

Assessing the Satisfaction of Personnel at Ports and Maritime Organization

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Abstract

This research is conducted with the aim of assessing the satisfaction of personnel at Ports and Maritime Organization with the performance of the Public Relations Department. This is a survey research that uses questionnaires as the measurement tool and the subsequent descriptive tables and charts are developed and analyzed by the SPSS Software. The population included the personnel of the Ports and Maritime Organization at different level (around 500 men and women), out of which 367 people were available for the research. The research made use of a holistic sampling method. The findings indicated that the majority of participants are familiar, to some extent, with the performance and activities of the public relations department and trust it. They believe that this department has acted vividly on distribution of information, and that it has been successful in holding or participating in national or international exhibitions related to maritime transportation industry, sending organization news to news agencies and also commending the retired and their families, as well as holding ceremonies on various occasions. On the other hand, the personnel believe that this department has not gained much success in surveying the personnel's opinions, promoting relations inside the organization, holding internal meetings between the personnel and managers, establishing free commenting systems, commending distinguished personnel, reflecting the personnel's problems to the management level and creating better understanding among different levels, nor has it made use of the viewpoints of the personnel in its decisions.

Keywords: *satisfaction, productivity, motivation, Ports and Maritime Organization*

Introduction

Nowadays, information plays an important role in uniting the personnel of an organization towards common objectives and is considered a base in organizational planning. It can therefore be claimed that communication help realization of organizational objectives.

Improvement of organizational activities in terms of quality and quantity, making better use of the work force and other resources are results of propagating these activities with the society and receiving their feedback. Therefore, the public relations can be regarded as a tool inside and outside of an organization. The work force as one of the precious assets of any entity must be considered in terms of information, motivation and enrichment for striving towards the designated goals, an action best included in the planning and policy making procedures thereof. This requires the provision software and hardware proportionate with the philosophy of the activities and the desired increase in productivity and interaction will realize in a suitable background of public relations.

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Some of the main duties of the public relations as a key factor are informing the public in regard with duties, responsibilities, and objectives, and receive their feedback in order to optimize the above. The most important factor for a public relations unit is trust making among people both within and without the organization concerned.

Since the advent of the public relations units in the early twentieth century, several theories and points of view have been proposed on its philosophy and functions, a few significant ones of which are introduced below:

Symbolic Interaction Theory: This theory rose from behaviorism in an attempt to identify interactions among people and their influence on the society. It is assumed that the reality of the society is what people believe, and the meanings of social interactions among people are assigned to them by the people participating therein. The strength of this theory is its statement that people use symbols and signs in their interactions, the meanings of which can be determined through conversation with people. The individual is thus considered a unit of analysis and the way to understand masses is to understand the manner the individual thinks, acts and interacts. It is then possible to progress to the organizational level by taking the organization as the unit of the analysis, instead of the individual. Since organizations are products of people's interactions, the people working there choose among behaviors, objectives and symbols at the organizational level in order to realize the relations inside the organization and also with others too.

Exchange Theory: According to this theory, social structures are based on social exchanges, which try to balance their input and output. More specifically, it is assumed in this theory that people make and maintain relations only when they believe they will gain more than they spend. The individual is again taken as the unit, which focuses the research on behaviors of people in organizational environments. Emerson (1981) divides the multiples views in this regard into three categories: 1) people behave with their benefits in mind; 2) every valuable event has a variable value that may change with different situations; and 3) the benefits of social interactions depend on the benefits of the exchange.

This theory considers people's motives for choosing actions and conflict arises when you expect to be awarded but face punishment. When demands are met, the need for award increases. At the organizational level, this theory holds that the personnel working in an organization collectively plan and conduct their choices of interactions with a view of behaviors and actions that balance the cost and benefits of different exchanges. Conflicts occur when the mentioned balance is broken and the organization takes no measures to restore it.

Conflict Theory: Conflicts are both causes and products of social change. Unlike the two initial theories mentioned above, therefore, the conflict theory holds that organizations are products of conflicts among actors, not their interactions or exchanges. Here, it is assumed that conflict is indispensable to social actions since objectives and values conflict and vary between different people or organizations. Every reality is composed of negative and positive aspects, whose conflicts determine the direction and extent of change. It is assumed that the resources are never enough and there is a permanent conflict over who assumes power over them.

There are dialectic and functional conflict theories. The former believes the conflict to be in the nature of organizations, while the latter stresses the benefits of conflict for the objectives and values of special groups. Functional conflict focuses research on the differences of benefits of different people in organizations, while the dialectic urges researchers to consider the inner differences leading to conflicts.

Structural-Functional Theory: This theory holds that social phenomena result from interaction of social structures and the functions serving them. The organization is therefore just a part of a

much bigger system that governs their interactions, conflicts, relations, etc. An organization, like a society, is considered as being more extensive than the total of their parts. This approach is thus more interested in considering the whole, than the individual parts, which possess secondary priority.

It is also assumed that the interactions of social actors are determined by a larger social order, and everybody will only be able to act in that framework. The public relations is endowed with a great position in this theory, as a factor that enables and facilitates the connection among different levels structures with pre-defined functions.

Methodology

This research is applied in terms of objectives and collective in terms of data gathering. The research population covers all the PMO personnel (500 people) and it equals the sample volume in this case. Out of this number, 367 people answered the questionnaire of 20 questions prepared by the researcher. The form and content of the questionnaire were verified by available sources and authorities, and their reliability was measured at 82% using pilot implementation and the Cronbach's Alfa Coefficient.

Results and Discussion

The first hypothesis indicated that there seems to be a meaningful relation between the personnel's confidence in public relations activities and their satisfaction of its performance.

Table 1: Distribution of the relation between the personnel's confidence in public relations activities and their satisfaction of its performance

Satisfaction		Confidence			Total
		High	Medium	Low	
High	No.	62	14	0	76
	%	81.6	18.4	0	100
Medium	No.	29	51	12	92
	%	31.5	55.4	13.0	100
Low	No.	40	124	25	189
	%	21.2	65.6	13.2	100
Total	No.	131	189	37	357
	%	36.7	52.9	10.4	100
Test	Value	Flexibility	Meaningful	Spearman Coefficient	
2	87.772	4	0.000	0.415	

The value for χ^2 is 87.772, with a flexibility of 4 (.000 as meaningful). Since the meaningful level is less than 0.01, Hypothesis 1 is proved with 99% of certainty and 1% error. Thus, there is a meaningful relation between the personnel's confidence in public relations activities and their satisfaction of its performance. Moreover, the Spearman's coefficient is calculated at 0.415, showing a medium relation between the two factors mentioned above. The table demonstrates that the more people trusted the public relations, the more satisfied they were with its performance.

The second hypothesis said that there seems to be a meaningful relation between the personnel's familiarity with public relations activities and their satisfaction of its performance.

Table 2: Distribution of the relation between the personnel's familiarity with public relations activities and their satisfaction of its performance

Satisfaction		Familiarity					Total
		Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low	
High	No.	4	41	27	2	2	76
	%	5.3	53.9	35.5	2.6	2.6	100
Medium	No.	8	15	57	10	2	92
	%	8.7	16.3	62.0	10.9	2.2	100
Low	No.	13	46	98	19	13	189
	%	6.9	24.3	51.9	10.1	6.9	100
Total	No.	25	102	182	31	17	357
	%	7.0	28.6	51.0	8.7	48.0	100
Test	Value	Flexibility	Meaningful	Spearman Coefficient			
2	37.547	8	0.000	0.172			

The value for χ^2 is 37.547, with a flexibility of 8 (.000 as meaningful). Since the meaningful level is less than 0.01, Hypothesis 2 is proved with 99% of certainty and 1% error. Thus, there is a meaningful relation between the personnel's familiarity with public relations activities and their satisfaction of its performance. Moreover, the Spearman's coefficient is calculated at 0.172, showing a weak relation between the two factors mentioned above. The table demonstrates that the more familiar people were with the public relations, the more satisfied they were with its performance.

The third Hypothesis indicated that there seems to be a meaningful relation between the vividness of public relations activities and their confidence in its performance.

Table 3: Distribution of the relation between the vividness of public relations activities and their confidence in its performance

Confidence		Vividness			Total
		High	Medium	Low	
High	No.	63	56	12	131
	%	48.1	42.7	9.2	100
Medium	No.	20	112	60	192
	%	10.4	58.3	31.3	100
Low	No.	2	13	26	41
	%	4.9	31.7	63.4	100
Total	No.	85	181	98	364
	%	23.4	49.7	26.9	100
Test	Value	Flexibility	Meaningful	Spearman Coefficient	
2	97.871	4	0.000	0.477	

The value for χ^2 is 97.871, with a flexibility of 4 (.000 as meaningful). Since the meaningful level is less than 0.01, Hypothesis 2 is proved with 99% of certainty and 1% error. Thus, there is a meaningful relation between the vividness of public relations activities and their confidence in its performance. Moreover, the Spearman's coefficient is calculated at 0.477, showing a medium relation between the two factors mentioned above. The table demonstrates that the more people believed in the vividness of the public relations, the more they trusted it.

The fourth Hypothesis said that there seems to be a meaningful relation between publication and information activities and the personnel's familiarity with public relations performance.

Table 4: Distribution of the relation between publication and information activities and the personnel's familiarity with public relations performance

Familiarity	Various activities					Total
	Books	Magazines	Bulletins	Pamphlets	Others	
High	No.	3	70	12	28	119
	%	2.5	58.8	10.1	23.5	100
Medium	No.	2	129	10	18	170
	%	1.2	75.9	5.9	10.6	100
Low	No.	0	33	4	0	42
	%	0	78.6	9.5	0	100
Total	No.	5	232	26	46	331
	%	1.5	70.1	7.9	13.9	100

Test	Value	Flexibility	Meaningful	Spearman Coefficient
2	24.045	8	0.002	0.191

The value for 2 is 24.045, with a flexibility of 8 (.002 as meaningful). Since the meaningful level is less than 0.01, Hypothesis 2 is proved with 99% of certainty and 1% error. Thus, there is a meaningful relation between publication and information activities and the personnel's familiarity with public relations performance. Moreover, the Spearman's coefficient is calculated at 0.191, showing a weak relation between the two factors mentioned above. The table demonstrates that the more publication and information activities, the more familiar the personnel were with public relations.

The fifth hypothesis indicated that there seems to be a meaningful relation between public relations success in different levels and the personnel's satisfaction of its performance.

Table 5: Distribution of the relation between public relations success in different levels and the personnel's satisfaction of its performance

Satisfaction	Success			Total
	High	Medium	Low	
High	No.	34	26	74
	%	45.9	35.1	100
Medium	No.	0	27	81
	%	0	33.3	100
Low	No.	2	17	181
	%	1.1	9.4	100
Total	No.	36	70	336
	%	10.7	20.8	100

Test	Value	Flexibility	Meaningful	Spearman Coefficient
2	172.999	4	0.000	0.599

The value for 2 is 172.999, with a flexibility of 4 (.002 as meaningful). Since the meaningful level is less than 0.01, Hypothesis 2 is proved with 99% of certainty and 1% error. Thus, there is a meaningful relation between public relations success in different levels and the personnel's satisfaction of its performance. Moreover, the Spearman's coefficient is calculated at 0.599, showing a medium relation between the two factors mentioned above. The table demonstrates that the more successful the public relations were in different levels, the more the personnel were satisfied with of its performance.

Conclusion

The study showed that the majority of the participants were familiar with and trusted the public relations activities and performance to some extent. They believed that the information

was transferred vividly and the public relations had succeeded in holding or attending relevant maritime transport exhibitions in national and international levels, reflecting news through internet and mass media, and commending the retired personnel and their families. On the other hand, they didn't attribute much success to it for studying and analyzing the personnel's opinions, improving relations inside the organization, holding internal meetings, personnel's relations with management, establishing free speech opportunity, commending excelling personnel, informing the management about the personnel's problems, nurturing understanding among various organizational levels and using personnel's feedback in its decisions. The majority mentioned that the public relations had had little success in serving them and they had little satisfaction with its performance in introducing the organizational objectives directly related to each worker's office or division, or introducing the organization to the outside public.

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