Public relations plays its roles in every industry, and each industries has its own unique form of public relations. Since we live in an information age, the needs of public relations in industries are significantly increased; although, public relations in or with the government is not an exception. Through this paper, general information about three areas of public relations in or with the government -- public relations, public affairs and lobbying -- will be presented and explained.

The government is an entity that provides public policies and regulations for citizens to protect individuals’ rights and freedom. In order for the federal, state and local government to perform well, effective communication with the public is crucial because reflecting on public opinions helps the government in making more legitimate decisions about legislations and policies (Lee, Neeley, & Stewart, 2012). In order to communicate effectively with the public, the government needs some people to build a tight bridge between itself and the public. Those people who engage in public relations in or with the government are classified as government relations specialists, public affairs specialists and lobbyists, depending on what areas of governmental public relations they work for (Cameron & Wilcox, 2012). Each area has a set of its own distinct responsibilities and differentiated roles, even though their duties and work roles are similarly related and overlap.

Government relations is the public relations specialization that helps communication between organizations and/or corporations and the government. Government officers often do not understand the complexities of running a business, and business people often do not understand the difficulties of making decisions for legitimate policies and legislations for the publics (TransLegal). Since policies and actions that the government has been taking or will take are really important for corporations or industries, communication is made directly with representatives of governments, lobbying is involved, and discussions about regulations are essential (Bowen, Rawlins, & Martin, 2012). It contains both educational processes and governmental processes. Government relations specialists educate corporations and/or organization officials about government processes, such as law-making processes, and issues that are important to business. Also, both governmental and corporation leaders are educated about potential outcomes for upcoming legislations and regulations. After the whole educating process, government
relations specialists give officers advices on how to influence policies and laws (TransLegal). People working in government relations should have in-depth knowledge about government policies and legislation decisions, but they should also be able to consider the government as both political and bureaucratic (Leonard Domino & Associates, Inc.). They gather, manage, and provide information that can affect the decision-making of the government, and they watch activities of the members and agencies to prepare for possible issues (Cameron & Wilcox, 2012).

Public affairs is a type of public relations that helps facilitate interactions between an organization and its stakeholders. It can also help facilitate interactions about policies or regulations with governments including both federal and local levels, legislative groups and the media, and communicating policies and regulations to public, investors, and internal publics in corporate setting. (Bowen, Rawlins, & Martin, 2012). Public affairs practitioners explain stakeholders about organizations’ policies, give factual information such as statistics, and lobby on issues that could influence the organization’s operation (Public Affairs Networking). Also, listening to public opinion is a crucial role of public affairs specialists. They approach and anticipate possible interests that the government might have with the activities of organizations. Developing relationships with policy-makers is important prior to initial communications (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, & Toth, 2012).

Lobbying has much influence on decisions about policies and regulations which are done by government officials. Lobbyists serve as liaisons between clients and legislators to influence the political and legislative votes or decisions about issues by persuading policy makers to support legislations in favor of corporations or interest groups (Berg, 2009). Their major work is analyzing proposed legislations and determining the possible effects of the legislations on their clients, and they work at the earliest stage of legislative processes. Lobbyists gather information about the policies based on surveys, studies, records and experts, analyze public policies and regulations, and prepare positions for their business leaders. They also promote or oppose governmental actions or legislations, arrange testimony to congressional committees, and contact government officials to persuade. They spend a lot of time improving the ways of communication with government officials and monitoring officers’ activities and
their positions on laws and policies (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, & Toth, 2012). In order to have effective assertions and persuasions, lobbyists should have deep understandings about legislative processes, and need to be ready for influential backup supports as well. Lobbyists must never lie like other public relations practitioners, but it is even more important for them. Moreover, with the presence of the Internet, the practice of lobbying has been influenced. Grassroots lobbying, also known as indirect lobbying, is another type of lobbying that influence legislations by affecting the opinions of the public and encouraging the public to take actions to the legislations by contacting legislative officers directly with letters and emails. Therefore, the practice of lobbying, especially grassroots lobbying, has been influenced since the world has become an information society (Seitel, 2006).

Public relations has been developed along with such historical periods as colonization, wars, fighting for independence, industrial revolution and development of technology. History of public relations in the government started since ancient time. Ancient civilizations in Babylonia, Greece, and Rome used persuasion as an interpersonal communication tool to promote government authorities. At this time, surprisingly, their skills for communication were similar to today’s public relations skills, such as communication with opinion leaders, public speech and visual communication through publicity, and staged events. In the period of colonial America, public relations was used to express citizens’ supports for the country’s independence. For instance, Thomas Paine’s well known public speech “Common Sense” contained a purpose of making the public more informed about the reasons why they should be independent from Great Britain -- It helped to form a new political and government system. The nineteenth century was the time of development of public relations in political and activist group. One example is John Muir’s advocate of the preservation of Yosemite Valley in California. He promoted a campaign to request congressional support for the preservation of Yosemite national park, and it was successful (Wilcox, Cameron, Reber, & Shin, 2011).

In 1919, the practice of public relations in or with government was blocked after Gillett Amendment’s enact by Congress. President Theodore Roosevelt used public experts to gain public
supports for his programs. Congress was worried about his persuasion power on public opinions, so they passed an amendment stating publicists should be used only when they have appropriate purposes. Later, in order to prevent the president’s power over legislation, Congress passed a gag law that prohibited using any kinds of communication tactics to influence Congress’ decisions towards legislations (Seitel, 2006).

In 1928, there was the first attempt to regulate lobbying. Senate enacted a bill which lobbyists to register with the Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House of Representatives. However, it was blocked, and no further legislative actions with lobbying were made. However, after World War II, the creation of the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act of 1946, which stated lobbyists should register their personal information such as names and salary with the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, and file quarterly reports on names of newspapers and magazines, funds and the proposed legislations that they support or oppose (Public Affairs Links). This act made lobbying as a legal act since lobbying was treated as an illegal act before then. After World War II, public relations grew as American economics and politics developed. With the growth of the economy, more corporations were built, and they involved in public affairs and lobbying in order to have successes on operating their businesses (Seitel, 2006).

Today, public relations with and in government has been growing increasingly. Countless jobs related to public relations exist in the governmental agencies and corporations. More industrial businesses and interest groups have continued to expand their government relations functions, and they communicate with government representatives on issues such as tax, trade, interest rates, and other concerns that may influence companies’ or organizations’ conditions (Seitel, 2006). Since technology development with the Internet and social media, the roles of government relations, public affairs, and lobbying have become highly important, and have more capacities of expanding (Wilcox, Cameron, Reber, & Shin, 2011).

Working in or with government is not the kind of job where employees can relax because people working as public relations specialists have heavy responsibilities for what they do since government’s roles are helping and giving positive differences to society (Lee, Neeley, & Stewart, 2012). Similar to
other types of careers, working in governmental public relations has both positives and negatives. Working as a government relations specialist, or public affairs specialist or lobbyist is helping society with the purpose of bringing positive differences to publics, organizations, interest groups and businesses. They also influence significant public policies, and become actively involved in decision-making processes which impact the relevant parties (Craig, 2012). Their involvements or interventions can make policies and legislations more effective and beneficial to all publics as well (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, & Toth, 2012). However, there are also disadvantages. These specialists sometimes overstep the regulations, registrations and policies since they are working on behalf of corporations or organizations. In the case of lobbyists, sometimes they need to lobby for works that are against their sense of ethics and freewill (Craig, 2012). Also, lobbyists can gain bad reputations about what they are doing for their clients if they do not consider the benefits of the public and other organizations (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, & Toth, 2012). Like all government related jobs, public relations professionals in government are not paid well, and have low salary growth.

In order to working in the field of government public relations, there are special skills that practitioners working in government relations, public affairs, and lobbying should have. First, like all other careers in public relations specializations, strong communication skills such as writing and speaking are sufficient. Second, practitioners should have essential knowledge about what government and politics are, what works government does in all levels, what rules and regulations have been proposed and passed, and what social trends of domestic and foreign politics are around the world. Third, sufficient knowledge about rules and regulations, such as ethics laws, lobbying and gift laws and campaign finance laws, and business management and strategy such as corporate strategy, operations, finance and marketing, will give competence on working in these fields. Fourth, practitioners should be familiarized with issue management, lobbying and program management as well. In particular, they should anticipate possible emerging issues, and build advocacy and relationships with the representatives of the government (Public Affairs Council). When the government, corporations, and organizations are looking for possible
applicants for public affairs and government relations, general qualifications were: bachelor’s degree in public relations, international affairs, political science or majors related to politics; strong communications skills especially written and verbal abilities; interpersonal skills; second language skills rather than English; and working experiences in similar fields (National Endowment for Democracy).

Like other types of public relations jobs, people working in public relations in or with the government improve the conditions for communication between organizations, which are government personnel and agencies for them. Also, they use media relations to circulate messages through media channels such as newspapers, television, radio and magazines. For governmental public relations, using printed media, speaking engagements, researching for policies and surveying public opinions are also crucial communication activities (Seitel, 2006). Use of the Internet and social media as communication tools is also similar to other types of public relations. They use internet to communicate with the public, researchers, activists and journalists, distribute information, listen to public opinions through comments, and let the public know about upcoming events or new policies (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman & Toth, 2012). However, governmental public relations has activities that are different or special than other types of public relations; it more deals with interpretation. Significant government events or legislations are interpreted by practitioners or lobbyists in order to find potential outcomes or effects on corporations and organizations in the future, and give recommendations for the actions. For lobbyists, they advocate a position on the behalf of their client for both advantages and disadvantages (Seitel, 2006). They have more proactive communication activities than other types of public relations.

Salary is an important element people consider when looking for jobs. General salary of practitioners working in the government PR is lower compared to that of other specialization fields, such as arts, entertainment, and media PR and financial services PR. According to PR Week, the median salary of practitioners working for the government and the public service PR is $71,500, which was estimated by 38 practitioners with 11 years of average managerial experience. The 2012 report states that only 16% of practitioners changed their career in the past 12 months. Also, 93% of practitioners said that their
bonus is measured by individual performances, and about 40% of practitioners said that they find their jobs more rewarding now than in the past 12 months. Specifically, the salary ranges of government relations vary from $14,000 to more than $150,000 a year. Its median salary has an average around $50,000 a year (Maxwell). According to the Certified Compensation Professionals' analysis, lobbyists’ median of expected salary in the United States is $101,041 (Salary.com). Employees are paid more by private sector companies rather than the public sector, such as non-profit organizations and interest organizations. Some of the positions are influenced by conditions of politics and government.

In general, public relations has been a fast-growing field, and the public relations in government relations, public affairs and lobbying still has been evolving rapidly, with more possibilities for growth in the future. According to *The Practice of Public Relations*, corporates’ and organizations’ needs of government relations and public affairs have significantly increased, and lobbying is one of the greatest growth industries in the United States; there has been 66% increase of occupations since 2000 (Seitel, 2006). Today, the willingness of government members to listen to the public and consider opinions from the community is greater than in the past. People working in government agree that ethical relationships have been increasingly important, and open interactions with groups helps the process of making decisions about policies and regulations. (Leonard Domino & Associates, Inc). Moreover, we are living in a digital age, and technology has influenced how people communicate. The communications among citizens, government, corporations and organizations has been more effective since the development of social media which has allowed people to express their own opinions about government activities, regulations, legislations, and campaigns – people have been given the space to share their opinions. Digital platforms have affected media relations, lobbying and other activities effectively. Activities related to government relations, public affairs and lobbying will be more successful and thoughtful with new digital platforms and traditional communication tactics and strategies (Waddington, 2013) Thus, government relations, public affairs and lobbying have more needs than ever before.

In conclusion, these three governmental public relations fields -- government relations, public affairs and lobbying -- are interesting career fields of public relations; this is because I have had a
particular interest in politics and government relations. While I was researching, for some reason I had a lack of interests in these fields, because it was more complicated than I imagined. This job takes on a lot of responsibilities and duties, since it demands the building of a bridge between governments and corporations or organizations. Also, these fields are working for the advantages and the interests of corporations or organizations; I do not necessarily think of it as negative sides of these fields, but I believe these have possibilities of hurting other organizations, corporations or the public.

Having a career in government relations, public affairs and lobbying is definitely fascinating. However, I do not want to have a career in these fields because I will not be happy with it. Since I do not have any interests in learning about politics and laws, I will not enjoy working. Also, my working efficiency will be really low. Then, neither my client nor I will gain advantages from this relationship. Thus, I want to have a career in the fields where I can enjoy working and have a win-win relationship with my client.
Reference


