

**How to Cite:**

Igben, H. G. O., & Ilaya, M. E. (2016). Public relations practitioners' perception of new media influence on promotion of mutual understanding between organisation and strategic publics in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 10(1), 1–23. Retrieved from <https://ijeponline.org/index.php/journal/article/view/19>

# **Public Relations Practitioners' Perception of New Media Influence on Promotion of Mutual Understanding Between Organisation and Strategic Publics in Nigeria**

**Harvey G.O. Igben**

Department of Mass Communication, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

**Michael E. Ilaya**

Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria


**Abstract**--New media is a trending innovation and its influence in the promotion of mutual understanding between organizations and strategic publics is a more contemporary issue. This study evaluates the perception of public relations practitioners on the incorporation of new media into the process of promoting good relationships between organizations and strategic publics in Nigeria. The fundamental goal is to examine if public relations practitioners find new media helpful in carrying out public relations activities in their organizations. This study is hinged on Technological determinism theory. Findings show that public relations practitioners of both public and private organizations do perceive the adoption of new media technologies in the performance of their function for the promotion of mutual understanding as supportive to quick and interactive approaches to dissemination of information from organizations to strategic stakeholders and the public. The study recommends that more public relations practitioners of organizations especially public organizations should be encouraged to use new media in course of executing their professional assignments.

**Keywords**--cybercrime, fake news, mutual understanding, new media, public relations.

## **Introduction**

This paper identifies the key areas of new media utilization in the cultivation and maintenance of mutual understanding between organizations and their publics.

---

© 2016 by The Author(s).  ISSN: 1307-1637 International journal of economic perspectives is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

**Corresponding author:** Harvey G.O. Igben, Email: [igbenhgo@gmail.com](mailto:igbenhgo@gmail.com)

Submitted: 9 Okt 2016, Revised: 27 Nov 2016, Accepted: 18 Dec 2016

The context of this discourse is in establishing how public relations practitioners perceive the use of new media in the execution of their professional assignments. The presence of new media in different professional fields has brought about significant changes in the way such professions go about their practice (Yeomans, 2016; Waters et al., 2010). The benefits associated with the intervention of new media in such fields are broadly expressed in the speed and accuracy in the process of achieving tasks as well as the quality of output of such task. So much has been highlighted about the support of public relations to different professions but very little attention has been paid to how new media support the practice of public relations especially with regards to building and sustaining mutual understanding between organisations and their relevant publics. A better understanding of how new media support the practice of public relations will serve as a stimulus to public relations practitioners in transiting from the analogue to the digital approach in the public relations practice (Weber, 2009; Supa, 2008; Sallot et al., 2004).

The paper also explores the attitudes of public relations practitioners to establish how they relate to the new media in the course of engaging in public relations practice (Manky, 2013; Goucher, 2010; Ben-Itzhak, 2009). Lastly, the paper seeks to establish the challenges public relations practitioners are faced within the process of utilizing new media for building mutual understanding between organizations and their strategic publics. Finally the paper points at the direction where the potentials lie for exploring the new media for supporting the process of organizational growth (Adedina et al., 2008; Ayankojo, 2001).

Public relations practice is undergoing revolutionary changes in the emergence of the new media culture which has an enormous effect on three of the most essential categories of society in the twenty-first century: economics, politics, and the exchange of information and ideas (Edwards, 2006; Eddolls, 2016; Roets, 2017). With the advent of internet-driven communication in the form of online social networks, news and company websites, the practice of public relations has ceased to be confined within the limits of tactics, such as press releases, events, and media interviews. Idi Cakim, in his work *Digital Public Relations: Online Reputation Management* cited in Duhe (2012), insists that key business audience form their perceptions of companies, brands, products and services by receiving online news and information. New methods of communicating in the digital world allow smaller groups of people to congregate online and share, sell and swap goods and information. It also allows more people to have a voice in their community and the world in general (Baran & Davis, 2016; Black, 1989).

The adoption of new media platforms of communicating in the era of digitalization in organizational communication is highly significant as it enhances the swift dissemination of information between an organization and its strategic publics (Holtz, 2002; McQuail, & Deuze, 2020). The promotion of mutual understanding between an organization and its strategic publics has been a profound part of a public relations practitioner's work. In times past, public relations professionals commonly send press releases by calling up a journalist to pick a story about their client or business but now, due to the use of new media incorporated into organizational culture, a public relations professional could "tweet" journalist's information or a story the media professional might be interested in or send a link

of a press release through the different social media websites (Cutlip et al., 1994; Fidler, 1997).

The term new media is where different forms of electronic communication are made possible through the use of a computer or digital technology, which is the internet; on-demand access to content at any time, anywhere, on any digital device, and it includes interactive user feedback and participation utilized by the public relations to inform the public of an organization's plan, mission, policies and practices in a positive consistent and credible manner. New media is becoming the preferred term for a range of media practices that employ digital technologies and the computer in some way or the other (Dewdney & Ride, 2006). Although many practitioners have simply transferred their traditional media skills and techniques to digital media, the new fascination with social media promises to have positive consequences for the public relations profession. If social media are used to their full potential, it is believed they will inexorably make public relations practice more global, strategic, two-way and interactive, symmetrical or dialogical, and socially responsible (FitzGerald & Spagnolia, 1999; Folarin, 1998).

New Media Institute, contends that "New media can be characterized by the variegated use of images, words, and sounds. These networks of images, sounds, and text data are different from old media formats such as hard copy newspapers because of the nesting characteristic." Typically, this means coordinating directly with the people who the organizations policies, programmes and plans will affect. The impact of these new technologies is bringing dramatic changes to many aspects of public relations (Wright & De Hert, 2012). The terrain of public relations practice is also shifting with new media bringing about substantial increases in stakeholder strength through facilitating communication within stakeholder groups and between different stakeholder groups (Van der Merwe et al., 2005). The Internet gives public relations practitioners a unique opportunity to collect information, monitor public opinion on issues, and engage in direct dialogue with their publics about a variety of issues. (McAllister & Taylor, 2007). Galloway (2005), avers that conventional techniques of public relations are being undermined by the mobile nature of new media and that this requires public relations practitioners to rethink how they relate to the public (Stolk et al., 2016; Benlian & Haffke, 2016).

The definition of new media, remains fluid and is evolving, with some definitions of new media focusing exclusively upon computer technologies and digital content production whilst others stress the cultural forms and context in which technologies are used, (Dewdney & Ride 2006). One key feature of new and emerging media technologies is that they are often portable and facilitate mobility in communications. New media has a wider reach than any media before it. Lindergrin cited in Galloway (2005), agrees that wireless and digital technological improvements to media have lifted restrictions that required connecting to a static physical network or machine. The new media rely strongly on digitally powered technologies, allowing for previously separate media to converge (Taylor & Perry, 2005; Leung & Lee, 2005).

Media convergence is a phenomenon of new media and this can be explained as digital media. According to Flew (2002), "The idea of new media captures both the

development of unique forms of digital media and the remaking of more traditional media forms to adopt and adapt to the new media technologies". This accounts for the reliance on computers, smartphones, tablets, and another medium instead of the previous analogue means of information gathering. New media has drastically changed the communication landscape in some fundamental ways over the traditional media, especially in information dissemination. It is imperative to note that many organizations which used newspapers and broadcast news operations to disseminate information now have websites from which they dispense information (Aryani & Rahayuni, 2016; Nimbalkar & Deodhar, 2015).

Furthermore, using the internet as a platform, e-mail and videoconferencing have also become veritable tools in this new dimension (Fitzgerald, 2005). A report by the Bledsoe et al. (2007), suggests that digital content and applications in the twenty-first century will be as significant and as embedded in economic well-being as was electronic power in the twentieth century. The report states that like information and communications technology generally, digital content and applications have the characteristics of a 'general-purpose technology. When examining cultural forms and contexts in which these new technologies are used, what is striking is the fact that new media potentially makes people technically more accessible more of the time: in the car, out shopping, in the office, at work, at home and when socializing. Contemporary public relations practice uses new media as a tool in maintaining relationship and understanding; both public and private organizations, now use new media as a tool to issue press releases, adverts and any information about organizations and the strategic publics.

Interestingly, organizations now advertise available positions and opportunities on social media platforms and the internet, they put out information about investor relations opportunities online and some even create a chat platform online to chat with stakeholders. This way, relationships are created faster and easier, too. Since the boom of the internet, the rhythm of the conventional news cycle has changed. Before the emergence of this new technology, everything is orchestrated.

### **The Problem**

Before the advent of the new media, the general challenge of public relations practitioners was the possibility of controlling the flow of messages from the organisation to the strategic publics; this was in the exclusive preserve of the communication professionals. The entrance of new media into the communication industry significantly altered the control of the communication process which extended to the public, the public relations practitioners inclusive, the privilege to actively encode and decode messages in the information exchange.

Before the new media evolved, public relations practitioners were committed to the traditional method of public relations practice which focuses on the use of press releases and special events for instance regularly. The influence of the new media which introduces a web-based form of communication consequently redefined the methods used in public relations practice for creating and sustaining cordial relationship between the organisations and their respective publics. Today, the practice of public relations has come to acknowledge the

internet as a potential tool in communication which raises the argument that there is no other tool that could better build relationships between organisations and their publics like the new media. Since the introduction of the new media in the 20th Century, into the corporate world, public relations practice has been redefined forever (Pavlik & Dozier, 1996).

Christ (2007), predicted that social networking sites would force public relations practitioners to rethink how they approach relationship development with their stakeholders. Practitioners have been exploring the interactive elements of social networking and experiencing benefits for their organizations. There are many different ways websites are using to communicate to their publics and stakeholders. They even provide information to the media in a much quicker way as opposed to the mainstream pattern (Hill & White, 2000). There is yet to be any public relations study in the Delta State of Nigeria that focuses on the interrogation of the public relations practitioners to establish how much the new media has influenced their public relations practice. In this research, the researcher seeks to find the level of effectiveness and exact influence new media has on maintaining understanding between an organization and strategic publics in Delta State.

### **Review of Related Literature**

The excellent theory of public relations emphasizes that public relations practitioners must focus on involvement and two-way communication to optimize the potential of long-term relationships with the public and other stakeholders (Grunig, 2009). Public relations activities in establishing relationships with audiences using internet media are known as online public relations or e-PR. This online Public Relations activity is very important in addition to traditional Public Relations activities, Grunig argues that the new media enables public relations to be more global, strategic, interactive, dialogical and socially responsible.

New technologies are being developed and updated continuously and in themselves pose challenges for public relations professionals in terms of keeping abreast of not only what is available but also of what is being planned for release in the future. Many large scale public relations projects such as national public information campaigns or major international events have long lead times, and plans made a couple of years out from an event may need to be revisited several times to accommodate trends in the usage of new technologies among key publics. Galloway (2005), puts forward that conventional techniques of public relations are being undermined by the mobile nature of new media and that this requires public relations practitioners to rethink how they relate to the public. Waters et al. (2010), argue that with the emergence of the new media, public relations, media relations inclusive, have ceased to be classified as a routine of producing static programming; rather, practitioners must seek out new communication channels and possibilities for engaging all stakeholders if only organizations and practitioners would like to be relevant and contemporary in the scheme of new media evolution.

Generally, many observers tend to write about new media as a term where different forms of electronic communication are made possible through the use of

a computer or digital technology, which is the internet 'New media is becoming the preferred term for a range of media practices that employ digital technologies and the computer in some way or another (Dewdney & Ride, 2006). This position was supported in the work who defined the word "new media" as on-demand access to content at any time, anywhere, on any digital device, and it includes interactive user feedback and participation. New media, according to them, is also real-time and unregulated. Huhtamo (1999), noted that 'one of the most common features of many intellectual discourses is their lack of historical consciousness.' These new media are not completely new phenomena. They have been growing out of 'old media' for some time. Furthermore, the concept of new technology is not unique to the current digital revolution. Marvin (1988), asserts that:

- New technology is a historically relative term. We are not the first generation to wonder at the rapid and extraordinary shifts in the dimensions of the world and human relationships it contains as a result of new forms of communication.'

Williams et al (1994), defined new media as the application of microelectronics, computers and telecommunications that offer new services or enhancement of old ones. In the same vein, Marvin (1988), also focused on the interplay between new and old purposes in new media. She suggested the tension created by the coexistence of the old and new becomes a focus of interest because it is novel. Other scholars have also identified specific characteristics of new media. Negroponte (1995), suggested that one of the things that differentiate new media from old is that new media are based on the transmission of digital bits rather than physical atoms. Indicated that for the media consumer, the major differences between old media and new are greater user choice control. Nevertheless, new media technologies, despite their synthetic capabilities, do not yet seem to be eliminating old media. Rather, according to Coffey & Stipp (1997), many individuals use their computers concurrently with other old media such as television.

It is an acknowledged fact that the main objective of public relations is to establish and maintain good relations with the critical stakeholders of an organization. This can be easily achieved when the appropriate tools are employed. Today, technological innovations and convergence have revolutionized existing public relations tools like press kits, newsletters, news releases facility visits just to mention but a few; thereby leading to the emergence of new and contemporary tools of public relations practice. This is not to say that these contemporary tools have replaced the 'old' tools but they are used to complement each other for effective relations with the media. The contemporary tools of public relations remain those media facilities that meet the changing trends associated with the 21st century thereby enhancing the practice of public relations. They include the internet, webcasting, e-mail, videoconferencing, video news release, facility visits among others. Of concern in this 21st century is the fact that the influx of a variety of contemporary public relations tools leaves the public relations department with the problem of choice. In this regard, provides some factors to consider in making the right choice (Ajala, 1993). Some of these factors include "the media profile, the target public profile, time factor, competition and cost of the tool." All these factors if properly harnessed are very capable of guiding



the public relations department of any organization in choosing any of these contemporary tools for public relations practitioners outlined and discussed below.

The Internet has ushered in a new age for public relations practice. Today, several organizations have corporate homepage and websites with informative and persuasive details about their products/services and the image of the organization is communicated to the media and their publics across the globe. This explains why [Onabajo \(2005\)](#), notes that "a professional website will improve organizations' image and enhance communication." He, however, advises that in creating an organizational website, the public relations/media relations department should ensure that the website designed for the organization exploits the interactive nature of the Internet, and enable a two way- the flow of messages because getting information from the target audience is as important as informing them.

Furthermore, the internet, an interconnection of computer networks, information superhighway online media; by its nature of converging with many other technologies incorporates other types of media relations tools commonly referred to as online media relations. Some of these are website newsroom, online newsletters, online news releases, frequently asked questions (FAQs), online monitoring among a host of others. The list certainly, would be inexhaustible because daily new ones are emerging and this would continue as long as man is in existence. This contemporary media relations tool "allows for a live discussion between a group of people in different locations by the use of linked telephones and video screen" ([Olise, 2008](#)). Videoconferencing enables public relations practitioners to get linked with reporters and other media gatekeepers, to see and talk to each other from the convenience of their conference centers or from meeting spaces, hotels, and offices and other venues with the requisite video and telephone facilities. One of the earliest examples of the use of a technology that metamorphosed into videoconferencing in media relations as [Straubhaar & LaRose \(2004\)](#), state was in 1982 when John and Johnson used the technology (videoconferencing) to reach hundreds of reporters in thirty cities breaking news and information about the Tylenol product tampering episode which cost the lives of seven people who ingested the tampered over-the-counter medication.

Webcasting is a form of broadcasting production that incorporates streaming video and audio on the Internet. It is used to deliver a live press conference or event to the computer screen of the target audience. In the case of media relations, a reporter or producer can watch from his or her desktop, laptop etc. viewing not only video but text and photos, participate in interviews if they are part of the package, then "download the Internet feed or run a tape to get excerpts for use in the on-air coverage," ([Straubhaar & LaRose, 2004](#)). Nonetheless, [Hanson \(2005\)](#), states that a major limitation on webcasting is "the need to obtain permission to transmit materials on the web." As it seems today, this might no longer be a limitation especially when one considers the proliferation of computer experts as well as Internet hackers which has led to the easy access and pasting of information on the net without seeking permission.

Hanson (2005), defines video news releases as “a tape or digitalized audio and video messages that serve as a press release to the broadcast and online media.” The difference between a news release and a video news release is that a video news release is accompanied by sound. They are not just read like news release in the print. Seitel (2007), states that "on the Internet, the new release is delivered by email and should be shorter than their offline counterparts." Organizations can package and send a video news release to media organizations especially for free and believe that they would be aired. Hanson (2005), argues however that to get a video news release on the air, it has to be more than a slick piece of video promoting the company but should be something that media organization want to air. He adds that video news release that looks like commercial or promotional films are unlikely to be broadcast, those that tell an interesting story and look like the video shoot for the evening newsstand a much better chance of getting on the air. This notwithstanding, media houses usually must edit the video news release once they found it does not suit their house style or would provoke public taste. Adamolekun (2001), asserts that media relations practitioners should understand that video news release is not only highly profit-oriented but grossly biased. Nevertheless, a video news release is still a very good tool for public relations practitioner because of its ability to present information through picture and sound.

The email is also a contemporary media relations tool. It is used in contacting the media with information about an organization. The e-mail is one of the most popular features of the Internet, mainly for the exchange of information. Furthermore, the Internet which comprised computer networks, information superhighway online media; by its nature of converging with many other technologies incorporates other types of media relations tools commonly referred to as online media relations. Some of these are website newsroom, online newsletters, online news releases, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), online monitoring among a host of others. The list certainly, would be inexhaustible because daily new ones are emerging and this would continue as long as man is in existence.

### **Influence of New Media in Public Relations Practice in Public and Private Organizations in Nigeria**

Consideration will be given to both the impact on skills, knowledge and work practices of current and future practitioners and the way new media is consumed and used, including the impact that related expectations and behaviour of consumers are having on public relations practice in Nigeria. New technologies are being developed and updated continuously and in themselves pose challenges for public relations professionals in terms of keeping abreast of not only what is available but also of what is being planned for release in the future. Many large-scale public relations projects such as national public information campaigns or major international events have long lead times, and plans made a couple of years from which an event may need to be revisited several times to accommodate trends in the usage of new technologies among key publics.

Galloway (2005), opines that conventional techniques of public relations are being undermined by the mobile nature of new media and that this requires public



relations practitioners to rethink how they relate to the public. Internet news services are not just relying on the news wire services but turning increasingly to other places for raw materials. Public relations practitioners would be aware that 'transcripts, reports and budgets are regularly being placed on the Web, either by organizations themselves or by citizens trying to hold those organizations to account' (Stephens, 2007). Consumers expect instant updates in their inboxes when something happens. Public relations practitioners may be under more pressure to produce this instant content.

The implications for public relations practitioners who need to prepare materials that would be faster than ever before include being able to produce what is required almost instantaneously and with the required level of accuracy; having processes in place that can get required priority clearances for materials to be released, and having the technology at hand to directly distribute or upload what is being disseminated. These factors may put pressure on the public relations practitioner and the team with which they work but may also pressure the relationships they have with colleagues or more senior staff, in particular the chief executive officer and his or her minders. It can also add pressure to the relationship with the Information Technology (IT) team if direct upload to the corporate website is not available to the public relations practitioners. In-house public relations practitioners may need to form stronger alliances with IT departments and may have to engage with the organization's legal advisers to refine content clearance procedures when content is demanded instantaneously. Another area of practice that new media has changed in the past decade is that of events. People attending events are being exposed to more and more 'bells and whistles' as new media technology gives the wherewithal to create a spectacle to an ever-increasing number of people. The ubiquitous digital projector and PowerPoint presentation have become baseline requirements for the most basic events, and access to the internet to enable presenters to integrate online elements is now almost essential. Practitioners working on events may need to manage expectations from their employing organizations, their consumers and stakeholders, including sponsors, that the level of spectacle and gadgetry provided at one event will be replicated or augmented.

If new media are to be embraced, public relations practitioners will need more technical skills in areas such as web publishing, new software operation, online security, search engine optimization, web analytics and web trend analysis software operation. They will need enhanced online information architecture skills and skills related to managing an increasing amount of complex information digitally. Writing for cross-media delivery will continue as a major component of practice but the demands for multimedia elements will bring even more challenges in this area. Since late 2006 there have been several trade press articles on how the media release is beginning to evolve to include multimedia elements. The past several years have seen an increased use of multimedia and interactive content in news releases and leading newswire services are fully equipped to distribute such material (Nowland, 2006).

With the trend towards multimedia news releases, the demands to have multimedia elements available for inclusion in such releases will grow. Public relations practitioners will be responsible for either coordinating production, or

producing this material, and the budgets and skills bases of public relations units may need to be reviewed to accommodate these new demands. This trend may be setting up new expectations for a content provider that smaller or non-profit organizations may not be able to easily meet and this has the potential to dwarf the share of voice that less well-funded organizations receive. There is also the need to consider whether target publics have access to new media technologies such as the internet which becomes an issue when communication strategies target publics without such access due to geographic or socioeconomic factors. All public relations practitioners will need to keep abreast of emerging media and many may already be undertaking public relations planning, implementation and evaluation in unfamiliar media areas. PR News Online started its PR Digital Report earlier this year and is now regularly covering stories on issues such as blogging, online communities and podcasting. Only a few years back it would have seemed unlikely to many practitioners to have to plan campaign components to embrace website possibilities such as YouTube and My Space but it is evident that many organizations and now, even election campaigns, are doing just that. In 2003, Galushkin suggested that SMS text messaging should be considered by organizations as a means to enhance internal communications given that spatial and temporal constraints had been weakened or removed, and new communication structures and forms had developed. Less than three years later, during the 2006 Australian Census of Population and Housing, SMS was used extensively by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for communicating with tens of thousands of census employees (Verey et al., 2007).

The academic literature indicates a range of challenges ahead for public relations practitioners. They may need to design virtual experiences that stimulate feelings as connectedness, involvement, appreciation and meaningfulness (Galloway 2005). Serious consideration must be given to whether blogs are part of campaigns as there are indications that they could be effective at establishing and maintaining organization-public relationships (Seltzer & Mitrook, 2007). Already the cautionary tales related to blogging are evident in the trade literature. A public relations firm was discovered to be ghost-writing a blog on behalf of Walmart customers in the USA causing embarrassment to the company (Bogacz et al., 2006). Sony was also caught out by faking a blog that was supposed to have been written by a boy wanting a Playstation 2 for Christmas; this is known as 'flogging'- a term coined in the information technology media for fake blogging. Practitioners will need to be able to analyse how new technologies can aid or hinder traditional public relations roles like public information dissemination, media relations, reputation management, stakeholder relations, marketing communications, investor relations, and issues and crisis management. Practitioners can draw on research to inform their practice. An excellent example of this is Rioux et al. (2007), work in articulating six best practices of mediated crisis communications.

Rioux et al. (2007), state that the use of the internet in crisis communications is a logical one in that websites are one controlled channel through which organizations can communicate directly with the media and the public. Through the website, an organization can tell its 'side of the story, reduce the uncertainty of consumers, address multiple stakeholder needs, and work with government agencies that specialize in public safety.' Public relations practitioners, as the in-

house communication experts, are likely to be advising senior management on these issues and, in some cases, actively engaging in implementing new media initiatives. The practitioner will need to manage the organization's expectation that all traditional media will be fully serviced, as has been the case in the past, as well as integrating many aspects of new media. Additional work generated by these expectations may need to be undertaken without additional personnel or budget allocations. Finding time, funds and support for upgrading skills and engaging in professional development experiences may continue to be challenging. Turf wars may develop with other work areas in the organization such as IT, marketing and sales, customer relations, call centres and others.

This is due to these areas seeing a range of advantages, including the advancement of careers and the control of information and technology, in managing communication activities in a new media age. Turf wars can also arise from public relations asserting management responsibility for areas of practice that traditionally may have resided within other areas such as IT. These internal relationships need to be carefully managed as encroachment from management information systems departments can lead public relations practitioners to have a lack of control in managing Web sites (Porter & Sallot, 2003).

Research has shown that public relations practitioners who embrace new technologies such as blogging are perceived within organizations as having more power, in that they are willing to be leaders in the industry and use new tools to better reach target publics (Sweetser et al., 2007). Some practitioners may find themselves working with key organizational decision-makers who are not abreast of emerging media or, at the other end of the continuum, are working with decision-makers who are very aware of the new media developments and want to embrace every new one without considering the full implications of doing so. There may be recruitment issues for public relations which may also impact journalists looking to stepping into a public relations role without the requisite professional readiness. The academic literature in journalism indicates a high level of debate as to the future of journalism practice, journalism outputs and the education of journalists, to name but a few. The outcomes of these debates may have unexpected outcomes for public relations both in terms of how establishing and maintaining mutual relationships are practised but also for recruitment planning.

Although not evident in the academic literature, through blogs, trade press and industry websites, one can glean a trend towards some public relations agencies and in-house units looking to employ staff with broader tertiary qualifications and career backgrounds than public relations. These agencies may instead be considering people with technological know-how to work alongside the traditional public relations practitioners. There are also anecdotal reports that mature practitioners are being overlooked in some cases in favour of young, relatively inexperienced, but technically-savvy, public relations practitioners who can take a leading role in projects that require technical know-how or first-hand knowledge of the consumption habits related to new media. Some public relations agencies or in-house units are being amalgamated into multidisciplinary strategic communication agencies encompassing public relations, marketing, advertising,

media, website development and graphic design. Agencies are forming strategic alliances with different companies to deliver cross-discipline multimedia services.

[Sharmini \(2007\)](#), in his study conducted "The role of media relations in corporate public relations practise: A study on 15 listed companies in Klang Valley with the primary objective of discovering how media relations is viewed and utilized in organizations in Malaysia, suggests that media relations play a strategic role to build a relationship between an organization and the media. This study recommends that organizations that will look beyond the promotional role of media relations shall benefit a great deal. [Oyeniya \(2000\)](#), researched on a topic titled, The limitations of Public relations practice in Developing countries. This study discovered that there are limitations to effective public relations practice in developing countries. It suggests that public relations practitioners in developing countries should find a way to rise above all these limitations.

[James \(2007\)](#), in his work titled A review of the impact of new media on public relations: challenges of terrain, practice and education, established that public relations educators do not have key knowledge in new media developments and the study suggests that public relations educators may need to review course curricular in light of new media developments and industry responses. [Samantha \(2011\)](#), researched a topic titled, Media relations and the Integration of New Media: Is new media affecting the relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists? This research observed that there is a new era of Media relations and it is becoming more predominant each day and the more public relations practitioners realize that the better. This research recommends that rather than public relations practitioners having to contact so many journalists for the quick dissemination of a message, public relations practitioners should get acquainted with new media technologies.

[Paramita et al. \(2010\)](#), researched a topic titled, The media image, Reputation and Media Communication of Metsahallituis Forestry. This research found that the media image of this organization is mostly neutral although both media image and reputation turned out to be more positive among the journalist than assumed. This research suggests that Metsahallituis Forestry must continue to focus on positive steps to improve its reputation in the media eye.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is hinged on the Technological Determinism theory. The technological determinism theory was propounded by [McLuhan, 1982](#)). This theory revolves around the proposition that technology in any society defines its nature. Technology is viewed as the driving force of culture in society and determines its force of history. The first major development of technological determinism theory came from a German philosopher and economist named Karl Marx, who argued that changes in technology and specifically productive technology are the primary influence on human social relations.

Cultural practices ultimately revolve around the technological base of a given society. Marx position has become embedded in temporary society, where the idea that fast-changing technologies alter human lives is all-pervasive. The study

stated that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, and act, as well as how society is, operates as we move from one technological age to another (Tribal- Literate- Print- Electronic). This implies that humans learn, feel, and think the way they do because of the messages they receive through the currently available technology. The radio requires that the audience only listen and develop their sense of hearing. Television, on the other hand, now engages both the hearing and visual senses.

Technological determinism seeks to show technical developments, media or technology as a whole as the key mover in history and social change. [Claude & Weston \(1992\)](#), characterized the most prominent forms of technological determinism as billiard ball approaches, in which technology is seen as an external force introduced into a social situation producing series of ricochet effects. According to [Lievrouw & Livingstone \(2006\)](#), technological determinism is the belief that technologies have an overwhelming power to drive human actions which leads to social change. From the foregoing, it is evident that media promotion of relationships between an organization and its stakeholders by the public relations practitioners in Nigeria must understand that new media technologies when properly harnessed are capable of transforming public relations practice. New media technologies, by their very nature, are drivers of social change, national development and organizational development. The various media of communication and their gatekeepers in Nigeria on the other hand, have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination task as posited by development media theorists, by ensuring that organizations operating in Nigeria are objectively and positively presented to the world.

This is possible because of technological transformations of new media technologies which now overlap with some contemporary tools for media relations and the relationship between organizations and stakeholders in the practice of public relations, which must be sustained and maintained mutually. This theory is suitable for this research work as this research study is focused on the influence of new media technologies on public relations practice. This theory guides this research from a technological perspective which is what the corporate world has fully adopted in its activities. Finally, it is suitable for this research as its major theme borders on new media technologies.

## **Methodology**

This study adopts the survey method of research. The survey research method becomes highly useful in the field of social behavioural sciences and indeed most appropriate for this study. According to [Ohaja \(2003\)](#), whenever the source of primary data for a study would be the views of members of the public or any particular group, a survey would be required. Again, survey research is a very vital method for collecting data to describe a population that is too large to be observed directly, through careful sampling and construction of a standardized questionnaire. It, therefore, becomes possible to gather data from a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken as being representative of those of the larger population. The survey is useful in the measurement of public opinion, attitudes and orientations which are dominant among a large population

at a particular period. The above assertion indicates that surveys are highly useful in the field of social behavioural sciences and indeed in any area where the investigation revolves around human action(s).

### **Study Population**

According to [Onwioduokit \(2000\)](#), "the term population is used to signify the entire class of objects or events to which generalization is to be referred. The population of this study covered public relation officers in Nigeria. This was the best option for this study, for it enabled the researcher to gather data from Public Relations Professionals in Nigeria who either work in public or private organizations thus generating quality responses. The population of practising public relations practitioners in Nigeria according to the National Bureau of Statistics are 10,000. The researcher took 54 per cent of the registered members of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations practising Public Relations Officers (NIPR) in Nigeria. The researcher also went even more in-depth in this research by interviewing the public relations officers of some selected organizations.

### **Sample Size**

[Oakland \(2004\)](#), recommends Taro Yamane's formula for researchers in determining the sample size from a given population. The Taro Yamane's formula is as indicated below:

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| N | = | Desired Sample Size  |
| N | = | Population size  |
| E | = | Level of significance or Accepted error margin or limit (0.05) |
| 1 | = | Constant value   |

Applying the above formula, the sample size for this study has been worked out and is 5400 respondents. The main function of a sample is to allow the researchers to conduct the study on individuals from the population so that the result of the study can be used to derive conclusions that will apply to the entire population. The researcher took +5 per cent of each of the population in the researcher's study locations from the registered members of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations practising public relations officers in Nigeria being representatives of various organization. Also, the study incorporated an in-depth interview of twenty of the public relations officers of these organizations.

### **Sampling Technique**

The purposive or judgmental sampling technique was used for the collection of data in this study. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2003:88) "purposive sampling includes only objects or elements selected for specific characteristics or qualities and eliminates those that fail to meet the criteria". The purposive



sampling method enables the researcher to pick respondents who were willing to participate in this study based on their understanding and knowledge of the subject matter as well as their availability. This technique was adopted because respondents need to have a good knowledge of what they are about to answer.

### **Research Instrument**

The tool adopted for this study was the questionnaire and interview schedule. The questionnaire used in this study contained demographic questions and psychographic questions. The questionnaire consists of closed-ended questions to elicit what was utilized because answers which are standard and could be compared from persons to persons was asked and it gave a positive outlook which was much easier to code and analyse. Also, the use of interview was adopted to interrogate six of the public relations practitioners of these public and private organizations who are members of the NIPR in Delta State Chapter to inquire of the stand of their organizations on the adoption of new media for public relations practice.

### **Validity of Research instrument**

For the validation of items in the questionnaire, content and construct validity was carried out. This is usually done to ensure that the instrument accurately measures what it sets out to measure. Therefore, the research instrument was subjected to content scrutiny by experts in the field of media art and educational research and methodology. In addition, the researcher ensured that the majority of the items in the research instrument successfully measure the theoretical constructs of this study, which lead to the fine-tuning of the items in the questionnaire to make them suitable for the study.

### **Reliability of Research Instrument**

The reliability of the research instrument is the degree to which it can yield consistent finding when replicated. To establish the reliability of the instrument a pilot test was conducted by the researcher. The pilot test involves 20 selected Mass Communication postgraduate students of the Delta State University, Abraka and selected Public Relations Practitioners of Higher Institutions of Learning in the state to test the instrument and have an oversight of how authentic the results of the questionnaire will turn out at the end of the research. This is to avoid the Hawthorn effect. The administration of the instrument was done once and the scores obtained were used to establish the reliability coefficient using Cronbach's coefficient alpha method, which stood at 0.81 and this value was considered acceptable reliability for the study.

Table 1  
Summary data for Cronbach's coefficient alpha for estimation of reliability

| <i>S/No</i> | <i>Name of Instrument</i> | <i>No of Items</i> | <i>Items Mean</i> | <i>Items Variance</i> | <i>r</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| 1           | Questionnaire             | 20                 | 2.908             | 1.877                 | 0.81     |

## Discussion of Findings

This section will deal solely with responses to answer the research questions. Research Question:

- Do public relations practitioners in organizations make use of new media in the practice of their profession in promoting mutual understanding between organizations and their strategic publics? This study investigated if the respondents use new media in their practice of promoting mutual understanding between organizations and their strategic publics and the responses derived from table 3 indicates that the majority of organizations who have public relations departments use new media. Table 4 also buttresses the responses in Table 3 as the figures show that most of the respondents use new media very often and this indicates they enjoy the service of new media while discharging their duties. The data from the interview shows that public relations practitioners who work in private organizations use and know the relevance of new media. Two public relations officers in two oil-producing communities in Delta State agreed that their organizations use new media in course of carrying out organizations' activities. The above findings show that a lot has changed in the practice of public relations activities since the advent of the new media, especially for a public and private organization that would like to transcend its geographical barrier to reach its publics outside its location. Both the survey and interview data show that organizations use new media and this agrees with Duhe and Sandra (ed.), (2012) in their book titled: "New media and Public Relations". According to them, "Organizations are using Facebook and Twitter to build relationships and to communicate transparently".
- What is the perception of public relations practitioners in organizations about the incorporation of new media into the practice of promoting mutual understanding between their organizations and their strategic publics? The majority of public relations officers see new media as a very important innovation. The way practitioners perceive it has made its adoption grow faster in hitherto unimaginable ways. Table 5 shows that the majority of the respondents see new media as an important and relevant innovation in the public relations profession for promoting mutual understanding between an organization and its strategic publics. These findings indicate that new media is very important and public relations practitioners see it as such. This agrees with McAllister and Taylor(2007), who opined that public relations practitioners see the internet as an unequal opportunity for collection of information, monitoring of public opinions on issues and engaging in direct dialogue with the public about a variety of issues.
- Do public relations practitioners find new media helpful in carrying out activities of promoting mutual understanding between their organizations and their strategic publics? The data shows that public relations practitioners find new media helpful in carrying out media relations. All the respondents as indicated in table 6 were affirmative that they find new media helpful when carrying out activities of promoting mutual understanding between their organizations and their strategic publics.

While table 7 buttresses that the new media has been found helpful to public relations practitioners, a higher number of respondents indicated that they find new media very helpful and helpful respectively. Data from the interview also corroborate the findings from the survey data. One of the interviewees said that the new media has been very helpful to their organizations in carrying out their activities. A cluster coordinator to one of the oil services companies, a position which combines the roles of public relations, community relations and interfaces coordinating officer said they cannot do without the new media as most of their major clients are using the new media so the organization use new media channels to reach strategic stakeholders, assist in the routine rendering of the report, do advertisement of bids and addressing emergencies. This agrees with [Galloway \(2005\)](#), who maintained that the new media a wider reach than any media before it.

- Do public relations practitioners encounter challenges as they use new media in carrying out public relations activities in their organizations? New inventions in all spheres of life require learning and adapting, users of new media especially in a developing country like Nigeria will be faced with myriads of challenges. Table 9 affirms this as the majority of the respondents indicated that they encounter challenges as they use new media in carrying out public relations activities in their organization in media-related activities. The challenges as described in table 10 are increased pressure in response time with emerging threat; power supply; managing increased audience and platforms; internet illiteracy; fake news and undecided. Probably, the recent trend of the pervasiveness of fake news would diminish the believability of the contents of messages from the new media by stakeholders of the organization as it has changed the perception of whatever emanates from the new media channels. One of the major challenges new media face is cybersecurity, a company's network may be susceptible to attacks from unauthorized personnel and this could lead to disruption and distortion of information the organization intended to pass across. Through this, fake news is disseminated to the public. The epileptic supply of power in Nigeria increases the cost of operation for organizations that use new media gadgets as they rely on the purchased power plant. Also, the illiteracy level of some stakeholders affects the adaptability and inefficiency of the public relations practitioners' use of new media effectively. Data from the interview revealed that fake news is a major challenge in new media use as a public relations officer who preferred anonymity expressed his fear that despite the various overwhelming advantages of the new media in enhancing public relations practice, there are some disadvantages as well. These include the susceptibility to abuses like being used for the dissemination of fake news; thereby misinforming the audience or public. This factor has created a dent in the efficacy or authenticity of social media as a public relations tool. Another disadvantage of social media is that a message well packaged and sent by the practitioner with all good intent can be hijacked and doctored by a mischief-maker for the ulterior purpose(s) in either demarketing or causing disaffection to the originator without his immediate knowledge. Many Public Relations practitioners, despite being academically inclined in their field of study still struggle with the use of

these new media gadgets. This is another major challenge because, without the knowledge of how to use these tools effectively, public relations practitioners will not be able to enjoy the advantages posed by new media while carrying out public relations related activities. This agrees with [James \(2007\)](#), who believe that if new media are to be embraced, industry practitioners, new and old, will need to acquire more skills for efficient use of software for web publishing, new software, online security, and many more. Writing for cross-media delivery will continue as usual, but demands for multimedia elements will bring more challenges to them.

- What role do new media play in the practice of promoting mutual understanding between organizations and their strategic publics? According to one of the interviewees, the role of new media in the practice of media relations in an organization has been very helpful to reach out to most of his organizations' clients through new media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp. Public relations practitioners relate with the media to reach its various publics and maintain a constant cordial relationship with them. As revealed in table 11, the respondents agree that the new media is assisting public relations practitioners to pass across quick information to the public. Timeliness is a hallmark in information dissemination and the new media is presently the fastest medium to reach journalist and the various publics of an organization through email, blogging, direct chat and social media. [Muhammad \(2014\)](#), corroborates the above position in his study which examined, Public relations and new media: a look at how new media has impacted today's practices of Public Relations. According to him, the power of new technology is so strong that contemporary society is reconfigured in such a way that almost everyone must have something to do with the internet.

### **Summary of Findings**

The advent of new media has brought a drastic change to the practice of public relations in Nigeria. This feat in technology has positively redefined the functions of the public relations practitioners, giving room for quick dissemination of information to a heterogeneous audience simultaneously through connected networks powered by the internet. This research investigated new media influence on the promotion of mutual understanding between organizations and strategic publics in Nigeria. The responses gathered from the returned 4670 questionnaires distributed to public relations practitioners revealed that public and private organizations no matter how small, know the value of new media in the promotion of mutual understanding between organizations and their strategic publics. Public relations practitioners in Nigeria, as the findings further indicated, perceive the new media to be a very important channel for carrying out the promotion of mutual understanding between organizations and their strategic publics.

It was also deduced that these organizations find new media very helpful. Despite new media's contributions to public relations practice, it is not devoid of challenges such as increased pressure in response time with emerging threat; power supply; managing increased audience and platforms; internet illiteracy and

the scourge of fake news. Public Relations practitioners use more new media than conventional media. New media has indeed improved the major role of the public relations practitioner in the creation of a favourable atmosphere for the organization to thrive with timely information dissemination.

### **Conclusion**

The importance of new media in the discharge of the public relations responsibilities reflects in both private and public organizations in Nigeria as this study has further proved that new media as a public relations tool has been very helpful especially in the sustenance of cordial relationship between organizations and their publics through quick dissemination of information to the strategic stakeholders which include both internal and external publics. The promotion of mutual understanding between organizations and their strategic publics has now become a core activity among public relations practitioners and the use of the new media to complement conventional media facilitates the effectiveness of public relations activities in the face of the ever-emerging volatile business environment. The emergence of new communication technology and the rise of the internet have opened up a new vista of information that has never been seen before. An organization without good relations with its publics or that cannot tap into the usefulness of the new media is at the helm of demise. Public relations practitioners in Nigeria owe their organizations the necessary advisory support to be cognizant of trending new media tools that will aid media relations since the media is germane to an organization's image and relationship with its publics.

Even though public relations practitioners perceive new media to be very important in the practice of public relations, they still face numerous challenges while using the new media. Some of these practitioners have not been well trained to use the new media effectively, knowledge derived from public relations as a field of study is not enough. These practitioners will have no choice but to update their knowledge about media tools, acquire more skills, such as cybersecurity, web publishing, and many more.

### **Recommendations**

The proper use of new media is very critical to public relations practice for the effective enhancement of relationship building between organizations and their publics through quick dissemination of information to the strategic stakeholders and other related activities. Arising from the findings of this research, the following recommendations were made:

- Public and private organizations in Nigeria should embrace the use of information and communication technology in organizations and the relationship between organizations and their publics which guarantees quick dissemination of information to the strategic stakeholders.
- Public and private organizations in Nigeria in collaboration with the Nigeria Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) should constantly organize training and seminars on emerging new media tools for public relations practitioners in their organization.

- Public and private organizations in Nigeria must ensure alternate power supply should be available always in case of national power failure to avoid disruption of new media related works.
- Public organizations should not rely absolutely on old media but also ensure a triangulation approach processes in the use of new media to complement their public relations activities.

### **Acknowledgments**

We are grateful to two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments on the earlier version of this paper.

### **References**

- Adamolekun, K. (2001). Survivors' motives For Extravagant Funerals Among The Yorubas Of Western Nigeria. *Death Studies*, 25(7), 609-619.
- Adedina, F. A., Adeniyi, K. A., & Bolaji, E. T. (2008). The internet and mass communication.
- Ajala, V. O. (1993). *Public relations: In search of professional excellence*. Afrika-Link Books.
- Aryani, I. G. A. I., & Rahayuni, N. K. S. (2016). Innovation of teaching and learning english applied to animal sciences' student with the combination of computer media and audio visual. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*, 2(1), 1-7.
- Ayankajo, K. (2001). Expanding the frontiers of public relations through the internet. *Basic Public Relations. Abeokuta: Gbenga Gbesan and Associates*, 211..
- Baran, S. J., & Davis, D. K. (2016). Mass Communication Theory.
- Ben-Itzhak, Y. (2009). Organised cybercrime and payment cards. *Card Technology Today*, 21(2), 10-11. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0965-2590\(09\)70057-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0965-2590(09)70057-X)
- Benlian, A., & Haffke, I. (2016). Does mutuality matter? Examining the bilateral nature and effects of CEO–CIO mutual understanding. *The Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 25(2), 104-126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2016.01.001>
- Black, S. (1989). *Introduction to public relations*. Modina Press in conjunction with the International Public Relations Association.
- Bledsoe, E., Coates, J. M., & Fitzgerald, B. F. (2007). *Unlocking the potential through Creative Commons*. Queensland University of Technology.
- Bogacz, R., Brown, E., Moehlis, J., Holmes, P., & Cohen, J. D. (2006). The physics of optimal decision making: a formal analysis of models of performance in two-alternative forced-choice tasks. *Psychological review*, 113(4), 700.
- Christ, P. (2007). Internet technologies and trends transforming public relations. *Journal of Website Promotion*, 1(4), 3-14.
- Claude, R. P., & Weston, B. H. (Eds.). (1992). *Human rights in the world community: issues and action*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Coffey, S., & Stipp, H. (1997). The interactions between computer and television usage. *Journal of advertising research*, 37(2), 61-68.
- Cutlip, C., & Center, A. Broom (1994): *Effective Public Relations*. Eaglewood Cliff New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc..
- Dewdney, A., & Ride, P. (2013). *The digital media handbook*. Routledge.



- Duhé, S. (2012). Public Relations and New Media? Advocacy, Alliances, and Assessments. *Global Media Journal*, 5(2), 1.
- Eddolls, M. (2016). Making cybercrime prevention the highest priority. *Network Security*, 2016(8), 5-8. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1353-4858\(16\)30075-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1353-4858(16)30075-7)
- Edwards, L. (2006). Rethinking power in public relations. *Public relations review*, 32(3), 229-231. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2006.05.013>
- Fidler, R. F. (1997). *Mediamorphosis: Understanding new media*. Pine Forge Press.
- Fitzgerald, D. (2005). Commentary on "The Decline of the National Reconnaissance Office"—The NRO Leadership Re| o| ies1.
- FitzGerald, S. S., & Spagnolia, N. (1999). Four predictions for PR practitioners in the new millennium. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 44(3), 12.
- Flew, (2002). *New media: An introduction*, Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Folarin, B. (1998). *Theories of mass communication: An introductory text*. Stirling-Horden Publishers.
- Galloway, C. (2005). Cyber-PR and "dynamic touch". *Public relations review*, 31(4), 572-577.
- Goucher, W. (2010). Being a cybercrime victim. *Computer Fraud & Security*, 2010(10), 16-18. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1361-3723\(10\)70134-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1361-3723(10)70134-2)
- Grunig, J. E. (2009). Paradigms of global public relations in an age of digitalisation. *PRism*, 6(2), 1-19.
- Hanson, G. H. (2005). Market potential, increasing returns and geographic concentration. *Journal of international economics*, 67(1), 1-24.
- Hill, L. N., & White, C. (2000). Public relations practitioners' perception of the World Wide Web as a communications tool. *Public relations review*, 26(1), 31-51.
- Holtz, S. (2002). *Public relations on the Net: winning strategies to inform and influence the media, the investment community, the government, the public, and more!*. Amacom Books.
- Huhtamo, E. (1999). From cybernation to interaction: a contribution to an archaeology of interactivity. *The digital dialectic: New essays on new media*, (s 96), 110.
- James, M. (2007). A review of the impact of new media on public relations: Challenges for terrain, practice and education. *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*, 8(1), 137-148.
- Leung, L., & Lee, P. S. (2005). Multiple determinants of life quality: The roles of Internet activities, use of new media, social support, and leisure activities. *Telematics and Informatics*, 22(3), 161-180. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2004.04.003>
- Lievrouw, L. A., & Livingstone, S. (2006). Introduction to the updated student edition. *Handbook of new media: Social shaping and social consequences of ICTs*, 1-14.
- Manky, D. (2013). Cybercrime as a service: a very modern business. *Computer Fraud & Security*, 2013(6), 9-13. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1361-3723\(13\)70053-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1361-3723(13)70053-8)
- Marvin, C. (1988). *When old technologies were new: Thinking about electric communication in the late nineteenth century*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- McAllister, S. M., & Taylor, M. (2007). Community college web sites as tools for fostering dialogue. *Public relations review*, 33(2), 230-232.

- McLuhan, T. E. M. (1982). *Menippean Thunder At "finnegans Wake": The Critical Problems*. University of Dallas.
- McQuail, D., & Deuze, M. (2020). *McQuail's media and mass communication theory*. SAGE.
- Muhammad, R. (2014). Public Relations and new media: a look at how new media has impacted today's practices of Public Relations: International Islamic University.
- Negroponte, N. (1995). The digital revolution: Reasons for optimism. *The Futurist*, 29(6), 68.
- Nimbalkar, A. A., & Deodhar, N. (2015). A Study of E-Services of Bank with Special Reference to Private Banks, Ahmednagar. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences*, 2(11), 16-21.
- Nowland, G. (2006). Fremantle, the port as a threshold of consciousness in the novel. *Westerly*, 50(Nov 2006), 145-158.
- Oakland, T. (2004). Use of educational and psychological tests internationally. *Applied Psychology*, 53(2), 157-172.
- Ohaja, E. U. (2003). Mass communication research and project report writing. *Lagos: John Letterman*.
- Olise, F. P., & MAKKA, W. (2008). Communication for development and modern ICTs. Nigeria at crossroad. *EM Mojaye, OO*.
- Onabanjo, F. (2005). Folly for effective Public Relations communication; gender violence and ICTs in Nigeria, Ibadan, Nigeria: Ibadan University Press
- Onwioduokit, F. A. (2000). Educational research methodology and statistics. *Uyo, forand*.
- Oyeniyi, A. O. (2000). The limitations of public relations practice in developing countries. *A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of a Master of Science (M. Sc) Degree in Public Relations Management*.
- Paramita, F., Annika, P., Bachtiar, E. W., & Yuniastuti, M. (2010). Effects of Autolog Saliva on Biofilm Formation of Streptococcus mutans Isolated from Caries and Caries-free Subjects. *Journal of Dentistry Indonesia*, 17(2), 63-65.
- Pavlik, J. V., & Dozier, D. M. (1996). Managing the information superhighway—a report on the issues facing communications professionals. *Institute for Public Relations Research and Education*.
- Porter, L. V., & Sallot, L. M. (2003). The internet and public relations: Investigating practitioners' roles and World Wide Web use. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80(3), 603-622.
- Porter, L. V., & Sallot, L. M. (2003). The internet and public relations: Investigating practitioners' roles and World Wide Web use. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80(3), 603-622.
- Rioux, J. D., Xavier, R. J., Taylor, K. D., Silverberg, M. S., Goyette, P., Huett, A., ... & Brant, S. R. (2007). Genome-wide association study identifies new susceptibility loci for Crohn disease and implicates autophagy in disease pathogenesis. *Nature genetics*, 39(5), 596-604.
- Roets, A. (2017). 'Fake news': Incorrect, but hard to correct. The role of cognitive ability on the impact of false information on social impressions. *Intelligence*, 65, 107-110.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intell.2017.10.005>
- Sallot, L. M., Porter, L. V., & Acosta-Alzuru, C. (2004). Practitioners' web use and perceptions of their own roles and power: A qualitative study. *Public Relations*

- Review*, 30(3), 269-278. Salu, A. (2000) Understanding Public Relations, Lagos, Nigeria: Cap-David Production.
- Samantha, D. P. (2011). Information System Design in Sahaaba Store (Doctoral dissertation, undip).
- Seitel, F. P. (2007). *The practice of public relations*. Pearson/Prentice Hall.
- Seltzer, T., & Mitrook, M. A. (2007). The dialogic potential of weblogs in relationship building. *Public relations review*, 33(2), 227-229.
- Sharmini, S. (2007). *The role of media relations in corporate public relations practice* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Stephens, M. (2007). *A history of news*. Oxford University Press.
- Stolk, A., Verhagen, L., & Toni, I. (2016). Conceptual alignment: How brains achieve mutual understanding. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 20(3), 180-191. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2015.11.007>
- Straubbar, J. and Larose, R. (2004). *Media now: Understanding media culture and technology*, 4th Edition, California, United States: Davenport.
- Straubhaar, J., & LaRose, R. (2004). *Media Now: Communications Media in the Information Age*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Supa, D. W. (2008). *Maximizing media relations through a better understanding of the public relations-journalist relationship* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Sweetser, K. D., Porter, L. V., Chung, D. S., & Kim, E. (2008). Credibility and the use of blogs among professionals in the communication industry. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 85(1), 169-185.
- Taylor, M., & Perry, D. C. (2005). Diffusion of traditional and new media tactics in crisis communication. *Public Relations Review*, 31(2), 209-217. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2005.02.018>
- Van der Merwe, R., Pitt, L. F., & Abratt, R. (2005). Stakeholder strength: PR survival strategies in the Internet age. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 50(1), 39.
- Verey, F., Corfield, A., Spicer, R., & Stevens, M. (2007). The Defence Of The Oral Cavity In Neutropenia: A Prospective Study Of Oral Mucosal Protection In Neutropenic Children: PA. 041. *Pediatric Blood & Cancer*, 49(4), 449-450.
- Waters, R. D., Tindall, N. T., & Morton, T. S. (2010). Media catching and the journalist–public relations practitioner relationship: How social media are changing the practice of media relations. *Journal of public relations research*, 22(3), 241-264.
- Waters, R. D., Tindall, N. T., & Morton, T. S. (2010). Media catching and the journalist–public relations practitioner relationship: How social media are changing the practice of media relations. *Journal of public relations research*, 22(3), 241-264.
- Weber, L. (2009). *Marketing to the social web: How digital customer communities build your business*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Williams, J. P., De Geus, E. J., & Blitz, L. (1994). Determining structure in molecular clouds. *The Astrophysical Journal*, 428, 693-712.
- Wright, D., & De Hert, P. (2012). Introduction to privacy impact assessment. In *Privacy impact assessment* (pp. 3-32). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Yeomans, L. (2016). Imagining the lives of others: Empathy in public relations. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 5(1), 71-92.