

[58]

## IMPACT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ON THE NEWS REPORTING OF CORPORATES

Pooja Arora

*Apeejay Stya University, Sohna, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

The blurring lines between PR and marketing have created a set of unethical practices that are increasing and have put a question mark on the credibility of the field. These practices fall under the broad category of 'Paid News' which include sponsored content or advertorials, exchange of gifts or exchange of bribes and private equities.

For this study, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions were conducted with six senior journalists from some of the leading publications in India. They mentioned that while the PR representatives help drive themes that generate new story ideas and trends; they are also very pushy for coverage. Based on the findings of the in-depth interviews, a questionnaire was shared with 250 journalists. The 100 journalists who responded to the questionnaire helped to analyze the relationship shared between the journalists and Public Relations Professionals in India. A significant correlation between the journalist's news stories on not-for-profit organizations (belonging to large corporates) and the marketing policy, promotion policy and editorial policy of the publication he or she worked for was identified. There was also positive correlation noted due to the PR material and the journalist's intention to cover corporate news. Freebies too indicated a weak positive correlation with respect to the attitude of the journalists.

The overall results of the study indicated that while PR has a role in creating and sustaining relationships with journalists for news coverage, it is not just limited to being a free approach anymore and there are some extrinsic factors involved in covering a particular news.

**Keywords:** Public Relations, journalists, media, not-for profit organisations, paid news