

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The current research has as its primary concern the image of Jordanian government ministries. This chapter provides a review literature in the area of public relations, power and influence, government public relations, and organizational image and reputation. Literature on rebuilding or influencing the rebuilding, managing, or enhancing of positive images and reputation will be reported. Literature has strongly linked positive image and reputation to publics' loyalty and future customing against negative publicity. This underlines the importance of developing positive image among the publics. Having citizens who are loyal to the services offered in government ministries would ensure growth of the ministries and enhancement in the quality of products and services provided to the public in such ministries.

2.1 Understanding Public Relations and Its Role

2.1.1 Defining Public Relations

Public relations is known by different titles in different organizations because of a number of reasons. First, the phrase "public relations" may at times convey negative connotations such as disguising information to have something done. Second, there has been a need to identify the types of public relations and as such the specializations needed for each type or role (Johnston et al., 2009). Some of the common titles of personnel heading public relations affairs department are Public

Affairs Executive, Communications Manager, Corporate Affairs Manager, and Media Liaison Director (Johnston et al., 2009).

Public relations refers to the “management of communication between an organization and its publics” (Grunig, 1992a, p.4). Publics, or stakeholders, are groups of people who share interests or concerns in that they have interests and concerns over the actions of an organization. Publics and stakeholders are affected by, or affect, the actions of an organization. Active publics are aware that they share a concern about an organization with others while passive publics are those that are not aware that they share a common concern or interest about an organization. Moreover, internal publics consists of a group of people who are found within an organization while external publics are groups of people found outside the organization including customers, the mass media, competitors, voters, community groups, lobby groups, legislators, among others (Johnston, Zanawi & Brand, 2009). This definition, according to James E. Grunig, sees public relations as synonymous with organizational communication management (Grunig, 1992a). Public relations under this definition involve planning, executing, and evaluating the communication of an organization with its internal and external publics. Publics determine whether an organization will meet its goals (Grunig, 1992a).

Following the advent and increasing use of the internet, incorporation of relationships and corporate responsibility in public relations, Johnston et al. (2009) define public relations as “the *development and management of ethical strategies using communications to build relationships with stakeholders or publics*” (p. 7). This

definition is adopted in this study because of its emphasis on ethical conduct. The activities carried out by public relations may be done by individuals, groups, or organizations, during interactions with their publics with a view of pursuing and achieving organizational objectives and goals. Inclusion of ethical considerations in this definition seeks to ensure that fairness for all those involved or affected by public relations programs is maintained (Johnston et al., 2009).

Public relations acts as a bridge between the organization and its publics through organization-public relation (Gordon, 2011; Hung, 2007). Organization-public relationships exist between organizations and their publics. Lendingham & Brunig (1998) defined organization –public relationship as “the state which exists between an organization and its key publics, in which the actions of either [the organization or the publics] can impact the economic, social, cultural or political well being of the other” (quoted in Hung, 2007, p.444). The organization-public relationships begin and exist when an organization-created consequences impact on the publics; or when publics’ behaviors impact on the organization. Dimensions of organization-public relationships have been identified as personal relationship, professional relationship, and community relationships. To measure relationships in public relations, an instrument with six outcomes of relationship is used. These measures are control mutuality, trust, relationship commitment, communal relationships, and exchange relationships (Hung, 2007).

2.1.2 The Role of Public Relations

Basically, there are two roles of public relations in organizations: technicians and problem solvers. Technicians provide technical services such as production of publications such as news releases and newsletters while problem solvers work with clients and senior managers for problem clarifications and solutions. Positions for technicians are lower within the organizational structures than problem solvers who may be managers involved in problem solving, decision making and policy formulation as part of the dominant coalition (Johnston et al., 2009). Dominant coalition is a term frequently used by Grunig and colleagues (. Grunig L, Grunig J. & Dozier, 2002) to refer to the organization's decision making and policy formulation organ. In large organizations like government ministries, there are several people performing different functions.

The role of public relations is facilitating positive communication between the organization and its various publics, a role that demands building relations. The public relations officers and practitioners serve to maintain relations of an organization and its publics; in which publics refer to the various groups of people crucial to the organization. The functions of public relations practitioners, according to Don Barnes, are: playing an advisory role to management on organizational policy and how it may affect organization's relationship with its publics; channeling and coordinating organizational activities that have effects on its publics within the organization itself; provision of proper avenues for explaining, through the communication media, the organization and organizational policies to the organizational publics; and ascertaining

and explaining the publics' perceptions about the organization (Johnston et al., 2009, p. 5).

The basis of relationships in public relations is the public perception. Public relations managers take part in the organizational decision making or policy formulation processes solely as communicators to the organization's senior managers (Grunig, 1992a). For public relations managers to execute this role effectively, they have to seek the views of the publics who are affected by the policies that the organization formulates, or the decisions made by the senior managers. They normally provide information to senior policy and decision makers on the possible consequences of the decisions and policies to be made on the publics (Grunig, 1992a). Armed with the possible effects of the policy and decisions that an organization makes, the policy and decision makers are able to make decisions and formulate policies from an informed perspective.

2.1.3 Public Relations Departments

Public relations seeks to make organizations they serve successful. Organizations with public relations departments have what Johnston et al. (2009) called in-house practitioners. In-house practitioners normally work for one organization, as opposed to consultancies that work for different organizations. In-house practitioners are able to learn about the organization from within, given that the practitioners can easily access the management, and facilities. Activities of public relations departments have been identified as communication, publicity, promotion, press agency, integrated marketing, issues management, crisis management, liaison

with media, government, or politicians, financial relations, public affairs, community relations, internal relations, industry relations, minority relations, media relations, public diplomacy, event management, sponsorship, cause/relationship marketing, and fundraising (Johnston et al., 2009). Organizations with clearly defined PR departments enjoy a number of benefits. For instance, Curtis and colleagues reported that organizations with clearly defined PR departments tended to adopt the use of social media (Curtis et al., 2009). However, the study was conducted using non-profit organizations; and therefore the findings may not be generalized to profit organizations and public service.

Grunig L. et al. (2002) reported that CEOs place special value on the public relations departments, with those with excellent public relations departments placing value on the communication role of public relations than CEOs of organizations with less excellent public relations departments. Public relations departments that have adopted excellent public relations are characterized by cultivation of human resources, organic structure, intrapreneurship, symmetrical communication systems, strong leadership, strong participative cultures, and strategic planning. Further, excellent public relations departments employ strategic management with a view of maximizing contributions of communication programs so as to achieve organizational effectiveness (Grunig, 1992a). In addition to participation in strategic management, a judicious combination of symmetrical and asymmetrical communication and strategic communication management should characterize excellent public relations departments (Grunig L. et al. 2002).

In this light, Ledingham & Bruning (2000) demonstrated that a two-way symmetrical approach to public relations is an effective approach to public relations. Two-way symmetrical approach involves building and maintaining beneficial relationships between the organization and its publics (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000). The organization benefits through the customers' organizational loyalty. The publics benefit through the support that the organization provides to the community (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000). Moreover, the study demonstrated that public relations basic involves two steps: focus on the organization's relationship with its publics; and communicating "involvement of those activities/programs that build the organization-public relationship with members of their key publics" (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000, p.66).

2.1.4 Power and Public Relations Departments

The underlying purpose of power is to institute behavior. Power can be personal, departmental, or organizational. This section is concerned with departmental power of Public relations departments in relation to the position the department occupies within the structure of the organization. The focus is the department's ability to mobilize scarce resources in an effort to bring about change that would enhance the effectiveness of an organization (Grunig, 1990). Public relations have no formal authority for action and as such rely on influence to change behavior. Influence may result from their expertise, friendship, and ingratiation as well as organization derision (Grunig, 1990). Power has its influence "in decision making, in behavioral outcomes, and in situational outcomes" (Grunig, 1990). Therefore, for changes that

should enhance image to occur, public relations departments should have the capacity and influence to cause the changes.

2.2 Public Relations in Government

2.2.1 Reasons for Government Public Relations

Public relations is an essential and integral part of public administration work. Government agencies which adopt public relations are able to do their job effectively. PR managers must understand that some PR functions are imposed upon them by the virtual of being a government institution. Lee (2012) has argued that there are three reasons (one mandatory and two optional) for government departments to engage in PR. The mandatory requirement of government PR is the democratic responsibility of the government agency or department. Every government must fulfil its democratic responsibilities to its citizenry, which makes it mandatory for government agencies to engage in PR. Given that one of the most important prerequisites to democracy is communication, government PR managers are obliged to full the democratic responsibility of the government (Lee, 2012).

Promoting the government's democratic accountability to the citizens of a country is a unique function of PR in public administration. This function is achieved through media relations and public reporting. This means that PR managers are required to respond to the news media enquiries regardless of whether the questions asked will portray the agency negatively or positively, and report its activities to the citizenry. It ensures that the government is fully responsive to the public as citizens. Within a democratic context, these issues are obligations that governments must fulfill. This is

especially important given that public opinion plays a core role in a democratic society. The public has the right to be informed about the activities of government agencies and how tax payers' money is being used by government agencies. Therefore, PR becomes an integral part of public administration.

The second reason, which is optional, is that government agencies may adopt PR to implement their central mission effectively (Lee, 2012). This function ensures that governments remain responsive to the public as clients and customers. This function may also enable the government to enhanced public outreach and utilization of services and products. In addition, the second function engaging in PR enables the government successfully implement public education and public service campaigns through public outreach. Ledingham (2001) studied government-citizen relationships and found that PR has the power to contribute to the building of communities. In addition, having a good relationship with the public built through public outreach may also give the government an opportunity to use the public as "the eyes and ears of an agency" (Lee, 2012, p. 13). The third reason, which is optional and controversial, is concerned with the political goals of government PR. Under this reason, government agencies need to engage in PR not only to advance their autonomy and power but also to command a huge public support.

Lee (2012) has argued that actions to be taken by PR managers in government agencies should adopt this purposes approach. He explained that some PR actions may be appropriate for some purposes and inappropriate for other purposes. He therefore concluded that "*the purpose of the [PR] effort needs to be identified before any plan of*

action can be constructed [emphasis original]”. Lee (2012) argued that the importance of the purposes approach in government PR is that once a specific goal to be achieved is identified, the relevant communication strategies needed to accomplish the task “will flow naturally from the purpose itself” (Lee, 2012, p. 13).

2.2.2 Reaching the Publics: Tools of Government PR

Government PR managers employ a number of tools to reach out to the citizenry. These tools include media relations, internet-based tools (government websites, web 2.0 tools), and public information campaigns. These tools present government PR managers with different opportunities through which to implement PR in their agencies. The communication strategies adopted in all these tools often include the mass media, internet-based interactive tools, and interpersonal support (Atkin & Rice, 2013). The use of internet-based interactive tools will be described in detail because they are the most recent in public relations. Online PR is accomplished through the use of government websites and social networking tools. A detailed discussion of social networking will be provided because they encourage two-way symmetrical communication, unlike government websites. Technological advancement has presented practitioners with various tools that they can use to enhance their efforts in building positive organizational images among their multiple publics (Supa, 2014). In particular, the internet has provided useful tools that the PR community has found to be vital in their job (Watson & Noble, 2007).

Online PR is basically concerned with “persuading people to comment positively about the organization or client that is being represented” (Watson & Noble,

2007, p. 198). Some social networking tools that are being used in public relations include blogs, wikis, RSS, podcasting, social bookmarking, and social networking (Brown, 2009). The use of web 2.0 tools has significantly impacted on the practice of public relations (Brown, 2009). Web 2.0 tools refer to the version of web that allows all users to add and edit content, including putting pictures, sounds, and video (Brown, 2009). The main driving force of social networking sites is user-participation through user generation of content (Waters et al., 2009). Some of the most common web 2.0 tools that have democratized the internet and corporate communication include Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

After social networking sites implemented features allowing organizations to create profiles and engage in social networking, many organizations jumped to incorporate social networking strategies in their PR programming (Waters, Burnett, Lammn & Lucas, 2009). A recent study (Wigley & Zhang, 2011) involving members of the Public Relations Society of America found that 82% of the organizations the respondents worked for had adopted the use of social media in their PR efforts. In addition, a quarter of the organizations had hired someone specifically responsible for social media. The authors reported that 71% of the respondents said that social media platforms were used to communicate with stakeholders such as prospective customers and clients (Wigley & Zhang, 2011). Moreover, more than half of the organizations used social media to communicate with employees of the organizations (Wigley & Zhang, 2011).

Organizations have found social networking sites useful for advocating for their causes and ensuring that they remain open and transparent (Waters et al., 2009). Research has reported varying perceptions among PR practitioners of the value of social media. Supa (2014) reported that most of the PR managers they interviewed acknowledged transformative ability of social media, while a few others said the introduction of social media in the practice of PR “did not create a change in media relations” (p. 5). Use of social network tools among PR practitioners is associated with feelings of confidence and power. Diga and Kelleher (2009) reported that PR practitioners who use social media tools more frequently have stronger perceptions of their expert and prestige power. Similarly, Eyrich, Padman, and Sweetser (2008) found that PR managers with advanced skills in the use of social media networks perceived increased adoption of social networking in the PR industry compared to those with no expertise in using social networking tools (Eyrich et al., 2008).

The tremendous attention that social media has received from the popular press is a clear indication that they present a new communication channel (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Supa, 2014). The radical change in internet-based communication has had radical implication on the practice of PR. Kietzmann et al. (2011) and Smith (2013) argued that social media has shifted control of communication from PR practitioners to social media users who create, share, and consume entries in social networking sites. Consequently, the model of PR practiced in social media tends to shift communication role from the PR practitioners to the users of the social media (Smith, 2013). Users are able to make

communication about products of an organization whether the organization has permitted such communication or not.

For instance, companies that have mistreated their clients have had those clients reporting the companies in social media, with a good number of the instances going viral and portraying the organization in a negative light. This situation has hurt the reputation of such organizations (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Internet-based social media presents PR managers with new routes to engage with organizational publics in an effort to promote a positive organizational image (Brown, 2009; Curtis et al., 2009). This engagement allows PR managers to fulfill their PR objectives (Smith, 2013). This has enhanced the ability of PR managers to target and reach most of the organizational publics (Brown, 2009).

Social media presents a useful communication tool to government departments, and experts have identified the potential of these tools to reinvent the relationship between a government and its citizens (Pizarro-Vela, Gutierrez-Martinez, & Luna-Reyes, 2012). The most common social networking tools in the Middle East are Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter (Al Jenaidi, 2011). Social networks can address most of the challenges that are facing government-citizen relationships. In particular, public's perceptions about whether their government is transparent enough strongly impacts on how citizens perceive the commitment of the government to prevent or fight corruption, promote democratic participation, cultivate trust in its citizens, and provision of accurate and correct information to the public, media, and companies (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010).

Citizens have used the social media to communicate about their dissatisfaction with various government agencies because of issues related to transparency and corruption, which has led to political uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia and political unrest in Jordan, Yemen, just to mention (Bhuiyan, 2011; Al-Jenaibi, 2011; CIA, 2012). Using the political uprising of 2011 in Egypt, Bhuiyan (2011) argued that social media provides a platform for discussion of ideas and experiences. Bhuiyan (2011) argued that the Egyptian uprising was a symbol of the role of the social media in promoting democracy.

Current literature shows that the transformative ability of social networking can be exploited by governments to promote transparency and demonstrate their commitment to preventing and fighting corruption (Bertot et al., 2010). Moreover, government can use internet-based social network tools in disaster management and consequently project favourable opinion among the citizens. After surveying 260 Mexican government employees, Picazo-Vela et al. (2012) concluded that participation of the government in social media network is powerful tool of promoting communication and participation of the citizens, and transparency and promoting good practices among government agencies. Consistent with Picazo-Vela et al.'s (2012) observation on the importance of social networks to governments, Bertot et al. (2010) viewed the use of social media in government as an important tool for promoting increased openness and fighting corruption. However, the authors identified the need to ensure that an appropriate implementation strategy is adopted to reasonably realize the benefits associated with social networking (Picazo-Vela et al., 2012).

2.2.3 Management of Government PR

Successful management of government PR takes account of various factors such as strategic communication planning and use of appropriate monitoring and evaluation techniques to measure the effectiveness of PR efforts (Bowen, 2012; Kolar, 2012; Martinelli, 2012; Taylor, 2012). PR managers need to adopt a strategic approach to the practice to ensure that it remains effective (Smith, 2013). Smith (2013) proposed a framework consisting of four broad phases that should be followed in strategic communication planning. The phases include formative research, strategy, tactics, and the evaluative research (Smith, 2013). The first phase, formative research, requires collecting data and analyzing the situation. The planner uses the findings obtained from gathered information and situation analysis to create a research program for further data gathering in order to have sufficient informational base to inform later decision making (Smith, 2013).

There are three specific steps in this phase which include analyzing the situation, analyzing the organization, and analyzing the publics. Analyzing the situation involves consulting every individual involved such as the clients, supervisors, planner, and colleagues to ensure that an accord is reached on the kind of obstacle that is intended to be addressed. In the second step of analyzing the organization, the internal environment (mission, performance and resources), public perception (visibility and reputation), and external environment (competitors, opponents, and supporters) are carefully examined. The third step, analyzing the publics, the PR manager is concerned with the identification and analysis of key publics in terms of its needs, interests, wants, and expectations in

relation to the issue under consideration. Further, attention should be given to other social, political, economic, technological, and media aspects that may have a significant impact (Smith, 2013).

The second phase, strategy, is the heart of the strategic planning process. It involves making decisions on the expected effect of the communication strategy being planned, and the nature of the communication itself. This phase is further defined three steps including setting goals and objectives, formulating action and response strategies, and developing the message strategy. In setting goals and objectives, the planner establishes clear, specific, and measurable objectives for the key public. The formulation of action and response refers to considering various notions that may be undertaken under different situations. The actions may be both PR initiatives and influences from outside. The development of the message strategy is concerned with message-related decisions. These include the spokesperson who will deliver the message to the target publics, the message content, tone and style, verbal and non-verbal cues, among others (Smith, 2013).

The third phase is the tactics. This phase involves considering the kind of communication tools to be used, as well as creating visible elements of the communication plan. The first step is therefore to select communication tactics. There are four categories from which the PR manager can choose from, including face-to-face communication, organizational media, news media, and advertising and promotional media. The next stage is the implementation of the strategic plan. This step involves packaging tactics into a coherent communication program. This step also includes

preparation of budgets and schedules as well as preparing for the implementation of the communication program (Smith, 2013).

The fourth phase has been identified as the evaluative research. In this final phase, the PR manager engages in evaluation and assessment of the communication program. Following the results of the evaluation and assessment, appropriate steps can be taken, which may include modification of the program and continuing with the program in its current form. The PR manager must have, as the last planning stage, plans on how to evaluate the strategic plan. The step requires that the PR manager identifies the specific methods to be used to measure the effectiveness of each tactic in realizing the set objectives and goals (Smith, 2013).

Monitoring and evaluating government PR is an important strategy in improving internal management of government agencies and service delivery among government agencies (Taylor, 2012). The ability to measure outcomes of government PR proves, in the first place, the value of PR function (Taylor, 2012). The philosophy behind monitoring and evaluation of PR is that efforts are intended to provide results and therefore one should have a way of determining whether the efforts have provided anticipated results (Taylor, 2012). Monitoring and evaluation assist in understanding trends and providing evidence of impact (Taylor, 2012). Managers who set goals and identify the tools for measuring the achievement of the goals are better placed to be effective leaders. As a consequence, government PR managers need to adopt systematic planning and evaluation of their PR programs (Taylor, 2012).

Senior PR practitioners who form part of the dominant coalition perceive evaluation of PR programs as important and as valued by the organization (Grantham, Vieira, & Trincherro, 2011). However, mid-level PR practitioners playing providing technical support did not perceived PR role and the measurement of PR activities as highly valued by the organization (Grantham et al., 2011). The measurement and evaluation of the effectiveness of PR strategies has been a subject of discussion for both practitioners and scholars for a long (Watson & Noble 2007). Most practitioners who undertake evaluation of public relations rely on simplistic methodologies (Watson & Noble, 2007). However, researchers (e.g. Taylor, 2012; Watson & Noble, 2007) rejected the use of simplistic evaluation techniques, arguing that there is no one simplistic technique in existence that can authoritative measure the effectiveness of PR programs. Instead, Taylor (2012) and Watson and Noble (2007) argued that deliberate efforts should be made to rely on a combination of tools and methods to measure effectiveness of PR depending on the level of measurement required.

In this light, a three-level model has been proposed as the most effective in evaluating PR programs. This kind of a model is best exemplified by “Stages and Levels for Evaluating Public Relations Programs’ model” proposed by Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2000). The model consists of the three levels of evaluation, which include preparation, implementation, and impact (Cutlip et al., 2000; Cutlip et al., 2006). The model, known as Preparation, Implementation, Impact (PII), provides levels of evaluation for different demands. Although this model does not prescribe a methodology, it recognizes that evaluation may have different meanings to different practitioners (Watson

& Noble, 2007). Every step in the model enhances understanding and provides additional information to aid in the assessment of effectiveness. At preparation evaluation, the practitioner is required to ascertain whether sufficient background information has been gathered for the effective planning of the program. Next, the practitioner should assess the content of the program to ascertain that carries the key messages of the PR program. Further, this level requires an examination of the presentation of materials.

At the second level, implementation evaluation, the application of the tactics and effort should be assessed. This begins with distribution of materials and attendance at events before proceeding to opportunities for exposing the intended publics to the key messages. This evaluation will make it possible to identify flaws such as distribution to the wrong contacts. At the third level of evaluation, stress is on the examination of the extent to which outcomes as reflected in the objectives and goals have been realized. The aim is to determine if the specified changes have been achieved, which is done by measuring the same variables that formed the basis of the PR program to determine whether the quantifiable changes specified in the objectives were realized. In order to accomplish this task, a combination of measurements including both surveys and observations, both direct and indirect, is required in addition to a considerable ingenuity in identifying attitudinal and behavioural changes. The PII model has been praised for its ability to separate output and impact. The model is a framework that serves as a checklist and a reminder for PR practitioners when planning to do an evaluation. The model further advises practitioners against falling trap in the common error in evaluation. This error involves substitution of measures from one level for the measures at the other level. For

instance, practitioners can use the number of news releases sent, brochures distributed, or meetings held as tools for documenting the effectiveness of a PR program. However, when documenting the effectiveness of a PR program, practitioners may substitute publicity placements which may be defined by column inches, airtime, changes target public's knowledge, attitude, and behavior which are stated in the objectives of the programs.

Media evaluation systems are useful in short-term and continuing PR activity (Watson & Noble, 2007). Traditionally, PR success was measured by collecting and amassing media clippings and transcriptions, which were considered as deliverable of the PR process and program. However, there have been efforts to develop more effective media monitoring strategies. Measuring media coverage is forms part of the overall PR evaluation process should be done consistently, and be consistent with the overall objectives (Watson & Noble, 2007). Lindermann proposed Public Relations Yardstick which outlines three stages of evaluation with increasing complexity. The stages are Output, Outgrowth or Out-take and Outcomes. According to Watson and Noble (2007), the most appropriate Yardstick for a simple media monitoring system is the Output.

Output is concerned with measuring PR effort production, rather than audience response and attitudinal change, which are addressed by the other Yardsticks. Analysis focused on Output is concerned with identifying where the message was received in the media, interpretations (manner and tone), and quantitative measurements of the appearance of the message in the media. Media clippings and transcripts, the raw material in monitoring media, are generated by monitoring the media. This role may be

accomplished by PR practitioners or hired agencies and bureaus specializing in broadcast monitoring. Setting up media monitoring system and utilizing the information drawn from such monitoring consists of six steps. The first includes defining objectives, which could be message exposure, dissemination, and education of target publics.

The second is determining criteria for judgment, which can be accomplished using IMPACT (influence or tone, message communicated, prominence, audience reached, consultants/spokesman quoted, type of article). However, the prominence factor in this framework has been questioned. People do not scan and retain information in a linear way. This is an indication that people “do not necessarily retain information offered by the largest article on a prominent page or the first report in a broadcast news program” (Watson & Noble, 2007, p.110). After choosing criteria, the next step is choosing a benchmark, which is accomplished through a review of media coverage for the previous 12 months. Next, a measurement tool should be collected, comparing results with objectives, and modifying campaigns (Watson & Noble, 2007). However, the main limitation of Output is that it is unable to judge the impact of the message on non-media targets.

2.2.4 Challenges Facing Government PR

There are various challenges that negatively affected the practice of PR in government agencies. First, most of models for government PR do not sufficiently taken into account the special environmental challenges facing the practice of government PR. Government public relations are affected by politics, the focus on serving the public, intense media and public attention, legal constraints, poor perceptions about government

PR, and lack of support for government PR (Liu & Horsley, 2007). Many PR personnel do not possess technological skills required to run social network presence. In addition, some practitioners do not consider social networking as an important PR tool (Curtis et al., 2009).

Second, government PR managers work with elected officials and appointed officials who do not always recognize the important role played by PR (Zahradnik, 2012). Such officials may view the role of PR as basically involving misleading the public rather than informing the public. In such situations, it becomes difficult for the elected officials to understand the value associated with investing in time and funds to enhance the practice of PR within government agencies. In some situations, elected officials consider funding communication as a form of government waste, fraud, and abuse (Zahradnik, 2012). It has been argued that if the PR does not give tangible benefits, it is difficult to invest in PR (Zahradnik, 2012). This puts government PR personnel in an uncomfortable situation as they endeavor to perform their duties while at the same time must defend their jobs. However, PR practitioners working for the government are urged to adapt and make use of their training and skills to ensure that internal publics are aware, understand, and appreciate the crucial role played by PR or communication (Zahradnik, 2012). PR managers will also need to ensure that internal PR is a high priority area of their work.

Political and economic systems, including level of development affect the practice of public relations, sometimes negatively (Sriramesh, Rhee, & Sung, 2011). For instance, according to MEPRA, public relations in the Middle East have been marginalized due to curtailed freedom of expression, poor democratic record, and the role of public opinion in

the society (Smith, 2013). Similarly, another scholar observed that in the Middle East, PR is referred to as “general relations” because governments are concept to the idea of public opinion. In this light, Al-Enad (1990) observed that PR was an aspect of development communication to free and organize publics. However, Kruckeberg (1996) rejected Al-Enad’s views and maintained that two-way symmetrical communication would develop in the Middle East because this is something that is present in many countries regardless of their cultural or environmental situations. Nevertheless, MEPRC has called upon governments in Middle East to consider PR as an ethical tool for improving the society rather than a propaganda tool (Smith, 2013).

Moreover, government relations programs are prone to budget cuts. Government hardly cut services to the citizens as a way of cutting expenses. Instead, they focus on trimming staff and operating experiences, in which the “budget supporting the public affairs function may appear to be one of the easiest positions to eliminate” (Taylor, 2012, p. 28).

2.3 Identity, Reputation, and Image

2.3.1 Definition and Importance of Organizational Identity, Reputation, and Image

In this study, reputation and image will be used interchangeably. Wei (2002) observed that identity, reputation, and image are used interchangeably. Their definitions and descriptions are first provided. Corporate identity has to do with the way an organization’s key members conceptualize it (Bromley, 2000). Identity concerns itself with creating, expressing, and managing explicit organizational values

on what the organization is and what it advocates, in relation to its competitor; putting emphasis on the visual and aesthetic expression modes (Schultz & Ervolder, 1998; Fillis, 2003). In contrast, image and reputation are based on the external environment, specifically the perceptions of various constituencies or publics.

Reputation is among the organizational aspects that provide the basis for success (E. Alniacik, U. Alniacik & Erdogmus, 2012). Reputation is related to performance of the organization, size, growth, history, and investment in promotion (Bromley, 2000). It is the way “key external stakeholder groups or other interested parties actually conceptualize” an organization (Bromley, 2000, p. 201). In particular, following Bromley (2000), Sjovall & Talk (2004) defined reputation as “the collective impressions of the members of a social group about the general disposition of some particular target entity” (p. 270). Dimensions of reputation include emotional appeal implying the extent to which publics admire, like and respect an organization; products and services, including their perceived quality, value, reliability, and innovation; vision and leadership, the extent to which the organization demonstrates and manages its vision and strong leadership; work place environment, including quality of employees and working conditions; social and environmental responsibility, how a company behaves as a citizen in interacting with employees, community, and environment; and financial performance, including perceptions about profitability, risk, and prospects of an organization (Fombrun et al., 2000, cited in E. Alniacik et al., 2012).

Kotler, G. (2003). *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, and Implementation* (6th ed.).

Reputation comes from resource allocation, media exposure, social responsiveness, diversification postures, institutional ownership, and risk-return profiles (Decker, 2012). The importance of reputation includes yielding competitive advantage and being an incentive ethical conduct (Decker, 2012; E. Almiach et al., 2012). A study by the Conference Board (2000) found that 51% of people in North America had either punished or rewarded a company on the basis of its social responsibility as perceived by the respondents while 6% were planning to either reward or punish a company based on its responsibility as a corporate citizen. This study underlines the importance of creating good image and reputation.

Public relations and image have received considerable attention in literature. Basically, public relations should be concerned with developing positive image as it is viewed as an effective differentiation form that places the organizations in better positions compared to their competitors (Bergmann, 2002; Wright & Fill, 2001; Kirdar, 2007). In an attempt to show the strong relationship between public relations and image, Christine M. Piotrowski stated that public relations involves “all the efforts of a firm that go into creating an image of the firm in order to positively affect the public’s opinion of the firm” (Piotrowski, 2009). Similarly, Kirdar (2007) considered image as the “specific organizational asset that the public relations department is in charge of.

This assertion views image as encompassing all public relations activities, tools, and efforts used in communicating information of the organization to its publics. Kotler (1991, p. 570; as quoted in Bergmann, 2002, p. 50) defined image as the “set of

beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person holds of an object". Other scholars have observed that image is the total impression that the entity makes on a public's perceptions (Brunner & Brown, 2007). Furthermore, image has been described as "a mosaic made of all the conclusions different publics make after being exposed to an organization's public relations efforts" (Brunner & Brown, 2007, p. 358). In all these descriptive definition, the basic idea is perceptive psychology. Bergmann (2002) has insisted that image should be taken as the actual reality.

Relying on literature, Bergmann (2002) concludes that consumers perceive what they see as the reality and therefore it would be inadmissible to term what the consumers see as copy of reality or not actual reality. In the event that public relations does not effectively present the psychological reality of the organization, image forms and the gaps in the presentation result into formation of inappropriate images. This paper actually seeks to find out how public relations departments in Jordanian public ministries can present the ministries in the best way possible in terms of psychological reality to ensure that appropriate images are formed. When publics evaluate an organization or its products, the negative images they form may affect the entire organization, or just the products or services concerned.

In public relations, image is a controversial term owing to the word's numerous negative connotations such as surface rather than substance (Brunner & Brown, 2007). As a result, some public relations scholars have avoided the use of the term. Images encompass all corporate communications indicating that public relations concerns itself with unreality in that practitioners "manipulate, polish, project, tarnish,

dent, bolster, and/or boost something that is not real” (Brunner & Brown, 2007, p. 358). Image combines publics’ symbolic about an organization (attitudes, perception, and schemas) and the organization-public relationships (Brunner & Brown, 2007). Image depends on the activities of an organization such as interaction of management and publics, financial performance of the organization, leader’s behavioral patterns, and organizational day to day operations.

Brunner & Brown (2007) reported that Image results from messages that an organization sends either intentionally or unintentionally. Additionally, image results from historical, social experiences lived with the organization. Public relations practitioners who wish to promote image must ensure that their communications reflect the mission, values, culture, and personality of the organization. All these aspects are, among others, reflected in the organization’s design, logo, stationery, etc. the information communicated can be in form of brochures, newsletters, news releases, and trade publications. It has been reported that positive organizational image among publics produces positive effects on uninvolved publics.

Pruzan (2001) wrote a paper on corporate reputation in relation to success and credibility in which he described pragmatic and reflective perspectives. With the increasing attention on corporate image by the constituencies or publics, organization are resulting into the development of attitudes and tools that enhance awareness and sensitivity to the vital role that positive image plays among publics, alongside its competitive advantage (Pruzan, 2001). As a result, organizations have adopted a pragmatic perspective on corporate image. Under this perspective, protection and

enhancement of reputation is viewed as an obligatory condition for the organizational survival, competitiveness, and maintenance of strong organization-public relationship. The reason for this kind of scenario occurs as a result of increased media focus on the conduct of the organization in which the media is ready to report on any unethical conduct from an organization, which threatens an organization's survival. The consumers themselves are also keen to notice any unethical behavior about the organization to publish it, especially through web tools such social networking sites. These consumers, which form part of the organization's publics, have been referred as political consumers, the conscious consumer, and the critical consumer (Pruzan, 2001). These consumers are concerned with social, ethical, and environmental responsibilities for an organization (Pruzan, 2001). Pruzan calls this "ethical consumerism" (Pruzan, 2001, p. 51). These consumers make choices on the products they should consume depending on the ethical conduct of the corporate.

Other than ethical consumers, there are also, ethical investors. They focus on the ethical conduct of the organization in addition to its profitability, productivity, and share price. To be ethical, the organization has to be sensitive to its image and reputation. The organization adopts pragmatic perspective to protect and nurture its image by avoiding unethical behavior and encouraging ethical behavior. Through this perspective and with a view of achieving the goal set, the organization effects changes in its structure by, for instance, creating new managerial positions such as "ethics officer" (Pruzan, 2001, p. 54).

Reflective perspective is a “deeper level of inquiry” that has resulted from the management’s reaction to the issues facing the organization as a result of the public’s focus on the organization’s reputation (Pruzan, 2001, p.54). This perspective is metaphysical in nature and seeks to answer existential questions. This concerns itself with the essential nature of corporate reality as opposed to the corporate appearance. In other words, reflective perspective is existential in nature and concerns itself with internal aspects of an organization such as identity and integrity. Pragmatic perspective is rational in nature and concerns itself with external orientation of an organization with special attention to image (Pruzan, 2001). The focus of the present study is image and therefore pragmatic perspective is adopted. If pragmatic perspective is applied in the context of Jordanian ministries, it will be seen that the ministries have to be sensitive to their behavior in light of social, cultural, and environmental issues to ensure that it is ethical.

A study was carried out to investigate the attributes that general practitioners and pharmacists in the UK use to form images of ethical practice among companies manufacturing drugs (Wright & Fill, 2001). The study design involved both qualitative exploratory research using unstructured interviews and quantitative design. In the exploratory phase, the researchers used judgmental sampling to obtain a small sample consisting of practice managers, general practitioners, and community pharmacists. This phase was designed to identify the five most important attributes. The attributes identified were drug effectiveness, level of Research & Development investment, relationship with representative, cost & effect relationship, and efforts to train staff.

The next phase was the administration of questionnaires to a sample of 104 participants. The results demonstrated that drug effectiveness was the attribute perceived as the most important in forming the image of the manufacturer. The second attribute was the Relationship with Representative attribute, although others believed that it was the most important. Others (in order of importance in creating positive image) were level of research & development investment, cost & effect relationship, and efforts to train staff. The results of this study are important to the current research in that they give an idea to what an organization that seeks to promote its image should do. For instance, although the study is on pharmacy, it is easily applicable in all other areas. For instance, the effectiveness of drugs may imply simply the effectiveness of all products and services that organization provides.

2.3.2 Management of Organizational Image

Public relations can effectively manage and enhance image through communication (Hung, 2008). The primary importance of image is that it enhances customer loyalty (Hung, 2008). Corporate image should be projected in the organization's communication and as such organizations should ensure coherence, consistency, and image in their communications (Argenti & Forman, 2004). This ensures that the organization generates and manages the image it creates among the publics effectively.

The image of an organization is the mental model the publics form whenever they think of that organization. Image contains sensorial, cognitive, affective information (Schuler, 2004). This image is formed as a result of organizational

information that the publics receive, then organize in the publics' "data banks" (Schuler, 2004, p. 37). As a result organizational image that publics form depends on: the organizational information the publics have; the way in which the publics acquire the organizational information; publics' personalized or individual way of categorizing the information about the organization received; how the publics perceive the connection between the received information and the information already in the publics' memory; how the publics perceive the connections between the pieces of the received information themselves; and the personalized or individual way through which the publics access information and retrieve the data that make up the models so as to think about them (Schuler, 2004).

Every contact that the publics makes with the organization, either through direct sensorial contact, or through organizational representations such as logo, name, hearing about it, and advertisements, among others, affects image formation. The organization has an opportunity to make a positive influence on the process that is involved in forming image by the publics. The organization makes this influence through: constantly informing the goals, characteristics, and working ways of an organization; keenly keeping an eye on the image making process by different organizations' publics; developing new forms of communication together with its publics to help in achieving, maintaining, and improving the desired image. A company needs to engage in the following operations to ensure that it intervenes in the image formation so as to have a better image.

First, the organization needs to know the kind of image it wishes to build in the minds of the publics. This implies that the organization needs to have a clearly defined image it wants all its different publics to have. The idea of the kind of image that the organization wishes to have should be spread in the entire organization; implying that the internal publics need to be aware of the image the organization wants to create in the minds of its external publics. Proper definition of the image and communication of that image definition in the entire organization ensures that all the actions and agents of the organization are tuned to achieving the intended image. Second, to positively influence image formation, an organization has to know the kind of image each of the organization's publics has formed about the organization. Being aware of the image the publics have enables the organization to identify the areas to target in an attempt to influence the formation of image it wishes to have. This needs the organization to evaluate the image that the organization has already projected in its publics (Schuler, 2004).

2.3.3 Addressing Negative Publicity on Corporate Image: Public Relations and Crisis Management

An organization's reputation and image may be heavily destroyed when it receives negative publicity from the media (Hoeken & Renkema, 1998; Carlson, 1999; Carroll & McCombs, 2003). For instance, the media are always keen to find issues such as tax evasion, employee exploitation, and child labor, among others within an organization to publicize and demand action (Hoeken & Renkema, 1998; Carlson, 1999). The location of the story (front, inside, back, etc), length/size, are crucial in

analyzing the story and the publics are aware of these details (Carroll & McCombs, 2003). In other words, the prominence of a news item influences the prominence of the issue of concern among the publics (Carroll & McCombs, 2003). Readers, including the organization's publics, perceive such organization as for instance, less trustworthy, less attractive, and less competent within a week of reading the article.

To enhance and maintain the image of an organization, the public relations departments need to engage with the publics for effective strategic management of social and political issues (Saiia & Cyphert, 2003). The issues management demands that organizations recognize emerging environmental and social issues and incorporate them in the organizational management. This ensures that the organization's activities are in line with the expectations of the publics. It has been observed that effective organizations are those that are able to monitor and appropriately respond to social, political, and environmental issues affecting them and their publics (Saiia & Cyphert, 2003). The same situation occurs in the case of government ministries.

Crisis management is an important aspect in protecting the organization's reputation, brand, and image (Ferguson, Wallace, & Chandler, 2012). Crisis management is increasingly becoming essential in managing organizational reputation, brand and image, especially in the wake of heavy financial losses to both private and public organizations. These losses occur following the erosion of organizational reputation and image as a result of poorly managed crisis (Ferguson et al., 2012). Poorly handled crises can seriously damage organizational reputation and lead to loss of revenue, legal problems, and unhappy publics (Ferguson et al., 2012). In most cases, crises pressurize

organizations to provide explanation and reassure relevant publics. Most of the pressure is attributed to how the media have covered the crises. Media coverage provokes an urgency to communicate because they appeal to many organizational publics. Organizational publics rely on the media to get both news and interpretation of the news. Consequently, media coverage can significantly shape organizational reputation during times of crises. Crisis management involves the overall strategic planning aimed at preventing, mitigating, responding, and recovering routine operations during a negative occurrence.

Crisis management is accomplished through various strategies. First, successful crisis management requires crisis preparation (Coombs, 2007). Preparation for crisis ensures that any damage to the reputation of the organization remains at the minimum. Properly prepared organizations are able to respond appropriately to crises when they arise. To prepare for crises, PR managers should prepare and practice crisis communication plans in which they simulate several crisis scenarios (Coombs, 2007; Fearn-Banks, 2007). However, this strategy may be limited in the sense anticipating and simulating every possible scenario is impossible. The reason is that crises are unpredictable and sudden (Wigley & Zhang, 2014). Therefore, crisis preparedness “can only go so far in helping an organization successfully manage a crisis” (Wigley & Zhang, 2014, p. 2). In addition, several case studies have demonstrated that crisis management preparedness is essential, but its usefulness is overrated (Wigley & Zhang, 2014).

Cases have been reported of organizations that handled crises poorly despite having crisis management plans such as NASA and the explosion of Challenges Space Shuttle and the University of Maryland and death of basketball leading player Len Bias

(Marra, 1998; Wigley & Zhang, 2014). However, some organizations have managed crisis successfully despite having no crisis plans. These may be exemplified by Johnson and Johnson and the successful handling of the Tylenol tampering case and McDonald's and the success management of crisis following mass shooting in their restaurant in San Ysidro, CA (Wigley & Zhang, 2014). These cases have led to the conclusion that organizations should have a "communication strategy that supports the attributes necessary for excellent crisis [management]" (Marra, 1998, p. 465). Therefore, PR managers need to go beyond the presence crisis management plans and consider other factors that influence successful crisis management.

There are two conditions that must be met in order to have successful crisis management efforts when they occur. These include two-way communication culture and communication autonomy of the PR manager. A two-way communication culture draws heavily from the excellent theory, and requires that PR managers adopt a two-way symmetrical communication (Marra, 1998). Consistent with this observation, Wigley and Zhang (2014) found that PR practitioners who perceive their organizations as highly using the two-way symmetrical communication were more confident in the ability of their organizations to tackle crises successfully. However, these PR practitioners did not see themselves as more confident to handle crisis management successfully. In the two-way symmetrical relationship, the extent to which organizations are ready to release information on crisis is crucial in the success of crisis management (Robertson, 2012).

Organizations in crises are the most important determinants of how the crisis will impact on the organization's image. Companies should ensure that they proactively share

(Marra, 1998; Wigley & Zhang, 2014). However, some organizations have managed crisis successfully despite having no crisis plans. These may be exemplified by Johnson and Johnson and the successful handling of the Tylenol tampering case and McDonald's and the success management of crisis following mass shooting in their restaurant in San Ysidro, CA (Wigley & Zhang, 2014). These cases have led to the conclusion that organizations should have a "communication strategy that supports the attributes necessary for excellent crisis [management]" (Marra, 1998, p. 465). Therefore, PR managers need to go beyond the presence crisis management plans and consider other factors that influence successful crisis management.

There are two conditions that must be met in order to have successful crisis management efforts when they occur. These include two-way communication culture and communication autonomy of the PR manager. A two-way communication culture draws heavily from the excellent theory, and requires that PR managers adopt a two-way symmetrical communication (Marra, 1998). Consistent with this observation, Wigley and Zhang (2014) found that PR practitioners who perceive their organizations as highly using the two-way symmetrical communication were more confident in the ability of their organizations to tackle crises successfully. However, these PR practitioners did not see themselves as more confident to handle crisis management successfully. In the two-way symmetrical relationship, the extent to which organizations are ready to release information on crisis is crucial in the success of crisis management (Robertson, 2012).

Organizations in crises are the most important determinants of how the crisis will impact on the organization's image. Companies should ensure that they proactively share

information with the media, regardless of how much the information may be damaging (Robertson, 2012). However, if the company withholds information during crisis, the company loses the control over the release of information to the media. The refusal to provide information causes increased media attention and prolonged media coverage of the issue. Journalists work harder to unearth the negative information, which increases the chances of organizational image damage. When information that had been withheld later comes into light, it generates more media attention and concerns that if the information had been released when the crisis first occurred (Robertson, 2012). Journalists (95% of those surveyed) observed that they would have serious suspicions if an organization initially withholds critical information or attempts a cover up, with some of them saying this would make them “dig deeper and harder for additional incriminating information” (Robertson, 2012, p. 15).

The second condition, communication autonomy, requires that organization give sufficient power and authority to the PR manager. Senior PR managers should be part of the boardroom decision making organ of the company, rather than middle-level managers who just wait to be instructed on what should be done (Wigley & Zhang, 2014). PR managers who enjoy communication autonomy also enjoy the support of the top management and freedom to make on-the-spot decisions. This way, senior PR managers need to be valued members of the dominant coalition who should report directly to the CEO (Marra, 1998). PR practitioners with communication autonomy do not have to get permission from the top management of an organization before releasing information to the publics.

In addition, PR managers who enjoy communication autonomy do not have to get permission for organizational attorneys before releasing information. Recent research (e.g. Wigley & Zhang, 2014) has showed that senior PR practitioners who are part of the dominant coalition are more confident about the ability of their organizations to manage crises successfully. In addition, they are more confident about their ability and that of their organization and the CEO to manage crisis successfully (Wigley & Zhang, 2014). Consistent with Wigley and Zhang (2014), Lee, Kim, and Wertz (2014) reported that CEO spokespersons were more effectively generated positive evaluations of the company by the public's during crises compared to lower PR practitioners acting as communication directors. They concluded that the level of PR manager in an organization has significant impact on the lowering of publics' attribution of crisis responsibility, and identified the need for giving power and authority to senior PR managers (Lee et al., 2014).

In another study, Wigley and Zhang (2011) investigated use of social media in crisis planning and dissemination of information during crisis among Public Relations Society of America members. They found that nearly 50% of the participants had incorporated social media (mostly twitter followed by Facebook, blogs, and Youtube), in their crisis planning (Wigley & Zhang, 2011). Social media was included in the crisis planning for the purposes of information distribution and monitoring for potential crisis (Wigley & Zhang, 2011). Research also shows corporate social responsibility (CRS) is an important tool in cushioning an organization against future crisis. In responding to a crisis, organizations should pay special attention to the organization-public relationships.

Sometimes, the media may negatively publicize the organization using false information which the journalists may consider as truthful. However, media can undertake corrections to repair the damage resulting from the negative publicity if a court of law finds such criticism unwarranted (Hoeken & Renkema, 1998). The aim of such corrections is to repair the damaged image. At times, the corrections may not achieve the intended effect since people maintain their original beliefs even in the event that they are made aware that such beliefs were formed on false grounds because the corrections rarely provide alternative explanation for the observed issue in question other than denying the issue allegations (Hoeken & Renkema, 1998).

Hoeken and Renkema (1998) designed a study to determine the effect of correction on perceptions about an organization's misconduct and the effect of such correction on the firm's image. The participants were 49 women and 48 men, a total of 89 participants aged between 18 and 65 years. The researchers found that corrections were effective in correcting negative image. It was established that after reading the correction, participants perceived the company as more trustworthy, more attractive, and more competent. After reading the corrections, participants indicated that they less believed the company could have committed such an illegal act. This finding was inconsistent with results of previous studies which have indicated that readers are insensitive to corrections that do not provide alternative explanations for alleged illegality. However, of key concern, and probably the difference between the previous studies and this one, is that the previous studies mostly dealt with events which had actually occurred, such as burnt building, and the question was on the cause of the

event, not the occurrence. In this study, the question is on the possibility of the event occurrence (Hoeken & Renkema, 1998).

Further, research shows that accepting wrongdoing may work well only for those firms with an established positive image. Decker (2012) purposed to examine potentially moderating variables impacting reputation by assessing the prior reputation of the firm and its responses to negative publicities. The study, which adopted factorial design, analyzed questionnaire data from 336 respondents. The results demonstrated that organizations with good reputation prior to wrongdoing allegations were more favorable in terms of trustworthiness and expertise than the firms without established good reputation before the wrong doing allegations. Further, the results showed that the organization's response to the wrongdoing allegations greatly influenced the impression of the respondents on the trustworthiness and expertise of the firm. The study demonstrated that admission of wrong doing was effective than wrongdoing denial or decline to give comment on the matter.

The overall conclusion was that accepting wrong doing allegations by an organization would have a positive effect on its image (Decker, 2012). This is a useful study in the current research given that government ministries in Jordan have been accused of corruption and other activities that have a negative effect on their image. It implies that developing positive image would ensure that any acceptance of any future wrong doing would safeguard their image. Therefore, the study is timely because it will help the ministries cultivate appropriate image which will be a way of insuring the image from negative publicity.

2.4 Measuring Corporate Image

With corporations perceiving their image as an asset, there is an increasing need to measure and verify corporate image. The best method for measuring image is chosen by the theoretical framework from which it is approached from. These approaches include an approach that perceives image as a network of meanings; as a holistic impression of the object position in relation to its competitors. Other factors that influence choice of technique include pragmatic and strategic considerations (Riel, Stroecker & Maathuis, 1998). Generally, image measurement methods are either open-ended or close-ended. The open ended techniques ask participants to provide their own description of the company while closed techniques request participants to provide an assessment of the company on the previously identified attributes (Riel et al., 1998). In a study investigating image measurement techniques, Riel and co-workers sought to find out whether different measurement techniques produce different corporate image measures, and to identify the best method for measuring corporate image. The methods were attitude scales, Q-sort, photosort, laddering, Kelly Repertory Grid, and Natural Grouping (Riel et al., 1998).

The researchers found that results obtained from open methods, which are qualitative in nature, can be used as inputs in closed methods. The purpose of the study should determine the choice of method. In this light, open methods are useful in those situations in which the organization seeks to elicit image dimensions. On their part, closed methods are useful when the company wishes to monitor its image while comparing it with that of its competitors over time (Riel et al., 1998).

2.5 Public Relations from an Islamic Perspective

Public Relations in Islam emerged when the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) started his approach in public relations from the first moment of inviting people for Islam, he sent the qualified Muslims to teach people about Islam and he advised them to represent the bright image for Islam (Yunus, 2008). The modern public relations is interested in the establishment of public relations and practice it, to gain publics' loyalty, enhance organization's image, and hence achieve profits, or to achieve some political gains for some individuals. The field of Islamic Public Relations is expanding. It aims at the establishment of friendly relations based on love and cooperation among all human beings, in order to configure a mutually supportive human society (Kahil, 2009). That means the Islamic Public Relations is intended for public benefit to all humans, but not to achieve financial or political gain for an organization or individual.

The Islamic culture has implemented the basis of public relations in the call to Islam by using persuasion, proofs, logic, and tangible and intangible evidence. The "Shura", for instance, has adapted a principle of taking decision and spreading the Islamic religion by enlightened advocates in masjids and in various religious and social events. The origins of public relations in Islam are various. It includes numerous basal principles which are now the foundation used to practice public relations. In addition, Verses and Hadith explain and clarify adequately the quality of the relations on which individuals, organizations, nations and other systems operate and coexist with one another (Othman, 2011).

It is accurate to state that Islam has cared greatly about human beings and their dignity, thoughts and wishes, thus we find that the Islamic call was not spread by force. However, as evidenced by historical facts, persuasion and evidence are employed in spreading the call to Islam. As such, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) implemented means of personal and non-personal communication as he used to send messengers on his behalf and send letters to kings and lords calling them to Islam. Persuasion, which was cultivated by the Prophet (Peace be upon him), is one of the most important means on which the art and science of public relations is based (Othman, 2011).

The people who constantly face the daunting task of public relations are aware that the basic foundation of this science deals with the ability to create a means of communication and a constructive dialogue. As such, this leads to an understanding that the initial step to achieve this is to possess the ability to instigate a dynamic and efficient communications channel owing to the fact that all Muslims, regardless of their countries of origin, are social individuals. As such, a respectful salutation or even lovely and simplistic words easily captivate our hearts. In this respect, Islam has always given importance to the use of salutations, or Salam, as an introductory part in every form of communication. This is especially designed under a system of manners of salutation, or more appropriately the etiquette of salutation (Bdear, 2008).

The practice of the Islam tenet of Shura within an organization necessitates the leaders to know the feelings of the members and hear their plight, thus allowing the organization to be professionally sincere and meet the individual needs of each

member perfectly (Zain, 2008). Another advantage of the Shura principle in Islam is that they give the Islamic institution the opportunity to show its opinion, policies and programs to the citizens in order to convince them of its use and to hear their opinions and orientations, thus it aims, through these public relations, at diverting the public opinion, community awareness and guidance towards its benefits and interests by means of kind words and warm style (Zain, 2008). That's exactly what the prophet (Peace be upon him) was ordered to do, Allah (S.W.T) said {And speak to people good [words] } (Al-Quran. Al-Baqarah 2:83).

There is a very bright image in the prophet (Peace be upon him) and Rightly Guided Caliphs' history that demonstrates how Islam employed the principle of "Shura" in surveying and knowing the opinions of people and the things that concerns them. This resulted in to the membership of the Shura council being split equally between the immigrants and supporters (Muhajireen, and Ansaar). This means that Islam recognizes public opinion and the importance of its sound representation of the Islamic public and its effect on forming the right decision. Also, the prophet (Peace be upon him) and Rightly Guided Caliphs used masjids, Hajj seasons, administrative bugging and other means to survey and influence the public opinion, and to know the status of the parishioners and hear their complains about the governors of regions and resolve any complaints through justice and righteousness (Zain, 2008).

Taking all of above-mentioned claims and arguments in perspective, it is logical to state that the holy Quran and the biography of the prophet, including his actions and sayings, are practical applications for the modern concepts of public

relations. This is for the reason that the era wherein the Islamic call was spread out by the prophet is considered to be a historical era that has played a major role in the development of public relations through all the guiding principles it taught. In this regard, we can truthfully state that Islam is a religion with a mission and a call, since it assigns every Muslim as responsible for communicating with all nations and using the principles of public relations that began during the conception of the immortal messages that are deeply inscribed in the Islam faith (Emam, 1980).

2.6 Public Relations in the Middle East

Public relations became pronounced in the Middle East beginning 1980s (Smith, 2013). The International Public Relations Association has practitioners from the Gulf States including Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, and the UAE. In addition practitioners in several Middle East cities are members of Middle Eastern Public Relations Association (MEPRA), which is based in the UAE (Smith, 2013). Kirat (2005) argued that PR in the Arab world is considered as an organization's instrument for advancing its reputation by releasing information to the public, publicity, and propaganda. He faulted public relations in the Arab world for failing to market the real image of Islam and Arab (Kirat, 2005). Despite these challenges, PR will potentially act as a crucial tool for fighting challenges associated with democracy and public opinion in the Middle East (Kirat, 2005).

There are some studies which have been conducted in Jordan and Neighboring countries. One study was carried out in Yemen and the other Oman in 2000. The two studies sought to evaluate (appraise) performance of public relations departments

responsible for government ministries and agencies. One of the studies, Al Faishani (2000) "Measuring performance of the public relations units in Yemen's government ministries: An empirical study", sought to investigate the relationship between performance of public relation units and variables including human resources, financial resources, administrative organization, scientific occupations of public relations, among others. The study reported a decline in the performance of public relations units in Yemen.

It also established a significant relationship between the decline in the performance of public relations and non-engagement in scientific occupations of public relations. Additionally, the findings demonstrated a strong relationship between lack of sufficient human and financial resources. Furthermore, the study found that low performance was significantly related to lack of educational qualifications. Compared with the proposed study, it will be seen that this study was to assess the level of performance of public relations units and the factors responsible for that performance. However, the proposed study aims to investigate ways in which government ministries in Jordan can enhance their image using public relations.

The other study, Shamakhi (2000), "Performance evaluation of governmental public relations departments in the Sultanate of Oman from the perspective of other departments directors", sought to evaluate the performance of public relations departments as perceived by directors of other departments with special focus on the means and methods employed in public relations function. The study aimed at finding out if sex, education, ethics, and experience affect such performance. The study

reported moderate performance of public relations on Likert scale. The study did not find any significant relationship between public relations level of performance, and the personal variable studied. However, significant relationship was reported between experienced and performance, with strong experience being linked to better performance.

Unlike the proposed study, this Study in Oman aimed at evaluating the performance of public relations departments and the effect of experience, sex, ethics, and education on the performance. This differs with the proposed study in that it seeks to find out how government ministries can enhance their image through their public relations departments. Additionally, the two studies differ in the sample. The sample for the past study was directors of other departments, while the proposed study will use a sample of employees working in the government ministries.

Although a few studies have been carried out in Jordan, none has focused on improving image and reputation of ministries. This makes this study essential. Al AbdAllah (1992) study sought to do an evaluation of the work of the public relations departments in the mentioned agencies. The study also sought to identify the means of communication the public relations departments employed to remain in contact with the people. Additionally, the study had as its goal an exploration of performance of public relations departments in conducting public opinion.

Al shool (1995) study, aimed at exploring management practice skills in the departments of public relations in the Directorates of Education in Jordan. Another aim was to identify the extent of the importance of the management skills. The study,

additionally, sought to determine, if any, the statistical difference between the responses provided by public relations practitioners and education officials. Furthermore, the study intended to set as priority public relations in light of the extent of use of the process including planning, communication, implementation, and evaluation.

Al Adwan (1996) study examining achievement and effectiveness level of public relations departments in Jordan. Attention was paid to the relationship between such achievement and effectiveness and variables including staff numbers, senior departments support, task purpose and structure, and the achievement and effectiveness level. Al Qudhah (2004) study sought to attain the goal identified in its title. In the study, 171 employees completed questionnaires. The data was analyzed using SPSS together with descriptive statistical methods. The study concluded that the public relations departments have a well-defined aims including gaining public support; planning in the public relations system, and that the rate of evaluating their activities is relatively high, at 76.6%. The study recommended that public relations departments be run by qualified personnel.

However, the previous studies are remarkably different from the current study being reported. The reason that distinguishes this study and makes it different from previous ones, is that it aims to examine the image of ministries by measuring the importance and satisfaction of image attributes and finding out how government ministries can enhance their image through their public relations departments, while

the previous studies has addressed the evaluation of the departments of public relations in the governments ministries, with regard to the administrative and technical aspects.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Literature reviewed has demonstrated that image consists of perceptions that result into mental models. Publics construct these mental models depending on how the organization impacts on them when they are on contact. That is, the publics form image and reputation depending on the perceptions they make in light of organization's environmental, social, financial, and political behavior. An organization establishes contact through communication, which is the role of public relations departments. This implies that a theoretical model that pays particular focus to understanding how image is formed so as influence that process of image formation will be effective. The researcher holds that an understanding of the cognitive processes involved in image and reputation formation can help an organization to make a positive influence on the image formation, an observation that is supported by the literature reviewed. As a result, the researcher has opted to analyze and interpret results of this study from the theoretical perspective of cognitive attribution theory.

2.7.1 Cognitive Attribution Theory

The (cognitive) attribution theory was advanced by Fritz Heider in his 1944 and 1958 publications as a cognitive approach toward psychology (Krull, 2001). Heider advanced the idea that when people observe behavior, they are interested in understanding the stable causes of the perceived behavior so that they can make predictions about the future occurrence of the behavior. Second, Heider insisted on the

difference between personal and situational causes. This observation implies that people may make conclusions based on the qualities attached to an entity or based on the situation to which that entity is in. Among the personal and entity attribution to causality of behavior, Heider observed that personality was more probable. This is because, pointed out Heider, an actor and their acts are perceived as a single unit; and as such personal factors tend to be the origin of personal behavior (Knull, 2001). These observations imply that attribution theory concerns itself with causation. Therefore, the primary principle for attribution theory is that people seek an understanding to determine why an event has taken place.

2.7.2 Application of Cognitive Attribution Theory to Organizational Reputation and Image

Heider observed that people are likely to attribute cause for an observed behavior to the person rather than the situation. Heider further explained that an action and the actor constitute one unit, and that unit is what is perceived as the entity, which is to be found within some situation. Literature has demonstrated that formation of organizational image and reputation by publics depends on the various communications they receive from the organization and the organization's responsibility in light of social, environmental, and political issues. The organization and its actions form a unit. This unit, or entity, is the one responsible for the organization's behavior. Viewed this way, any behavior that the organization exhibits informs the impressions that the publics have.

These impressions constitute image and reputation of the organization. This implies that if the organization gets involved in desirable activities, they will be attributed to the organization and that will positively influence behavior. Similarly, if the organization undertakes undesirable activities, then it will negatively influence the image formation because the publics attribute such activities to the organization as an entity rather than the situation. Since this study seeks to identify ways through which public relations departments can enhance image of Jordanian ministries, an understanding of the causal nature of image formation can help the public relations departments to gain an understanding on how to influence image and reputation formation.

2.7.3 Cognitive Processes Leading to the Formation of Impressions

Formation of impressions precedes the formation of images and reputation. Upon an observation of behavior, the following cognitive processes are involved in the formation of impressions. First, publics observe the organizational behavior through its activities. The publics pay attention to the salient features of the behavior or activity or action the organization has taken in relation to the dimensions of reputation, or the salient actions from the perspective of the publics. This may hint as to why organizations endeavor to be visible through advertisements and sponsorships of events such as sports. The second step involves interpretation and judgment of action. The publics interpret and determine the organizational behavior on how it benefits or harms them or the society as a whole. It is believed that the cognitive process involved in image formation is the same whether the impression to be formed is good or bad

(Sjovall & Talk, 2004). The interpretation depends on the nature of the publics and the nature of observed action. This explains why different publics will have different impressions of the same action by the same organization.

The third stage may be taken as the automatically attributing the behavior to the actor's personality. In this study, the actor is perceived as the organization, as it has already been noted. Heider observed that people are more likely to attribute behavior to the actor than to the situation. This disregards situational and social factors, no matter how evident they are, that may have been responsible for the occurrence of the observed behavior. This is a form of bias against the actor and has been termed as "fundamental attribution error" (Krugl, 2001; Sjovall & Talk, 2004). This is because the behavior that is attributed to an actor's personality may have been caused by situational constraints. This observation implies that publics perceive the observed behavior by an organization as caused by the organization rather than any social, financial, environmental, economic (like economic recession) and political constraints that the organization may be facing. An action resulting from these actions such as layoffs, are first attributed to the disposition of the organization rather than, say, economic recession.

The next stage involves cognitive attributional processing. The aim of this phase is to ensure that behavior is not attributed to the wrong entity. It involves a careful consideration of the situational factors within which the entity is situated in addition to the personality of the entity. This process needs time and effort and as such does not proceed to completion because there are other issues to be processed; and in

some situation it does not take place. The existing impression about an entity influences the outcome of the attribution processing in that the observer's previous impression may focus attention on the aspects of the observed behavior that are consistent with previous impression. This may be the reason behind a study finding reported in this proposal that organizations with good reputation have their reputation repaired following their acceptance of wrong doing allegations by the media as opposed to organizations without good reputation prior to wrongdoing allegations (Decker, 2012).

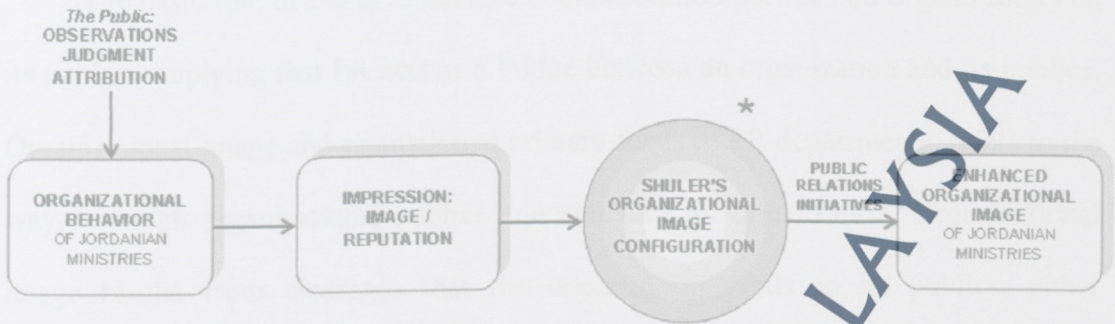
In the event that the situational factors are found to be responsible for the behavior, this does not replace the originally formed impression of the actor as the cause but rather changes it. At times, both impressions may exist. Hoeken & Renkema (1998) have studied the latter. The study is reported in this proposal. For external or situational factors to be viewed as the cause of behavior, they must be salient and co-occur with the behavior observed by the public (Kelly, 1967; cited in Sjoval & Talk, 2004). For instance, if an organization that receives negative publicity like bribery and then funds a social program as a result, the two (funding social program and bribery) co-vary and therefore the funding will be attributed to external influence (Sjoval & Talk, 2004). However, an organization that consistently funds social programs in absence of any negative publicity has these attributed to the organization and contributes positively to the formation of good reputation and image. The implication of these observations and illustrations is that an organization should get involved in

activities beneficial to its publics or society as a whole so as to build their image and reputation rather than waiting to do that when they are accused of unethical conduct.

In assessing the covariance of entity actions, Kelley describes three kinds of information used. These are: consensus- the extent to which others, other than the actor, perceive an action within a situation; distinctiveness- the extent to which the behavior only occurs in a given situation, or the actor repeats it in other situations; and consistency- the extent of the repetition of an action across time in a particular situation. Attribution is made either to the external cause within the situation or to the actor's disposition should a pattern or two emerge from available information. When consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency are high for an action, the action is attributed to the external cause; while when consensus and distinctiveness are low, but consistency is high, the action is attributed to the disposition of the actor, an organization. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the proposed study called the cognitive attribution - organizational image configuration model, which is a hybrid public relations framework adopted from Mieder (Krull, 2001) and Shuler (2004).

UNIVERSITI SAINS ISLAM MALAYSIA
 جامعة العلوم الإسلامية
 ISLAMIC SCIENCE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYSIA

THE COGNITIVE ATTRIBUTION - ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE CONFIGURATION MODEL



* Graphic Display of Results: This graphic provides a kind of a conceptual map showing the location of each analyzed attribute. (Schuler, 2004)

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

As depicted in Figure 1, the public derives their concept of organization behavior in three cognitive stages consisting of observation, judgment, and attribution. Such attribution may be positive or negative behavior, which are then transformed into impressions of image or reputation of the organization. Public perceptions of image or reputation may not always be positive, and thus, the burden of creating a specific mental image of the organization is placed on the organization itself.

In this model, the task is facilitated using Shuler's organizational image configuration where the layers of concentric circles represent the levels of importance or configuration of the factors which influence organizational image. The innermost configuration represents the most important factors based on the data analysis guided by Shuler's methodology. Grounded on the findings of the resulting image configuration, public relations initiatives are designed and implemented with the end in view of generating an enhanced organizational image.

2.8 Summary of Chapter

The basic role of PR is to manage communication between an organization and its publics, implying that PR acts as a bridge between an organization and its publics. Organizational image and reputation, a primary focus of PR departments, refers to the way in which organizational publics conceptualize an organization. Organizational image results from messages that the organization sends to its publics, either intentionally or unintentionally, through media exposure, social responsiveness, diversification postures, institutional ownership, and risk-return profiles. Studies reviewed in this chapter have underlined the importance of developing positive organizational image. Positive organizational image is vital in enhancing public's loyalty and cushioning the organization against negative publicity, as it promotes organization's competitive advantage and social responsibility. Consequently, organizational image has been described as the "specific organizational image" that PR departments are in charge of (Kudar, 2007). However, there is need to ensure that PR programs are constantly monitored and evaluated.

PR departments should ensure that their communication coherently and consistently projects a positive image for the organization since publics form organizational image depending on the kind of information they receive. As a consequent, every contact, either through direct sensorial contact or image representations is crucial to PR departments. Some studies have also been conducted to measure organization's image. Previous studies show that organizational image measurement methods are either open-ended or close-ended. The open-ended

techniques adopt qualitative approaches while the close-ended adopt quantitative research methods. Results obtained from qualitative approaches are used to inform closed or quantitative methods. The most common method for measuring organizational image is Schuler's (2004) Organizational Image Configuration method which is grounded in the cognitive attribution theory. This study was based on the cognitive attribution theory and guided by Schuler's organizational image configuration model. Some studies have been conducted on the practice of PR in Middle East, although they are different from the current study.

UNIVERSITI SAINS ISLAM MALAYSIA
جامعة العلوم الإسلامية الماليزية
ISLAMIC SCIENCE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYSIA