

**THE SOCIAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATION PRACTICE IN NIGERIA: HOW  
ORGANISATIONS ARE ADAPTING TO DIGITAL CHANGE**

**OGOCHUKWU C EKWENCHI (PhD)**  
Department of Mass Communication,  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.  
[ekwenchiogo@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ekwenchiogo@yahoo.co.uk)

&

**CHINWE REBECCA OKOYEocha**  
Department of Mass Communication,  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.  
[cr.okoyeocha@unizik.edu.ng](mailto:cr.okoyeocha@unizik.edu.ng)

**Abstract**

*In an era where the social media has completely revolutionized almost every facet of life, Public Relations (PR) appears to likewise be aligning with the new template provided by the new technology. Unlike what happens in the past, and how PR managers have managed their organisations before now, the current trend offers quite a number of possibilities. From the streams of arguments gathered through plethora of empirical evidences, this paper argues that social media platforms like: whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, 2go etc, have not only redefined the way PR works, but also the way PR managers carry out their routine duties. For example, the authors of this paper argue that social media have today changed communication culture in PR practice, it has also redefined relationship building between climes and organisations, created more efficient ways of doing research. The paper also argues that the social media has brought about cost effectiveness in way communication campaigns are carried out, unlike what obtains when it was done via traditional media channels. Against the above backdrop therefore, the scholars concludes that since the social media has come to stay, it behooves Nigerian PR professionals to adapt to this technological transformation as quick as possible, as this will in no small measure fast track the Nigerian PR industry on all fronts and more importantly, place her on the same pedestal with other contemporaries around the globe.*

**Keywords: Public Relations, digital change, social media, PR organisations.**

**Introduction**

In a world where business organisations compete both locally and internationally for visibility and relevance, governments work persistently to maintain favourable bilateral relationship with other countries, and humans put in much effort to remain in good relationships with their fellow humans, one word remains crucial – that word is public relations (PR). Literature has over time demonstrated that public relations remains one of those fields that business organisations have explored to maintain good relationships with their publics – internal and external publics (Nwosu and Okeke, 2020). Over the years, this field of study has continued to experience changes and somewhat adapted to the changes. In the recent time, PR practice appears to be undergoing a radical change that is not only redefining the way things are done, but drastically changing the way PR professionals carry out their duties. One of such novelties that seem to bring about this radical change is the advent of social media. Uzuegbunam, Duru and Ekwenchi (2015, p.59) aptly capture this present massive technological revolution going on in the following words: “The advent of the new media and its array of technologies has become a radically transforming development in our world today. Definitely the practice of public relations has also been affected by this change in communication landscape”

To this end therefore, a number of concerns are raised by this study as it concerns the way public relations as a field of study has adapted to the change engendered by the new technology. It is against the above backdrop that the following concerns are raised. In what ways is the social media transforming public relation practice? To what extent are public relation professionals proactively aligning with the current trends produced by the arrival of the social media? What challenges, prospects and future do the the intersection between social media and public relations have for PR practice in Nigeria? These are the issues that that the authors of this paper seek to discuss.

### **Traditional Public Relations in Nigeria: Quick Historical Review**

There are different arguments over the actual origin of public relations. However, there still seems to be controversies on the actual period that public relations arrived (Uzuegbunam, 2015, Nwosu & Okeke, 2020). Empirical evidence nevertheless has it that PR as a global profession began in 1900, when the Publicity Bureau was founded. Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays, who helped establish the field as a professional practice in the United States of America are both referred to as the founding fathers of public relations (Uzuegbunam, 2015, p.124). Yet much of what is regarded as modern public relations practice blossomed after the Second World War.

Nwodu, (2007) as cited in Nwosu and Okeke (2020) provides another insight on the evolution of public relations as a field of study. They note:

The early PR practice began with people in government at about 1800 BC. Then the likes of Julius Caesar maintained high profile in government as well as consolidating their hold on power through constant reports of their accomplishment in power. However, the era of propaganda/publicity PR began in 1830, with the dawn of mass production and distribution of newspapers- the foremost of mass media. This era paved way for the dawn of the position of press secretary in government. This era was followed by the period referred to as the two-way communication era; this was at the heat of the First World War in 1900's, at this point as championed by Edward Barnays, practitioners began to think in the terms of audience reaction to messages directed to them, as the era of propaganda/ publicity had the challenge of communication operating in one-way direction. The last stage, the advanced two-way communication saw public relation practice turn more decidedly towards integrated two-way communication, employing research advertising and promotion.

The practice of PR however arrived in Nigeria with colonial administration, although with negative impression of what public relation was. The British who were the colonial masters at this period established PR department in Lagos with units in the Northern, Eastern and Western provinces. Their sole aim was to use PR as an instrument of telling the citizens what the government was doing and what the people were expected to do. They also used it as a platform to publicize Nigeria to Nigerians and to the world (Adamoleku and Ekundayo, 2002, p.45). The PR industry continued to expand over the years. Following this expansion, a regulatory body was established in 1963 (Nwodu, 2007, p. 10). Founded by Dr. Sam Ekpelle, the body was named Public Relations Association of Nigeria (PRAN). In 1972 however, the body metamorphosed into what is known today as Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), with the primary purpose of standardizing PR practice in Nigeria.

### **Social Media and Public Relations**

Defining public relations has not been a straightforward task. This is because the field has drawn and continues to draw on concepts, principles and practices from various fields which include media, communication, management, marketing and psychology (Andoh-Quainoo & Annor-Antwi, 2015). Bhargava (2010, p.10) however notes that the pioneer of PR education, Rex Harlow, examined almost 500

definitions of public relations before concluding that it “is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organisation and its public”. Cutlip, Center and Broom Bhargava (2010) further observe that public relations is about managing problems and issues. It enables an organisation’s management to be aware of and efficiently respond to public opinion, fulfill its responsibility of serving public interest, and be in a position to understand change and anticipate trends. In a nutshell, public relations is the principles and practice of pursuing a sustained cordial and mutually beneficial relationship between an organisation and its publics.

By virtue of its philosophy and goal, public relations would ideally thrive on two-way communication, as an organisation aims at understanding and being understood by its publics. Stated differently, public relations involves both communicating and listening. According to Igbe (2003), by listening to its publics, an organisation can evaluate their opinion about its policies and activities. Through such listening, it is able to gauge how positive or negative its public image is at any given time as well as ascertain factors responsible for such image. It is through such knowledge that the organisation will be in a good position to implement measures required for effective image management. These measures may include change or amendment of policies and activities or strengthening of existing ones when these are found favourable. In the same vein, an organisation will also have some messages for its publics and which they should listen to. Thus, public relations is ideally an interactive process.

The foregoing definition underlines the continuously two-way orientation of PR communication without which an organisation may find itself distant from its publics, failing to understand their feelings and perceptions. Interestingly, this imperative of interactivity in public relations definitely underscores the place of social media in PR. Social media offer invaluable resources for two-way communication in a continuous and flexible manner such that an organisation is able to obtain regular feedback on its communication, policies and programmes. Hence, as noted by Achor, Nwachukwu and Nkwocha (2015, p.12), social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, blogs and You Tube among others have remained an integral part of PR media strategy. The authors further observe that a consensus now exists among communication practitioners that the role of the traditional (“old”) media of communication in public relations has been so redefined that their use in PR campaigns now ought to take cognizance of the complementary role of social media and other ICT resources. Thus, Inya (2017) avers that social media has altered corporate communications patterns, changing the manner in which PR campaigns are formulated, disseminated and evaluated. Prior to this time, audience engagement in public relations was exclusively done via print and electronic media. Then, PR publicity campaign was basically concerned with getting decent TV, radio and newspaper coverage. However, with a growing majority of Internet users coming on social media, these interactive platforms have provided for PR practitioners a unique opportunity for information gathering, public opinion monitoring, and dialoguing with their publics on various issues of concern (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In fact, PR practitioners are fast adopting social media as an integral part of their campaign, especially given that the complementary relationship between social media and traditional media has progressively blurred the lines between online and offline campaigns (Eyrich, Padman & Sweetser, 2008, as cited in Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

This explains the reason Solis and Breakenridge (2009) as cited in Ogbu (2019) argues that “social media put the public back in public relations” vividly reflects the vital position social media has assumed in modern PR practice. This declaration also embodies the wide optimism and excitement sweeping through the industry about social media’s potential to unprecedentedly transform public relations.

The impact of social media on public relations practice can be viewed as multidimensional. This impact can be viewed from the following perspectives:

- i. Communication culture
- ii. Relationship building and sustenance

- iii. Research efficiency
- iv. Cost effectiveness

### **Communication culture**

One area in which social media has influenced public relations practice is communication culture. The Internet has radically transformed human communication, making it more efficient in a variety of ways. One of these is the phenomenal increase in the quantity and frequency of communication. Achor *et al.* (2015) observe that this advantage reflects in social media where increasing numbers of individuals and organisations are finding a voice, thus resulting in much rise in the amount of information shared. This situation constitutes some boost to public relations which thrives on information sharing; the more information an organisation can give and receive from its publics, the better its chances of establishing and nurturing mutual understanding. However, increase in information flow also constitutes some challenge to the modern public relations manager. The sheer quantum of information circulating in the digital space is causing problem of attention; too many messages are chasing after limited number of consumers (some of whom may even be disinterested). The implication is that an organisation may start having problems trying to gain the attention of its publics in the ensuing scarcity of attention (Damásio, Dias & Andrade, 2012).

Related to the quantity of information is the speed at which it flows in social media. This entails some benefit to public relations especially within the context of crisis management where prompt message delivery is critical. Nonetheless it also poses a potentially serious challenge of information management to an organisation which may sometimes be thrown into the struggle to catch up with the stupefying rapidity of information flow (Wright & Hinson as cited in Achor *et al.*, 2015).

Equally relevant is the interactivity that social media brings to PR communication. This is also known as relational or dialogic communication, and its immense value to public relations has been widely acclaimed (Wright & Hinson as cited in Achor *et al.*, 2015; Breakenridge, 2009). One implication of this scenario is that the audience is not just able to offer feedbacks, but can also originate its own messages. Hence, what is traditionally known as “audience” now functions as both message producers and consumers rolled up in a single (hybrid) actor known as “prosumers” (Damásio *et al.*, 2012).

Nonetheless, this advantage could also become a disadvantage as it may seriously challenge an organisation’s image management capability (Andoh-Quainoo & Annor-Antwi, 2015). The organisation faces a risk of losing control over its communications as uncontrollable number of social media users originate messages about its activities. These users are not under the organisation’s control, and so potentially complicate its communications management process (Inya, 2017). In fact, this challenge is considered by many as the most important problem posed to public relations by social media (Damásio *et al.*, 2012).

However, rather than seeing this situation as a problem, there has been a tendency to look at it from the point of view of the opportunity for a better engagement of consumers through a more horizontal as against top-down approach to communication. Bhargava (2010) notes that the social media age demands a recognition of the big shift from a producer-driven to a consumer-driven market where the “consumer is the king”. Holtz (2002) as cited in Bhargava (2010) therefore observes that the consumer of this age is now more aware and more demanding, hence the imperative of transiting from the more traditional one-way information dissemination model to a two-way asymmetrical model that places emphasis on continuous mutual engagement. Social media users are a very active audience with an immense flexibility to select the information to receive and the source to accept. They also tend to prefer sources which align with their lifestyle and taste. All this underscores the need for PR practitioners to keep abreast with the views, motivations and expectations of their publics through engaging them constantly in dialogue and continuously monitoring trends (Bhargava, 2010). Similarly, the new public relations environment is a call for a more proactive approach to communications and a more pre-emptive rather than corrective strategy of managing misinformation and all negative developments (Achor as cited in Achor *et al.*, 2015; Nkwocha, 2015;

Oluwasola, Obajuluwa & Ibitoye, 2017). PR practitioners who use “this approach are often analysts/prospectors. They explain that such practitioners always project into possible future occurrences and therefore earmark effective plans and programmes to handle such forecasts and subsequently evaluate results” (Oluwasola *et al.*, 2017, p.37).

### **Relationship building and sustenance**

Social media is having a notable influence on public relations in the area of relationship building and sustenance. PR engagement through the traditional media treats the audience as a collective whereas social media PR engagement tends to relate with each audience member as an individual. Stated differently, social media has enabled greater personalisation of communication and relationship building in public relations (Inya, 2017; Nkwocha, 2015). In other words, traditional media is *mass* while social media is *personal* and intimate. Inya (2017) in this respect observes that social media platforms make it possible for an organisation to communicate personally to individuals who are in turn able to give their feedbacks immediately. These individuals are also on their own able to initiate discussion with the organisation. It is today a common practice for organisations to display their social media handles on their websites, billboards, letterheads, products and souvenirs for members of the public to reach them through such. A user may contact the organisation through dropping a public message on its social media page or sending a confidential message to their inbox (Nkwocha, 2015).

An important development arising from this trend is that an organisation is able to remain in continuous contact and conversation with individuals and groups among its publics, which significantly help relationship building and sustenance. Inya (2017) observe that while traditional media tend to pass on message, social media tend to drive conversation, and while traditional media communication tend to be basically one-off, social media communication tends towards continuity. Thus, while the traditional media’s capacity to establish relationships is not in any doubt, social media surely possesses a superior potential for effective nurturing and sustenance of such relationships through continuous two-way symmetric engagements.

Kent and Taylor (as cited in Wang, 2015, p.5) explain that researchers have noted three important strategies for cultivating relationship on the Internet. These are “disclosure or openness, information dissemination, and interactivity and involvement” Admittedly, these three strategies are closely associated with personalisation and intimacy; they tend to recognize the individual in their personal thoughts, concerns, desires and expectations.

### **Research Efficiency**

Research is a crucial component of public relations as it indispensably enables the practitioner to monitor trends and obtain other information and data necessary for PR planning and actions (Nwosu & Okeke, 2020). With social media, research practices in public relations are taking a new turn. First, social media channels are a veritable source of information and data for an organisation. Bhargava (2010) observes that social media tools like Really Simple Syndication (RSS) news feeds, social networks, and blogs offer instant availability of real-time information which an organisation may use for research, media monitoring and management of issues. Social media channels are an efficient observatory post from which an organisation may observe and gauge stakeholders’ opinions, perceptions, preferences and expectations. Very importantly, through such monitoring, the organisation is able to predict a potential crisis for a proactive intervention (Wang, 2015).

Apart from helping in routine monitoring of public opinion, social media serves as a valuable tool for a systematic opinion research. Stated differently, social media platforms have also become integrated into research processes in the professional sense. Thus, as these platforms serve professional academic researchers in their data collection process, so they also serve PR practitioners conducting professional opinion survey to determine the views, feelings and expectations of their publics (Wang, 2015).

### **Cost Effectiveness**

Social media is transforming public relations in regard to cost of communication and engagement with publics. While the Internet generally makes such engagement less expensive, social media proves even cheaper in this respect than some other Internet tools (BinShaikh *et al.*, 2016).

Basically, communication campaigns via traditional media channels are quite costly. In fact, a significant proportion of the PR budgets of most organisations naturally go into media campaigns. These include cost of press conferences, purchase of print space and broadcast airtime as well as other components of media relations (Bhargava, 2010). With social media, however, a substantial part of this burden may be lifted of an organisation's shoulders depending on the extent it has integrated social media in its communication strategy (BinShaikh *et al.*, 2016).

Elaborating on this cost advantage of social media, BinShaikh *et al.* (2016, p.3) carefully note:

Traditional media might be extremely expensive, in particular for small businesses. In contrast, most social media platforms are totally free to use, the cost only to businesses being the time which is spent on updating profiles and interacting with customers or contacts. The low price of access to the social media makes it particularly helpful to small businesses which often find the costs associated with traditional media quite high. Organizations or institutions can use social media to create and distribute promotional materials such as articles, audio and videos to save money, but in traditional media, it would take a high cost for this content to appear in the press eg on the radio or on TV.

Besides the area of communication and engagement with publics, social media also helps reduce substantial costs in the area of research. Research can be quite expensive depending on the scope and design. However, social media helps a great deal in reducing cost by dispensing the need for a whole of logistics associated with physical collection of data (Wang, 2015)

### **Social Media and Public Relations Practice in Nigeria**

Social media has a huge potential to dictate the present and future course of public relations in Nigeria. This is simply for the reason that it is strongly gaining ground as a popular means of communication. As at December 31, 2019, about 126, 078, 999 Internet users existed in Nigeria representing 61.2% of the population (Internet World Stats, 2020). Also, 28.15 million Nigerians were connected to social media in 2020, and out of this number, 27, 120, 000 used Facebook (Internet World Stats, 2020). Furthermore, 44.63 million are projected to get connected to social media by 2025 (Statista, 2020).

Smartphone, which is the major means of Internet connection among the population, is tremendously growing in accessibility and use among the populace. By 2025, about 140 million people will be using Smartphones in Nigeria. Currently, the number of users is put at between 25 and 40 million (O'Dea, 2020). All this statistics points to the growing influence of social media in Nigeria, implying a corresponding influence as a means of communication and engagement in public relations. Ogbu (2019, p.2) captures this reality when he remarks that the social media culture has led to the emergence of "a target audience that is more influenced by social relationships and experiences than by asymmetrical press releases". With precise reference to how this new trend is emerging in Nigeria Ogbu (2019, p. 2) argues:

The growth in the use of the internet and mobile phones in Nigeria has, to a great extent, accelerated the adaptation of the social media as the modern village square, where people converge to exchange goods and services as well as share interests and information. Assisted by smart phones, media convergence and the

advances in digital technology, Nigerians are becoming very active producers and critical consumers of content. The social media have not only given them a voice but also a veritable platform to express their concerns or share opinions on almost anything.

To engage the audience of this disposition, one should ideally employ channels that are interactive and relationship-oriented. This summarises the place of social media-driven public relations in the Nigeria of today.

Nonetheless, it has been observed that while many organisations in the country have integrated social media in their public relations processes, not many have actually maximized its advantages (Awofadeju & Ewuola, 2019). Inya (2017) observes the apparent lack of a good understanding of how much contribution social media can make to public relations among local practitioners. The author argues that some PR practitioners, either as a result of ignorance or sheer laid-back attitude, seem to utilise social media platforms only as a communication channel thereby marginalising other crucial uses such as research and monitoring of trends.

Another important factor affecting social media use in public relations is the limited Internet and social media penetration in the country. Statistics quoted earlier shows that while large numbers have access to these tools, a substantial proportion of the population still lacks access. For instance, close to 40% and 70% of the populace are still without Internet and social media access respectively (Internet World Stats, 2020; Statista, 2020). The implication of this is that social media will not yet be a viable channel of PR communication and engagement for a large proportion of the population. This is more so when the target population comprises older persons, as Internet and social media access is heavily concentrated among young people (Uzuegbunam et al. 2015).

#### **Using the Social Media: Are PR practitioners adapting to the new technological Landscape?**

Scholars have argued that the effect of social media on public relations has been decidedly profound (Gross, 2012; Uzuegbunam et al, 2015). In fact, describing the type of challenge that the social media has engendered for the public relation practitioner, Quinn- Allan (2011) states “the effect of social media on the public relation practitioner has been “disruptive” He argues that despite the novel inventions of the technology, it has been somewhat turbulent (in positive and negative) ways to the PR practitioner.

The social media however have brought about fundamental change in the orientation of communication such that communication has become decidedly interactive. It has provided the audience with more power of control than was ever available to them, the PR publics of today, unlike what they were in the traditional media era are in better position to engage the organisations in a completely interactive manner, asking questions and demanding immediate answers. In other words, at the present era there is, unlike what obtains in the traditional setting, a horizontal and two way approach to PR practice as opposed to the traditional top-down, one-way form of communication. The publics at this era (social media era) therefore appears to wield more discursive power. Because of its interactive capabilities, it appears that PR professionals are increasingly working towards aligning with the new direction provided by social media (Nwosu & Okeke, 2020)

On the other hand, the social media has brought to the PR practitioner a new leverage, a new possibility and flexibility in terms of gate keeping (Uzuegbunam, 2015, p.64). The PR practitioner is no longer burdened by the old media imperative of subjecting his/her PR message to the scrutiny and selection of the journalist. Similarly, the new media has added vibrancy to public relations increasing the amount of messages generated while enlarging the scope of participation both in terms of audience size and geographical spread – therefore increasing the pace of PR engagement; this is a cost effective manner.

Furthermore, because the social media is anchored on multi-directional conversation, it has given the PR practitioner the opportunity to fulfill the two-way symmetrical communication model (Macnamara, 2010). The two-way symmetrical approach enables the practitioners to apply effective communication and build relationships with various publics. Today, public relation practitioners in Nigeria are leveraging on this opportunity provided by the social media to build relationship with their various publics.

One other area that the social media is creating impact is on “reputation and the survival of organisations” (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy & Silvester 2011). The inclusion of such social media networking sites like: Facebook or micro-blogging services like Twitter into public relations strategy is likely enhancing corporate transparency and authenticity. Today, practitioners are engaging publics online; they are honestly answering their publics on different issues that concern the organisation, which also have serious implication for the public. This new way of doing things somewhat adds to the organisation’s reputation. In carrying out their duties, the Nigerian public relation professionals seem to foster sustainable relationships between the organisation and their publics through the social media, therefore building positive reputation and strong relationship with their publics.

#### **What Challenges Impede PR practitioners Adaptation to the Social Media?**

Irrespective of the fact that the social media has continued to provide new possibilities, new grounds and skills for PR professional, there seems to factors that affect these professionals from adapting to the new technology. Uzuegbunam (2015) argues that “The public relations practitioner in the new media era is left with little time for planning and systematization amidst the astounding speed of information generation and distribution, which the internet entails” Hence, Gonzalez-Herrero and Smith (2008) cited in Phillips and Brabham (2012, p.9) encourage PR practitioners to be vocal online in other to maintain control of a crises.

Furthermore, in spite of the fact that PR practice in Nigeria has caught the fever of Information Communication Technology, like other developed countries; paucity of ICT infrastructures and lack of access, high cost of ICT ownership; high cost of ICT usage on the consumers, unsteady and inadequate electric power supply, inadequate ICT knowledge and poor ICT training among PR practitioners; paucity of expertise for the maintenance of ICT equipment contribute to the numerous factors that has continued to affect the PR practitioners from making most use of the social media (Ndolo, 2011, p. 166).

#### **What therefore is the way forward for PR practitioners in Nigerian in the era of social media?**

From the foregoing there is no doubt that PR practitioners would either emerge successful with the opportunities offered by the new media, or suffer failure as a result of challenges they hold. It is against the above backdrop that it becomes increasingly imperative that public relations practitioners maximize these opportunities that are offered by the social media on one hand and on the other, minimize the effect of the challenges that accompany it. In order to achieve this:

The PR practitioner must as a matter of great importance pay attention to certain imperatives which the new media entail for PR practice.

It is also important that organisations make out time to conduct regular technical social media training for their PR professionals. This training and re-training should cut across different cadres in organisations – the senior and junior categories of PR practitioners. A particular research study carried out to find out the level of proficiency in the use of certain technological tools demonstrated that a good number of the PR practitioners interviewed appeared to struggle with their proficiency in their use the social media to effectively engage their publics (Martens, 2020, p.134)

Martens (2020) also found in his study that a number of PR practitioners do not make use of the full potential conversational opportunities that the social media can offers. It is therefore the position of this paper that PR



practitioners in Nigeria are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the advantages of a conversational use of social media and to promote this approach within their organisations as this will not only help them while carrying out their duties but the organization.

Furthermore, organizations should come up with well-articulated social media policy to guard and also guide PR officers and internal publics from the challenges that may arise from the usage of the social media.

### **Conclusion**

The advent of the new media no doubt implies the arrival of a new communication culture. This culture by virtue of its compelling nature possesses a compelling force of attraction that tends to cut across all facets of human activities. One of the areas that this revolution appears to have affected is public relations practice. Lately, the practice and the profession are being reshaped by the new technology. What this implies is that the PR practitioner must embrace the present change engendered by the social media if he/she must survive in the new highly technology-driven and competitive environment.

As for Nigerian PR professionals, the need to adapt to this technological transformation remains incontrovertibly imperative. This will in no small measure fast track the Nigerian PR industry on all fronts and more importantly place her on the same pedestal with other contemporaries around the globe.

### **REFERENCES**

- Achor, P. N., Nwachukwu, C. P. & Nkwocha, C. A. (2015). An evaluation of impact of social media on information management in public relations practice. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 4(10), 1697 – 1706.
- Ademolokun, W. & Ekundayo, T. (2002). *Interactive public relations*. Taymos communications (Abuja-Ondo), Joe-Tolalu (Ogun, Lagos).
- Ajah, J.O. (2011). Information and communication technology and contemporary public relations practice in Nigeria. In I.S. Ndolo (Ed.). *Contemporary issues in communication and society* (155-167).
- Andoh-Quainoo, L. & Annor-Antwi, P. (2015). The use of social media in public relations: A case of Facebook in the Ghanaian financial services industry. *New Media and Mass Communication*, 14(5), 37 – 47.
- Awofadeju, P. O. & Ewuola, P. O. (2019). Impact of social media on public relations practice. *IJRDO - Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, 4(5), 65 – 85. Retrieved from <http://www.ijrdo.org/index.php/sshr/article/view/2878>
- Bhargava, D. (2010). The use of Internet in public relations and its impact on the practice: A New Zealand perspective (Master's thesis, AUT University). Retrieved from <https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/handle/10292/1052>
- Damásio, M. J., Dias, P. & Andrade, J. G. (2012). The PR Pyramid: Social media and the new role of Public Relations in organizations. *Revista Internacional De Relaciones Públicas*, II (4), 11 – 30.
- Gross, S. (2012) Public relations and the internet. Retrieved from <http://iml.jou.ufl.edu/project/STUDENTS/Gross/frameset.htm>
- Igben, H. G. O. (2016). Public relations and peace negotiation in Niger Delta (Doctoral dissertation, University of Salford). Retrieved from <https://usir.salford.ac.uk/id/eprint/41143/1/Salford->

[%20Public%20relations%20and%20peace%20negotiation%20in%20Niger%20Delta-complete%20corrected%20edition.pdf](#)

- Internet World Stats (2020). Usage and population statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>
- Inya, A. E. (2017). Influence of social media on public relations practices in universities in south-east, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: Arts & Humanities – Psychology*, 17(3), 45 – 52.
- Kaplan, A. M. & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241-251.
- Macnamara, J. (2010). Public relations and the social media: How practitioners are using, or abusing, social media. *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*, 11, 21-39.
- Martens, S. (2020). The role of social media in public relations practice – a New Zealand perspective. A Masters Degree thesis submitted Auckland University of Technology.
- Nwosu, J. & Okeke, O. (2020). Understanding public relations principles and practice. In C. S. Okunna (Ed.), *Communication and media studies: Multiple perspectives* (pp.163 – 184). Enugu: New Generation Books
- O’Dea, S. (2020). Smartphone users in Nigeria 2014-2025. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/467187/forecast-of-smartphone-users-in-nigeria/>
- Ogbu, S. U. (2019). Social media and effective public relations practice in Nigeria: Implications, challenges and strategies. *International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research*, 7(4), 1 – 13.
- Oluwasola, O., Obajuluwa, T. & Ibitoye, P. (2017). Re-engineering the reactive public relations practice of the Nigerian police for national security. *Research Journal of Mass Communication and Information Technology*, 3(2), 35 – 50.
- Phillips, L.M., & Brabham, D.C. (2012). How today’s digital landscape redefines the notion of power in public relations. Retrieved from <http://www.prismjournal.org/homepage.html>
- Uzuegbunam, C.E., Duru, H.C. & Ekwenchi, O.C. (2015). “Playing catch up” opportunities and challenges for public relations practice in Nigeria. *Journal of Integrated Marketing Communication* 13 (7), 58-72.
- Wang, Y. (2015). Incorporating social media in public relations: A synthesis of social media-related public relations research. *Public Relations*, 9(3), 314 – 322.