



# Public Relations Publics

Subtitle

# What is Public?

- A public is any group whose members have a common interest or common values in a particular situation.
- Publics differ from one organisation to another and the publics of one organisation may not be the publics of another organisation.
- Therefore you have to help your organisation to identify its publics.

THE CATEGORISATION OF  
PUBLIC RELATIONS  
PUBLICS

# Categorization of Public

## Wragg (1993) categorisation

- Functional publics
- Enabling publics
- Diffused publics
- Normative publics

## Guth and Marsh (2000) categorisation

- Traditional and non-traditional publics
- Latent, aware and active publics
- Intervening publics
- Primary and secondary publics
- Internal and external publics
- Domestic and international publics

- They are those publics which enable the organisation to perform its chosen tasks.
- These include
  - – Customers
  - – Consumers
  - – Business firms with which it relates
  - – Employees
  - – Trade unions
  - – Supplier

# 1

# Functional Publics

- These are publics which permit the organisation to function within the framework of the society to which it belongs.
- Such publics include regulatory bodies
  - – Pakistan Institute of Public Relations
  - – Advertising practitioners council of Pakistan
  - – National Broadcasting Commission
  - – Community leaders
  - – Politicians
  - – Share holders

## 2

# Enabling Publics

Within this group are

- –media organisations
- –Pressure groups
- –Local residents

These are varied audiences and often, especially in the case of the media.

3

**Diffused  
Publics**

- This term refers to trade associations and professional bodies.
- It also include political parties.

# 4

## Normative Publics



Guth and Marsh (2000)  
categorisation of Publics  
of PR

- **Traditional Publics** refer to groups with which your organisation has ongoing, long term relationships.

They include

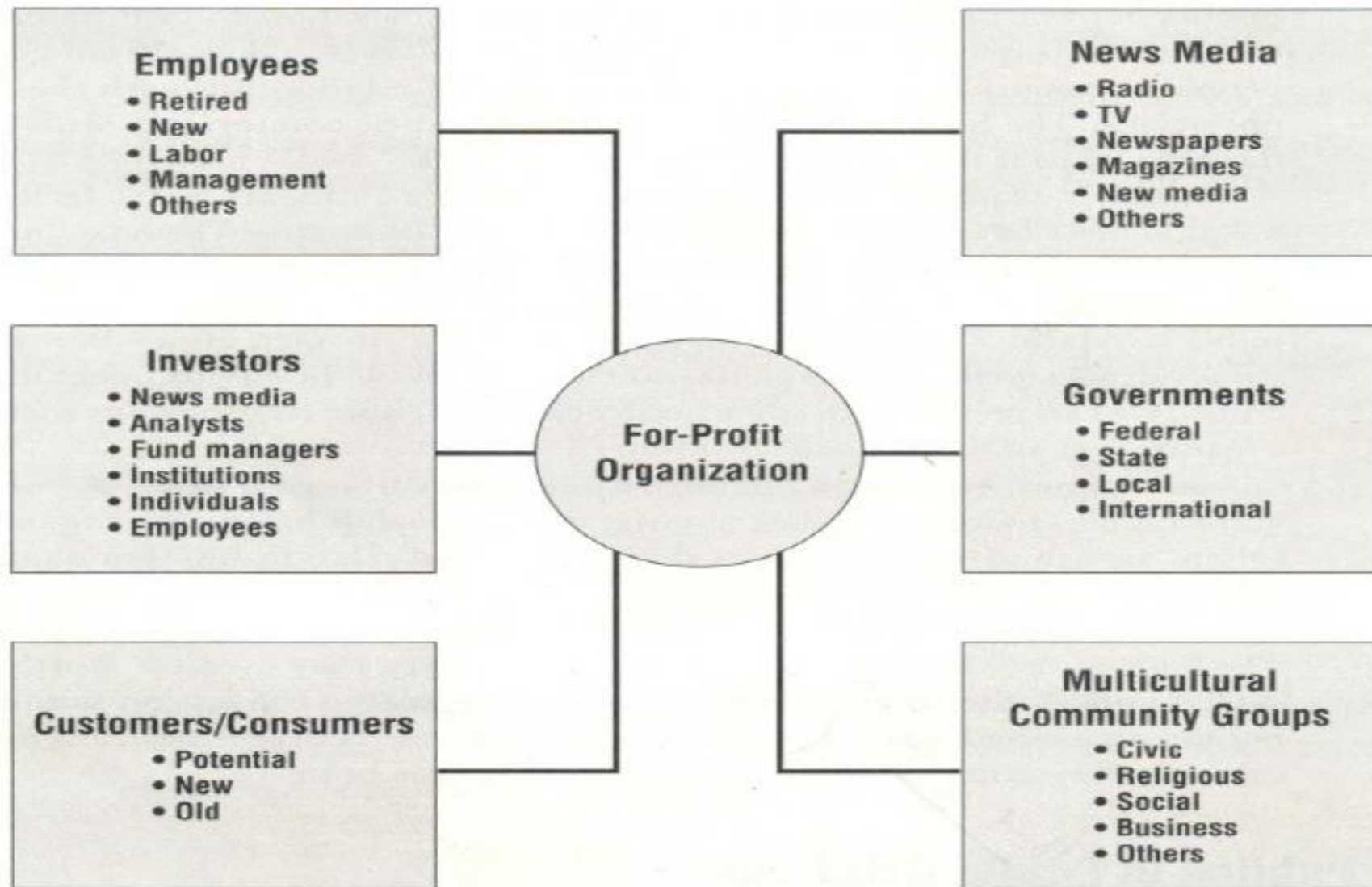
- – Employees
- – The news media
- – Governments
- – Investors
- – Customers
- – Multicultural community groups

These publics are always there, however they must not be taken for granted as they can in one minute be allies.

And in another minute could be foes depending on how your organization relates to them.

# 1

## Traditional and Non Traditional Publics



**Fig. 2: Traditional Publics in Public Relations. Adapted from Guth and Marsh (2000)**

- **Non Traditional Publics** are the groups that usually are not familiar with your organisation.
- That is your organisation had not had an ongoing, long term relationship with them.
- Non-traditional publics emerge either due to changes in you organisation, the society or those publics themselves.
- They have always been there but not very relevant to you organisation but due to those changes, it could become imperative for them to form one of your publics.
- Some traditional publics of some companies today were at some point non-traditional publics.
- After several years of relevance and interaction between an organization and its non-traditional publics, such publics could become traditional publics.

- **A latent public** is one which, by evolving developments, common grounds of relationship is opening up between it and your organization. There is no active relationship between both parties presently. The members of that public are not aware of the existence of the relationship.
- **An aware public** is that whose members are aware of the existence of a commonality of values or interest with your organization, but have not made any organized effort to respond to such relationship.
- **Active public** has realised the relationship between itself and your organization, and is working to manage that relationship on its own terms.

## 2.

# Latent, aware, and active publics

- Any public that helps you to send a message to another public.
- Naturally the mass media fall into this group.
- Without the media, there is very little any organization can achieve in its relationship with other publics.

## 3.

# INTERVENING PUBLICS

- If a public can directly affect your organisation's goals so that you have to take them into consideration virtually on all PR matters, then that public is definitely a primary public
- **Primary publics** are of great importance to any organisation.
  - – Employees
  - – Your immediate community
  - – The media
  - – The government
  - – The shareholders
  - – The financial institutions

## 4.

# Primary and Secondary Publics

- **Secondary Publics** are equally important and you must strive to have a good relationship with them.
- However, the degree to which they affect your organisation's pursuit of its goals is minimal.



- Internal publics exist within your organization while external publics are outside.

For a higher institution of learning for instance, some of its publics would include

- – Students
- – Academic staff
- – Non-academic staff
- – Food vendors
- **External Publics** include its immediate community, providers of social amenities like water and electricity, other institutions in its state or country of location, education ministry.

## 5.

# INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PUBLICS

- **Domestic publics** are those within your country
- **International publics** exist beyond your country's borders.
- More and more organization are realizing the place of international publics in their overall corporate success.
- International public relations is not just about the specific group or persons that your organization relates to in another country, it entails knowledge of such a country in such areas as culture, believe and value systems, taste and preferences, religion, business, ethics, important holidays, weather.

## 6.

# DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLICS

- Refer to groups with which your organisation has ongoing, long term relationships.

They include


- – Employees
- – The news media
- – Governments
- – Investors
- – Customers
- – Multicultural community groups

# 1

## Traditional and Non Traditional Publics



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