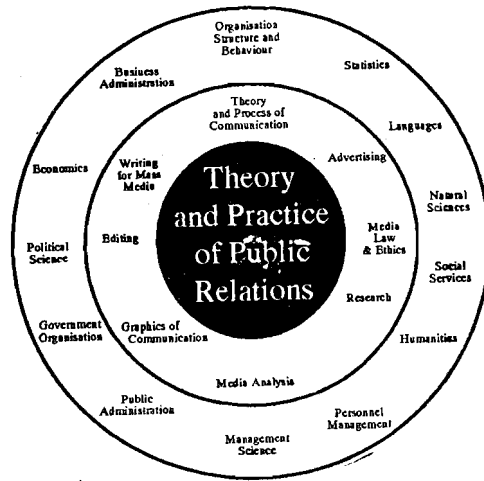
The first generation of PR practitioners in India in the fifties and sixties came from the field of journalism or advertising. Until then, there were no facilities for PR education in India. The PR professionals learnt from foreign books on the subject, from their own experience and through contacts with the PR professionals abroad. Some were fortunate enough to have undergone PR courses in the USA or the UK.

You would, however, appreciate that a profession cannot develop without facilities for education and training. One of the first tasks, taken up by the Public Relations Society of India, after its formation, was to organise such training programmes. The India Foundation for Public Relations Education and Research (IFPR) was organized by the PRSI to provide an academic and educational base for education and training. In planning their educational and research activities, PRSI and IFPR have taken note of the recommendations of IPRA on the subject of PR education. To harmonise educational standards on a worldwide scale, the IPRA decided, in 1980, to set up a working group for a systematic study of the state of PR education in different countries, and to make recommendations for education and standards in this field. The recommendations of this group were published in the IPRA Gold Paper No.4, in 1982.

In his introduction to the Paper, the Chairman of the IPRA Education and Research Committee stated :

"In considering the elements of public relations education, it is essential always to respect the individual nature of a country's culture and historical background. The theory of public relations is valid everywhere, but its practical application must take into account national character, economy and environment.

The curriculum for the education of a student wishing to enter the profession can be pictured as a series of three concentric circles. The smallest circle encloses the subjects specifically concerned with the practice of public relations. The second large circle has the subjects in the general field of communication. The third and the largest circle represents the general liberal arts and humanities background, which is essential preparation for a successful education".



THE WHEEL OF EDUCATION

From the IPRA World of Public Relations Exhibition, London, May 1979.

Check Your Progress 5

- Note :** i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.
 ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) What preparations would you consider essential for PR education besides PR theory, and Why?

.....

2.7 CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN INDIA

We could group the various functions of Public Relations under the following heads :

- 1) Communicating the organization's policies.
- 2) Projecting the image of an organization.
- 3) Monitoring the environment.
- 4) Counselling the top leadership of an organization.
- 5) Crisis management and problem-solving.
- 6) Issue management.

If we look at the PR scene in India, we find that while some of these functions are being performed by the PR people, others are either not being performed at all or performed only perfunctorily. The inadequacy may be attributed, to some extent, to the top leadership of various organizations and to some extent on the lack of ability on the part of the PR professionals to play the role expected of them.

In respect of communicating management policies, and in projecting the image of the organization, PR is generally active, and is called upon to plan and execute various programmes and projects. In the area of crisis management, too, the PR persons are now being sought for active participation though, at times, their role is limited to 'handling' the media. In the task of preparing organizations to face a crisis, and in deciding on policies and programmes to be followed for dealing with a crisis situation, PR generally has a very limited role to play. In problem-solving, too, PR is seldom asked to make a contribution as the effectiveness of the PR techniques in tackling major problems such as increasing productivity, preventing waste, reducing costs, improving safety consciousness, are not often appreciated.

Issue management is an area where PR can play a crucial role. With greater privatization, the field of investor relations is rapidly expanding, and PR is being called upon to play a key role in the mobilization of finances. With the phenomenon of collaborations, having become a regular feature of the corporate scene, financial public service is in great demand. The highly complex scenario of the capital market is leading to a high degree of specialization in the field of financial public relations. Many advertising agencies are offering consultancy services in handling and managing all communication for equity/debenture/bond issues.

It is, however, in the area of monitoring the social, political and economic environment, and counselling the top management that PR could do much more than it is being called upon to do today. As a result of the rapid changes in the socio-economic environment, both within the country and abroad, new issues of public interest are coming to the fore, and a wide variety of pressure groups are emerging. This is affecting PR in two ways. Corporations are having to deal with new publics, to understand the emerging issues and to devise strategies to handle these publics. On the other hand, these publics are themselves in need of public relations to put across their points of view, and to communicate with the government and other sections of the people. Ecology is one such factor, which was hardly of any significance a decade ago, but is now of crucial importance.

Consumerism and the consumer movement is another trend that is acquiring importance. Pressure groups like the trade unions have been active for a long time, but are increasing their clout as a result of having representatives in the Parliament and legislatures, and also because of their capacity to act unitedly on certain issues. The agriculturists lobby is also growing in strength, and has been able to get a considerable amount of legislation in its favour or to stall decisions that adversely affect its interests.

In addition, other minority groups, women's groups, the new class of the knowledge workers, the new media are emerging as publics, and the governments as well as the corporations have to reckon with them.

While it is the corporations, as a whole, that would be required to face these issues, it is the public relations specialists who have to deliver the blue prints for strategies that need to be adopted.

The growing complexities of the social environment in India, and the variegated pattern of issues coming up, require the development of the Public Relations Consultancies in the country. So far, only a few have come up in Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta. Many more would be needed, once organizations realise the importance of tackling the emerging issues, and of taking timely action before crisis situations develop.

The policies of economic liberalization announced by the government would undoubtedly give a boost to the PR profession in India. The reliance on the market forces rather than on the bureaucratic regulation to run the economy, and the creation of a competitive environment would offer a much wider scope for the use of the PR techniques than has been possible so far.

Check your Progress 6

- Note:** i) Answer the following question in the space given below.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) Why is it important for a PR person to 'monitor the environment'?

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.....

2.8 LET US SUM UP

We began this unit with the story of pre-independence era, when the government needed to mobilise people for the war effort. This gave a fillip to the organised PR activities.

Prior to Independence, our freedom movement was a greatly successful attempt at mobilising the masses. Mahatma Gandhi was able to harness public support despite cultural and linguistic diversity in the country. This was because of the excellent communication techniques used by him. The PR persons have much to learn from his ways.

The socio-economic environment in the post-independence era proved conducive to the growth of the PR discipline. On the one hand, there was rapid growth of mass communication, infrastructure, but the emergence of democratic institutions and the constitutional guarantee of fundamental rights to speech and expression greatly added thrust to the development of PR.

The country having opted for the pattern of a mixed economy, the various Industrial Policy Resolutions provided guidelines for planned industrial development. This led to setting up of giant public sector undertakings. Along with it, the Government of India also introduced other legislations to regulate the functioning of the industry. This necessitated liaisoning with the various regulatory bodies and the Parliament so that business houses had the necessity for government relations.

The public sector undertakings systematically established PR departments as per the guidelines issued by the Parliamentary Committee on public sector undertakings, as it was felt that they owed it to the public to keep them informed about the state of business of all public sector undertakings. Similarly, many private enterprises also began to set up PR departments so that a cadre of the PR professionals emerged.

A need was felt for a professional organization, which culminated in the formation of the PRSI, in 1958. This organization did much to increase the status of the PR profession, by first adopting a code of ethics, holding conferences, interacting with the professionals abroad, and by setting up facilities for the PR education and training.

This helped to set standards for the profession, and gave PR an important status in the corporate life of the country. At present, the political, social and economic environment, the emergence of pressure groups, surfacing of issues and trends like consumerism, environment protection, liberalization and creation of competitive environment offer unlimited scope for the practice of PR.

2.9 GLOSSARY

Adult Suffrage:	Voting power for the adults.
Fundamental Right:	Privileges given to individuals on which the government must not infringe.
Harijan:	Name proposed by Gandhiji for the cast of untouchables. Also the title of the journal edited by him, which proved very popular and effective for accelerating the freedom struggle.
Charkha:	The spinning wheel, which Gandhiji adopted as his symbol to denote the self-reliance concept.
Monitoring of Environment :	To keep a watch on the changes in the social/legal/ political/ economic conditions that are likely to affect the business interests.
Democracy:	The form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people, collectively.
Issue:	Security put into circulations by a company for money borrowed from the public on the company's property.
Enterprise:	An undertaking, a business concern

2.10 FURTHER READING

Dhenkney V.M. (1992); *Public Relations in Business and Public Administration in India*; Vaishali; Poona.

Kaul, J.M. (1982); *Public Relation in India*; 2nd Edition; Noya Prakash; Calcutta.

Mehta, D.S.(1980); *Handbook of Public Relations in India*; Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd.; Bombay.

2.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The government needed to mobilise public support in favour of the war effort. Hence, a Ministry of Information was created to influence public opinion through its units.
- 2)
 - Through identity with the masses and their aspirations;
 - Use of symbol, like the charkha, symbolising self-reliance;
 - Staging of events like the Dandi March;
 - Holding of public meetings;
 - Writing of hard hitting articles in Harijan;
 - Honest communication.
- 3) Two features of great significance are;
 - a) guarantee of certain fundamental rights like freedom of speech and expression, etc., and
 - b) adult suffrage which have power to people for democratic functioning.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) The elaborate framework of legislation by the Parliament and the setting up of several bodies to regulate the functioning of the industry resulted in a situation, making it imperative for the industry to develop relations with the government and its regulatory institutions.
- 2) Briefly, the committee suggested that :
 - * the PSUs had a clear cut duty to keep the public fully informed about the state of its business;
 - * it provided guidelines on the functioning and responsibilities of PR in the PSUs;
 - * it laid down minimum qualification for the PR officers; and
 - * as needs of different undertakings varied, the guidelines on expenditure could not be laid down.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1)
 - * The democratic functioning and constitutional guarantee of fundamental rights provided conducive atmosphere;
 - * the growth of the government media units and information network;
 - * rapid development of the Press; and
 - * industrialisation of the country.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Code of ethics.
- 2) Bombay, 1959,
- 3) The First All India PR Conference.
- 4) Interaction.

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) The curriculum for the PR education is not confined to the PR theory alone. Besides the PR theory, it is important to know the general field of communication. It is also essential to have an arts and humanities background to know the country's culture and historical background. This is so because the practical application of PR must take into account the national character, economy and environment.

Check Your Progress 6

- 1) The PR personnel have to be aware of the socio-economic environment in which their organization operates. New legislations, new issues and the emerging pressure groups could affect the working of the organizations. Hence, it is important to be aware of the emerging trends and to know the country's historical and cultural background.

UNIT 3 PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS ORGANIZATIONS

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Public Relations and the Early Environment
- 3.3 Public Relations Society of India (PRSI)
 - 3.2.1 Major Objectives
 - 3.3.2 Membership
 - 3.3.3 PRSI Organization
 - 3.3.4 Code of Ethics
 - 3.3.5 PRSI Conferences
 - 3.3.6 PR Education
 - 3.3.7 PR Publications by the Indian Authors
 - 3.3.8 PRSI Fellowship
- 3.4 International Public Relations Association (IPRA)
 - 3.4.1 PR World Congress in India
 - 3.4.2 IPRA Gold Paper No.4
- 3.5 India Foundation for Public Relations Education and Research
- 3.6 Impact of the PR Associations on the Indian Society
- 3.7 Let us Sum up
- 3.8 Glossary
- 3.9 Further Reading
- 3.10 Check Your Progress: Model Answers

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we introduce you to professional associations, both Indian and international, which have played significant roles in the growth of public relations in India. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the status of the public relations in India in the early fifties;
- explain the environmental factors which encouraged the growth of public relations in India;
- define the role of the PRSI to promote public relations;
- outline the growth of the PR educations;
- explain the code of ethics adopted in India;
- discuss the contribution of the International Public Relations Association;
- enumerate the contribution of the Indian authors towards building a body of knowledge; and
- list the activities of the IFPR in building an academic and professional base.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss the role of the Public Relations organizations that have contributed to the growth of PR in India in the last three decades. We present to you in detail their activities, relating to creating an awareness for public relations, building a professional base and laying a strong foundation for PR education and training.

You will be made familiar with the environment in which PR is involved in India, what its status was, and what role was accorded to it in the early stages of its development.

However, in this unit, we shall mainly concentrate on tracing the history of the foremost organization looking after the interests of the PR fraternity in India, *i. e.* the Public Relations Society of India, also known as the PRSI. We shall also examine the role and impact of these professional organizations in bringing about an improvement in the standards of the profession through setting up of better educational facilities, by organizing seminars and holding workshops and conferences. A glimpse of the Ninth World PR Conference held in Bombay, in 1982, will also be provided. In short, you will come to know about the impact of this organization on the PR scene in India.

3.2 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE EARLY ENVIRONMENT

Although Public Relations was well developed in the United States, its application to the Indian scene became noticeable only in the early fifties. This was confined to the multinational organizations, which realised the importance of building up public opinion in their favour under the new political set-up.

After independence, the public opinion was unfavourable to foreign companies operating in India. The Indian public viewed them as an extension of the foreign rule in the area of trade, industry and commerce. The large oil companies, *Burmah Shell, Esso and Caltex* saw this as a threat to their existence and growth. Among the Indian business groups, the *Tatas* were the first to realise the importance of Public Relations as an instrument of growth to create an atmosphere of trust between the business, the government and the Indian public.

The early fifties, witnessed the construction of three major steel plants at *Durgapur (West Bengal), Rourkela (Orissa), and Bhilai (Madhya Pradesh)*. The *Durgapur* plant was entrusted to a British consortium of steel companies. The *Rourkela* plant was commissioned to Germany headed by *Demag-Krupp*, and world leader in steel. The third plant at *Bhilai* was entrusted to the Russians. The three plants were "green field operations", and it necessitated the rehabilitation of the rural folks to safer places to protect them from the hazards of steel fabrication. For the smooth construction of these plants, the Public Relations personnel were recruited to communicate the resulting benefits to the local community, the opinion leaders at the district and state levels, and the Indian public at large. The PR operations maintained close links with the media at the state and national level. This helped to overcome public hostility.

In the fifties, the Public Relations personnel managing these activities were expatriates or foreigners with Public Relations experience in their home countries and the Indians recruited from among the journalists largely due to their experience with the local media. The Indian PR personnel of the multinational oil companies were trained abroad and, later, absorbed to head the PR operations in India to replace the expatriates. Thus towards the end of the fifties, India had a group of Public Relations professionals. Although they were a very small group, they had an understanding of the role of Public Relations in the emerging industrial India, which contemplated development with a series of five-year plans. It was this group, which had the vision of Public Relations as a management area in the new India in order to build a nation with the co-operation of all segments of society. No one was to be ignored.

In 1958, this small group formed a professional Public Relations Association to promote the cause of Public Relations, and to inculcate the PR professionalism. This group, led by *Farouk Mulla, Kali Mody* and a few others, met in Bombay and formed the Public Relations Society of India. That was the birth of India's first national public relations body.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note: i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.
ii) Check your answers with those supplied at the end of this unit.

- 1) Why did the foreign companies find it difficult to operate in India after independence?
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- 2) Which was the first business house to practice PR actively in India?
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- 3) How did the concept of the PRSI evolve?
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3.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF INDIA (PRSI)

Formation

As discussed in the earlier chapter, the concept of a national professional association was visualised as early as 1958, but a formal registered body under the Indian Societies Act, XXVI came into being in 1966. It was registered in the State of Maharashtra.

3.3.1 Major Objectives

In the Memorandum of the Association, the society adopted the following as its major objectives:

- a) To promote the recognition of Public Relations as a profession;
- b) To formulate, promote and interpret to the public the understanding of the objectives, potentialities, and functions of the Public Relations practitioners;
- c) To promote and seek to maintain high standards among the Public Relations practitioners;
- d) To exchange ideas, experiences and informations on the value of the public Relations practitioners; and
- e) To foster the study and research in Public Relations.

3.3.2 Membership

Membership of the society is available to any person, "who devotes the whole or a major portion of his time to the practice of Public Relations". A special category of Corporate Members was created to involve a company, institution or association which believes in and engages the practice of organized Public Relations. The society also enrolls Non-voting members in "Associate and Student" category to encourage a larger participation in the public relations activity. The PRSI has 20 regional chapters, and its membership strength is over 2500, including all categories of members.

3.3.3 PRSI Organization

The PRSI constitution permits a two-tier organization, the National Council and the Regional Chapters. The Regional Chapter is the grass roots organization, which enrolls

members, holds meetings and workshops and organizes training programmes. Each Chapter elects its own Chairman, Secretary and members of the executive committee, and runs the chapter under the overall guidance of the National Council. The National Council is composed of three or more representatives of each Chapter. The Chairman and the Secretary of the Chapter are members of the National Council by its constitution. The National Council elects its own President and other office-bearers. The National President is elected each year at the annual election meeting of the National Council. Over the last 25 years, the PRSI has established a healthy convention, by which the office of the President is rotated among the four regions of the country.

The National Council provides a broad guideline to the Chapters, initiates activities relating to education and research, and maintains close contact with the Government, Chambers of Commerce, Management Associations, Universities and other educational institutions. The National Council meets four times a year in different parts of the country. Often, the National Council meetings are followed by a national seminar hosted by a local Chapter.

3.3.4 Code of Ethics

As a professional organization, the PRSI took a major step to discipline its members, and encourage professional activities, by adopting a code of ethics in its First All India Public Relations Conference, held in Delhi, in 1968, in the presence of over 150 members and a delegation from International Public Relations Association. This Code was earlier adopted, in 1965, by the International Public Relations Associations at Athens, Greece, and, therefore, it is known as the "Code of Athens" among the world community of Public Relations. The Code is largely based on the United Nations Charter on Human Rights. (The full-text of the Code of Athens is given in Block I, Unit III).

After the adoption of the Code of Ethics at the All India Public Relations Conference, each member delegate was presented with a scroll embodying the full text of the declaration. Since then the Code of Ethics is reproduced in the Conference volumes for the benefit of the new members joining the society.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note:** i) Fill in the blanks with appropriate words.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

- 1) The Code of Ethics adopted by the IPRA at is also known as
- 2) The Code is so called as it was adopted in the city of
- 3) The PRSI is a organization with a and.....
- 4) The PRSI was registered as a society in in the state of
- 5) The PRSI holds a National Conference

3.3.5 PRSI Conferences

Ever since 1968, the PRSI has been organizing the All India Public Relations Conference every two years. Later, in the eighties the conference was turned into an annual event to meet the aspirations of more Chapters wanting to host an All India Conference.

To the PRSI, the National Conference brings in the major users of Public Relations -- the Government, the Corporate Management and the Institutions -- to present the various uses of Public Relations in their own environment. It is also an opportunity to educate its own members, and members of the allied profession in the effective PR techniques being utilised and developed in India and abroad.

The Conference serves two objectives:

- 1) To introduce Public Relations as a management discipline in non-user organizations; and

- 2) To improve the professional competence of its own members by exposing them to the usage of Public Relations, and thereby, increasing the number of members by attracting talented persons from allied professions, e.g., Journalism and Advertising.

To serve the first objective, the PRSI invited prominent persons from the Government, top management of public and private sector organizations, the media, education, science and technology and international Public Relations to the Conferences as speakers and resource persons. The 1976 Conference in Delhi was inaugurated by Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the President of India. Prominent leaders like Shri I.K. Gujral, Shri Vasant Sathe, Shri L.K. Advani and Shri V.N. Gadgil have been closely associated with the PRSI activities on several occasions.

To broaden the depth of public relations expertise, the Conference invited senior PR professionals to make presentations on a large variety of issues concerning the employer--employee relations, the media relations, consumerism, financial PR, community relations, relations with the government, crisis communication and related areas. These conferences provided an opportunity of cross - fertilization among members from various organizations.

The first case study presentation at the 1974 PRSI Conference was on the PR involvement in lowering the level of production waste at a tyre plant. The case study was selected for publication in the PR News of New York. Ms. Denny Griswold, the editor of the PR News, was present at this Conference.

Thereafter, the presentation of case studies became a regular feature of the Conference. The delegates looked forward to it with great expectations. Later, in line with international conferences, the PRSI introduced case study competitions, and offered awards to provide recognition to the Public Relations professionals and their organizations.

Activity 1

You are now aware of areas where PR operates, and what its scope is. Using your imagination, draw up a list of possible cases which could be worthy of study because of specific targeted successful public relations activity.

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3.3.6 PR Education

The founding fathers of the PRSI visualised the need for an academic base to introduce Public Relations as an important management area. Immediately after the All India Public Relations Conference, in 1968, the PRSI invited Dr. Scott Cutlip, noted American Professor, to hold a Management Development Programme in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

Throughout the seventies, the PRSI organised a series of workshops and seminars through its regional Chapters. In 1973, the PRSI Delhi Chapter organized a 2-month refresher course, which was later organized in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Between 1973 and 1976, the Delhi Chapter organized four courses. Meanwhile, the PRSI worked very closely to introduce a post-graduate programme at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

At this stage, the PRSI took an important step forward by introducing Public Relations as a component of the management development programme at the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad, and the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

However, the most important contribution of the PRSI came in the formulation of the *India Foundation for PR Education and Research*, a trust created by the PRSI, and registered in 1990, to provide an academic and professional base for education and training. The trust was the result of almost ten years of planning in consultation with International Public Relations Association and similar foundations in the U.K. and U.S.A.

3.3.7 PR Publications by the Indian Authors

Until the mid-seventies, there were no publications based on Indian experience. The Indian PR professionals had to refer to American and British authors. The PRSI sought to close this gap by publishing Conference volumes which contained contributions from Indian practitioners.

The first Indian publication to make its appearance was *Public Relations in India*, by J.M. Kaul. This was followed by *Public Relations: a Scientific Approach* by Baldeo Sahai, published by SCOPE Publications. *Public Relations: Problems and Prospects* by Anil Basu. C.V. Narasimha Reddi, yet another PRSI president, authored *How to Be a good PRO*, and also published a *Handbook of Public Relations*.

Two recent publications worthy of mention are a *Public Relations Manual* by Sushil Bahl, the Chairman of the PRSI Bombay Chapter.

The authors mentioned above were closely associated with the PRSI, and provided leadership to enrich the profession with a body of knowledge that was wholly Indian.

3.3.8 PRSI Fellowship

The introduction of the PRSI Fellowship in collaboration with Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, was another step forward. Launched in 1974, the Rs. 50,000/-fellowship was offered to a scholar to spend two years in collecting data and case studies of the PR applications from selected Indian companies and organizations. The entire exercise was carried out under the guidance of an experienced faculty nominated by the IIM Ahmedabad. The IIM, known for its case study-related method of teaching, recommended extensive documentation of Public Relations case studies of reputed well-managed companies.

The research conducted over a period of two years, was later put together by the IIM, Ahmedabad, with teaching notes for classroom application. The following case studies were compiled:

- Indian Airlines Lockout, 1973;
- Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore;
- Industrial Conflict in 1975;
- Organization of Pharmaceutical Products of India;
- ACC's village improvement Scheme; and
- A product launched by Larsen & Toubro.

Check Your Progress 3

- Note: i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Briefly outline the major objectives of the PRSI.

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2) Who could become a member of the PRSI?
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3) What are the objectives of holding the All India PRSI Conferences?
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4) Name the case studies which were compiled under the PRSI fellowship?
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3.4 INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION (IPRA)

At this stage, it would be worthwhile to discuss the contribution of the IPRA, the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), to the Indian PR scene. But before we proceed further, let us familiarise ourselves with the organization itself.

The IPRA, founded in May, 1955, is a world-wide professional organization dedicated to the highest standards of public relations practice. Membership is open to competent professionals, who have practised at a senior level or for at least five years and who operate internationally. The IPRA comprises over 800 individuals in over 60 countries, forming a network and knowledge-base of experience and contact accessible to all members.

The IPRA is an independent organization with no formal links to other public relations bodies. However, close functional relationships are maintained with national and regional associations.

The IPRA's link with the PRSI dates back to 1968, when the IPRA's code of ethics was adopted in India. The IPRA held its first general assembly meeting in India, in 1974, which brought the IPRA members in close contact with the members of the PRSI. The presence of the IPRA President and Council members at the National Conference of the PRSI brought India closer to international PR practice. This exchange of information and ideas between IPRA and PRSI gradually increased with the election of an Indian, Mr. Sanat Lahiri, a former president of PRSI, as the President of IPRA. The PRSI sent a large delegation to the Seventh World Congress at Boston, and even a larger one at the Eighth World Congress at London, which was presided over by Mr. Sanat Lahiri.

3.4.1 PR World Congress in India

The Public Relations World Congress is held every three years under the banner of the IPRA. It is organized by the National Public Relations Association of the country where it is held in collaboration with the IPRA.

Ten World Congresses (held every three years) have been sponsored by the IPRA with the following themes: Public Relations in the Service of Mankind (Brussels, 1958); Public Relations for the Progress of the Community: Experience and Methods (Venice, 1961); Public Relations and the tides of change (Montreal, 1964); PR and the New Demands of a

world. Side by side with the growth of interest in consumerism, there has been a considerable increase in 'protests'. It has become fashionable for individuals and groups, aggrieved by events, or proposed developments, to organize themselves in order to protest as effectively as possible. Their protests range from peaceful protests to violent agitations and vandalism. The PR people, today, have to handle such development carefully and effectively, or else it could create major problems for the organization.

Not so long ago, top managements in India — Chairmen and Managing Directors — were accountable only to the shareholders, employees and their unions. Now we have seen the emergence of consumerist groups and pro-environment lobbies, which are demanding that industry take cognizance of public interest in a wide range of areas, from profits at the expense of the consumers to issues like community development, pollution, etc. This is forcing the managements to justify their actions to their stockholders, and this social responsibility is being passed down to the PRO.

It is for this reason that a public relations department is today also termed as a public affairs department. It is expected to handle the commercial PR as well as the economic and social issues, competently. It is, thus, a "public face of the organization, as well as the voice in community".

5.7 ACCOUNTABILITY : THE KEY FACTOR

Management in modern society is accountable not only to the groups which traditionally control it, but also to the public at large. The concept of accountability to the general public is applicable to both the public sector and private enterprises alike. Businesses are subject to pressures from the government, Parliament and legislatures, various statutory authorities, financial institutions, trade unions, trade and professional organizations, and from a variety of external groups. No organization, whether public or private, service or commercial, could afford to ignore these pressures. It is in this context that organizations need to be "accountable". When the question of accountability of the organization comes up, PR could not absolve itself of its own responsibility to project the organization as a "socially responsible" one.

Thus, "accountability" has become a key factor in the functioning of PR. The present trend is for organizations to have a checklist of demands, needs, aspirations, fears and threats of their internal and external publics. They then examine their performance against this checklist, and review it at regular intervals. This is primarily to compare whether the organization is living up to the expectations of its publics. The PR professional is expected to provide feedback from these publics to the management, and devise means to project an image of accountability. What people are looking for in an organization today is a combination of professionalism and humanity, for this is what gains respect for an organization in modern society.

While we learn how PR could help in projecting the organization as accountable at the bar of public opinion, we must also examine the corollary to it. This refers to the accountability of the PR department to the organization. The PR department has to justify the investment made in it by the organization through fruitful performance. This trend is slowly gaining ground and the PR professionals are now able to, if not quantify, at least present a cost-effective image through their performance. In future, there might emerge a way for quantifying PR's role as a key factor in the overall performance of the organization. This is an area in which research and evaluation in PR, could play a crucial role.

Research and Evaluation

The general resource crunch and inflation in the media costs has resulted in another trend. Cost effectiveness is the buzz word. Validating of the PR efforts has become crucial. Establishing of benchmarks and evaluation of the PR efforts is being demanded by the managements. The PR persons could not escape this responsibility.

Research is beginning to play a vital role in planning and then demonstrating effectiveness of the PR strategies, and justifying the costs put behind them. The days of "shooting from the hip" are gone. These are the days of the responsible PR practice. There are more primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative surveys being undertaken by the professional

PR people in organizations. Broad, elaborate opinion polls, audits, and tracking studies have become a norm to provide the PR benchmarks. This trend is visible in India as well.

There are two kinds of research, which help in ascertaining the impact of the PR effort in the creation of a favourable image of the organization. These are motivation research and effectiveness surveys.

Motivation research seeks to discover, through indepth interviews, with a representative sample of the organizations' publics, which kind of PR effort has motivated the company towards a favourable image of the organization.

Effectiveness surveys are used to measure the impact on public opinion made by an organization's PR activities. One of the most precise measurements of the change resulting from the impact of communication on the public opinion is a "before-and-after" study of the attitudes of the publics. Prior to the start of the campaign, a representative sample of the organization's publics is interviewed to determine their attitudes and the extent of the public's knowledge of the organization. After the conclusion of the PR campaign, the same sample is interviewed to see if there has been any change in their opinions as a result of the PR messages. These surveys are used to measure the response to the PR messages by its publics. Also, these are used to measure public opinion on specific events like open houses, anniversary celebrations lock-outs, strikes, etc.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note :** i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

1) What do you understand by the term 'Accountability'? Identify the publics to whom an organization is accountable.

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2) How does one ascertain the impact of the PR effort in creating a favourable image of an organization?

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5.8 NEW TACTICAL WEAPONS AND TOOLS

As the PR practice continues to become more strategic, its relationship and interaction with other communications related disciplines grows closer, and provides some very appropriate and strong tactical weapons to communicate with the target groups.

Among the variety, two of which are most obvious and most useful in today's context are:

- i) PR and Advertising joining forces towards common goals. Although advertising has always been one of the key strategic tools in PR, yet advertising and PR were always considered as two separate functions, and not to be mixed. Advertising was seen as a part of marketing, and PR a part of communications. Today, there are many instances where advertising and PR work together. Corporate advertising is one major example where PR and advertising always form a communications team. Another area is 'sponsorships'. PR and advertising go hand in hand. The Reliance World Cup Cricket Tournament is a classic example of this. The benefits of the integrated approach and its results, in terms of the impact and mileage to the company,

are well known. The dividing line between the product advertising and institutional advertising is blurring. It is a systematic relationship — quality product contributing to company's image and company's reputation leading to ready acceptance of its products.

Further still, the 'one-stop-shopping' concept among marketing companies, *i.e.*, hiring of an ad agency and its PR consultancy is another development which supplements and promotes this concept of joining forces for results.

Activity 2

Some items like soap, cosmetics, etc., are purchased on impulse, while others which are costlier like household gadgets, stereo, the TV, etc., are purchased after careful decision making. Take a survey in your neighbouring households, whether the purchase-decision with regard to these products was taken

- a) on the advice of another user;
- b) on reading the advertisement;
- c) on the basis of the manufacturer's reputation;
- d) on being coaxed by the salesman; or
- e) on a combination of two or more of the above reasons.

- ii) **Common Communication Media :** The spurt in the variety and availability of a range of communication media, like the television, home video, computer networks, facsimile, E-mail, etc., has brought about a change in the tools used traditionally for the PR communication, which has placed reliance on the press and related print media.

Many of these new technology tools could be employed effectively. However, it still needs skills to choose the most appropriate tool for a particular job to draw upon the talent and knowledge for using it for impact and success. In a way, the PR person could be likened to a master craftsman.

5.8.1 Technology in PR

Technology has made its impact felt in every field, including PR.

Two areas in which the impact is quite noticeable are :

- i) **Establishing of data-bases :** With the computer becoming so much a part of our lives, data-base systems and software have become very important for business activities. And these are becoming indispensable in the PR field as well.

To personalise communications, the PR outfits abroad are now building data files on target groups individuals, groups, and companies. These are establishing target group 'pyramids' and 'matrices', whereby the target groups are identified by importance and by activities. This is going to be very much a part of the day-to-day PR work in India too, as one needs to closely monitor the moves of one's competitors also.

- ii) **Global Communications and Instant Communication :** It is said that a whisper in a board room, today, could be front-page news worldwide in less than 10 seconds. The telecommunication technology has given access to a whole new range of existing opportunities. And instant global communications are increasingly recognized by both the users and receivers. Desk-top publishing, fax, newspapers, computer graphics and animation, video conferences, cellular phones and even photo-telephones are other new technological developments, which are making communications speedier and more effective. As a consequence, PR will be more result-oriented in the coming years.

5.8.2 Corporate PR : A New Concept

With advent of globalisation and the need for organizations to reach out to its publics beyond national boundaries, big organizations, of both public and private sectors, have evolved a new concept called corporate PR. This concept envisages the inter-linking of corporate

policy, corporate performance and communication, with the PR chief having the same status as the head of any other key management function. Whether it is the public sector National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) or the private sector Hindustan Lever Ltd. (HLL) or Godrej, all these organizations have adopted PR as a corporate policy. Their PR chiefs handle top policy matters, whether it is a question of crude oil purchasers or sale of minerals, or the controversy surrounding the detergent soaps. Only rarely does the chief executive enter the picture. This has lent a high degree of credibility to the PR profession in India. Managements now agree that when it comes to the question of facing the press and its barrage of investigative questions, there could be no better choice other than the professional PRO to effectively place the organization's view-point before the media. This trend is bound to increase the status of PR in India, and opens up new opportunities for the budding PR professionals.

Check Your Progress 4

- Note:** i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

How have the new communication technologies affected PR functioning?

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5.9 FUTURE PROSPECTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Organizations need to speak up today, not just in defence, but also to glorify themselves for their initiative and accomplishments. These need to talk to all different publics, and to be honest, frank and transparent to all their publics — both internal and external. The communication messages emanating from an organization are not just promotional in nature. Rather, a great many are aimed at building bridges of understanding with the external publics. All of this leads to one significant pointer.

PR emerging as an independent and specialised profession. The scenario or perspective for PR for the next two decades is that the practitioners will be gearing themselves to meet the challenges that will be confronting them. With counselling coming into its own, the PROs will have a field day. The new economic policy of liberalisation makes it more challenging. Structural changes in the policy have had a tremendous impact on the corporate sector. Mere in-house PR departments may not be able to cope with the global needs of the corporate conglomerates. Here the role of the PR counselling and use of the PR consultancy services are in the offing, which will help bridge cultural gaps with professional ease.

To achieve its utmost potential, PR in the coming years will need to cultivate resources. For this, reliance on educational and professional institutes and universities in both undergraduate and graduate schools drawing upon social, economic, business law, behavioural research, and other relevant disciplines is imminent.

The demand for competent people, both for generalists in counselling and the trained people in special services, will rise steeply. The number of men and women engaged in this profession will steadily increase every year.

With the prospects of government involvement and regulations, the importance of business-government relationships will continue to increase. The need for the PR competence in this area will expand at a fast space.

Because of the increasing complexity of our society, the rising level of education, and the growing sophistication of business management, the PR person will be required to uphold the highest standards and ethics.

The rapid advances in communications and transportation will bring a vast expansion in

international trade, and the field of international PR is fast becoming one of the most promising in any branch of work. PR has a mounting need to help clients adjust themselves to a world stiven with far-reaching and dramatic changes; and the practioners will take an active part in helping corporate and other organizations develop policies.

And now, a PR hotline!

In the West, the telephone hotlines are extremely popular with the consumers as these offer the convenience of asking questions, getting free advice or assistance for ordering products. The Telephone hotlines exist on every conceivable topic, from gardening tips and career counselling to sorting out marital problems and health advice.

And now, a unique addition to this is the PR hotline business service, created with an eye to serving smaller enterprises, which cannot afford the high retainership fee for PR firms or those needing quick advice. What is even more unusual is that credit cards are also accepted in payment for services rendered.

We are living in a time of great transition, moving into a period of even more far-reaching change, affecting every element of our society. In the free regions of the world, public opinion has and will continue to have the last word. Even in countries not counted as free, the power of public opinion is being felt today. The more enlightened and better informed public opinion is, the sounder its judgment will be. The more attuned our institutions (companies) are to the needs and aspirations of an increasingly complex society (our target groups), the more able these will be to grow and prosper through genuine service (PR) to the public welfare.

Taken together, all these factors constitute the opportunity and the challenge for PR to fulfill its expectations and its potential in the future.

Check Your Progress 5

- Note : i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Mention some factors which are pointers to increased importance of the PR personnel in the future.

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5.10 LET US SUM UP

Predicting trends is always a difficult proposition, more so in the PR profession. But, in this unit, what we have attempted is to relate the different developments in the PR discipline to what could or should, eventually, take place in the PR field. For instance, in this unit, we have pointed out to a growing trend of professionalising the PRO, and making the PR discipline as "strategic". New techniques are being evolved to tackle the rising profile of multi-national companies and the NRI investors in the Indian economic scene.

We have also seen how technology is making a major impact on the PR practice, particularly in the field of establishing data-bases and computer software, and also the building of data files on target group individuals, companies and rivals in competition.

Another area that has been covered in this unit has been the scope of Research, Evaluation and Accountability in PR. You must have, by now, realised that research is beginning to play a vital role in planning and then demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of the PR strategies. The current trends abroad of elaborate opinion polls, social audits, and tracking studies are already visible on the Indian scene.

One important development in India during the last one decade has been the sudden growth of the consumerist movement in India. The Consumer Protection Fora are doing excellent work. PR needs to come in a big way in acting as a liaison between its organization and the victim-complainant before the Forum. Further, the growth of the PR profession has been extended to even non-commercial organizations like the police, universities, hospitals and municipal corporations. The PR departments are slowly changing into the Public Affairs Departments.

5.11 GLOSSARY

Strategy :	A term used to describe a communication act planned before hand, which is deliberate, and has a clear purpose. Strategies are used to deal with particular groups or situations.
Counselling :	Giving advice professionally.
Accountability :	Liable to answer and be responsible.
Sample :	A group selected from a larger social group, for analysis, using statistical methods.
Teleconferencing :	A facility on telephone exchange that enables the interlinking of more than two parties in a single call, each person being able to hear and address the other.
Data Processing :	Handling of data -- letters, words, numbers, statements -- in a sequence of operations designed to obtain a specific result. The computer programmes provide the sequence of operations.
Communication Technologies :	Broad term to include all new developments in technological processes and systems that aid communication, e.g., the rotary press, cinematography, cellular radio, satellite, fibre optic technology, facsimile, interactive video, word processor, computer graphics, compact disc, high definition photography, etc.
Facsimile :	Transmission of exact copy of a printed or handwritten page or image by electronic means. Documents and data can be instantly transmitted in the facsimile form.
Electronic Mail :	A technology that enables companies to exchange mail electronically by using computer terminals.

5.12 FURTHER READING

Cutlip, S.M. & : *Effective Public Relations*, 6th Edition 1986, Practice Hall. Center, A.H.

Dhenkney, V.M. : *Public Relations in Business and Public Administration in India*, 1972, Vaishali Publications.

Jenkins, Frank : *Planned Public Relations*, 1969 Interbooks, London.
Press Relations Practice, 1968 Interbooks, London.

Robert. W Bly : *Targeted Public Relations*, 1993,
Henry Holt and Company, New York.

5.13 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) False 2) True 3) False 4) True 5) False

Check Your Progress 2

- a) Image-building activity through publicity, house journals, institutional advertising, etc.
- b) Financial Relations : to maintain the shareholders loyalty through corporate disclosures.
- c) Contributing to the HRD in coordination with the personal department through effective employee communication.
- d) Crisis management to safeguard reputation.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) A business organization is subject to a lot of pressures for good performance from several publics. It must perform well, and participate in welfare tasks for earning the goodwill of the general public. This concept is termed as accountability. An organization is accountable to its various publics like the government, parliament, various statutory bodies, employees, financial organizations/shareholders, and community at large.
- 2) Two kinds of research -- the motivation research and effectiveness surveys -- are used to measure the impact of an organization. The motivation research seeks to discover what kind of PR effort has brought about a change in the attitude by use of a representative sample. Effectiveness surveys are used to measure the impact on public opinion made by our organization's activity. This often uses before and after studies of the attitude of the public to assess the effectiveness of a PR campaign.

Check Your Progress 4

There has been a spurt in the range and availability of communication technologies like the TV, facsimile, video film, computer network, E-mail, etc., which have opened up vast opportunities for the PR communication. Instead of total reliance on the print medium, these could be used appropriately. With data-base system and software, one can build data files on target groups, companies competitors, etc. The DTP, computers graphics, animation, etc., could also be put to effective use, while instant global communication with tele-conferencing, photo telephone, etc., could have a great impact on business administration.

Check Your Progress 5

The twenty-first century is sure to bring both challenge and opportunity for the PR profession, because of

- the liberalisation policy, which has exposed India to greater international competition;
- growth in the educational and training facilities for PR;
- constant need for the government-business relationship;
- rising sophistication of the business management;
- international PR with the advanced technology; and
- growing power of the public opinion.

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Activity 1

Make a list of activities on which you would like to receive training as a PR professional.

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4.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have covered a very important aspect of the PR education, training and research. We have seen the increasingly significant role being played by PR in different organizations due to increasing sophistication in the business management and other external pressures in the socio-economic environment. It is now imperative for any kind of organization to have a PR department to cope with the publics.

We have traced the evolution of various efforts made by different institutions to impart the PR education and training so that this discipline becomes a "profession". The educational institutions have contributed to the growth of the PR status of Certificate, Diploma, Graduate and Post-graduate courses in University Journalism and Mass Communication University.

Departments offer PR as a subject in their courses. Only the Indian Institute of Mass Communication offers a full-time PG Diploma in PR, while Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University offers a one-year Bachelor's Course in PR through correspondence. Institutes run by the Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan also run part-time courses in PR in the evening classes.

While most of these impart good theoretical knowledge, there are inadequacies in these training courses. This includes dearth of the teachers, sound infrastructure, books on the Indian scene, coordination between the teachers and PR professionals, etc. Besides, there is no compulsory practical training. As PR is action-oriented, some effective methods and strategies have to be evolved to make the PR education and training viable and feasible. Therefore, the objectives of both the PR education and PR training must be differentiated, so that we could identify the levels at which the PR education is possible, and the levels at which the PR training need to be provided through in-house training facilities or even by getting external expertise to conduct courses for PR itself. Besides, allied social sciences also need to be incorporated in the curriculum.

We have also emphasised the need for effective support from the PR research to the PR discipline. The objectives of research for PR and different types of PR research and the techniques involved have also been discussed. In conclusion, we note that the research studies could greatly enrich the discipline.

4.9 GLOSSARY

- Training :** To instruct in discipline, to prepare for performance.
- Case-Study :** A process of examining a specific case with a view to arriving at a solution either by action or by decision. An industrial case — study might analyse a particular conflict, a breakdown in communication, offer an explanation of the dispute, and a way of solving it.
- Accreditation :** To certify as meeting official/professional requirements.
- Content Analysis :** Research in the mass media messages for the purposes of identifying, categorising and quantifying it.

4.10 FURTHER READING

- Balan, K.R. (1990) ; *Lectures on Applied Public Relations*, S.Chand & Co.; New Delhi.
Basu, Anil (1990) ; *Public Relations — Problems and Prospects*.
Kaul, J.M. (1986) ; *Public Relations in India*, (2nd Ed.), Noya Prakash; Calcutta.
Narasimha Reddy, CV (1974); *How to be a good PRO*, Sharada Publications; Hyderabad.

4.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) PR activity deals with human relations and communication. It consists of informing, educating, motivating, organising and persuading people, which calls for creative talents.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) PR is now a vital management function. All organisations including the government, industry, commerce, educational institutions, voluntary organizations need the trained PR personnel, as they have to deal with heterogeneous groups that could have conflicting interests. Harmonious functioning in a pluralistic society merits education and training of the PR professionals.
- 2) PR is taught at various academic levels in India. Institutes like the Indian Institute of Mass Communication and Kerala Press Academy.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Good infrastructural facilities including access to equipment and tools, trained teachers, books and relevant literature, training opportunities, coordination between teachers and professionals, use of case studies, coordination among institutions, and recognition of PR as a profession.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) The interaction between the teachers and PR professionals could be beneficial to the students. The professionals could lend support to educational efforts so that theoretical knowledge is supplemented by practical experience. This could raise the standards, and enrich the profession ultimately.

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) PR needs an understanding of social psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics, political science, history and even religion. Only when a PR practitioner understands the social attitudes of the public, he could take suitable action to win the support of the public.
- 2) Education means imparting of basic skills and techniques within the ambit of curriculum, including basic knowledge of the PR environment. The PR training consists of imparting of special skills to the personnel to help them tackle the PR problems of the organization they are serving. Training improves quality of performance.
- 3) The PR training could be in-house or by attending courses by specialised firms. Short term courses in management run by IIMs and other institution could also be useful. Participation in seminars and conferences by the PRSI could also be helpful.

Check Your Progress 6

- 1) a) True b) True c) False
d) True e) False f) False

UNIT 5 TRENDS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Changing Public Relations Environment
- 5.3 Present Trends in Public Relations
- 5.4 PRO Emerging as a New Professional
- 5.5 PR Becoming More Strategic
 - 5.5.1 Communications within an Organization
 - 5.5.2 Press Relations
 - 5.5.3 Government Relations
 - 5.5.4 Financial and Industrial Relations
 - 5.5.5 Human Resource Development
 - 5.5.6 Crisis Management
- 5.6 Public Relation and Consumerism
- 5.7 Accountability : The Key Factor
 - Research and Evaluation
- 5.8 New Tactical Weapons and Tools
 - 5.8.1 Technology in PR
 - 5.8.2 Corporate PR : A New Concept
- 5.9 Future Prospects in Public Relations
- 5.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.11 Glossary
- 5.12 Further Reading
- 5.13 Check Your Progress : Model Answers

5.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall discuss the emerging trends in PR in India. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- outline the impact of globalisation on the functioning of different organizations in India;
- explain the concept of “integrated communications approach” in an organization;
- outline the effect of new economic policy and growing privatisation on the PR profession in India;
- describe how PR has been made into a task-management function;
- enumerate how the new communication media could be employed to achieve the PR goals;
- analyse the impact of information technology on the greater access to the PR profession;
- discuss the role of accountability and cost-effectiveness in the PR functioning;
- delineate the rise in consumerism and its effect on PR;
- state the reasons why even non-commercial organizations are getting the PR counselling; and
- account for the increased tempo and growth in the PR field.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the earlier four units in this block, we had an overview of the evolution and growth of the PR movement in India, particularly before and after Independence. Of particular relevance is the study of the PR units in the government, through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and its media units.

Further, we also dealt with the concomitant growth of the professional PR organizations and their impact on the growing professionalism. In terms of the PR practice, we have also discussed the importance of training and research in PR, particularly for evolving research methodologies suitable to the Indian socio-politics and economic conditions.

In view of the perspectives gained, it is worthwhile to project the PR profession into the 21st century, and try to visualise the emerging trends in the PR in India. You would realise that the restructuring of our economic policy has resulted in greater liberalisation and privatisation. What are the challenges posed by these changes to the PR profession in India? What are the effects of the so-called trend towards "globalisation" on areas, like business, trade, commerce, industry, and other fields, like education, science and technology, agriculture, health and environment? With increasing global competition, the emphasis is on the faster productivity with strict quality control. Would PR be able to cope with this? If so, would PR be called upon to perform, this task-management function also? This assumes importance in view of the trend of consumerism sweeping the country. We shall discuss the nature of the consumer movement in the country, and what role PR could play to supplement the efforts of the organization to meet the high consumer standards.

These new-found tasks and expectations would make heavy demands on the expertise of the PR profession. We shall, therefore, explain to you how PR can meet these tasks by using new tactical tools and strategies based on the latest technology available.

All this has increased the scope of research and evaluation in PR, more so because of the discipline's greater accountability. The major trend in the PR research abroad comprises elaborate surveys, opinion polls, social audits and tracking studies. We shall examine the efforts being made towards more in-depth research and evaluation in the Indian PR scene.

And, finally, we shall analyse the future prospects and trends in PR, particularly the demand for competent people who could handle the PR tasks either within the organization or outside, in the shape of PR counselling agencies, with their specialised services.

5.2 CHANGING PUBLIC RELATIONS ENVIRONMENT

Change is taking place all around us -- especially in Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations, the professions we are concerned with directly. Public Relations in India, is witnessing its own special changes. Some significant, some challenging, some so radical that the evolving of new systems has become imperative.

The PR professionals, today, are no longer the "gin and tonic brigade" they were considered to be in the past. Gone are the days when 'wining and dining' was the main function of a PRO in an organization. It has been possible to overcome this misconception only through proven performance. In India, the PR practice is generally associated with Press Relations and Institutional or Corporate Advertising, although, it is much more than that. The professional organizations and managements are making efforts to expand the scope of the public relations field for the PR professionals.

Before we proceed to assess the emerging trends in PR specifically, let us attempt to understand the environment of PR in modern organization, and what is expected of it. To put facts in a nutshell :

- i) There is an on-going shift from an agrarian society towards a greater industrial society.
- ii) There is also a visible trend in business management and ownership patterns. Businesses are no longer only family owned. More and more businesses are now being professionally managed.

- iii) With competition going global, there is a need to have international communication, and, hence, the need to understand alien cultures.
- iv) Certain social issues like the Human Rights Issues, which demand equal treatments, have come up before the world fora.
- v) The greater education has made the general public less to tolerant of authoritarianism, and led to increased expectations.
- vi) There has been a growth of public opinion power.
- vii) The action-oriented public participates in matters of public interest, e.g., concern for environment.
- viii) There is interdependence of various segments, because of which no one could afford to shirk responsibility.

In this present PR environment, the scope of the PR functioning is almost unlimited. Among the important PR tasks are the following :

- Informing people about facts or ideas;
- Educating people, or instructing them in how to do things or behave in a particular way;
- Reinforcing or helping shape new attitudes under varying circumstances;
- Maintaining loyalty of stockholders (customers, shareholders, employees and other key publics) towards the company or organization;
- Neutralising public opinion on important controversial issues;
- Winning over people who are hostile or opposed to the organization;
- Influencing people to change their behaviour to ways conducive to the organization, which is the most difficult, but most rewarding function of PR.

One thing, that PR cannot do for long, is to maintain good reputation for an organization that does not perform in a deserving manner. Thus, good PR means truth as it is clearly and effectively communicated/understood by critical supporting publics/audiences/target groups. Superficial communication that seeks to hide or distort reality is poor PR.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note :** i) State whether the following statements are true or false.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of the unit

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|----|---|------------|
| 1) | Authoritarianism is conducive to the growth of PR. | () |
| 2) | Increased global competition calls for greater PR effort. | () |
| 3) | Family businesses need not be professionally managed. | () |
| 4) | Neutralising hostile attitude does not amount to a good PR effort. | () |
| 5) | The greater education and increased expectations of the consumers has contributed to PR growth. | () |
| 6) | Good PR efforts should be able to hide poor performance of the organization. | () |

5.3 PRESENT TRENDS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

There are, among others, the following eight distinct trends, in fact, megatrends, that are taking place in the Indian PR profession today :

- The PRO is emerging as a new professional;
- PR as a discipline is becoming more "strategic";
- PR is playing an important role in "CONSUMERISM";
- Accountability is becoming a key factor;
- Use of research and evaluation to validate the PR efforts is gaining ground;

- New tactical weapons and tools are being introduced and adopted;
- Technology is making a major impact on the PR practice; and
- Change in nomenclature to "Corporate PR".

5.4 PRO EMERGING AS A NEW PROFESSIONAL

Public Relations as a profession, and the Public Relations Officer (PRO) in it, are undergoing changes in response to the changing external environment. The practice of PR is today being accepted as a management tool, which is getting to be more professional in its 'delivery of goods', by adopting sound principles of managing PR and ethical conduct with greater accountability for its actions.

The PRO today, is not just an expert communicator, but also an adviser to his management and organisation. In the changing status and role of the PR profession, the Public Relations Officers need to know and understand the changes taking place in the country's economic, political, social and cultural spheres, which directly affect an organization's operations. The PR professionals have to be in the forefront. Understanding and interpreting events around them is now crucial, so that they could satisfy those, who come to them for information and advice. The PR people need to know what the existing conditions are, and what could be influenced by the PR and communications.

The development of the PR consultancies in India is a further step in the direction of professionalisation of PR and PR people. In India, at one time it was only Consilium which existed as an independent PR agency. Today, we have Roger Pereira Communications, Good Relations, Spectra, among the known ones, started by some well-known advertising and PR professionals.

A parallel development to this was when big advertising agencies started setting up their own PR divisions, or cells, to cater to the growing demand for PR. D&M, Trikaya, Mudra, HTA are some of the agencies which have full-fledged PR outfits as part of their organizations. In the past, the PR services and advice at the ad agencies for their clients were rendered free of cost. Now, because PR has become a specialised function, the ad. agencies have professional specialists working for them, and they are charging the clients for the specialist PR services provided.

5.5 PUBLIC RELATIONS BECOMING MORE STRATEGIC

PR is becoming a highly specialist and "strategic" discipline today. It is being termed as "communications with a mission". This description of PR stems out of its new advisory role. To be successful, it has, therefore, to be highly target-group-oriented.

Conventionally, PR has been basically an image-building (or boosting) activity, through corporate advertising campaigns and public service communications on the external front, and house journals and brochures on the internal PR front. Today, however, the PR activities are greatly objective-oriented and target-group-oriented. Making these more strategic in nature, PR is an on-going dialogue between the organization and its target groups. It is no longer a white-washing department, nor a sales aid.

Examples of this strategic shift in PR are seen in some specific activities of organizations, internally and externally.

5.5.1 Communications within an Organization

Among Indian organizations, or companies, the internal communications had always been given less importance as compared to the external communications. The need and importance of the internal communications is today being accepted more and more widely in the professional companies. In the course of the last few years or so, certain social and business influences have acted upon organizations from both within and without, calling for a more thorough and balanced approach to communications. An organization consists of individuals and groups of people whose work relates to the work of other individuals and groups, as well as the organization as a whole. Therefore, a healthy policy in terms of

purpose, planning, and control is necessary to achieve corporate objectives. Internal communications play an important and decisive part in this policy.

Internal communications might have either a formal or informal character. Good PR managers, as well as organizations, keep their communication skills shining and sharp, and use them constantly in a planned manner for allround effectiveness and productivity.

5.5.2 Press Relations

The PR professionals are getting to use the media persons (journalists) more and more to influence the public opinion. That way, they are getting better and better to influence the "Press opinion". Their contact with the press, in particular, and the other media people as well, is more personal and individual. This contact is supported with organized activities like the Press Conferences and convincing handouts/releases.

The journalists, on their part, are imbued with an investigative spirit. Therefore, they expect greater intellectual inputs, including direct contact with the managements. Gin and tonic is no longer sufficient motivation for them. Therefore, the PR people have to cater to their demands, and give them due respect as professional colleagues.

5.5.3 Government Relations

With the recent liberalisation of the Indian economy, the government relations have assumed a new dimension. Merely knowing ministers and MPs is not adequate today. Lobbying, in the Western sense, is getting to be important. The PR people might not be directly involved in the lobbying process as yet, but their professional support is getting to be essential. The 'Liaison' people in New Delhi are going to be demanding PR inputs to make their impact on the ministers and MPs. This is going to be more so in the future, and the PR professionals would have to prepare themselves to meet the challenges of the situation.

Activity 1

A Case for International Lobbying?

Lobbying is a way of life inside Washington. Recently, India found it difficult to put across an accurate view of its policies on issues like human rights, non-proliferation of nuclear weapon etc., in getting the Indian message through to the American government. After deliberations, Indian Embassy, finally, hired lobbyists — Mcauliffe Kelly and Rafaelli — a public relations company at a cost of \$ 500,000 a year. The company is said to have good contacts with all political parties, and it is expected that the firm would be able to present a better image of India and counteract the intensive anti- India campaigns. While this decision to hire lobbyists is seen by some as a right strategy to smoothen bilateral relationship, there are others who feel that no lobbying firm could iron out troubled political relationships. As a PR person, what kind of criticism do you expect from the general public in this decision, and how would you defend the decision?

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5.5.4 Financial and Industrial Relations

The PR people have to be thoroughly knowledgeable about the organization and the environment around them. They must be armed with facts, rationales, and arguments in dealing with their shareholders, the financial community, as well as their employees at

various levels. There are umpteen situations where their professional involvement is necessary and proves beneficial. Be it dilution of equity, share issues, announcement of a company's financial results, strikes and labour problems, or even anniversary celebrations, the PR persons have to adapt and gear themselves to meet the situation and implement what is required to achieve the desired objectives, quickly and effectively.

5.5.5 Human Resource Development

HRD is a function of the personnel department. As organizations grow, the need for trained professionals also increases. Therefore, HRD is becoming vital. PR can also play a helpful role in the HRD function through effective communication of messages to employees about the corporate philosophy and culture. PR can greatly contribute to HRD in evolving a conducive work-culture within the organization. It can also enable the employees to project the right image of the company to the external publics. PR's role in this is going to increase steadily in the coming years. The PR persons should do well by motivating all employees, and getting them involved in the organization. PR has tremendous potential to contribute to HRD.

5.5.6 Crisis Management

This is a new phenomenon, which could be said to be an outcome of industrialisation and technology development. Until recently, most companies were geared for smooth sailing and good times, in terms of PR and corporate image. These failed to be able to safeguard and protect their image in times of problems and crisis. However, there is a sea-change taking place today in the handling and management of crisis, particularly after the Bhopal tragedy. Organizations have pre-planned rehearsed activities, and trained teams to handle any potential crisis situations.

We have case studies of the successful handling of crisis by the Indian Airlines at the time of a plane crash, of the ONGC at the time of the fire on their rig, and of the TISCO, when it was about to be nationalised and was resisting the threat. As a result of their being prepared and taking timely PR action, the sailing, for these companies, was less traumatic. Even Harshad Mehta opted for the PR help at the time of his personal crisis to win the sympathy of the people, and to project that it was he who was being victimised.

The message that seems to emerge out of this is : "Be prepared. Be honest. Tackle the situation boldly and squarely".

Check Your Progress 2

- Note :** i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answer with the one supplied at the end of this unit.

- 1) State, at least, four major strategic areas where PR has assumed importance.

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5.6 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND CONSUMERISM

There are many PR activities, which are genuinely concerned with the well-being of the population, and which are divorced from the ordinary commercial implications. The responsibility for the public welfare is gradually being shared by business houses so that the total responsibility is shifting from the Government on to corporations. This is happening in India as well, and is resulting in various non-commercial organizations, for example, universities, police, municipal corporations, trade and industry associations and so on, recruiting their own PR advisers.

The first impact of 'consumerism' was felt in the USA, but soon spread to other parts of the

4.3.3 Teaching Methods

In reality, those students who join the Journalism Departments of various universities are poorly taught and undertrained as far as the Bachelor's Degree and Masters' Degree Courses in Mass Communication and Journalism are concerned.

There is not much in the form of practical training except opting for a PR department in any organization to undergo their mandatory 4-6 week internship. The various certificate and diploma courses also help to equip the candidates with necessary theoretical knowledge, but do not emphasise on imparting practical skills in PR. The overall structure and syllabi of most of the university departments in Journalism and Mass Communication have basic similarities and common inadequacies as far as the Public Relations' training is concerned. The major shortcomings include lack of training and orientation, especially among the potential public relations functionaries' problem-solving and decision-making ability, handling human relations and communication problems, developing a diagnostic framework and inculcating leadership qualities.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note : i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answer with the ones given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain the need for PR training and education in India.

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4.4 THE STATUS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION IN INDIA

The Indian Foundation for Public Relations Education and Research is preparing grounds for offering comprehensive, need-based and qualitative courses in Public Relations. The Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi, is the only agency at the national level offering a Post-graduate Diploma Course in Advertising and Public Relations, which is known for its high quality. Now, with the setting up of a regional centre at Sambhalpur (Orissa), more such centres are planned for the other regions for providing opportunities to the local youth. Most of the courses offered by the University Departments of Mass Communication and Journalism attach little or no emphasis to Public Relations.

Most of the present Public Relations professionals are drawn from Literature, Management, Economics, Public Administration, Political Science, and various branches of Humanities. Certificate, Diploma, Post-graduate Diploma and Post-graduate Degree Courses, exclusively in Public Relations, have not been offered by the Indian universities or other institutions. Public Relations is being taught as one of the subjects in the Master's Degree Course of Journalism and Mass Communication in India. As such, very few among the trainees get an opportunity to do internship in Public Relations Organizations.

4.4.1 Infrastructural Facilities

Most of the training institutions and University Departments are ill-equipped due to lack of administrative will, vision, encouragement and funds. The audio-visual aids, cameras, teleprinter services, DTP, audio-cassette recorders, etc., are not made available. Where these do exist, the same are either not used or simply non-functional for not being properly maintained. The teachers and the taught are not imparted necessary training in the proper utilization and maintenance of these equipments.

4.4.2 Trained Teachers

There are many University Departments which are under-staffed. They do not even get the professionals to undertake the PR teaching, even on part-time basis. Since Public Relations

also includes a crisis-management function, the students should be taught by the practitioners rather than the theoreticians. Most of the teachers in various colleges and University Departments of Journalism and Mass Communication lack first hand professional experience and competence to impart training in Public Relations.

These teachers are not exposed to the challenges, responsibilities, skills, and demands of the PR profession. Special lectures are rarely organised involving the PR professionals. This is only possible in a state capital, where they are available. One cannot entirely blame the universities either as the top PR functionaries and resource persons in Public Relations are reluctant to visit smaller Universities or colleges because of unattractive allowances or facilities.

4.4.3 Relevant Books and Literature

Adequate reading materials, namely, text-books, professional journals, reports, etc., which could be a source of information and guidance on all aspects of theory and practice of Public Relations, to both the teachers and the taught, are inadequate in most of the University Departments and Colleges. Reading materials, which are available, are out-dated or peripheral. Secondly, most of the available publications are western-oriented, which are of little relevance to the Indian realities or requirements. There are very few books written by a few Indian teachers and professionals, like K.R. Balan, C.V. Narasimha Reddy, Anil Basu, J.M. Kaul, Baldeo Sahai, and others. These books are also not always stocked in the college and University libraries. There is not even a single professional journal in Public Relations, which reflects the Indian PR and its realities.

Check Your Progress 3

- Note:** i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Identify the factors that are conducive to sound PR education and training.

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4.4.4 Training Opportunities

The PR trainees learn all the tricks and gimmicks of the trade, but not the trade itself. The training programmes for the teachers, professionals and trainees are not adequately organised at local, provincial and national levels to update their skills and enrich their knowledge and experience. Professional seminars, workshops, conferences, which could serve as forum of exchange of ideas and experience, are few. These benefit the teachers, professionals, policy-makers, administrators and other core groups. The reports and proceedings are rarely printed and disseminated. The Public Relations Society of India convenes annual national conferences, but, the opportunities for the participation of the teachers are limited. Such professional bodies are not making their presence felt as the necessary forum or open centres of higher learning, research, publication, evaluation, etc. The governmental agencies, private bodies, universities and research centres are not putting forth coordinated efforts towards improving the competence of the teachers, professionals and students in the field of Public Relations.

4.4.5 Coordination between the Teachers and Professionals

The Public Relations institutions and departments are isolated from the profession. There is a communication gap between the teachers and professionals. The Public Relations training becomes meaningful and relevant if there is proper co-ordination between the teachers and the professionals. Such co-ordination would be beneficial to the students, in particular. The teachers are predominantly providing theoretical input but not enough practical input. There is no scope for interaction between the teachers and the professionals.

The professionals are not actively involved in the training process in most of the training schools and University departments. Some departments convene one or two special lecture sessions in an academic year, and that too with great difficulty. Most of the times, the University administration does not give either administrative approval or funds. Sometimes, the practitioners do not turn up either due to their busy schedule or lack of will. Further, there is practically no dialogue and mutual interaction between the teachers and the professionals.

4.5 COORDINATION AMONG INSTITUTIONS

The success of the Public Relations training demands mutual understanding, co-operation and coordinated efforts made by colleges, universities, professional bodies, public institutions and private agencies at local, regional and national levels. We have not been pooling the resources, intelligence, experience, and expertise towards collective planning and implementation of meaningful public relations training programmes for the benefit of both the trainees and society. Sharing the experience and resources makes the training programme quality-oriented. The training services made available in the present times are not complemented by collective efforts and co-ordination. The practitioners should understand the limitations of the theoreticians and teachers. The researchers should also supply the information and guidance based on the authentic data pertaining to the problems and solutions in the area of 'Applied Public Relations' and related issues of our times. The present training programmes are not based on the professional problems, challenges and demands.

4.5.1 Lack of Case-Study Approach

Preventive Public Relations is just as important as preventive medicine and, like the latter, is rarely employed. Effective Public Relations is not emergency or transitory activity. Unfortunately, this has not been the motto of the Public Relations training institutions in India. The students are not trained to deal with the professional challenges, in general, and the management of crisis, in particular. This is attributed mainly to lack of the professional study approach. There are organizations with better Public Relations professionals who have done well. But, the methodologies adopted, the innovations founded, the strategies adopted, etc., while dealing with the crisis or professional problems by these organizations, are not made known to the trainers, who absolutely lack the professional touch. Our present training programmes lack adequate case-studies. This severely handicaps the trainees, and deprives them of exposure to the realities and challenges of the profession. The teachers are rarely in touch with these case-studies. They neither get information from such organizations, nor do they share such experiences regularly with the practitioners. The students are deprived of this innovative and useful professional experience approach while undergoing training in Public Relations. If successful strategies and technologies adopted by the efficient practitioners could be integrated into the training, the system could be a high-quality one.

4.5.2 Recognition and Encouragement

While it is always good for the organizations to make use of the services of the people who have learned the trade of Public Relations, the contemporary society which is becoming increasingly complex needs the professionals who can ably educate, organize and motivate the public to achieve the goals of an organization. The professionals, who are not trained in the art and craft of Public Relations, cannot do justice to their jobs. Today, Public Relations is making an important contribution to modern organizations, governments and societies by contributing to HRD. Modern techniques and new methodologies are being adopted. The Public Relations personalities are called upon to advise managements, formulate policies, and implement strategies to improve the organizational image, cultivation of mutual goodwill with the community, and support of the general public. Increasing employment opportunities to the trained persons brightens the prospects of the PR training. Of late, some organizations are realising the importance of recruiting trained persons as the PR executives or functionaries. Unfortunately, a great majority of the public and private sector organizations are yet to realise the importance of the trained PR persons.

Check Your Progress 4

- Note:** i) Answer the following question in the given space below.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Why is it important to have coordination between the PR teachers and professionals?

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4.6 TOWARDS EFFECTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION

When Edward Bernays was asked recently, whether he would like to re-define PR, he replied, "PR is still an applied social science. It applies an understanding of social psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics, political science and history, and even religion and ethnicity. If I am advising my client, unless I know the impact of socio-economic, political and cultural conditions or the impact of religion and ethnic background. I can't deal with the problem. Therefore, a PR practitioner is an applied social scientist, who advises the client or employer on the social attitudes and appropriate actions for winning the support of the publics."

What does this mean? The doyen of PR seems to feel that if PR education has to be effective, it needs to be not only wide-spread, branching into the various disciplines of the social sciences, but also the imbibing of an ability to analyse social attitudes and behaviour. Edward Bernays, when asked whether people should have a grounding in social sciences and also take PR courses, said:

"I recently advised a University President (Vice-Chancellor) to set up a Public Relations Centre to blend teaching of social sciences with PR techniques in a four-year program. Instead of a school of public relations that teaches only journalism and communications, there should be a Centre. If people knew what area of public relations they would like to pursue, they would take courses in areas of special interest, such as pharmaceuticals, environment, government, agriculture or science. I have even suggested that practitioners get two degrees; one in public relations and another in a speciality, such as science, agriculture, commerce or even trade."

4.6.1 Difference between PR Education and Training

Before we find out what kind of mix is needed for a course in PR, let us differentiate between the PR education and PR. This is perhaps the most complex problem facing the PR profession. The PR education would mean "the imparting of basic skills and techniques, through theory and practice, to the student, within the ambit of a course curriculum in a college or a University, equipping him/her with the basic knowledge of the environment of the PR field". On the other hand, the PR training would mean "the imparting of special skills and techniques to the personnel already serving in an organization, through theory and practice, based on a pre-decided schedule of training, equipping him/her to tackle the PR problems better within the organization that he/she is serving".

Thus, the dimensions of the PR education are entirely different from that of the PR training. This would necessarily mean that the objectives of both are different. In the PR education, we have to analyse the levels of education, the functional aspects of the jobs they will perform after passing the course. In the PR training, we need to see the level of the PR competence that the personnel of the organization already possess, and what more needs to be done to increase their skills and potential. For this reason, it is wisely said, "Training improves quality, and better quality gets you new business, which means more profits".

4.6.2 PR Training

The PR training could be conducted in different ways. It could be in the form of in-house training, either through one's own resources or outside expertise. Or else, the staff could be sent to attend courses conducted by the specialised firms, which provide training on a periodic basis. Either way, the basic objective is to enhance the competence of the staff to tackle the PR problems and issues, and perform their tasks better.

The staff development is now viewed by many organizations as the best way to stay competitive, especially in a recession. The training programmes, they say, not only help the employees do their jobs better, but also standardise work procedures, boost morale, and build a sense of teamwork. These programmes also demonstrate that the firm is committed to its employees.

Despite the perceived benefits on in-house training, formal programmes are still the exception, not the rule, in the PR departments all over India. Most of these send their staff to short-time courses on management run by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) or other recognised institutes. Participation in seminars and conferences is another method usually resorted to. The Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) is one such forum, which provides these opportunities.

The banking industry in India is perhaps the first to realise its importance through their respective staff colleges. This helps the staff to do their jobs better. The programme is formalised, and attendance is mandatory. Classes are designed to serve the needs of the junior executives, middle management and senior management. But the training needs of the entire management are met, not only those of the PR personnel. In the US, such training courses for the PR personnel emphasise hands-on training; more than communications theory. The subjects covered in sessions for junior employees, for example, focus on the media relations techniques, such as how to pitch a story to an editor, and how to develop article themes. Classes for the middle management concentrate on motivating the subordinates, managing time, and measuring and evaluating campaigns. The senior management is schooled on the bottom-line related issues.

The Public Relations training should be so oriented that it would contain:

- 1) understanding the nature of today's top management style of functioning;
- 2) explaining to the people the true nature of the publics generally different from the traditional wisdom about them;
- 3) understanding changes in the communication process that substantially alter what we need to do;
- 4) understanding what is really behind current trends in public attitudes; and
- 5) determining what to do that meets all of these different and changing factors, in many cases, quite different from what has been done in the past.

Having reviewed the concepts of the PR education and PR training, let us quickly summarise how we could make the PR education and training effective.

4.6.3 Improving PR Education and Training Facilities

The Public Relations movement in India has travelled a long way since the early days, when it was fighting for recognition. It has been accepted by the government, business, industrial and other organizations, as an important management function. The organizations that fail to take note of the publics and fail to meet their increasing expectations are likely to be rejected by society. If the PR professionals rise to the challenges, they could take Public Relations to greater heights in future. The professional advancement could come only with advancement in training and education. The following measures could brighten the prospects of the Public Relations education and training in India.

- 1) It is high time that the problems of PR education and training were looked into by the policy-makers, professionals, researchers and trainers. There is an urgent need to overhaul and redesign the PR education and training system. The nomenclatures, objectives, priorities and methodologies of various Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Post-graduate Degrees and Diploma courses should be standardised and restructured.

The Post-graduate Courses in Public Relations should be started only in the Central Universities, Regional Universities, and nationally reputed centres of learning for two years' duration on a regular basis, with adequate teaching faculty members. A.V. equipments, publications, training and research facilities.

- 2) It is better to admit only such students who adequately display sound knowledge, communication skills, and leadership qualities, to Post-graduate Diploma and Degree Courses in Public Relations/Journalism/Mass Communication. These courses should be grounded in sound academic and professional inputs.
- 3) There should be a National Council for Public Relations Training and Research to recognise the institutions and courses, and also to offer accreditation. It should be an apex body to prescribe norms, review the status of Public Relations education, and issue guidelines from time to time.
- 4) Suitable educational qualification and professional experience should be prescribed for the trainers. Those who have studied Public Relations and served as professionals in this field should be recruited as the teachers.
- 5) Refresher courses of short duration should be organized for the teachers and trainers who are presently serving without much professional experience, so that they could enrich their knowledge, experience and competence.
- 6) The course-pattern should be overhauled and up-dated. Allied and adjunct subjects, like advertising, publicity propaganda, motivation, persuasion, communication skills, media selection, research, evaluation, etc., should be adequately reflected in the course curriculum. The course should be designed in such a way that each student actively participates in the process of learning, and intelligently contributes towards improving the quality of education. The internship training should also be included.
- 7) The public, private and corporate sectors should change their attitudes in regard to recruiting the PR personnel. They should only recruit the trained persons in the field of Public Relations on a priority basis.
- 8) The public, private and corporate sectors should change their attitudes with regard to recruiting the PR personnel. They should recruit only trained persons in the field of Public Relations on a priority basis.

The professionals are called upon even in a changing world to do justice to the profession, their organizations and the people. Quality-based education in the Public Relations Communication is the need of the hour. The ultimate objective of the PR education is to help the alumni to get placement in government and non-government organizations, and then enable them to manage the most complex and challenging roles and responsibilities. At the same time, the training must inculcate in them the spirit of intellectual adventure, public service, social responsibility and professional ethics, and, finally, the ability to deliver the goods, manage the crises, improve the delivery system, and promote constantly better understanding between the organization and the people.

Check Your Progress 5.

- Note:** i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

1) Why is a PR practitioner likened to the applied social scientist?

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2) Distinguish between the PR education and PR training.

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3) How do PR personnel obtain training?

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4.7 PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH

The importance of the public relations research for managements of all organizations is greater today than it has been in the past. The top executives in industries worry about how public attitudes toward their industries may translate into unfavourable legislation affecting their future-operations.

The focus of the public relations research has been changing from the study of the traditional publics to a greater attention to the study of "issues", and how best to modify the public attitudes towards the same. For the most part, the tools of the public relations research have changed little in the past decade. The development of the public relations research models, based on the sophisticated use of the electronic data processing techniques, is bringing timely and usable data into the hands of the decision-makers.

4.7.1 Purposes and Types of PR Research

Typically, the public relations research serves three functions. Most frequently, it may simply confirm assumptions and hunches about the state of public opinion on an issue, a product, a company. Nevertheless, this is a highly useful kind of back-up function.

The second role of research is to clarify questions on which limited information is available, or on which apparently contradictory data are to be found. For example, such studies could help determine if expressed attitudes are related to actual behaviour, whether in the supermarket, the shop-floor, or among the consumers. Research can help sort out what people really mean when they say they like or dislike an organisation — the reasons they cite for these feelings, and even the origin of the feelings.

Finally, research occasionally reorients our thinking and conceptualization on a public relations problem. One assumes that such was the case when the banking industry discovered that it was frightening away potential small customers because of its non-sense image. Whatever the reason, the change in the public posture of banks has been profound. This has been due to the PR research.

There is an unintended bonus in conducting research. The process of defining its design and assigning priorities to areas of investigation forces various individuals and departments in an organization to make explicit their beliefs as to which publics and which problems are most serious. Such an exercise frequently generates an internal dialogue that turns up surprising differences in opinion as to the exact nature and degree of importance, which different people and departments attach to various problems.

4.7.2 Different Techniques of PR Research

Those who have had first-hand acquaintance with formal research cannot fully appreciate the variety of techniques and study designs available. A very old and still useful method is to carry out a content analysis of how a topic or an organization or a problem is treated in the press, textbooks, radio or television. Such research gives a pretty fair measure of the saliency of the problem, and often provides useful hints as to which aspects of it seem to be arousing the greatest public interest. Several conditions must be observed with respect to content analysis studies — what weights, if any, should be assigned to the length of coverage, position on the page, the page number itself, and so on. Used with intelligence and a clear recognition of its limitations as a research instrument, the content analysis could be a useful tool.

For many people, the term 'research' is synonymous with the public opinion surveys and the various survey techniques, each of which has its merits and limitations. Properly used, these different techniques can complement one another, and produce a mosaic of data, giving new insights into the longstanding problems.

If an organization is embarking on a public relations programme for the first time, or if some new or relatively unknown factor becomes relevant for an on-going programme, the profile survey could be useful. It is a one-time snapshot (or perhaps X-ray) of public reactions to a particular company, issue, or programme.

When a profile survey is repeated, retaining the basic sample design and interview guide, but employing a new sample of respondents, a trend survey is taking shape. The trend surveys are double-edged sword, particularly if these are employed as effectiveness studies of an information programme. Properly used, these can provide critically important clues as to which facets of a message are getting through to the audience, and which are not. But when misused and wrongly interpreted, it could create no end of mischief. Only when the time, trouble, and expense are taken to permit the same respondents to be reinterviewed on another occasion could these trend surveys be converted into a panel survey. These panel surveys permit the dynamics of opinion change to be more fully studied. By re-interviewing the same respondents on one or more occasions, it is possible to identify the context for individual shifts in attitudes from one time period to another, and to probe for specific reasons that might account for these changes.

Another form of opinion research, that is a useful tool for the public relations profession, is the depth survey, which is nothing more than an effort to let the public tell the researcher how it views a company, a public issue, or a particular individual. In these surveys, the researcher carefully avoids imposing his point of view on the respondent. Rather, he encourages the person being interviewed to freely associate and ramble on, in his own words, to describe his perception of the matter under study. The depth studies are useful in the early stages of a programme in giving clues to the parameters of a problem. They could also provide some really valuable themes that copywriters and creative departments might incorporate into an advertisement campaign.

Good research takes time, but the management often needs answers in a hurry. The management frequently feels it must have research results immediately, if they are to be of any value in planning action programmes. This sense of urgency runs smack into the irksome fact that good research requires a reasonable time to organize, pre-test, execute, analyse and write up. There are a few problems, on which at least some significant preliminary data could not be collected within a few weeks. Subsequent analysis and refinement of these data would actually benefit from the early comments and questions the management addresses to these initial findings.

Check Your Progress 6

- Note :** i) State whether the following statements are true or false.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.
- a) Research could help to confirm assumptions. ()
 - b) Content analysis has limitations as a research tool. ()
 - c) Research consists of only public opinion surveys. ()
 - d) Good research takes time, and cannot be done in a hurry. ()
 - e) In panel survey, the same respondents need not be reinterviewed. ()
 - f) A researcher is free to impose his view-point on the respondent. ()

changing World (Rio de Janeiro, 1967); Public Relations: The Bridge to International Understanding (Tel Aviv, 1970); Public Relations: A Profession Comes of Age (Geneva, 1973); Public Relations in the Parliament of Man (Boston, 1976); Challenges of a Changing World (London, 1979); The Interdependent World (Bombay, 1982); and Between People and Power (Amsterdam, 1985).

The PRSI made a bid for the Ninth World Congress in 1982, which was accepted by the IPRA Board of Management. The growth of Public Relations in India and the organizational strength of the PRSI were largely responsible in bringing the PR World Congress to India. The management of the IPRA felt that the holding of a World Congress would give a further boost to the Public Relations profession in India, and lead to its greater acceptance among the user organizations.

The Ninth World Congress, held in Bombay, in 1982, was attended by over 1000 delegates from all over the world. Commending the World Congress for its theme "The Interdependent World", Mrs. Indira Gandhi wrote, "The Theme of the Ninth Public Relations World Congress in Bombay is an idea that has been, and is an integrated part of our outlook".

The Congress was addressed by eminent economists, scientists, educationists, political leaders and public relations professionals from all over the world. The print media, particularly financial and business press covered the proceedings in great detail.

From the Indian point of view the World Congress served two objectives:

- 1) It vastly improved the image of Public Relations as a profession.
- 2) It exposed to the world community the depth of Public Relations in India, and the organizational strength of the PRSI, which involved the governments of the States and at the Centre, the corporate sector, the media and other allied professions. In the international PR case study competition, two Indian case studies, by Glaxo India and Hindustan Copper, were selected for honourable mention.

3.4.2 IPRA Gold Paper No.4

The Ninth World Congress will, however, go down in history for its contribution to the PR education with the presentation of the IPRA Gold Paper No.4, a model for Public Relations Education for professional practice.

The IPRA Gold Paper No.4 was the outcome of a systematic study of the state of public relations education as it existed in different countries. In 1980, the IPRA President, J. Carrol Bateman, and Secretary General, Sam Black, agreed that an International PR educators' meeting be organized to discuss the world-wide standards and curriculum of the PR education. The meeting, held in Hong Kong, in September, 1980, was attended by 20 academics and professionals from four continents. After 48 intensive hours of discussion it produced a report, The Hong Kong Document, so named in honour of the host university, the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The *Hong Kong Document* was presented to regional and national public relations associations and universities for their consideration and comment. The final document, the IPRA Gold Paper No.4, incorporated the world-wide reactions, a curriculum model and a working definition of Public Relations.

As the concept of Public Relations is constantly developing, let us have a close look at this definition:

"Public Relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organization and its public; involves the management of problems and issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasises the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilise change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and use research and analysis to help management make informed decisions."

If we examine this definition, we come across the following added responsibilities of the PR professionals:

- a) Involvement in the management of problems and issues;
- b) Helping management to define its responsibilities to serve the public interest;
- c) Helping management to keep abreast of change; and
- d) Serving as an early warning system to anticipate trends.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

1) Is there a code of ethics for the Indian PR professionals?

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2) Which organization collaborated with the PRSI in holding the Ninth World PR Congress in India?

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3) Name the first Indian President of the IPRA.

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4) What is the subject of the Gold Paper No.4? What relevance does the paper have in the Indian context?

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5) What is the Hong Kong document?

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3.5 INDIA FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

To provide an academic and professional base for the PR education and training, the Public Relations Society of India constituted the Indian Foundation for PR Education and Research (IFPR), a separate trust, which was registered in 1990.

The IFPR has been entrusted to conduct basic research, publish professional papers and case studies based on Indian experience, to hold Public Relations Diploma Examinations, and to introduce the PR fellowships.

The IFPR conducts two diploma examinations, each year -- the DPR for the beginners and the APR for candidates with a minimum of 5 years experience as Public Relations executives. The examinations are held in four centers: Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras.

In its publications programme, the IFPR has published seven professional papers and two case study volumes. Authored by senior public relations practitioners, these publications are

To promote high professional standards, the IFPR conducts Advanced Management Programmes for senior public relations practitioners. These programmes explore the present PR environment, and discuss the PR application to current issues and problems.

The Kathmandu Meet discussed the changing post-cold war scenario and rising expectations of the employees, consumers, community and other pressure groups. 'New Communication Technology' was the theme of the Singapore programme, arranged in collaboration with the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, Singapore. The new economic order, globalization of trade, and the role of communication in improving quality and productivity were the issues deliberated at the Goa Management Programme. The Fourth Advanced Management Programme, at Port Blair, discussed issues relating to privatization, international competition, technology update, higher productivity, and quality awareness.

The IFPR also launched a PR fellowship to collect basic data on the PR applications in India's major industrial corporations. The fellowship has been established under a grant from the Goodyear India.

The IFPR maintains contact with the International Public Relations Association, and incorporates recommendations published in the IPRA Gold Paper. The IFPR publications are also circulated in the International Educators meet.

3.6 IMPACT OF THE PR ASSOCIATIONS ON THE INDIAN SOCIETY

In the foregoing sections of this unit, you have learnt some facts regarding the growth and development of professional organizations in the PR discipline. The efforts of these organizations, to date, have made a significant impact on the Indian Society, particularly on the outlook of the government, the corporate sectors and various other organizations in the field. We give below an overview of this impact:

- 1) Wider acceptance of public relations from manufacturing industry to service organizations, educational institutions and non-profit voluntary organizations.
- 2) Greater understanding of the professional tools and techniques, and decreasing importance of self-styled quacks.
- 3) Greater opportunities of public relations education in the universities and other specialised educational institutions.
- 4) Political parties and Government organizations are turning to public relations to achieve their objectives.
- 5) The number of books and the professional papers devoted to the Indian public relations is increasing each year.
- 6) With the introduction of the Public Relations Diploma examination, Public Relations as a career is gaining in popularity.

Check Your Progress 5

Note: i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.
ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What are the main functions of the IFPR?

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2) List the main contributions of the PRSI towards the development and growth of PR in India?

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Activity 2

Go through the institutional advertisements, press releases, articles or interviews on organizations appearing through a week in any national newspaper. Study them, and see how an organization tries to reach out to its various publics to create awareness and a favourable image for itself.

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3.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have presented the PR scene in India in the early fifties, starting from the motivation of the foreign oil companies to win public opinion in their favour. We traced the origin and formation of the Public Relations Society of India to a handful of PR practioners endowed with vision. After holding the 1st All India Public Relations Conference, in 1968, the PRSI grew very rapidly both in membership and activities relating to the PR Seminars, Workshops, and Training Programmes.

The PRSI, thus, helped to create an awareness about Public Relations as an important management discipline. We have discussed in great detail the objectives and the contribution of the PRSI and the IPRA towards the growth of professionalism by laying the foundation for an academic base. The adoption of the International Code of Ethics was a major step in this direction.

The holding of IX PR World Congress in India, in 1982, and presentation of the IPRA Gold Paper No.4 on education at this congress, are major events which brought further sophistication to Public Relations standard and applications.

The formation of the India Foundation for PR Education and Research (IFPRR) gave India a regular academic body to conduct examinations and management development programmes, encourage publication of the PR literature and case studies as also to conduct research, all of which enriched the discipline of Public Relations.

3.8 GLOSSARY

- Fellowship:** The state of being a partner or a fellow in an association.
Conference: An appointed meeting for discussion.

Chapter:	A division, an organized branch of a society or fraternity.
Constitution:	A system of laws or rules established by a sovereign state or an autonomous body for its own guidance.
Chamber:	A place, an assembly of persons for some specific purpose.
Management:	Those persons charged with the responsibilities of determining organization policy, planning, or directing operations.
Discipline:	A branch of learning/field of study or training .
Product Launch:	The taking off of a product into the market.
Product Recall:	Removal of a brand or a product from the market.
Code of Ethics:	A digest/collection of rules and regulations regarding established standards of moral conduct.

3.9 FURTHER READING

Basu, Anil; (1982); *Public Relations in India: Problems and Prospects*; New Delhi.
Kaul, J.M; (1982); *Public Relations in India*; 2nd Ed; Noya Prakash; Calcutta.

3.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) After Independence, the public opinion in India was unfavourable for foreign companies. They were being viewed as an extension of the foreign rule in the area of commerce. The environment was, thus not congenial.
- 2) The House of the Tatas.
- 3) A small group of Indian PR professionals who were trained abroad, by multinational oil companies to replace expatriates, were interested in promoting the cause of PR in India. They realised the importance of PR as an emerging new discipline. Thus, the idea to form the Public Relations Society of India was born.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) 1968, Code of Athens.
- 2) Athens.
- 3) Two-tier: National Council, Regional Chapters.
- 4) 1966, Maharashtra
- 5) Annually.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The Society adopted the following as its major objectives:
 - a) To promote the recognition of Public Relations as a profession.
 - b) To formulate, promote and interpret to the public understanding of the objectives, potentialities, and functions of the Public Relations practioners.
 - c) To promote and seek to maintain high standards of the Public Relations practioners.
 - d) To exchange ideas, experience and informations of value to the Public Relations practioners.
 - e) To foster the study and research of Public Relations.

- 2) Membership of the Society is available to any person, "who devotes the whole or a major portion of his time to the practice of Public Relations". A special category of Corporate members has been created to involve a company, institution or association. The Society also enrolls Non-Voting Members in "Associate and Student" category to encourage a larger participation in the public relations activity.
- 3) To the PRSI, the national conference is the most important opportunity to bring in the major users of public relations - the Government, the Corporate Management and the Institutions -- to present the various uses of Public Relations in their own environment. It is also an opportunity to educate its own members, and members of the allied profession about the effective PR techniques being utilised and developed in India and abroad.
- 4) The PRSI Fellowship offers an opportunity for scholars to conduct case studies on the PR application in Indian companies and organizations. So far, the following case studies have been conducted:
 - Indian Airlines Lockout, 1973.
 - Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore.
 - Industrial Conflict in 1975.
 - Organization of Pharmaceutical Products of India.
 - ACC's village improvement scheme.
 - A product launched by Larsen & Toubro.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Yes, there is a Code of Professional Ethics for the PR professionals in India. The PRSI took a major step to discipline its members and encourage professional activities by adopting a Code of Ethics in its first All India Public Relations Conference, held in Delhi, in 1968. This Code was earlier adopted, in 1965, by the International Public Relations Association in the city of Athens, and is based on the United Nations Charter on Human Rights.
- 2) The IPRA collaborated with the PRSI. The Public Relations World Congress is held every three years under the banner of the International Public Relations Association. In 1982, it was held in collaboration with the IPRA.
- 3) Mr. Sanat Lahiri.
- 4) A model for the Public Relations Education for professional practice, the IPRA Gold Paper No.4, was the outcome of a systematic study of the state of the public relations education as it existed in different countries. As it was presented in India, at Bombay, at IX World Congress, it was a historical event for the PRSI.
- 5) The *Hong Kong Document*, it named in honour of the host university, the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The *Hong Kong Document* was presented to the regional and national relations associations and universities for their consideration and comment.

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) The main functions of the IFPR are to conduct basic research, publish professional papers and case studies based on the Indian experience, hold the Public Relations Diploma Examinations, and introduce the PR fellowship.
- 2) The main contribution of the PRSI towards the development and growth of PR in India can be listed as follows:
 - a) Wider acceptance of public relations by all kinds of manufacturing and service organizations, educational institutions and non-profit voluntary organizations;
 - b) Greater understanding of professional tools and techniques;
 - c) Greater opportunities for public relations education;
 - d) Use of the PR techniques even at governmental level;
 - e) Encouragement to the PR literature; and
 - f) The PR career is gaining popularity.

UNIT 4 TRAINING AND RESEARCH FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 The Status of Public Relations Training
- 4.3 Public Relations Academic Institutions
 - 4.3.1 Admission to the PR-oriented Courses
 - 4.3.2 Course Curriculum
 - 4.3.3 Teaching Methods
- 4.4 The Status of Public Relations Education in India
 - 4.4.1 Infrastructural Facilities
 - 4.4.2 Trained Teachers
 - 4.4.3 Relevant Books and Literature
 - 4.4.4 Training Opportunities
 - 4.4.5 Co-ordination between the Teachers and Professionals
- 4.5 Co-ordination among Institutions
 - 4.5.1 Lack of Case-Study Approach
 - 4.5.2 Recognition and Encouragement
- 4.6 Towards Effective Public Relations Education
 - 4.6.1 Difference between PR Education and Training
 - 4.6.2 PR Training
 - 4.6.3 Improving PR Education and Training Facilities
- 4.7 Public Relations Research
 - 4.7.1 Purposes and Types of PR Research
 - 4.7.2 Different Techniques of PR Research
- 4.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.9 Glossary
- 4.10 Further Reading
- 4.11 Check Your Progress: Model Answers

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- identify the need for a systematic approach to PR training and education in view of the specialised nature of its professional functioning;
- list the various PR academic institutions — full-time, short and long-term courses available for PR training and education, in universities and other prestigious institutions;
- state the eligibility and administration criteria for PR education;
- discuss facilities available at the educational institution in imparting PR education in terms of teachers, libraries, equipment, etc.;
- understand the reasons for inadequacies and how these could be overcome;
- discuss the efficacy of the PR education through in-house training and workshops;

- discuss the advantages resulting from co-ordination between the PR teachers and professionals;
- understand the need for the PR research;
- enumerate the common types of the PR research;
- explain the utility of the different techniques of the PR research used in different fields of the PR functioning; and
- discuss the importance of co-ordination with other behavioural and management sciences, in the area of the PR research.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the earlier three units of this block, you were told about the world wide origin of PR, its growth and its development in India. You also are now familiar with the various professional PR organizations, which helped in giving the discipline the status of a profession.

In this unit, we shall discuss how PR, in the true professional sense needs to be backed by training and research. The reason for this is quite simple. PR is increasingly gaining importance by being called upon to play a major role in all walks of life.

The governments are spending money and making efforts to enhance their reputation and to enlist the participation of the people in nation-building tasks. Further, the role and importance of Public Relations in obtaining public approval of their policies and actions is greatly realised by the government not only for its own ends but also for business, industry, development, welfare, professionalism, national development, international cooperation, etc. All these call for a greater role and involvement of well-educated, trained and motivated professionals the world over.

4.2 THE STATUS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS TRAINING

Increasing realisation of the role and significance of PR as a vital human activity and management function has paved the way for the public relations education and training in India and other parts of the world. That apart, the growing emphasis on the PR education too is, in good measure, responsible for widening the horizons of knowledge and training in this field. The tools, techniques and strategies of PR are based on theories of behavioral sciences, for gaining public consent, goodwill, participation and support from all. Any persuasive communication to motivate people for change, modernization, industrialization, urbanization, and for all kinds of development in a democracy, uses the PR techniques.

The Public Relations training activities have been undertaken in India since the 1960s. The modern PR manager who can efficiently handle human relations, communications and crises is the backbone of every successful organization. He/she concentrates on the creative aspects such as informing, educating, motivating, organizing and persuading people. This tests his/her leadership qualities and capabilities in the areas of human motivation. Earning public goodwill and support for the activities of the organization, wherein he/she serves as a PR specialist, calls for specialised skills. Underlining the scope of the PR training in India, a PR expert says, "With the growth of public relations in India during the last two decades, the government, industry, commerce and non-profit organizations are on the lookout for trained public relations personnel, which, in turn has broadened the realm of education."

Public Relations being concerned with human relations, the relevance of this function is seldom questioned in our modern society. The need for PR training is inherent in the very nature of modern society, and people could ignore it only at a very high premium. Modern society is made up of heterogeneous groups of people. The interests of each group are different. In some cases, these might even clash with the interests of other groups. In India, people do have varied social, economic, political, educational, religious and cultural backgrounds, and their expectations also differ accordingly. The harmonious functioning of such a pluralistic society certainly merits the proper education and training of the PR professionals.

Sam Black observes, "There is an interesting analogy between medicine and PR. A medical practitioner and PR practitioner must both first diagnose and then treat. It is common for both to be called in after the damage is done. Preventive PR is just as important as preventive medicine, and like the latter, is equally rarely employed." Effective PR is not an emergency or transitory activity, but a continuous effort towards educating the PR professional to achieve the specific goals of an organization.

But, who is a PR professional? Edward Bernays, the doyen of the PR professionalism in USA, speaking in April, 1991, said:

"Right now, PR is not a profession. According to the Supreme Court, a professional is someone who (a) graduates from a University in that profession, (b) passes a standard examination, (c) takes an oath to uphold a Code of Ethics, and (d) agrees to give up the professional title, and leave the profession if he/she breaks the Code".

This comes from no less a person than Edward Bernays, who carried out the PR campaigns for three US Presidents, and even at the age of 99 guides the destinies of numerous US Corporations through his counselling. What does this mean? It is clear that there is need for a systematic approach to PR training and education. It means that PR should be taught as a subject in colleges and universities for which degrees should be awarded on passing requisite examinations.

According to estimates made by the PRSI and its educational associate, the Foundation of PR Education in India, hardly ten per cent of the total number of the PR professionals in India have a degree or diploma in PR. In a country, which has over 2000 PR professionals in the public, private and corporate sectors, this figure is too small. This becomes still miniscule when we see that there are over 10,000 organizations, companies and firms which have a turnover of over Rs.50 lakhs per annum, all of whom require trained PR personnel. Let us survey the present position of the PR training and educational institutions in the country.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note: i) Answer the following question in the space provided.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Why is PR considered a creative activity?

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4.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Public Relations is taught at various academic levels all over India. Institutes of Mass Communication/Journalism/Management recognised and also supported by the Government conducting various courses in Public Relations. These include Certificate Course, Diploma Course, Graduate Course and Post-Graduate Course. Regular and correspondence courses are also being offered by several private agencies. There are more than 50 Colleges in the country, which are offering instruction in public relations. A majority of these courses are located in Mass Communication and Journalism departments of Indian Universities; approximately 10 per cent are in the business schools and departments; and the remaining are in private educational institutions.

AT UNIVERSITIES : For the first time in the country, a specific PR-oriented course was started at the University of Madras which has offered a three-year Public Relations degree course. The Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi, is also imparting a one-year Post-graduate diploma course in Advertising and Public Relations. Several Indian Universities have been offering the two-year Post-graduate course in Journalism and Mass Communication with emphasis on Reporting, Editing, Press Laws, Media Management, Press History, Advertising, Public Relations, and other subjects. At the IFRI : The India

Foundation for Public Relations Education and Research, which is part of the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) seeks to ensure a sound educational and intellectual base for the PR practitioners through a system of examination, certification and accreditation based on certain standards of proficiency. A Professional Diploma Course in Public Relations has been designed to facilitate the students from all over India to qualify as the PR practitioners. The IFPR Diploma Examination were held in three centres -- Bombay, Delhi and Madras -- till March, 1992. The IFPR together with the Public Relations Society of India is collaborating with the University Grants Commission to introduce the Public Relations graduate Programme in the major Indian universities. The foundation has recently announced a Fellowship Programme to conduct basic research in the PR Practice in India.

AT BHARTIYA VIDYA BHAVAN : Diploma courses, of one year duration, in PR are taught in the various institutes of the Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, spread all over the country. The curriculum includes advertising and preparation of a study paper (a brief research report) on the various aspects of PR.

DISTANCE EDUCATION : Private colleges in Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Delhi, offer Diploma courses in PR. Under the distance education programme, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, first offered a PG diploma course in PR, but has recently upgraded it into a full-fledged Bachelor's Degree Course (B.P.R.), in 1992.

KERALA PRESS ACADEMY : Sponsored by the State Government of Kerala, this institute offers a one year full time diploma in PR and advertising. While all academic institutions teach PR, in most of them, it forms only part of the wide-spectrum of Journalism and Mass Communication. Here, the student is given a wide choice of career opportunities in various fields of the mass media, from print to electronic journalism, PR and advertising, and careers in the information services of the States and the Centre. Specific courses for PR include government recognised part-time courses offered by the Kendras of Bhartiya Vidya Bhavans and the full time course by the Kerala Press Academy and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, which is through distance education mode.

4.3.1 Admission to the PR - Oriented Courses

In view of the limited opportunities of specific courses in Public Relations, an overwhelming majority of students enter into this field after obtaining a Diploma or Degree or Post-Graduate Degree in Mass Communication or Journalism or Management. With the PR distinction of PR being one of the most well-paid professions, M.A. (Master of Arts in Mass Communication and Journalism) or M.C.J. (Master of Communication and Journalism) or M.S., (Master of Science in Communication) or M.B.A (Master of Business Administration) attract a large number of bright prospects from such diverse disciplines as Humanities, Management, Science, Engineering and Commerce. The two-stage admission process (written test and viva voce) is tough, especially in good University Departments and only about 5-10 per cent of those who apply are finally chosen. Graduates in any discipline are eligible, and the candidates are selected only through an Entrance Test in most of the universities.

4.3.2 Course Curriculum

Those who get admitted into the Post-graduate courses in Mass Communication and Journalism must be prepared for two years of teaching and training in the basic aspects of Journalism and Mass Communication. There are assignments, discussions, practical sessions, seminars, written tests, summer placement, performance examinations, etc., besides the lectures. Lectures by the faculty and outside experts on a variety of subjects such as reporting, editing, press laws media management, advertising, public relations, organizational communications, communication management, are held. The essentials of PR, namely, public relations functions, public relations management, types of public relations, public relations research, principles of public relations, etc., are taught. There are not many University Departments in the country offering an exclusive Degree or Masters' Degree Course in Public Relations, except the Dr. Ambedkar Open University in Andhra Pradesh and a few universities in the southern states of India.