
Appendices

APPENDIX I

Public Relations in Nigeria: A Literature Search

Wole Adamolekun and Tayo Ekundayo

Sam Epelle was the doyen of public relations in Nigeria and is deservedly on record as one of the earliest Nigerians to publish books on public relations. Public relations has come a long way having been in existence for over three decades. The rapid growth of the profession is attested to by its acceptance in most public and private institutions as a *bonafide* department. Its functionaries oftentimes are seated at the highest policy making bodies in their various organisations as advisors, counsellors and managers.

The available literature on public relations specific and related subjects by Nigerian authors are scanty and rare to come by. This is not unconnected with the "infancy" of the profession as a legal entity which became a reality only in June 1990. This is to say that whatever was happening before then was actually a dogged determination and conviction on the part of the leaders of the profession and other practitioners to bring public relations on the same pedestal as other professional bodies such as those of medicine, architecture, engineering, pharmacy, and law. This has paid off as the strides made a few years preceding the Decree (1988) and now have made all the difference.

The attempt below is the beginning of a long search for books, journals, magazines, articles, unpublished speeches, conference

proceedings, seminar, research and workshop papers that have been written on public relations by Nigerians. The idea is that in not too distant time, a fairly representative bibliography of works on public relations would have been assembled in a data bank with the appropriate annotations and citations. This would be done in conjunction with other individuals and groups that may be presently engaged in the endeavour. This exercise would require more time to accomplish. Indeed hundreds of these documents are available but have not been consciously gathered for the purpose of research.

Altogether, more than seventy books have been identified including the earliest of them, *Essentials of Public Relations* by Same Epelle in 1968. The same year, he wrote *A Basic Course in Publicity* and in 1969 edited *A Handbook of Public Information*. The last two books did not carry the words "public relations" but it is apparently given the bent of the author that the issues being discussed are public relations. Of these three books, *A Handbook of Public Information* is a four-chapter work devoted to public communication, production and general skills. Reading through the book, it is clear that the authors (Sam Epelle and Bill Morrison) concentrated on the media aspect of public relations. This is not surprising given the fact that one of the authors was then the Director of Information, Federal Ministry of Information; and environmental needs of the nation then were basically that of a country just emerging from a thirty-month fratricidal war. All that was needed then was an effective method of moulding public opinion through the sharpening of the skills of mass communicators. Kanu Offonry's *Guide to Public Relations Practice in Nigeria* (1985) came seventeen years after those written by Sam Epelle (should there have been other books in between this period, further research findings may reveal this in the near future). As the title suggests, the book is a guide. The author treated public relations as it is practised in several organisations to emphasise its dynamism. In the preface to the book, the late Frank Ugboajah noted that:

It is not always common in Black Africa, unlike industrial countries, for people who have privilege to make a distinguished and successful professional career in commerce, industry and government, perpetuate their contributions, by passing along in print, or in any other form of permanent record, their experience to posterity.

The book, like most others that would be looked at in this piece, treats public relations in a general sense. All of them invariably start with the definition, requirements, work tools, who qualifies to practise and their roles and responsibilities. Other areas of focus are background information on the institute, government, corporate, community relations, financial public relations, employee communication, management functions, marketing support and case studies. These topics are treated in some detail with the main target being public relations students.

Other early books on public relations mostly introductory are:

- *Public Relations for West Africa* by Dayo Duyile (1987);
- *Public Relations Strategies and Implementation* by Olusegun Adebayo (1992);
- *Principles of Public Relations Practice (The Nigerian Approach)* by Chucks Osuji (1990);
- *Public Relations and Strategic Planning* by Olusegun Adebayo, (1993) ;
- *Public Relations in the Interdependent World* by Olusegun Adebayo (1990); and
- *Public Relations: In Search of Professional Excellence* by Victoria Ajala (1994).

In the last but one book, Olusegun Adebayo brought in the legal and diplomatic dimensions of public relations. Ajala's book is an excellent and focused textbook for students of Public Relations with concise and practical exposition of its theory and practice in the country. The generalist nature of the contents is

hardly surprising and many more books that would be published for sometime may likely follow this pattern until the horizon of the practice is broadened and more challenges present themselves. Besides, public relations books cannot be picked on the shelves of bookshops like other professional publications since very few copies are printed by the pioneering authors. The present efforts are geared towards improving the situation.

Closely related to these introductory books is *Understanding Public Relations* by Adekunle Salu (1994) which could be said to be a compendium on public relations. The thirteen-chapter book treats virtually all subjects on public relations as practised in Nigeria in some detail. Element for element, the book spans through such topics as public relations objectives, media, programme planning, corporate communication, chief executive's public relations functions, issues and crises management and ethics. The book also made extensive use of case studies sourced from personal experiences as well as some celebrated cases from other countries.

Public relations books that have attempted to address special segments of wider corporate institutions include:

- *Public Relations for Local Governments in Nigeria* by Adekunle Salu (1993) (ed);
- *Corporate Image: The Strategic Imperative in the Nigeria Banking Sector* by Victor Ogundipe (1988);
- *Handbook of Effective Corporate Relations* by Olufemi Ajayi (1997); and *Public Relations in Banking* by Olusegun Adebayo (1988).

In *Bank Management: Principles and Practice* by Green Nwankwo (1991), there is a chapter on Public Relations in Banking. Also in *Philosophy and Dimensions of National Communication Policy Volume 2*, a section was devoted to public relations as a profession.

There are some books which carry titles that embrace public relations as shown in the contents. Most times, such books

address the more general subjects of communication, journalism, mass media and language-related subjects such as speech-writing and data collection. Much as the techniques and subjects treated are useful tools in public relations, they cannot qualify to be public relations books notwithstanding the dearth of reading materials in this field. It is important to take this stand in order not to encourage the type of ignorance and misunderstanding that the profession has suffered in the past. Also there is a shift from pamphleteering that was becoming a cause for concern as single unresearched issues were published as books. Public relations books should always conform with the high academic standards required. The public relations profession is intellectually based and this should reflect in the practice and publications emanating from academics as well as practitioners.

Apart from books, some public relations journals are now being published by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations, State NIPR Chapters and private public relations consultancy. Chief among the journals are the institute's *Quarterly Journal* and the Students' *Newsletter*. The Lagos Chapter of the institute has published an edition of its *Public Relations Lecture Series* while two editions of the *Abuja Chapter Public Relations Journal* have also been published, *Public Relation Review* by PRCAN began publication in 2002 and more than four editions have so far been published. The Lagoon Centre for Public Relations in 1992 pioneered the first private *Public Relations Digest* (Babs Ogundeyi, ed.) and is now waxing strong. The LCPR journal has also begun publishing case studies which are veritable resources for practitioners. In this group are the various annual general meeting programmes, anniversary publications, conference brochure, where several public relations issues are tackled. Some of these papers are not Nigeria specific and so may not fit into the present effort of documenting what has been written on public relations at home. The only exception that would be accommodated in this exercise is a listing of the Sam Epelle Gold Memorial Lectures for its symbolism and a few of the state chapter publications which

are reasonably well researched and cover various aspects of the practice in some details.

Sam Epelle Memorial Gold Paper Lectures 1988 – 1999

The Sam Epelle Memorial Gold Paper Lecture is the first of its kind in Nigeria. Sam Epelle is the father of Nigerian public relations practice and authorship, and for this, a listing of the twelve lectures in the series are being given a place in this publication.

Dr Sam Epelle devoted all his working life to the public relations profession. It was as if there was something urging him on to carve a niche for himself in the profession as there was not much known about its early beginnings. Also, the official posture of government and the business communities to the profession at that time must have been less than enthusiastic. Only determined men like Epelle would have sustained his sowing the seed of Nigerian public relations profession.

At various times, he rose to become the Acting Director of Information Services, Eastern Nigeria (having joined in 1948), Editor, *Eastern Outlook*, Publicity Officer, Nigerian Railway Corporation and retired as Director of Federal Information Service. He was not only the first President of the institute, he was made a Fellow and was a member of the International Public Relations Association (*Bob Ogbuagu, 1999*).

In 1988, the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations under the leadership of Mazi Mike Okereke instituted the *Sam Epelle Memorial Gold Paper Lecture* for his indelible contributions to the profession. At the outset, the decision was that "... only internationally acclaimed public relations practitioners will be invited yearly to speak at this memorial lecture." Today, this policy has changed as there are many Nigerians that are capable of delivering such lectures. By 1999, 12 lectures had been delivered and they are listed below:

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- (a) Black, Sam (1988) "Public Relations – Past, Present and Future"
 - (b) Black, Sam (1989) "Public Relations in Business Management"
 - (c) Sharpe, Melvin L. (1990) "Public Relations in Action – The American Experience"
 - (d) Donald, K. Wright (1991) "Issues Management and Public Relations"
 - (e) Watts, Reginald (1992) "Communicating for Growth – The Role of Public Relations in Corporate Strategy"
 - (f) Schroder, Joachim (1993) "Inventing and Defining the Communication of the Future Together – The Challenge Faced by Africa and Europe in the Age of Uncertainty"
 - (g) Motau, C. Sejamothopo (1994) "Africa and Public Relations – A Perspective from South Africa"
 - (h) Moshe, Triwaks (1995) "Communications Explosion – The Israeli Experience"
 - (i) Onunkwo, Chris (1996) "Writing As a Tool in Public Relations"
 - (j) Egbon, Mike (1997) "Crystalising Public Relations in Africa"
 - (k) Nabanyin, Pratt (1998) "The Challenge of Public Relations Consultancy in the Next Millennium"
 - (l) Ogbuagu, E. Bob (1999) "Public Relations and Democratisation in Nigeria".

Published Books on Public Relations in Nigeria

- Abiodun, Taiwo (1995) *Fundamentals of Public Relations*. Lagos: One Soul Publishers.
- Adamolekun Wole & Tayo Ekundayo (2002) *Interactive Public Relations*, Lagos & Abuja Nigeria: Taymos & Taymos Communications in association with Joe Tolalu Associates.
- Adamolekun Wole (2005) *Public Relations Possibilities: Selected Seminar & Conference Papers*, Ibadan & Lagos: Spectrum Books.
- Adebayo. O. O. (1992) *Public Relations Strategies and Implementation*. Lagos: Economic Communications Ltd.
- Adebayo, Olusegun (1990) *Public Relations in the Interdependent World*. Lagos, Nigeria: Economic Communications Limited.
- Adebayo, Olusegun (1988) *Public Relations in Banking*. Lagos: Royal Maneda Production Limited.
- Adebayo, Olusegun (1987) *Public Relations Challenges in Nigeria*, Lagos: Royal Maneda Production Limited.
- Adebayo, Olusegun (1993a) *Public Relations Strategies and Implementation*, Lagos, Nigeria: Economic Communications Limited.
- Adebayo, Olusegun (1993b) *Public Relations and Strategic Planning Economic*, Lagos, Nigeria: Communications Limited.
- Agim, J. A. (2004) *The Principles and Practice of Public Relations in The Military & The Police*, Enugu, Nigeria: Ultimate Books.
- Ajala, O, Victoria (1993, 2001) *Public Relations: in Search of Professional Excellence*. Ibadan/Enugu/Abuja, Nigeria: Afrika-Link Books, Second Edition by My Best Publications
- Ajayi, Olufemi (1997) *Handbook of Effective Corporate Relations*. Lagos: Fem Publicity Ltd.

- Ajai O. Sunday (2005) *Public Relations in Marketing Education*. Lagos, Nigeria: Pumak Educational Publishers.
- Al-Haastrup, Funso. (1997) *The Place of Public Relations in Management (Issues and Resolution)*
- Awaneri, Festus (2001) *Principles and Techniques of Public Relations*. Lagos: FEST Communications.
- Awaneri, Festus (1999) *Inroad Into Public Relations*. Ikeja, Lagos: FEST Communications.
- Awaneri, Festus (2003) *Contemporary Media Relations Management*. Lagos: Star Lake Publishers.
- Awaneri, Festus (2002) *International Public Relations Management*. Lagos: Star Lake Publishers.
- Awaneri, Festus (2002) *Public Relations Strategies in International Marketing*. Lagos: Star Lake Publishers.
- Babaleye, Taye (2005) *A Guide to Public Relations Practice in Agricultural Research*. Ibadan, Nigeria: Banktab Publishers.
- Benson-Eluwa Virginia, (1999) *Public Relations: A Practical Approach*. Enugu: Magnet Books.
- Benson, Eluwa V. (1998) *The Practice of Human, Industrial and Public Relations*. Enugu: Virgin Creative.
- Duyile, Dayo (1987) *Public Relations for West Africa*. Lagos, Nigeria: Gong Communications.
- Epelle Sam (1968) *A Basic Course in Publicity*, Lagos, Nigeria.
- Epelle Sam (1968) *Essentials of Public Relations*, Lagos, Nigeria.
- Epelle Sam (1969) ed. *Handbook of Public Information*, Lagos, Nigeria
- Ezirim Seb. (2003) *Effective Public Relations*, Lagos: Literamed Publications.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria Decree No. 16 of 1990, Official Gazette (Lagos), vol. 77, No. 37 of 26th June, 1990.

- Ifezue, A. N. (1996) *Ethical and Legal Aspects of Public Relations*. Enugu: ACENA.
- Nkwocha, Jossy. (1999) *Effective Media Relations*. Zoom Lens Publishers, Lagos, Nigeria.
- Nkwocha, Jossy. (2003) *Public Relations Practice in Nigeria: The Practitioner's Handbook*. Lagos, Nigeria: Zoom Lens Publishers.
- Nkwocha, Jossy. (2004) *Digital Public Relations: New Techniques in Reputation Management*. Vol. 1. Lagos, Nigeria: Zoom Lens Publishers,
- Nkwocha, Jossy. (2005) *Effective Media Relations: Issues, Strategies and Dynamics*. Lagos: Zoom Lens Publishers.
- Ogedengbe, Kunle. (2004) *Media of Public Relations*. PR Plus Consulting. Lagos, Nigeria.
- Oso, Lai Kayode Ayankojo, (2001) *Basic Public Relations*, Gbenga Gbesan & Associates, Abeokuta.
- Osuji, Chuks (1999) *The Dynamics of Public Relations: The Theoretical and Functional Frameworks*, Owerri & Lagos: Opinion Research and Communication Limited.
- Osuji Chuks (2001) *Political Public Relations*. Owerri & Lagos: Opinion Research and Communication Limited.
- Oyekola, Olalekan (2003) *Contemporary Dimensions of Public Relations: Principles, Perceptives and Challenges the 21st Century*. Lagos: Bombshell Publications.
- Oyeneye, Peter (1997) *Concepts & Principles of Public Relations*. Lagos: Media Gate Limited.
- Oyeneye, Peter D. (1999) *Public Relations: Ideas and Thoughts*. Maryland, Lagos: Media Gate Ltd.
- Nwosu, Ikechukwu, (1996) *Public Relations Management*. Port Harcourt, Nigeria: Dominican Publishers.

- Nwosu, Ikechukwu, (1995) *Public Relations Management, Principles, Issues, Applications*, Aba, Nigeria: Dominican Publishers.
- Nwosu, Ikechukwu and Idemili Samuel (1992) *Public Relations, Speech, Media Writings & Copy*. Enugu and Lagos: Acena Publishers.
- Nigeria Institute of Public Relations (1988) *25 Years of Public Relations Service in Nigeria Anniversary Publications*, Ikeja, Lagos.
- NIPR Lagos State Chapter (1994) *Public Relations Lectures Series*.
- NIPR Ogun State (1999) *Critical Issues in Public Relations*. Occasional Publications Series.
- NIPR Abuja Chapter (2003) *Reputation Management*.
- Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (1993) *Register of Members*.
- Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (1997) *Guide to Career in Public Relations*, Lagos, Nigeria: Right Time Publishers.
- Offonry, Kanu H. (1985) *Guide to Public Relations Practice in Nigeria*. Owerri: New Africa Publishing Co. Ltd.
- Ogedengbe, Kunle (2003) *Media of Public Relations*, Lagos: PR Plus Consulting.
- Ogundipe, A. Victor (1988) *Corporate Image: The Strategic Imperative in the Nigerian Banking Sector*. Lagos, Nigeria: Gravitas Publishments Limited.
- Ogunsanya, Adegboyega (1992) *Public Relations and Strategies for Chief Executive Officers*: Lagos: Richminds Books.
- Olumideko, Akindele (1992) *Public Relations for Maximum Productivity*. Ibadan: Ivocol Books.
- Onodarho, Akpode (1995) *Public Relations: The Great Expectations*. Warri and Lagos: Ivescomm Limited.

- Osuji, Chuks (1990) *Principles of Public Relations Practice (The Nigerian Approach)*, Owerri: Opinion Research and Communication Limited
- Oracca-Tetteh, Kwei (1986) *Public Relations* Ibadan, Nigeria: Mackey Publishers Ltd.
- Oyekola, Olalekan (1995) *Foundation of Public Relations: An Introductory Handbook for all Students and Professionals*, Lagos: Bombshell Publications.
- Salu, O. Adekunle (1993) *Public Relations for Local Governments in Nigeria*, Lagos: Talkback Publishers Limited.
- Salu, O. Adekunle (1994) *Understanding Public Relations*, Lagos: Talkback Publishers Limited.
- Sabo, S. Mohammed Ed. (1998) *Dr Sam Epelle Memorial Gold Papers (1989 – 1998)*, Lagos: Spread Publications.
- Sambe, A. Samson, Keggku (2004) *Media Relations: Techniques & Strategies*, Makurdi, Nigeria: Starix Communications.
- Shuaib, Yushau A. (2005) *A Dozen Tips for Media Relations*, Abuja: Image Merchants Production.
- Shuaib, Yushau A (2001) *Financial Public Relations: The Nigerian Approach*. Abuja: Image Merchants Promotion.
- Tyotom, Keggku. (2005) *Public Relations and the Nigerian Economy*. Otukpo, Benue State, Nigeria: Aboki Publishers.
- Ubani, Otuokere, Cajetan (1997) *Modern Public Relations (Theories, Principles and Practice)* Lagos: S & T Books.

Four years after *Interactive Public Relations* was published, only about ten more public relations specific books are known to the authors to have been added to more than seventy recorded in 2002.

APPENDIX II

NIPR: How It All Began

Ogbuefi Alex Nwokedi

The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) started as the Public Relations Association of Nigeria, the brainchild of the late Sam Epelle. The inaugural meeting of the association was attended by five persons: Sam Epelle, Alex Nwokedi, Kunle Ojora, Theo Awobogu and Mrs Aduke Alakija.

As Ogbuefi Alex Nwokedi, the only pioneer member still in active practice recalled, two other persons, Dan Agbakoba and Wilton Hugh, an expatriate public relations manager with the Nigerian Tobacco Company (NTC), later joined them. "Seven of us actually could be regarded as foundation members of the institute," he said. Ogbuefi Nwokedi, former General Manager, Public Affairs Services of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) (now *Igwe Otuko of Achalla*), said that in 1963, Sam Epelle invited him to his house and told him that he wanted him to serve as secretary of the nascent body.

At the outset, education was the priority of the body and this was pursued through monthly luncheons held at Bristol Hotel in Lagos during which knowledgeable individuals on public relations were invited to lecture members. Those sessions had a dramatic impact on the development of PR practice in Nigeria. Ogbuefi Nwokedi notes that inspiration and exposure gained in

such fora greatly influenced his illustrious career. Here is a man who pioneered the setting up of the PR departments at the then National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), now Power Holdings Company of Nigeria (PHCN)), where he developed what was a welfare section into a full-fledged PR unit; and that of the NNPC, the largest corporate entity in Nigeria with challenging domestic and international publics.

Between NEPA and the NNPC, Ogbuefi Nwokedi (1977 – 79) was Press Secretary to the then head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo. His effectiveness in the office which he rates among his most challenging and the most satisfying professionally, still has the Nigerian press flustered. Membership of the association was strictly on merit and limited to active PR practitioners in the public and private sectors. The exciting programmes of the association made it an attractive association. The civil war changed all that. Nwokedi, who left Lagos during the war recalls that when he was recalled after the event and re-elected secretary, membership had grown. "I remember protesting the inclusion of the name of a photographer in the register." Perhaps Peter Hospidales, a West Indian, who served as secretary in the interim was not discriminatory enough. The decline in the quality of NIPR entrants continued as membership increased and the founding members lost grip of the body. Remarkably, while the institute lost ground in its professional responsibility, it never faltered on the political front. Successive presidents were elected and served maximum terms.

Sam Epelle was succeeded as NIPR president in 1968 by Chief Kanu Offonry (1968 – 72) who passed on the baton to Tonye Willie Young-Harry who served between 1972 – 76. Alhaji Ikhaz Yakubu took charge between 1976-80 before Chief Bob Ogbuagu came in (1980-84). Chief Alex Akinyele brightened the stage between 1984 and 1988. Mike Okereke took over from him.

The highly competitive elections at "*Kwara '88*" also saw the election of Alhaji Sabo Mohammed as first vice president, Chief Jibade Oyekan and Rufus Isaac as second and third vice presidents

respectively, and Mrs Ronke George as national treasurer.

Okereke took the NIPR presidency on the platform of a 22-point action plan. Midway through his term, he had largely implemented the high points of his action plan, which included installing a rigid education and training programme to boost the intellectual basis of public relations practice, and spreading recognition of NIPR to national and international levels. The latter came with the highly acclaimed first Commonwealth Public Relations Conference and meeting of the Federation of African PR Associations (FAPRA) at which Okereke was elected (FAPRA) president.

In recognition of the dynamism of NIPR, the federal government in 1990 commissioned the institute to produce a documentary film on Nigeria with a grant of one million naira.

APPENDIX III

Public Relations Consultancy in Nigeria: Retrospect*

*Which firm was the first public relations consultancy in Nigeria?
Or put it in another way, who started Nigeria's first PR consultancy?*

One contender is Publicity Services Nigeria Limited whose founder, Oloye Olanrewaju Dotun Okubanjo, Fellow of the British Public Relations Consultants Association; Fellow of the International Public Relations Associations and Fellow of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations says, as a matter-of-fact – and proudly too – “mine was the first public relations consultancy firm ever established and managed by anybody in Nigeria.” Still located at the Western House, Broad Street, Lagos – although another office is at Osapa-London, Lekki, on the outskirts of Lagos, the company was founded on July 1, 1963 but registered April 1964. Okubanjo's son Olusegun Olarenwaju, now runs the show.

The other contender is OAB Press – a partnership of late Olabisi Onabanjo, who later became the Second Republic Governor of Ogun State; Ebusi Adesioye, a former editor of *Daily Times* and a third person called Banjo. As you can see, O is for Onabanjo, A for Adesioye and B for Banjo. Going by the recollection of Dupe, Adesioye's daughter who works with *Daily*

* First published in *PR Review* (Journal of PRCAN) No. 1, 2002.

Times (like father, like daughter), OAB was founded soon after her father left *Daily Times*. Mr Adesioye was editor of *Daily Times* from 1951 to 1955 and Managing Editor from 1955 – 1957. Dupe thinks OAB may have been founded either 1958 to 1959. It had its offices on the 4th Floor of the Bank Chambers Building on Martins Street, Lagos.

Anyone out there who can solve the riddle?

Says Okubanjo or Adesioye: "I won't call him a colleague because he was older than I am. I will rather say that we were operating at the same time." Okubanjo planted the seed of PSN while working in the department of public relations in the First Republic's Ministry of Information. His first account, Cologne (West Germany) Trade Fair came about while still in the ministry. According to him, he did some jobs for the client and discovered that his income was triple his salary. He called it quits from the ministry and founded PSN.

One successful trade fair led to others, for the British Embassy, and of course, for Cologne. You could say that organising trade fairs was the forte of the consultancy. But, of course, there were other jobs. Okubanjo recalls particularly his firm's work for UNIC. According to him, the insurance company with headquarters in Lagos wanted something "catchy" that would linger in the minds of the public. And, the catch-phrase, "the best insurance address is 53 Marina," was born. According to him, it was reflected for many years on the firm's corporate manifestation: letterheads, business cards, vehicles, etc. This won PSN an award from a foreign magazine, although Okubanjo could not remember the details. One remarkable thing about PSN was that it had many overseas accounts; from England, Brazil and Canada. "They were the ones paying big money," says Okubanjo. OAB's major client was Gulf Oil (the precursor of Chevron). Adesioye's daughter notes that Gulf Oil has great respect for her father's professionalism adding that the Gulf Oil folks always said "Ebun is the man" whenever there was any attempt by anyone inside or

outside of the company for a review of the account. She says OAB's diaries and calendars were exceptional.

Oloye Okubanjo also has a high regard for Adesioye: "He never did anything without a reason; he was very outstanding and a very honourable man; he worked not necessarily for the money but for the prestige of the profession."

At some point, Adesioye was the one left in the partnership as others moved on to other things.

In the beginning there was also Walton Solomon and Associates. This is the baby of Mazi Mike Okereke. The story of Walton Solomon, founded in 1970, soon after the end of the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War, is interesting. When Okereke finished school in Britain, he decided to garner experience through attachment with British Petroleum, Sam Black Consulting and UAC International so as to come home and establish his own consulting firm. But providence had something else in stock for him. After one year with UAC International and a desire to return home, he was given the option of joining the Nigeria office. The offer was one he could not refuse. He ended up staying at UAC for 26 years while Mr Bankole Akinyemi (the one called 'Prof.' in PR circuits) piloted the affairs at Walton Solomon and Associates.

Apart from other PR services, Walton Solomon specialised in PR education and research. Although he could not provide more details, Okereke gave names of other pathfinders, including Uloma Nwachukwu and Associates (Okereke says Mrs Nwachukwu was one of the best PR consultants of her time); Gab Fagbure and Associates and Gab Idigo and Associates – both are defunct as their principals are also dead; Bob Ogbuagu and Associates – owned by Bob Ogbuagu who has now retired as a newspaper administrator and a certain reverend gentleman whose name Okereke could not recall. One thread that ran through these firms was the use of the owners' names for their companies. Okereke offered a reason: Their names commanded goodwill. The names were part of what got them accounts.

Another pioneer was Olu Ademulegun who had a company

called Praction Partners Limited, first at Alhaji Masha and later at Western House. Toye Ogunnorin, immediate past president of PRCAN, remembers him when he used to come to his old office, NICON, in the mid-1970s. He says: "He wrote proposals that were too scientific ... people didn't really understand what he was getting at, although he knew what he wanted to do, as many then were not used to public relations practice, and he found it difficult getting clients." He also did some PR workshops that were well attended because at that time there were only a couple of people into training. Ademulegun was American-trained and "a very good PR consultant," according to Ogunnorin.

Okubanjo also says that he too was misunderstood by people. "They thought I was crazy because of what I did; they wondered how I could be making money from that." He says, in those days, people who were practising public relations were merely doing "messenger jobs," although he believed he was doing the right thing. Maybe we would get to that sometime later.

Add to the pioneers this quartet, who started their own firms in the 1980s: Olu Johnson, Kunle Oyalowo, Lanre Oginni, and Toye Ogunnorin. Those indeed were the foundation members of PRCAN established on Tuesday, February 8, 1983. They were later joined by Sir Oluwole Falodun and Nicholas Iyere-Isibor. Late Oyalowo, who was the pioneer secretary of PRCAN, ran Good Contact which handled jobs for the Ministries of Information, Roads and Transport and NITEL. Ogunnorin describes Oyalowo as a good planner and strategist.

Oginni ran Bloomel Public Relations. Falodun ran Wolfa Promotions, and, Ogunnorin, Progan Promotions. Johnson ran Philip Johnson & Associates while Nicholas Iyere-Isibor ran Niga Consultants.

Those were the known pathfinders of PR consultancy in Nigeria. There just might be one or two others who were not found in our research and if there is/are, there will be due acknowledgement. These pioneers may have been press agent/publicists, events handlers/manager, printing/production

jobbers or even “messengers” but they cleared the path for others to tread. They charted unknown, even unfamiliar courses, for in those early years, PR, if at all, was largely an in-house affair. Some of the pioneers fell by the wayside, some others trudged on...and today, PR consultancy is for real says Okubanjo: “The field of public relations is bottomless, the opportunities now are so inexhaustible.

APPENDIX IV

Down Memory Lane*

*Victor O. Oshinowo, FNIPR
Pioneer Lagos Chapter, Chairman*

I must say that I feel highly honoured to have been asked to give a brief history of the growth of public relations in Nigeria. I say this because I do not think I am the only public relations veteran around and I feel there are more veterans who are more qualified to handle the subject than myself. However, I shall try to lead you into how our institute became what it is today.

Sometime in 1961, a group of few men and women, mostly in the multinational companies in Lagos and those in the public sector, practising public relations, got themselves together and started discussing the possibility of forming a sort of an association. This was without much progress but they refused to give up and by 1962, their efforts began to yield results. Information officers in the federal ministries were invited and regular meetings were then being held at the rooftop of Mobil Oil Company along Broad Street, Lagos.

Among the early pioneers that can be mentioned are Mrs Aduke Moore, Chief Kanu Offonry, Chief Dotun Okubanjo, Ogbuefi Alex Nwokedi, Dr Sam Epelle of blessed memory, Mr Tonye Willie-Harry, Miss Akingbehin, Chief Kunle Ojora, Mr

* First published in Lagos State NIPR Chapter 1991 AGM Brochure.

Hospidales, Mr P.E.N. Malafa and a host of others. In July 1963, the Junior Minister in the Federal Ministry of Information, Hon Yerokun formally inaugurated the institute then known as Public Relations Association of Nigeria (PRAN).

It is of interest to know that a strong and powerful member of this chapter was the **first secretary** of the association; he is no other person than Ogbuefi Alex Nwokedi, while late Dr Sam Epelle was the **first president** (he was then in Nigeria Railways). Chief 'Dotun Okubanjo was the **first treasurer**. They held their posts for some years.

There used to be regular monthly luncheon meetings at which important personalities were invited to give talks. At that time also, there were only two main places in the whole country where practitioners could be found – Lagos and Enugu. Among those who held the fort at Enugu then that can be mentioned are past presidents of the institute – Chief Bob Ogbuagu and Mike Okereke.

Lagos Branch was not actually a branch then; it was taken by virtue of its geographical position as the nucleus of the national body because it constituted the bulk of members for elections for national offices. I must say here that the position of Lagos members as being the pivot of national body notwithstanding, Enugu branch was very active and I can say that they contributed more to the propagation of the existence of public relations in the country. It was Enugu branch that would organise seminars and invite those of us in Lagos to such seminars and we would all troop there to attend. The so-called national body was not doing anything of such.

It was at one of such seminars in 1978 that Mr P.E.N. Malafa and I started to discuss forming a real Lagos Branch because Enugu was really stealing the show and Lagos did not have the qualification of a national body, and it had no platform to organise such seminars. On our return from Enugu, we started talking to members in Lagos and holding meetings at UNILIFE office offered to us by Mr Ted Oviosu who was the *pro tem* secretary while I

became *pro tem* chairman. Later, elections were held and I became the first chairman of Lagos State Chapter while Mr Oviosu was elected the first secretary.

Then came Benin branch, it was a strong branch; it did organise seminars which we in Lagos and those in Enugu attended. There had been many dedicated members since then and many were found to be fellow travellers. I do not intend to go into details.

However, I feel very happy at the present state of affairs in the institute as of today. Among the past presidents were late Dr Sam Epelle, Chief Kanu Offonry, Mr Tonye-Willie Harry, Mr Ikhaz Yakubu, Chief Bob Ogbuagu, Sir (Chief) Alex Akinyele and Mazi Mike Okereke.

Among the important events in the life history of the institute were the participation at the famous Kenya Conference in 1975 at which the Federation of African Public Relations Association (FAPRA) was born. Nigeria hosted that body in 1978 and it was a very successful event.

In 1981, Nigeria attended the IPRA conference in London and another one in Holland a few years ago. In 1981, Nigeria also attended FAPRA conference in Accra and there we were elected the president and treasurer respectively. Two other Nigerians including my humble self were elected council members.

The brief history I have given cannot be regarded as being complete because my premise were from memory and not so much from records.

APPENDIX V

Nigerian Institute of Public Relations 30 Years of Growth*

Chief Jibade Oyekan, NIPR President, 1998

The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations can now exclaim "Eureka!" But that has not come easy. Public Relations discipline, from its very inception, assumed quite an amorphous structure, and because of its multidimensional outlook, people gave it a wide-range of "definitions".

Early Days of NIPR

In order to, hopefully, silence abusers of public relations, and particularly to focus sharply on the real substance of public relations, late Dr Sam Epelle, Nigeria's one-time Director of Information, was inspired to intervene in the definition "controversy" by initiating the formation of a body that would "professionally think, plan, practise and live public relations in Nigeria". That was 1961, and by 1963, he had excited some colleagues who, with him, founded what was then known as the Public Relations Association of Nigeria (PRAN). Epelle carefully and shrewdly planned what form PRAN should take and all his

* Courtesy of Nigeria Institute of Public Relations 30 Years Commemorative Journal (1993)

thinking was laboriously and sagaciously executed by some of the most active public relations spirits in Nigeria then, Epelle, the initiator, became coordinator, chairman and eventually President of PRAN in Lagos. His friends later took PRAN to Enugu and Port Harcourt.

Dr Chuks Osuji says that the development of public relations in Nigeria started with the government. He explained thus:

The need arose immediately after the Second World War for proper public information as a result of the growing unpopularity of the then colonial government. People were conscripted into the colonial army, prices of goods and costs of services were becoming unbearable, while locally produced goods such as palm-oil and palm-kernel were declining in price. This gave rise to the unpopularity of the government.

The ex-servicemen began to form a potential pressure group to secure compensation for their past services in the army. Political, social and economic problems of the postwar era brought about disaffection against the government. As a response to these, "the government appointed information officers who combined the duties of government publicity and public relations, who were later designated as public relations officers." The pioneering public relations practitioners found public understanding then of public relations totally objectionable. Chief Bob Ogbuagu once said, "In this maze of confusion and contradictions, the profession had suffered very violent prostitution, misuse and abuse." The pioneers, therefore, set out to "preserve the excellence, integrity and performance of public relations practitioners."

Public relations gradually became a subject that some people admired to study, and a career they planned to embrace. Some joined the British Institute of Public Relations as overseas students or members. As the PRAN group was sharpening on the correct meaning and practical application of public relations, some individuals were able to proceed overseas to study the subject

formally. When they returned, they beefed up the vanguard that was crusading the proper understanding of public relations.

Dr Sam Epelle – President, 1963-68

As the number of practitioners swelled, and their objectives and functions became wider, PRAN, under Epelle, developed into the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) in 1972. Besides affable Epelle, the following public relations bigwigs had become presidents of NIPR by 1980: Chief H. K. Offonry (1968-72); Mr Tonye Willie-Harry (1972-76); and Mr Ikhaz Yakubu (1976-80). It must be made clear that each of the past presidents, facing the vicissitudes of championing a novel and rough terrain of operating among a predominantly misinformed public, did his best to remain on course and defend the public relations *status quo*. The number of practitioners grew slowly but steadily, while would-be members developed a positive attitude towards associating with a burgeoning professional body whose expertise, they believed, would eventually be sought by both government and industry. At the end of 1980, NIPR recorded 100 financial members.

The founding fathers of public relations in Nigeria concerned themselves with giving lectures at every given opportunity. This was the only way they could spread the word on their new discipline. Gerald Rix (1979) observed that

Public relations is not an international science with exact standards which mean the same thing and can be measured the same way in every country of the world...It relates to the local environment in which it is being practised, and although there are many fundamental principles, public relations education must usually be national.

How to “nationalise” public relations education out of the international verbiage of the write-ups on the subject engaged the attention of all NIPR past presidents and other senior

practitioners. They all now stand formidably behind the institute they nurtured. Mr Ikhaz Yakubu, NIPR one-time president at a 1985 council meeting in Ibadan said, "We will beat public relations profession into such an enviable international mould that generations of practitioners yet unborn will be very proud to practise it."

"Medieval" Period of NIPR

Chief Bob Ogbuagu, on assuming NIPR presidency in 1980, styled public relations "an organic profession in Nigeria". Indeed, Ogbuagu brought to the NIPR presidency, very brilliant credentials. He adopted a new style of leadership, bringing his oratorical aptitude into play. His tenure witnessed periods of rib-bursting jokes and anecdotes, which he churned out lavishly whenever he was on his feet.

Priorities

He set out some goals for his council, some of which were:

- (a) Rotating council meetings and annual general meetings among state chapters;
- (b) Establishing a certification system for members and would-be members;
- (c) Instituting a National Assembly law that would regulate the practice of public relations in the country;
- (d) Membership drive to open up new chapters;
- (e) Working with a budget;
- (f) The relationship between NIPR and the then (President Shehu Shagari's) administration;
- (g) A constitution for the NIPR; and
- (h) Securing a national secretariat.

Action Taken

Certification System

At the January, 1980 Annual General Meeting in Lagos, a committee was set up to produce a certification system with its related training component for NIPR. The central objective of this exercise was to "establish a professional education system capable of ensuring the recognition of public relations practice as a legally recognised profession in Nigeria." Dr Sam Epelle, who chaired the committee, worked with Messrs P. E. N. Malafa, Ikhaz Yakubu, Mike Okereke and Yemi Fadipe to carry out the assignment. The blueprint that these brains produced remains a masterpiece and a most exemplary working document till today.

Bill Drafting

Chief Lai Joseph led the committee that drafted the public relations bill that was to be presented to the government for ratification and enactment. After much in-house editing, NIPR council, on 24 July 1981, led by Chief Ogbuagu, paid a courtesy visit to the then Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Edwin Ume-Ezeoke, to present him with the draft NIPR bills. The Hon. Speaker advised that NIPR "should henceforth establish minimum admission requirements by way of education, training and experience...so that the public relations practice will not be proliferated by people who can debase the noble profession." He then assured the council that "on the matter of the bill to recognise your institute, the House Committee on Public Relations is working on this: you as professionals should therefore liaise with the committee to present a flawless bill to the National Assembly."

Three months later, the council took another copy of the draft bill to the Senate President, Dr Joseph Wayas who also promised that whenever it was presented to the Senate, it would be favourably considered.

Constitution

The institute's constitution, which was drafted by Chief Lai Joseph, Chief Victor Oshinowo, Chief Alex Akinyele and Mr Peter Onono and ratified by council, was approved at an extraordinary general meeting held at the Bristol Hotel, Lagos on 30 January, 1981. A code of ethics was also approved for the institute.

Membership Drive

This continued among the states. It was a productive extension work for broadcasting the ideals of public relations practice in many states. It remains an everlasting job for the institute.

Professional Journal

The Anambra/Imo State Chapter had initiated the production of a public relations magazine entitled *Public Relations*. Four brilliant issues were produced. But when the then chairman, Mr. Mike Okereke, and the secretary, Otunba Bamgbola Akinsanya, moved out of the East, the publication folded up. NIPR president Ogbuagu wanted this to be handled at the national level; Otunba Akinsanya, Chief Jibade Oyekan and late Mr Victor Osho were asked to serve on the editorial board. The three men wrote and edited some articles, but because the cheapest production cost would exceed the institute's annual budget, the idea fizzled out, naturally.

Nigeria's Image: President Shehu Shagari's Challenge

The NIPR council paid a courtesy visit to President Shehu Shagari in 1982. During the visit, the president charged the NIPR council with a responsibility of producing a document that would detail the essential public relations ingredients that could be used to polish Nigeria's image abroad. A sketch was produced under considerable restraint and apprehension, showing that the unbridled freedom of Nigerians to do whatever they liked outside was unstoppably staining the nation's picture. But by the time

the document was to be discussed with President Shagari, he was no longer in office.

Direct Approach

Chief Bob Ogbuagu initiated writing directly to each financial member. This public relations practice in itself boosted the then president's public relations stature substantially.

The President and his council members dutifully gave series of lectures and took part in workshops, which they organised to complement the existing knowledge of members and non-members. On one of such occasions, Chief Ogbuagu said, "although the practice of public relations profession may be comparatively young in this country, it no doubt dates back to the beginning of creation." And rather prophetically, he added,

nothing could be as dangerous and disastrous as leaving the generality of the people in a state of ambiguity and confusion as to the government's intentions and actions. All those involved in the science and practice of government must utilise the existing facilities of proper communication to build the necessary bridges to reach the people.

Professor Sam Black, whose teachings of public relations are usually treated with biblical reverence, once said, "I like to think of ourselves as bridge builders, reconciling the public and the private interest." He, therefore, lent credence to public relations practitioners as being not merely image makers but, particularly, bridge builders. Throughout Ogbuagu's era, he rang this bell loud and clear to all and sundry.

External Activities

Members of NIPR were front-seat participants during the inauguration of the Federation of African Public Relations Associations (FAPRA) in Nairobi, Kenya. Chief Ogbuagu became the second chairman of that body in 1982 while Mr Rufus Isaac has played liaison officer's role between NIPR and FAPRA over

many years. Currently, Mr Mike Okereke is FAPRA chairman. Chief Jibade Oyekan and Mr Limmy Baba Omar-Ikaige are also FAPRA's current council members.

From its beginning, FAPRA meetings which have been held in Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Cote d'Ivoire were attended by NIPR members. When Mr Tonye Willie-Harry, at Accra in 1981, saw how David Masoke made an impromptu speech and then presented Dr Hilla Liman, Tonye said, "Oh no! NIPR must brace up and take over leadership role in FAPRA. We have the resources: now, we Nigeria FAPRA members should ignite our collective will." His determination was well placed. Nigerians have since then elbowed out many other countries to show FAPRA the way.

International Public Relations Association

The first Nigerian to register as a member of the International Public Relations Association was Dr Sam Epelle in 1979, then Chief J. A. Odunlami in 1981, followed by Chief Alex Akinyele and Chief Bob Ogbuagu in 1982. Mr Mike Okereke and Chief Jidade Oyekan became members in 1984. Today, 30 NIPR members are also holding IPRA membership cards. They have, at one time or the other, attended all IPRA conferences in England, Mexico, India, Sweden, Finland, Hong Kong, Germany, Holland, Belgium, China, Hungary, Austria, Australia, Canada, Zimbabwe, Israel, and South Africa. Attending all conferences has been with a view to widening NIPR members' international scope and comprehension of current practical public relations at the global level. Mr Rufus Isaac rose to the prestigious board membership; that position is currently being held by Mr Okereke.

Sam Epelle's Death

In July, 1983, Dr Sam Epelle passed on, and NIPR was heavily represented at the funeral of an Opobo-born public relations luminary whose dream has given many people their career.

During Ogbuagu's last days in office in 1984, he introduced the president's collar of office, to be worn as a mark of honour and authority on official and ceremonial occasions. He also initiated the President's Merit award. The institute's image and programmes, no doubt, received a new fillip under his administration. Tribute should be paid to the then secretary-general, Mr Ted Oviosu. Ted is indefatigable, accommodating, businesslike and quite responsible. Most council meetings in Lagos were held in his office.

Alex Akinleye Steps in (1984-88)

When Bob Ogbuagu bowed out of NIPR presidency in 1984, continuation of work on consolidation became a logical activity for the institute as people were then yearning to know more about modern public relations practice. Chief Alexander Akinyele, the charismatic Ondo chief and a Lagos-based frontline communicator and industrialist got the presidential gavel from Ogbuagu. That was in Calabar. Throughout the four years of Akinyele's leadership of NIPR, he sought and received generous press assistance. He spontaneously became the epicentre of practical public relations world, in Nigeria.

During the previous regimes, council and other members were periodically appointed to work on certain pressing issues whenever the need arose. But the new president saw things differently. As the responsibilities of the institute were getting heavier, he started the practice of appointing standing committees. Several members from various parts of the country were appointed into the 15 standing committees that would meet and have their chairmen report to council or the president, whichever was appropriate. Working through committees was an experiment with its teething problems. The president wanted action, but many committee members found attendance at meetings too expensive, personally. At one time, Chief Akinyele lamented: "All the committees that were constituted at the first meeting of council are yet to show any sign of existence. They must now wake up

from their slumber and act for the glory and pride of NIPR."

Council meeting also suffered from poor attendance. This situation became so acute that Akinyele chided members at some council meetings for their lack of contributions during meetings. "If some members continue to be consistently absent from council meetings," he threatened, "I shall have no option but to co-opt interested and respected members to the institute to fill their places." This apparent lethargy pervaded the first two-year term of the council, but during 1986-88, the scenario was a lot improved. Chief Akinyele remains the only NIPR president who has been served by two secretaries-general (Mr Oladele Osunbote - 1984-86, and Alhaji Umaru Galadanchi - 1986-88). Both served the institute loyally.

Chief Akinyele paid a courtesy visit to the Head of State, General Muhammadu Buhari, many state governors and traditional rulers, explaining practical public relations to them. He also visited many highly placed government functionaries projecting the image of NIPR. One of his goals in 1984 was to create more NIPR chapters and he achieved this by launching Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Plateau Chapters while he invigorated the existing ones. He visited many media houses, getting publicity for NIPR and granting interviews on public relations and NIPR. He led many delegations to FAPRA and IPRA meetings, giving Nigeria and NIPR a pride of place every time and everywhere he went.

During some of his visits to top politicians and civil servants, he appealed to them to make public relations more practicable in their areas of authority by opening up the "confidential", "secret" and "top secret" files used to muffle their public relations officers or information officers and arranged many training programmes for many chapters; these were all effective and successful. One could summarise Akinyele's aspirations (or motto) for NIPR as "Consolidation and Promotion". He never said that, but he only practised it. He held on to what Ogbuagu had attained for membership, kept them together by remote control through his

constant brilliant performance in the media, thereby promoting public relations positively in the minds of members and non-members alike.

The issue of a national secretariat for NIPR agonised Akinyele during his presidency: he had made it a campaign promise and he worked on it unceasingly, but it was not possible. However, with so much promotion work he had done for NIPR, he created a great need for a national secretariat such that his successor could hardly function without one.

Recent Times of NIPR

Mike Okereke was president between 1988 and 1993. After his election in Ilorin in 1988, he took off charging, like a desperate lion. He summoned a short "let's-get-together" council meeting immediately after the election! Since then, it was one meeting after the other... weekly, monthly and bi-monthly...initiating, aligning, ensuring, acting, confirming, checking and cross-checking.

And from the first formal council meeting in Lagos, members saw signs of a pushy and bumpy ride ahead of them. A fat docket detailing the new president's programme of action was distributed. On leafing through, one impression that dawned on each council member was one of "falling-in-or-falling-out"! Some outstanding issues inherited from Chief Akinyele's era were first appraised for smooth dovetailing of both regimes. Some of the key issues on Okereke's agenda as he rolled them out were as follows:

- (a) Getting the PR decree out (finally promulgated as Decree No. 16 of 1990).
- (b) Institute a systematic training programme – (varied, valuable, successful).
- (c) Setting professional qualifying examinations – (ongoing, once a year).

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- (d) Sam Epelle Memorial Gold Paper Lecture – (annual, successful).
 - (e) Permanent Public Relations Development Centre (yet to be built).
 - (f) Secure a temporary national secretariat – (39 Sobo Arobiodu St. GRA, Ikeja).
 - (g) Launch a PR Development Fund – (moderately successful).
 - (h) Service to members – (being articulated).
 - (i) Updating the Register of Members – (still in progress).
 - (j) Publishing NIPR major works – (continuing process).
 - (k) Getting a new corporate identity – (new bright red logo already in use).
 - (l) Budget – (annual budget with audited account).
 - (m) FAPRA – (NIPR playing leadership role).
 - (n) IPRA – (More NIPR members join annually).
 - (o) Commonwealth Public Relations Conference – (held in Abuja, 1990: successful).
 - (p) Relationship with professional bodies – (cordial).
 - (q) Standing committees – (on their feet).
 - (r) Silver Jubilee and 25th Anniversary of NIPR – (held).
 - (s) Fellows and Corporate Members Night – (annual event)
 - (t) National Conference and Annual General Meeting – (held every year).
 - (u) Mount PR for NIPR – (ongoing).
 - (v) PR prizes in some universities – (established).
 - (w) Start MSc degree programme in PR – (established at UNN).
 - (x) Patrons and Grand Patron – (done, and ongoing).

Okereke's ideas were emitted in rapid-fire, palletised successions. Council members had to stay up to keep up with the dizzy tempo. Through dedication of many members, many of the above programmes were realised as they were originally designed. NIPR now operates from a rented building. The national secretariat is well staffed with the first-ever registrar, Mr Adekunle Salu, a soft-spoken and prodigious public relations veteran of UAC class, as the administrative authority. He first assumed office in 1988 as executive director. He was assisted by Mr Chibiko Udeagha, director of training, education and research; Mr Tyotom Keghku, director of public relations and membership services and Mr Charles Shaba as accountant. Plans are afoot to construct permanent national secretariat in Abuja. Prominent public relations magnates who have delivered the Sam Epelle Memorial Gold Paper Lectures are Professor Sam Black, Mr Melvin Sharpe, Mr Donald Wright and Professor Reginald Watts.

The institute's professional qualifying examinations have been widely acclaimed all over the country for their originality and practicality. Composition of standing committees cuts across the entire membership of the institute, irrespective of their location or status. The NIPR publications include:

- Public Relations Decree No. 16 of 1990
- PR Journal and NIPR News, NIPR Newsletter
- Code of Professional Practice Bylaw
- Strategic and Operational Plan
- Public Relations and the Law
- Creation and Administration of NIPR Chapters
- Brochure on UNN M.Sc. Degree Programme
- Annual Training Programme
- Detailed Training Programme

All the above have been sent individually to every paid-up member, again pursuing the "direct approach method."

The institute's MSc degree programme in PR has taken off at the UNN, "by being the first country in Africa to mount a full-fledged Master's degree programme in PR." Okereke asserts, "Nigeria has further justified its claim to be a leader." It took off in 1992/93 session. The plan to extend it to other universities is underway.

All state governors are patrons of NIPR while the president of the federal republic is the grand patron. President Ibrahim Babangida was accordingly inducted Grand Patron of NIPR in January of 1992. This is in recognition of the patronage of the federal government which the institute enjoys.

The Public Relations Decree No. 16 of 1990 remains an outstanding fulfillment for the institute. It empowers it not only to determine what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by a person seeking to become a member of the public relations profession, but it also empowers the NIPR to approve and recognise courses in public relations in all institutions of higher learning in the country and also to regulate the practice of public relations in Nigeria. Getting that decree out was not automatic. It took the collective efforts of certain appointed members, notably Mr Akin Peter-Thomas, Mr Adekunle Salu, Mr Mike Okereke, the NIPR president himself, Mr Wale Kolapo and many others, to see that it got to the table of President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida for signature in June of 1990.

The invaluable resource persons on whom Udeagha depends for his training programme are Messrs Bankole Akinyemi, Ladosu Ogunmakin and Toyé Ogunnorin. These PR moguls lead every time, and their counterparts who are dotted all over the country join periodically, to ensure successful NIPR training and workshop sessions.

The Commonwealth Public Relations Conference

This was held in Abuja in September, 1990, with its theme as

"The World in Transition". It was crystallised in 18 sub-themes varying from "Theoretical and Philosophical Foundations of Public Relations" to "Law and Ethics of Public Relations"; they were all of international academic standards. The intricacies of each sub-theme were explicated by such public relations tycoons as Professors Sam Black (UK), J. O. Onah (Nigeria), Melvin Sharpe (USA), Messrs Dennis Buckle (UK), Goran Sjoberg (Sweden), Alain Modoux (France), Anand Akerkar (India), Jonathan Wootliff (UK), A. O. Ogunmodede (Nigeria), John Budd (USA), Mike Register (UK) and William Corbett (USA). Among others were Chief Alex Akinyele (Nigeria), Mrs Modupe Adeogun (Nigeria) and Dr Cecil Blake (Japan).

Although there was some apprehension initially over the venue of the international conference, Okereke put his foot down that it must be held in Abuja. He saw that it would be successful, so he followed it through and it came out as a stunning masterstroke. The novelty of a neutral environment, the interest engendered by members who converged on the new federal capital, the enthusiasm generated by celebrated public relations czars from the world over, the official stamp of the federal government on the conference and the determination of everybody to participate in the first-of-its-kind multinational and multicultural public relations conference all culminated in achieving a most productive international convention that will ever serve as a reference point for others that will follow.

Back in Lagos, Okereke took a deep breath, reflected and said,

The successful hosting of the Commonwealth Public Relations Conference firmly establishes NIPR as a leading national professional group internationally. The exposure went a long way to propel Nigeria to the role of a leader in the realm of international public relations. Our voice is now clearly heard.

Hats Off to Secretaries-General

Secretaries-General who have served NIPR with great diligence and dedication are Chief Alex Akinyele, Mr Ted Oviosu, Mr Oladele Osunbote, Alhaji Umaru Galadanchi and Chief Fassy Yusuf. Their records are keeping the institute together.

Conclusion

NIPR has been victorious in making some dramatic impact in the communication industry in Nigeria, although the road had been sometimes precipitous and wavering. The institute's membership strength now stands at 2000 while about 5000 people have attended one NIPR-organised workshop or the other. Sam Epelle's idea, which grew like a mustard seed years ago, now has more than one million people in the country as direct and indirect beneficiaries. The institute is a leader among its peers and public relations specialists today are reaping the fruits of public relations pioneers' efforts. The fruits are in polytechnics, universities, government offices, parastatals, commerce and in the wide world of consultancy.

The institute's main problem used to be that of functional definition of Public Relations as a discipline. NIPR seems to be getting out of the woods on that, but it should not take anything for granted. The training should be strengthened for further public relations evangelisation. Government, industry and commerce, all will need public relations profession increasingly. This is, therefore, the time to set a long-range plan for the NIPR because of the dynamic and organic nature of public relations as a profession. Finance for the institute's multifarious programmes, which will always be a problem should be realistically addressed. Future leadership should also be considered analytically, not only to maintain continuity but to provide intellectual strength, vitality and clear-eyed vision for the institute.

Sam Epelle was the architect of public relations practice in Nigeria. He and his colleagues (*Offonry, Willie-Harry and Yakubu*) jointly laid its impregnable foundation. Bob Ogbuagu and Alex

Akinyele built the walls while Okereke has just roofed the house. Sabo Mohammed may want to paint and furnish it. So, NIPR future leaders will choose which aspect to public relations "property development" they may wish to specialise in. Oyekan, year 2000 president, fortuitously, may begin the modern extensions to the "NIPR property".

As NIPR scampers up the concrete stairs of public relations history in Nigeria, with each step a different height, members can now speak with a great deal of pride and smile, smiles of pure joy at their institute's accomplishments which have been made possible by the foresight and tenacity of their past and present leadership. Over to the future!

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