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Page: 01-36

## AUDIENCE PREFERENCES OF OLD & NEW MEDIA IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES OF COCA- COLA PLC & NIGERIA BREWERIES PLC.

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### ABSTRACT

The use of media in public relations is paramount and unavoidable. But while practicing public relations, the PR managers should always consider their audience as well as their preferred medium of engagement. This paper therefore, examined, explored and interrogated the audience preferred media and medium in public relations engagement of Coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC, both located at Ikeja, Lagos state. The theories used were Media Dependency Theory and Technological Determinism Theory. The survey method was adopted because of its efficiency and accuracy, using quantitative and qualitative approach. The design helped to extract primary data. The population of Ikeja residence was put at estimated 3,106,281 within the age of 18 to 40 years, while the sample size of 400 respondents was arrived at using Taro Yamane formula. This study established that despite the fact that social media and other new media were the audience preference of PR engagement of both organizations, traditional media like television, radio and news prints are still relevant in PR practice and should be modified to harmonize with the digital media. At the end, the researcher recommended that public relations managers or consultants should always watch and monitor the trend and always try to carry their audience along as regards to their choice of media in its public relations practice.

**KEYWORDS:** Public Relations, Media, Practice, Preference, Audience, Organizations.

## **1.0. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background to the Study**

This study is unique because it's using two different organisations, different products but almost the same audience and customers with their production outfits in the same location. The case study is possible because public relations (PR) is as old as man, businesses and organizations are concerned with their media engagement in their PR practice and services. Therefore, the preferences of their audience should be considered in order to create a good communication channel. Public relations as any form of communication aimed at bringing about goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics, is a planned and deliberate communication by any organization be it commercial, charitable, non-commercial or a governmental body. It is so because every organization or institution needs to create a favourable image for itself before it's internal and external publics for positive branding, growth and successful business operations, without undermining the interest of its stakeholders.

The contemporary practice of public relations according to Cutlip, Center and Broom (2000), was defined back in 1976 by the pioneer in public relations education, Rex Harlow, who examined close to 500 definitions and concluded that public relations have a distinctive management function which helps to establish and maintain lines of communication and understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organization and its publics as it involves in the management of problems or issues. This helps the management to keep informed on, and to be responsive to public opinion, defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest, helps management keep abreast of, and effectively utilize, change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends, and uses research and ethical modern communication techniques as its principal tool in engagement and practice.

Public relations and media relations are two major approaches adopted by organizations to reach out to their customer(s) or audience, by publicizing its offerings and brands mission. Although the publicity strategies may overlap in several aspects, there are still many key differences between public relations and media. Additionally, organizations may have detailed public relations plans they rely on frequently to reach customers, while media relations may make up only a small part of an overall public relations campaign. The Internet, which is a tool of mass media has been used extensively for accessing instantaneous

information and communication across geographical boundaries. Due to its characteristics of speed, efficiency and economic factor, the Internet began to be increasingly use across various institutions and organizations to enable their presence felt by their customers or audience globally. It is beyond doubt that since the last decade, the Internet has evolved faster than any other communication Tchannel and has dynamically changed lives and professions, including information gathering and engagements. The public relations practice which is an engagement with audience are typical examples of professions that have considerably been affected by online revolution (Phillips, 2001). To practice public relations the media are committed to communicate to the publics on the account of an organization. In developing countries, a couple of years in the past, the audience or the publics can only be reached through the old media, recently majority of the publics, customers, employees and stakeholders can be reached by the new media , mass media or digital media, making communication through public relations very easy for firms.

Thus, the media or media relations refers to the channel and medium organizations uses to engage, reach out to, or interact with their audience and press outlets. Businesses and organizations often build relationships with media outlets as part of their public relations strategies considering their accessibility to tv brocasting channels, radio stations, newspapers and mass media at large, in order to sustain a positive image with their audience and publics. Audience , these are people connected with organization course, buy – into their brand and care about their products and how the organization products and services impact their lives. They also have a set of characteristics as well as demographics that they share, they have similar behaviour and can be grouped by their personal preferences“Targeted Audience“. Targeted audience are the key concept throughout media studies, because all media contents such as press statement, press release,adverstisment, boardcast, social media contents,internet news, tv news, books , music and etc, are produced with audience in mind,thus audience are determinat of media influence.The audience or targeted audience always set the agenda for PR.

Although digital media are now seen as an component of public relations practice, many public relations practitioners are struggling to upgrade, especially with the use of the internetand modern communication technology. According to Alfonso and de Valbuena (2006), research has shown that practitioners are not fully embracing the new media, they are ill-equipped to do so and have a fear of the technology. The terrain of public relations practice is also shifting

with new media bringing about substantial increases in stakeholder's strength through facilitating communication within stakeholder's groups and between different stakeholder's groups (der Merwe, Pitt & Abratt, 2005). Stephens (2007) concluded that, information pours out of digital world and news now arrive astoundingly fast from an astounding number of directions and it is often free for everyone. In communication there is need for the use of appropriate media to reach the audience. Also, the need for businesses and organizations to determine their audience preferences in communication since the contents of communication is driven by audience preference and interest. To overview audience analysis which involves identifying the audience and adopting their preferred media to approach their interests, level of understanding, attitudes and beliefs because audience helps to navigate business or organization from small size to medium size and to a progressive and successful business venture. Organizations and companies need to understand what they are trying to accomplish in order to be successful in reaching the audience or customers with their public relations in their PR campaigns. Since public relations is about managing perceptions and what people think about your business and organization, and as it aims to increase awareness and good public image, organizations should monitor audience knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors to achieve that. Therefore, a public relations officer should use a popular communication channel that is accessible and preferable to its audience. That is to say, the medium organizations use as part of their public relations practice or public relations campaign and audience medium preference must be in alliance, and audience preference should be paramount while planning PR campaigns and mapping out PR strategies.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

This study was motivated and prompted by the fact that majority of the businesses and organizations engage their audience through the media without considering their media preference. Since the goals of public relations practitioners are to promote brand awareness and alert customers or audience of products and services, promote their organizations offerings and build a positive image and reputation via media, the choice of media that is accessible and likeable to their targeted audience should be very important and of high esteem. With past evidence and studies suggesting that public relations practitioners were open to using new technology (Porter & Sallot, 2003), it seems incongruous that even a traditional mainstay of PR practice such as media relations is not taking advantage of the possibilities offered by the innovative web and modern technologies. However, much of the literatures available have an overall tone of lament that practitioners were simply transferring traditional approaches of

public relations practice and not utilizing the unending benefits provided by new technologies, and thereby not evolving their practice. Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the audience

preferences of old and new media in public relations practices of Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC, as the researcher hope to expose the danger in doing otherwise.

### **1.3.Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study is to investigate the media used by communication or public relations departments of Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC respectively and also find out if such media channels are their audience preference.

Further objectives are as follows, to:

1. Identify the media often used by Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC.
2. Examine the organizations preferences between old media and the new media.
3. Investigate the media preferred by the audience that was used by the organizations.
4. Determine the extent of effectiveness of the media adopted in communicating to the audience by the organizations.

### **1.4. Research Questions:**

1. Which media are often used by Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC to engage in public relations practise?
2. Which of the old and new media do the organizations prefer ?
3. To what extent are the media adopted by the organizations are preferred by the audience?
4. What is the essence of the audience preference of the media used by the organizations?.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The study will help to examin the past related studies on prefered used media by organizations, upadates and insert new trend of mass media. Help the Nigeria Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) in its policy making as a regulated public relations body and in its professional certificate students curriculum. The study will also help the media as well as the public relations prationers and organizations in their media relation strategy and campaign plans.

### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

The study will be carried out with Coca - Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC. This research will be centered hundred percent on their respective Public Relations and

communication's department including their (Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC) customers residing in Ikeja, Lagos state where these organisations' operational head offices or factories are located.

### **1.6. Limitations of the study**

Conducting a research of this nature is not without some constraints. Because the study was focused on Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC, its respective customers,

respective public relations departments and the media they often used. The researcher had to navigate and interview all their stakeholders in order to collect primary data that are key in solving research questions. Secondly, it wasn't easy to access the directors and head of communication departments for interview because of their busy work loads, meetings, schedules and issues even when the researcher had to carry out the study within a stipulated time frame.

### **1.7. Operational Terms**

**Coca Cola Nigeria PLC:** This is an organization with international outlook and registered in Nigeria as a PLC, to promote professional excellence in the production of non alcoholic drinks and beverages through its sister company, Nigeria Bottling Company PLC and upholding the code of ethics and professionalism in a competitive market as well as gaining stakeholders' commitment to professional standard.

**Nigeria Breweries PLC:** Nigerian Breweries Plc is Nigeria's leading company that manufactures a rich portfolio of high quality alcoholic and non-alcoholic products categorized into premium, mainstream and value brands. Nigerian Breweries currently has 19 brands in its product portfolio and these brands cut across the lager, stout, malt, ready-to-drink, carbonated soft drinks and energy drink segments.

**Audience:** This are targeted group (stakeholders) by Coca –Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC for their media release, press conference or adverts, mainly their customers, employee, shareholders and respective community of operations.

**Organization:** Group of people with mutual interest, same purpose such as a business, association, corporations or a government department which under an act formed or established something, eg business together. Examples are Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC.

**Public Relations:** This term refers to public relations' strategic communication process that

builds mutually beneficial relations between the Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC , Nigeria Breweries PLC and their stakeholders or publics.

**Media:** These are organizations used by Coca –Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC, saddled with the responsibility of circulating their news, press release, press statement adverts and information within or across the borders and wherever their customers or audience are located through their respective public relations officers.

## **2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

Theories are explanations and suppositions that explain how things work as they relate to human environment. In a more simplistic sense, McQuail (2017) avers that a theory consists of a set of ideas of varying status and origin which seek to explain or interpret some phenomenon. Theories as concluded by Nwachukwu, Asak and Asadu (2013), are generalized statements on concepts and explanations or representations made about them. Theories are explanatory, speculative, supportive, expository, hypothetical statements made about a principle or concepts. The researcher in this study looked at two different important theories relevant to this work. These theories include, Media Dependency Theory and Technological Determinism Theory.

### **2.2. Media Dependency Theory**

Media dependency theory is a mass communication theory that seeks to explain the long term effects of media on the audience and society. This states that the more dependency an individual is on media for fulfilling his or her needs, the more important the media will be to that individual. This theory was originated by two persons , Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur. Media dependency theory came to existence because the inventors saw the need to integrate the findings of a large body of media effects research that had been done at that point. DeFleur and Ball –Rokeach (1975) suggest that a "general theory" of the effects of mass communication is lacking and that it is important to move towards a higher level of abstraction in order to understand where our research and analyses appear to be leading us"(DeFleur and Ball- Rokeach,(1976, P.25). This theory offers a helpful way to think about the relationship between media and the fulfillment of different audience needs and goals. Sandra Ball –Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur proposed the "Dependency Theory" in 1976. The theory is a combination of so many perspectives such as psycho analytics and social system theory, including systematic and casual approach, base elements from uses and Gratification

theory but it focuses less on effects. Media dependency theory is first of its kind that placed or reorganized audience as an active part in communication process. Dependency theory is a child birth of, or is expanded from the theory of Uses and Gratification. According to this theory, between the media, larger part of the system and audience exists an internal link, the audience learning from the real life is limited and they can use media to get more information to fulfill their needs and extensive use of media generates dependent relation in audience, that the media can also create dependence relationship with targeted audience to achieve their goals by using its media power. The level of dependency is always proportional to individual, social stability and active audience. The originators of media dependency theory went on to argue that social media dependency theory (also called media system dependency theory or simply dependency theory) holds that the mass media's influence varies based on how much need or use by a particular media. Instead of claiming that media effects are always powerful, or always limited, dependency theory seeks to explain why media have powerful effects in some cases and limited effects in others. This entry provides the background on the development of media dependency theory which also summarizes the theory's key tenets and also discusses how the theory relates to corporate reputation.

However, the media dependency theory is based on the "Uses and Gratifications theory" and links to the "Agenda Setting Theory". Uses and Grats identifies how people use and become dependent upon the media. They use the media for different reasons such as information, entertainment, and parasocial relationship, to mention just a few. This theory says the more an individual or person becomes dependent on the media to fulfill his or her needs, the media will become more important to that individual or person. And if an individual, person or someone is so dependent on the media for information, and the media is that person's only source of information, then it is easy to set the agenda. That person becomes victim to agenda setting, that means, these three theories are intermarried. Media dependency theory is very important to this study because it relates to the research questions and objectives of the studies in relation to audience and their media preferences in practice of public relations of Coca-cola PLC and Nigeria breweries PLC. Without doubt, there are critics who believe that the theory is inconsistent to science, it describes the media role during social changes and crisis, the theory is more flexible and descriptive, the power of media dependency is not clearly stated or described and moreover, that media dependency theory is difficult to prove scientifically or experimentally. In the other hand, according to Chaffee and Berger's 1997 criteria for scientific theories. This theory is a pretty good one and it's a key study for media and communication.

### **2.3. Technological Determinism Theory**

The term is believed to have been coined by Thorstein Veblen, an American social scientist in the 1960s. This theory was made popular by Marshal McLuhan. The theory states that technology of communication shapes the way individuals think, feel and act and how societies organize themselves and operate. According to McLuhan as quoted in Nwachukwu, Asak and Asadu (2013) states that, humans are living in a new age of technology which has never been experienced before. Baran (2002) explained that, technology drives cultural and even social changes in the society. Human society has always been shaped by the changes in communication technology. McLuhan suspects that the current technological environment, when looked back upon, will be seen as a major turning point in the history of communication. Nwachukwu, Asak and Asadu (2013) concluded that, as communication technology evolves and advances, so is human life as well as culture shaped. People are made highly isolated as one does not go pursuing information but information pursuing one its made it circulates around.

According to the “Technological Determinism Theory”, technology has important effects on our individual lives. Clearly, any given technology’s effects depend to some extent on the social context. The context will encourage or discourage the technology’s adoption, and, if the technology is adopted, the social context will have important effects on how the technology is used and thus on its ultimate impact. Feminist research has been particularly eloquent on these themes. Strong versions of Technological Determinisms are difficult to sustain in the face of evidence showing that both these moments of social determination are important. On the other hand, the idea that technology has no causal impact is equally difficult to sustain (Adler & Borys, 1993). The basic tenets of this theory is that, the invention of new technology can alter the way society responds to events or what they use to do in an old way. Also, Obayi (2013) asserted that the emergence of the various social media platforms had redefined the manner in which interpersonal communications are built and maintained. Strict adherents to the technological determinism theory do not believe that the influence of technology differ based on how much a technology is or can be used. Instead of considering technology as part of a larger spectrum of human activity, technological determinism sees technology as the basis for all human activity.

Technological determinism theory has been summarized as “The belief in technology as a key force in society”. Smith, Roe and Leo (2021) averred that, we are somewhat powerless, and society allows technology to drive social changes because, societies fail to be aware of

the alternatives to the values embedded in technology. Technological determinists believe that, “You cannot stop progress” implying that we are unable to control technology (Green, 2001). The technological determinism theory plays a crucial role in the day-to-day life of humans in an ever-changing world. Media technology helps us to stay informed despite the distance through all walks of life and race. It has also successfully breached the gap between humans which ordinarily could have been difficult. These theories are appropriate for this study because the work is on audience preferences of old and new media in public relations practices of Coca- Cola Nigeria PLC & Nigeria Breweries PLC .

## **2.4. Conceptual Review**

### **2.4.1. Conceptual Clarification of Public Relations**

Public relations is the art and science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization, leadership and implementing planned programme of action which will serve both an organization and public interests. This definition actually points out that public relations, primarily has to do with the process of establishing and maintaining cordial relationship between an organization and its public (audience), to build and maintain its reputation so as to help the organization to achieve its objectives. Therefore, solid public relations campaign includes at least some segmentation by audience , and the use of paid or earned media by organizations or businesses to connect with them (customers or audience ).

Jefkins (1985,P.20), opines that public relations consists of all forms of planned communication outward, between an organization and its audience for purpose of achieving specific goals concerning mutual understanding. Jefkins emphasized planned communications with targeted audience of any organization to achieve mutual understanding with them. Martson in the book nature of public relations (1963) in trying to put a lot of definitions forward, saw public relations as planned, persuasive communication designed to influence significant public. He emphasized the key words in this definition planned, persuasive, communication and significant public. He said that public relations are not accidental but planned to convince some to do or believe in something. In broad terms, the public relations function is to establish and maintain a mutual understanding between its targeted audience and to communicate an organization’s view, objectives and purpose while at the same time monitoring feedback and collecting the public attitudes and reactions.

Overall, the researcher argues that public relations is all about planned favourable image or a favourable reputation (Reputation Building). Burton (1989:13) has almost a different view.

He was looking at public relation from the organizational perspectives. He wrote that public relation should help an organization to establish and maintain a good name (Brand) for its products and service through professional communication techniques and of course prospect a good image of the organization as a transparent body. It should be noted that lack of an efficient and effective two ways communication has an adverse effect on the organization. The reason is that it creates a loophole for distrust, misunderstanding, disharmony and unnecessary tension between the organization and its audience and stakeholders in general. This could lead to voluntary resignation of experienced and key personnel of the organization. The resultant effect is not only tarnishing the public image but ruin the entire organizations activities. Moore and

Confield (1977:35) in their own view says that public relations is a two- way communication through careful listening to its targeted audience (publics), and sensitive interpretation of the signal it receives. The public Relations officer can discover any likely breakdown in communication and think about the possibility of altering the nature and approach, always scan the environment against negative news or informations as relates to the organization. In fact, one of the roles of an organization's public relations officer is the core reputation management.

Further, Lesley (1976:59) says everyone influenced by reputation in choosing everything he brings and in every association he makes, whether cheering sum or energy wheels, prestige will sell goods, attract dealers, back up sales effort. It should be noted when an organization neglects the workers which constitutes the internal publics, which is the workers or employees of an organization are properly not cared for, that is also sure way of killing the corporate image of an organization. Nnaemeka diagnosed the public relations for local Government in Nigeria (1993:55), he pointed out that outcome of public relations effort are influenced by the interactions which take place at different levels of the social structure. The implication of these for public relations practitioners is that different strategies or approaches are needed to establish effective and efficient two- way communication between a company and different groups that made up its public. Further, an attempt to influence the opinion and behaviour of members of each group should be directed specifically to the opinion leaders since they are the primary reference points for their members. Besides, there is also need to establish feedback mechanism which will help the public relations effort in the communication between our organization and its publics, the need for publics consultative committee to be established since they will serve as feedback mechanism as well as serve as a

testing ground for a proposal or programme designed for each public.

### **2.5.0. Conceptual Review**

#### **2.5.1. Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC : An Overview**

Coca-Cola Nigeria Limited, is a total beverage company, offering one of the world's most valuable brands, Coca-Cola. The company portfolio includes valuable beverage brands such as Coca-Cola, Fanta, Sprite, 5Alive juices, Eva water, Schweppes, Limca and the recently acquired CHI portfolio in 2018 in line with its objective of evolving to a total beverage company: Chivita, Hollandia Yoghurt etc. The company is constantly transforming its portfolio

to accommodate the evolving tastes of its people, from reducing sugar in its drinks to bringing innovative new products to market.

Coca-Cola was first produced in Nigeria in 1951 by its bottling partner, Nigerian Bottling Company (NBC) at its small bottling facility in Iddo, Lagos and has since continued to refresh and make a difference in various communities across Nigeria. Today their footprints extend to 9 bottling operations (including CHI) across the federation, over 55 commercial territories, 22 depot locations and over 1,000 suppliers (90% of which are SMEs). The company have grown with Nigeria and is a major contributor to the Nigerian economy. Along with its bottling partners, they have remained a major tax contributor, deeply committed in investing in the country's local content development as well as a top employer, providing livelihood to over 15 million Nigerians across its value chain.

This year 2026 marks its 74 years of doing business in Nigeria. Coca-Cola, along with its bottling partners, NBC and CHI, will continue to create shared opportunities in the communities they serve. They pride themselves in the value they provide, impacting over 5,000 direct employees. The company is committed to doing business sustainably across its host communities with their key sustainability pillars centered around Women, Youth development, Water, Environmental Sustainability and Wellbeing. Their Mantra is to build loved brands, done sustainable for a better shared future.

Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and its bottling partners are multinational organizations with their presence across the globe, and their diversity of views as regards to their audience preferred media. However, their reconciliation lead to growth and social progress. This worldview presupposes that Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC as an organization serves the public interest, and facilitates a dialogue to develop mutual understanding between the organization and its audience (Gadzama, 2014). Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC is performing well in visualizing the

potential areas and advancing it towards a balanced initiative as regards to its audience media preference. Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC primary objectives is to advance the standards of the public relations profession of its organization and to provide it's audience with a professional channel of carrying and spreading messages or information through both old (Traditional) and new media. An important element to the organization's PR department growth and development is the advisory input and creativity of a large body of public relations personels. In this way, the organization task is to remain focused and accountable to its audience. It is no longer about profit making, it is rather the serious business image, integrity and reputation management (Gadzama, 2014). Owobu (2012) asserts that world events and services are gradually being globalized, shareholders, consumerists, tax assessors, communities, legislators, executive government officers, environmentalists, trade unionists and a host of others have become sophisticated and inquisitive to know how fair a business organization is doing. They question the conduct of organizations, judging performance from the levels of understanding. Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC is organized organizations with streamlined business strategy within their individual management bodies, the house hold name and brand "COCA-COLA" can testify to it.

### **2.5.2.Nigerian Breweries Plc: An Overview**

The only thing on earth that remains unchanged is change itself, change is inevitable, change is consistence and key to human evolution. The world, the globe is dynamic, every economic activity is dynamic and a business organization which operates in a dynamic environment is equally dynamic. Because of the said dynamic principle, modern public relations strategy demands a constant evaluation of organization public relations practices so as to know or determine which areas would need updates or improvement in order to match the nature of its business environment.

The chief executives officer ( CEO ) of an organization therefore, needs a periodic review of their policies and quality of their products and services as regards to their effectiveness and degree of responsibility. These periodic evaluation will in no small measure help the organization , for example Nigeria Breweries PLC make some necessary adjustment within their publics' goodwill and also give them competitive edge or advantage over their rivals. The evaluation of organizations public relations practices is key and very much needed now that a lot of proliferation of business organization are dealing with strong competition for market share, public image and public acceptance. For an organization to survive in today's

mordern, global and competitive business world, their primary goal should be to satisfy the needs, wants and aspirations of their potential customers since their actions and inactions may definitely affect the organization either ways, and Nigeria Breweries PLC is not an expection . The researcher believes that they are just doing that by having a very good and reasonable Public Realations department.

Nigerian Breweries PLC, the pioneer and largest brewing company in Nigeria, was incorporated in the year 1946 and recorded a landmark when the first bottle of star larger beer rolled off the bottling lines in its Lagos Brewery in June, 1949. This was followed by Aba Brewery which was commissioned in 1957, Kaduna Brewery in 1963 and Ibadan Brewery in 1982. In September 1993, the company acquired its fifth Brewery in Enugu. On April 9, 2001, it laid the foundation for yet another brewery in Enugu which was completed recently. From

its humble beginning in 1946, the company now has six operational breweries from which its high quality product are distributed to all parts of Nigeria. Nigeria Breweries plc has a rich portfolio of high quality brands namely: Star Larger Beer (1949), Gulder Larger Beer (1970), Maltina (1976) which now has four varieties (Maltina Principle, Legend Extra Stout (1992), Amstel Malta (1994) and Schweppes range of carbonated soft drinks launched in 1996 (Schweppes Bitter Lemon, Schweppes Tonic water and Schweppes Soda Water). This was followed by the launch of Crush Orange in November 1997, and Schweppes Principle in October 1999.

The company has earlier launched in the Nigerian market Heineken larger in June 1998. However, in August 2001, the company decided to exit the carbonated soft drinks market because of the need to concentrate on its area of core competence, the Schweppes franchise was therefore sold off. Nigerian Breweries PLC keeps place with key international developments thus, ensuring that its systems, processes and operational procedures are always in conformity with the world class standards. It is in line with this policy that the company established a research and development center in 1987 to enhance its research activities on all aspects of brewing operation.

Nigeria Breweries PLC in 1994 as part of its social corporate responsibility (CRS), established an education trust fund of one hundred million Niara to take more active part in the funding of educational and research facilities in higher institutions. Nigerian Breweries plc is the foremost sponsor of sports by variety in the country with sponsorship covering football, table tennis, lawn tennis, cycling, chess, golf, badminton, boat racing and others. The aim is to develop Nigerian sportsmen and women to participate in national and international sports and

boost the sports profile of the country in the global sports stage . Nigeria Breweries PLC bought the assets of Diamond Brewery in September 1993 and fulfilled its desire to have a brewery in Enugu. Their aim is to improve the company's service to its customers in the south south and south east geo political of Nigeria and also to expand their labour market having in mind the satisfaction of their numerous audience across the country, including their organogram, which consists of the management, the senior staffs, junior staffs and freelancers.

## **2.6.Audience: Meaning and Definition**

These are people connected with organization course, that buy – into their brand and care about their products and how the organization service impact their lives. Audience loyal to the brand , has a set of characteristics or demographics that they share, they have similar behaviour and can be grouped by their personal preferences.“Targeted Audience or Readers“. Accordinilly , it is advised that when considering readers or audience, it is actually helpful and extremly important to consider and que into the different important factors worth to be condisedered before reaching out or comminicating with the audience,customers, publics or readers. Such factors as attitudes and motivation, educationnal background, experence, the enviroment, reading ability or level and the organizational role. Burnett,1997.

1. Attitudes and motivation : what are the attitude of the readers, the audience group, are their attitude going to influence the way they read and make their prefence?, if they are actually motivated to read the press release and e.t.c.
2. How can you as a public relations officer increase their reading motivation and also establishing their media preference ?
3. Educational Backgroung : How much formal knowledge about the subject the audience or reader have and how it affects the plan of the press release, what the public relations officer intends to achieve with the document or press realse between his organization and audience or readers is key.
4. Experence:The comminicator or public relations officer have to factor in or consider the Experence of his audience or readers before putting out press realse or issuing statements.
5. Eviroment : the enviroment plays a vital role because it will affect where the readers use the malterial and the distraction they will likely face while trying to digest the content of the press release or statement.
6. Reading Ability or Level : The comminicator have to put in a balance scale the best

estimate About the level of material the reader or audience can handle and comprehend without difficulty at any given time.

**7. Organizational Role** :The readers or audience position in the organization is vital and key.

### **2.6.1 Types of Audience in Public Relations**

There are many kinds of groups or different types of audience in public relations process called the stakeholders of the organization . For a media release , press statement , press conference ,a public relations campaign or advertisement , the audience targeted by a public relations officer of an organization are mainly their stakeholders, as a public sector, company, institution or organization , it's extremely important to maintain a transparent communication with the stakeholder , those who have invested in your success or struggles as a brand such as shareholders, customers, journalists , the media , employees, audience and the host community. The role of stakeholders or audience in an organization, is that they drives every aspect of developing a theatrical performance itself and as well as influencing the decision making of an organization. Thus, it involves audience when you communicate , your purpose is not what you want to do; instead , it is what you want your audience to do , understand and buy- into will determine what you write and read, and what you wrote or reads, forms the listening content to your audience.

**2.6.2. Purpose of Audience in an Organization:**They are the key concept throughout media studies, because all media content are produced with an audience in mind, that is to say a group of people who will receive the text and make some sort of sense out of it are the audience . The audience are part of the media as well as the organization equation – a product is produced and audience receives, accept, buy into it and use it. Therefore, the main purpose of audience is their initiation or involvement into the primary or secondary reading as well as cultivating and putting down their support to promote , buy use and advance the product and services of an organization.They also serve as initial person to persons in the consumption and circulations of information,thus known as initial audience.For example, public relations colleagues are an initial audience when a writer or communicator gives them a document to review , proofread , revert or provide feedback .

**2.6.3. How to Reach Audience Clearly define who your targeted audience is:** Before you have a productive conversation in any setting,it helps to know who you're talking to.The same principle applies to online conversations. Before you can engage your targeted audience effectively, you have to know who exactly makes up that audience. A customer survey is a great way to learn more about your target market, and it doesn't have to be complicated to be

effective.

**2.6.4. Identify what your target audience truly cares about:** If you want your customers to listen to what you're saying online, it helps to publish content that answers the questions they're already asking. It's impossible to do this until you understand what your target audience truly cares about. Customer surveys, keyword research, and social listening are all helpful tools for identifying what your audience most cares about.

**2.6.5. Consider how your target audience wants to receive information:** Once you know what your audience cares about, consider how they want to receive information on that topic. Do they prefer videos?, Long -form articles?, Infographics?, Email newsletters?, When you know your target audience's preferred medium for new information, you can focus your efforts on producing content they will actually enjoy.

**2.6.5. Provide valuable content for your target audience:** Now that you know who your target audience is, what kind of topics they want to hear about, and how they want to receive new information, you're ready to produce some content. Every blog, email, video, and social media post you produce should be written with your buyer person as in mind, strive to answer common questions, solve problems, and provide value for your buyer person as in your content.

**2.6.6. Meet your audience where they hang out:** You can write the best LinkedIn articles in your industry, but if your target market is spending all their time on YouTube, you're only wasting your time. Use your customer research and buyer personas to determine where you should share the content you create. Once you know your target market's preferred platforms, you can focus your efforts on those platforms to maximize the reach of your content.

**2.6.7. Make it easy for your audience to find you:** Hanging out on your customer's preferred platforms is only part of making it easy for your audience to find you. Engage with your followers, use popular (and relevant) hashtags, and pay to promote posts or run ads when your budget allows for it.

**2.6.8. Be consistent:** Digital marketing is a marathon , not a sprint. If you produce a ton of great content for your targeted audience in the first few months , then burn out, your results will quickly stall. To get the most out of your online marketing efforts, it's important to show up regularly online and offer valuable and creative content on a consistent basis.

## 2.7 The Media

Media has been around for ages , from the early days of cave painting to today`s mass media

channels. It is a channel of communication, a vehicle designed to carry messages from one person to another or from one place to another locally, national or globally. And since then, media have evolved, throughout history, major changes have occurred in the way media is produced and consumed. The invention of the printing press in the 15<sup>TH</sup> century led to mass production of books or prints which lead to an increase in literacy rates. Then came the rise of radio and television in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, bringing about a new form of communication that reached a mass audience. This brings us to the two different kinds of media known or called old media (Traditional) Media and new (Digital) media. According to Reine Hdroj, marketing specialist at consumer choice award, it's impossible to predict exactly where the world of media is headed. But one thing is very sure, it will continue to evolve as new technologies are developed and new ways of communication are created. So, the best way is to stay ahead of the curve is to be open to change and embrace new technologies as they come, who knows you may be the one to create the next big thing.

**2.7.1 Traditional Media:** This includes print media, such as newspapers, books and broadcast media such as television and radio.

**2.7.2. New Media:** Often called or refers to as multimedia or digital media, simply means to communicate as opposite to traditional media like newspaper, television or radio rather it's a technology which involves the use of internet, blogs, websites, youtube, facebook, instagram (X), WhatsApp message and etc.

### **2.7.3. Relationship Between the Old and New Media**

In spite of the way it's often positioned, traditional and new media do have to go head to head. These mediums can actually be used together to make over advertising campaigns stronger than ever. Traditional and new media can compliment one another with each playing a vital role in relation to audience. To let that concept hit home, let's look at an example – say, Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC have a new product, and their targeted demography are men and women ages, 18 years and above. And they would especially like to reach out to those in the urban cities. They are currently using the entire advertisement budget on prints, radio or TV and have seen some good returns on the new product, but would like to see more. One way Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC could achieve that, is to spread out their advertising budget. Imagine their advertising budget as a cake, each form of media is one piece of the cake, so right now your cake has two pieces, one for print and one for radio/TV. If Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC cuts the cake into six pieces and adds a couple of the other form of media. New media, as well as get into a little later trends to be much more affordable than traditional, So Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC could take some of the radio and print budget, and shift them into targeted mobile ads,

that means, Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC will exponentially increase the reach of their targeted audience.

#### **2.7.4. Traditional Media VS New Media**

While traditional media and new media can go hand in hand, there are a few reasons why organizations should consider adding new media to their mix over, expanding their use of traditional media. the difference can be seen or found in the following:

- i Value,
- ii Communication/Interaction,
- iii Level playing Field,
- iv Cost Efficiency, Accuracy,
- v Trust / Efficiency on Customers,
- vi Realative Result,
- vii Global Reach
- viii Choice of Audience
- ix Ability to Track Result

#### **2.7.5. Audience Preference /Choice**

New media is highly targeted, and not just almost every one uses it or likes to use it, organizations can have choice media and their audience are still comfortable with it. That means you can have your choice or preference and still your audience can still be okay and comfortable with you, but still at that, the audience choice can be influenced by the following:-

- i Ability to Track result or Result Tracking
- ii Mobility / Easy Access
- iii Easy to Use
- iv Cost Efficiency
- v Engagement

The audience can easily engage the organization via social media, for example, facebook, Instagram, or through its website.

### **2.8. An Overview of Digital Communication**

Digital communication is rooted in the development of electronics. From the 1830s to present time, media technology developments include telegraph, telephone, radio, television, and internet. Except the telegraph, all of these continue to evolve with the computer technology. Traditional, non-digital communication such as print, is also influenced by the new media technology. Though, the final product is ink on paper, the production processes uses more of

combination of digital technology in computer graphics, photographs, data bases, and so on (Asak & Ohiagu, 2013). Due to the development of technology, many more types of digital communication gadgets have been introduced to satisfy the increasing contact needs of people. Together with the traditional media which every body has been familiar with for a long time like television, newspapers, books etc., the whole world has experienced a considerable rise of digital communication. Digital communication, which refers to any form of communication taking place through technology and electronic mediums, has marked a tidal wave of global revolution in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Nguyen, 2017). Digital communication provides users with instant access to others on an unprecedented level. Many businesses prefer using email over a phone call because email provides a record of the message. But there are consequences to this built-in record-keeping feature. Users forget that even though they may delete a message it is usually stored on a server or is backed up for future review. This means users need to think about what they say when using email. This is the same for many other communication methods like texting and social networking sites, even after the information is deleted it continues to live on in cyberspace. Any of these technologies can be used inappropriately. Too often, people send emails, texts, or posts without considering who might see them or how they might be interpreted. It is easy to write the first thing that comes to mind and then send it before considering the long-term consequences. In some situations, speaking to someone face- to-face can solve a situation faster than multiple emails or other communication methods (Nguyen, 2017). Talking more on the revolution of digital communication, Asak and Ohiagu (2013) aver that, the technological solution of the 1980s and 1990s was mass digitization. They further stated that, the computing and communications turning point became apparent as an increasing number of products and services started to be encoded into computers or cyber – space. This reflects an age in which an increasing number of computing-enabled devices are permeating the everyday development of computing every where, with internet-access and other digital technology almost constantly available. Digital communication technologies according to Asak and Ohiagu (2013) are the digital tools that allow two or more people to communicate with one another. These can be written, verbal, visual or audible communication. According to Dotan (2022), digital communication is data transmission and data reception or, more broadly, data communication or digital communications is the transfer and reception of data in the form of a digital bitstream or a digitized analog signal over a point-to-point or point-to-multipoint communication channel. Digital communication refers to the use of such devices to send information electronically. With the advent of digital communication came a

new set of rules to guide social interactions through technology. These rules are collectively referred to as “netiquette”. As mentioned above, netiquette is a set of rules guiding social interactions when using technology such as computers and cell phones for communication. When communicating in this manner, it is easy for students and other individuals to forget that they are dealing with real people, since they are not interacting with them face-to-face (Bianco, 2022). Due to the development of high technology, numerous forms of communications have been used for digital transmission in variety media types and vehicles when mentioning digital communication, people usually think of Internet as the most popular instance. However, the digital age has brought society more tools than just the Internet. The following part lists out some main forms of digital communication that take a prominent role in our environment nowadays (Sarokin, 2015).

### **3.0. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This section deals with the type of research method applied in the study. The research method employed in this study is survey because of its efficiency and accuracy, with quantitative and qualitative approaches. One and one interviews were conducted with top management staffs of their public relations officers. Survey is defined as "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions" (Check & Schutt, 2012). Pinsonneault and Kraemer (1993) defined a survey as a "means for gathering information about the characteristics, actions, or opinions of a large group of people". Kraemer (1991) identified three distinguishing characteristics of survey research. First, survey research is used to quantitatively describe specific aspects of a given population. These aspects often involve examining the relationships among variables. Secondly, the data required for survey research are collected from people and are, therefore, subjective. Finally, survey research uses a selected portion of the population from which the findings can later be generalized back to the population. It is categorized into two; namely:

**Primary source:** Primary source for this study is the accurate information or data gathered that is self-conducted, direct and first hand. Primary research fills in the subsequent gaps in information that a researcher was not able to gather through secondary research source such as

original research, result of self conducted experiment, interviews, questionnaires, oral history and etc. The goal of primary research is to answer specific questions that directly pertain to the project at hand. This type of research is extremely valuable, yet, due to its nature,

it takes more time to collect than secondary research.

**Secondary source:** Secondary research is information gathered or collected from someone else or previously conducted studies. Secondary research is usually where most research begins, this is because secondary research may provide a researcher with a basis of knowledge on what relevant information had already been compiled by other researchers in the past. And it includes books, website, government publications, journal articles, blog, internal records and etc.

### **3.2 Population for the Study**

The study population consists of audience (customers) of Coca-Cola Nigerian PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC, resident in Ikeja, Lagos state, whom are also familiar with the terms, public relations, media, audience and media preference. They constitute persons within the age of 18 to 40 years with basic education background. This group of people are considered appropriate for the study because of their knowledge of media (traditional and new media), massive interest in social media and internet, as well as their interest in the organizations and their respective brand.

### **3.3. Sample Size**

The sample is an important feature of any study in which the goal is to make inferences about a population from a sample. According to Ihejirika and Omego (2013), and also confirmed by Payne and Payne (2014), sampling involves selecting a subset of people to be studied from the larger universe to which they belong. A sample is a number of individual cases that are drawn from a larger population. The sample size of this study consists of 400 respondents, representing the estimated 3,106.281 persons within the age of 18 to 40 years currently residing in Ikeja, Lagos state. The sample size of 400 was arrived using Taro Yamane formula. Taro Yamane sample size formula is presented as this :

$$n = N/1+N = (e)^2$$

where:

$n$  = sample size  $N$  = population size

$e$  = sampling error (0.05)

Applying as follows ;  $n = 3,106,281/1+3,106,281(0.05)^2$

$$n = 3,106,281/1+3,106,281 (0.0025)$$

$$n = 3,106,281/1+7766 n = 3,106,281/7767 n = 399.93 \sim 400.$$

### **3.4 .Sampling Technique**

The sampling technique used for the purpose of this research work is multi-stage cluster

sampling for quantitative and purposive for interview. As utilized in qualitative and mixed methods research, purposive sampling involves an iterative process of selecting research subjects rather than starting with a predetermined sampling frame. According to Cohen (1980), quantitative research is defined as social research that employs empirical methods and empirical statements about what “is” the case in the “real world” rather than what “ought” to be the case, are in

- acquaintance with the media both organizations used to communicate with them (customers). Moreover, Creswell (1994) has given a very concise definition of quantitative research as type of research that is explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics). The purposive sampling which involves an iterative process of selecting research subjects rather than starting with a predetermined sampling frame allowed the researcher to engage senior public relations officers heading the public relations department of Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria breweries respectively in one and one interview.

### **3.5. Research Instrument**

The instrument for data collection for this study was a 12 item questionnaire and interview guide. The 12-item copies of questionnaire was designed with multi-choice format, the 4-point Likert Scale of: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) and the YES and NO response to enable the respondent to respond to the items appropriately. The 400 copies of questionnaire were divided into five sections A-E. Section A focused on the bio data of the respondents. Section B looked at which media are often used by Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC to engage in PR practice. Section C examined why do the organizations use these media. Section D talks on which of the old and new media do the organizations prefer, while Section E looked at what media used by the organizations are preferred by the audience.

### **3.6. Validity of Research Instrument**

The questionnaire for the collection of data were carefully drawn out and structured by the researcher and was scrutinized by an expert in the field and the project supervisor, whom also evaluated and corrected mistakes and also made useful suggestions to improve the content before it was finally approved for administration.

### **3.7. Reliability of Instrument**

The instrument used for the purpose of this research work are the questionnaire and interview guide which is tested to be reliable and trusted. The questionnaire are administered with the help of two trusted research assistants and the researcher successfully conducted the interview.

### **3.8. Method of Data Collection**

For the purpose of this research work, the researcher with the aid of two research assistants administered the questionnaire on hand to hand basis to residents of Ikeja, Lagos state (where the operational office and main factories of both organizations are located) that are aware of public relations strategy of Nigerian breweries PLC and Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC, including interview guide form the two staffs of public relations department of Nigerian breweries PLC and one staff of Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC, by conducting interview with them at their choice places through audio recordings in which were transcribed afterwards.

### **3.9. Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected and collated in this study were presented and analyzed with the aid of Frequency Tables, simple percentages and mean scores. The Frequency Tables were used to provide pictorial representations of the data in a simple form, which made the data easy to comprehend by even persons without good knowledge of statistics. Simple percentages was used to analyze the bio-data which bearing were minimal. Mean scores were used to calculate each of the items based on the YES and NO response and the multi-choice format. The 4 point Likert Scale of: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) gotten from the question. The criterion mean score for this study was 2.50. In essence, any item which was calculated to the range of 2.50 and below was rejected while those that fell on 2.50 and above were deemed acceptable.

### **4.1. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

This section seeks to analyze the data gotten from the sample size of this study consists of 400 respondents, representing the estimated 3,106,281 persons within the age of 18 to 40 years currently residing in Ikeja, Lagos state. The sample size of 400 was arrived using Taro Yamane formula.

#### 4.2.1 Analysis of Demographics of the Respondents

The demographics of respondents are presented in Tables 1-5 below.

**Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents.**

Gender	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Male	151	37.75
Female	249	62.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2026..*

Data on Table 1 shows the gender distribution of respondents. One hundred and fifty one (151) representing 37.75% of the respondents were males and two hundred and forty nine (249) representing 62.25% of the respondents were females. This table shows that a greater percentage of the sample is female and also means that majority of the respondents in Ikeja, Lagos State are females.

**Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age Range	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
18-22 years	247	61.75
23-27 years	140	35
28-32 years	2	0.5
33-40 years	11	2.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data on Table 2 shows the age distribution of respondents. Two hundred and forty seven (247) representing 61.75% of the respondents were within the age brackets of 18-22 years. One hundred and forty (140) representing 35% respondents were within ages 23-27, two (2) representing 0.5% respondents within age brackets of 28-32 and eleven (11) representing 2.75% were within the age brackets of 33-40 years and are aware of both companies PR engagement.

**Table 3: Marital Distribution of Respondents**

Marital Status	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Single	333	83.3
Married	67	16.8
Separated	-	-
Divorced	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data on Table 3 shows the marital status of respondents. Three hundred and thirty three (333) representing 83.3% of the respondents are single. Sixty seven (67) representing 16.8% of the respondents are married and none of the respondents is separated or divorced. This table shows that a greater percentage of the sample respondents are single and are aware of media and PR.

**Table 4: Distribution of Respondents According to Educational Qualification.**

<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>	<b>Percentage of Response (%)</b>
SSCE/WAEC/GCE	223	55.75
Diploma (OND/HND)	100	25
B.Sc/BA/M.Ed	70	17.5
Others	7	1.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2026..*

Data on Table 4, shows the educational qualification of respondents. Two hundred and twenty three representing 55.75 % of the respondents have SSCE,WAEC or GCE as highest educational qualifications respectively. One hundred representing 25 % of the respondents have Diploma (OND/HND) qualification.Seventy representing 17.5 % of the respondents have B.Sc/BA/M.Ed while seven representing 1.75% of the respondents have other qualifications.From the data analyzed, it can be seen that most of the youths in Edo State do not have qualifications above school leaving certificate.

**Table 5: Occupational Distribution of Respondents**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>	<b>Percentage of Response (%)</b>
Student	197	49.3
Self-employed	57	14.3
Civil Servant/Public Servant	-	-
Unemployed	98	24.5
Business	48	12
Others		
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2026..*

Data on Table 5, shows the occupational qualifications of respondents. One hundred and ninety seven representing 49.3% of the respondents are students. Fifty seven representing 14.3% of the respondents are self-employed. Ninety eight representing 24.5% of the respondents are unemployed and forty eight representing 12 % of the respondents are into business while no respondents are civil servants/public servants.

#### 4.2.2. Research Question One

Which media are often used by Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC to engage in public relations practise?

To answer this question, items 6i-6iv, as well as items 7i-7v, on the questionnaire were used.

Data gathered from the respondents are presented in Tables 6 and 7 below and analyzed accordingly.

**Table 6: Respondents' views on the media often used by Coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC in engaging in public relations practice..**

Item	Details	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	Decision
		4	3	2	1			
<b>6i.</b>	Social Media	194 776 48.5%	188 564 47%	12 24 3%	6 6 1.5%	400 1370÷400 100%	3.43	Accepted
<b>6ii.</b>	Television	181 724 45.3%	181 543 45.3%	38 76 9.5%	- - -	400 1343÷400 100%	3.36	Accepted
<b>6iii.</b>	Print News	181 724 45.3%	173 519 43.3%	46 92 11.5%	- - -	400 1335÷400 100%	3.34	Accepted
<b>6iv.</b>	Internwt	183 732 45.8%	163 489 40.7%	54 108 13.5%	- - -	400 1329÷400 100%	3.32	Accepted

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2026*

Data on Table 6 reveals the media often employed by Coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC in engaging PR practice. One hundred and ninety four representing 48.5% of the respondents were of the view that social media were often used. One hundred and eighty three representing 45.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that social media were often used by both organisations in public relations practice. 45.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that television is often employed by both organisations in PR practice. Also, One hundred and eighty one representing 45.3% of the respondents agreed that television is the media often used by both companies in their respective PR practices.

**Table 7: Respondents' views on the medium use by coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria Breweries in engaging their audience in their public relations practice.**

Item	Details	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	Decision
		4	3	2	1			
7i.	Radio	194 776 48.5	179 537 44.8%	27 54 6.8%	- - -	400 1367÷400 100%	3.42	Accepted
7ii	Digital Media	298 1192 74.5%	87 261 21.75%	4 8 1%	11 11 2.75%	400 1472÷400 100%	3.68	Accepted
7iii.	Social media platforms	181 724 45.3%	180 540 45%	31 62 7.8%	8 8 2%	400 1334÷400 100%	3.34	Accepted
7iv.	Emails	169 676 42.3%	171 514 42.8%	44 88 11%	16 16 4%	400 1294÷400 100%	3.24	Accepted
7v.	Bilboards	155 620 38.8%	180 540 45%	43 86 10.8%	22 22 5.5%	400 1268÷400 100%	3.17	Accepted

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data on Table 7, reveals the medium employed by both organisations. Two hundred and ninety eight representing 74.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that digital media is the medium often employed by both companies in egaging in PR practice. One hundred and ninety four representing 48.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that radio is the medium often employed by both companies. One hundred and eighty one representing 45.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that social media platform is the medium often used in PR practice. One hundred and sixty nine representing 42.3% strongly agreed to emails while one hundred and fifty five representing 38.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that bilboards were the medium employed by both organizations in PR practice.

## Research Question Two

Which of the old and new media do the organizations prefer ?

To answer this question, items 8i-8ii on the questionnaire were used. Data gathered from the respondents are presented in Tables 8i to 8ii below and analyzed accordingly.

**Table 8i: Awareness of traditional and new media public relations practice**

Variable	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Yes	203	50.8
No	197	49.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data in table 9i shows that two hundred and three representing 50.8 % of the respondents are aware, while one hundred and ninety seven representing 49.3% of the respondents are not aware. This shows that more than half of the respondents are aware of traditional and new media as a medium of PR practice.

**Table 8ii: Awareness of the medium often used by both organizations public relations practice.**

Variable	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Yes	389	97.25
No	11	2.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data in table 9ii shows that three hundred and eighty nine representing 97.25 % of the respondents are aware of the medium use by both organizations in public relations practice, while eleven representing 2.75% of the respondents are not aware. This shows that a greater percentage of the respondents are aware of the medium often use by both firms in PR practice.

**Table 9i: Awareness of new media platforms as a medium for PR practiceas of both organizations.**

Variable	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Yes	378	94.5
No	22	5.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data in table 9iii shows that three hundred and seventy eight representing 94.5% of the respondents are aware of new media platforms as a medium of public relations practice, while twenty two representing 5.5 % of the respondents are not aware. This shows that a large percent of respondents are not aware.

**Table 9ii: Awareness of traditional media platforms as a medium for PR practiceas of both organizations.**

Variable	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Yes	256	64
No	144	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data in table 9iv shows that two hundred and fifty six representing 64% of the respondents are aware that traditional media often use public relations practice, while one hundred and forty four representing 36% of the respondents are not aware. This shows that a large percent of respondents are aware.

#### 4.2.4. Research Question Three

To what extent are the media adopted by the organizations are preferred by the audience?

To answer this question, items 10i-10v as well as items 11i-11v on the questionnaire were used. Data gathered from the respondents are presented in Tables 10i to 11v below and analyzed accordingly.

**Table 10: Respondents' views on to what extent the adopted by Coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria breweries PLC are their audience preference.**

Item	Details	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	Decision
		4	3	2	1			
<b>10i.</b>	Social Media	189 756 47.25%	156 468 39%	48 96 12%	7 7 1.75%	400 1327÷400 100%	3.32	Accepted
<b>10ii.</b>	Television	142 568 35.5%	240 720 60%	18 36 4.5%	- - -	400 1324÷400 100%	3.31	Accepted
<b>10iii.</b>	Internet	146 584 36.5%	198 594 49.5%	56 112 14%	- - -	400 1290÷400 100%	3.23	Accepted
<b>10iv.</b>	Radio	154 616 38.5%	205 615 51.25%	41 82 10.25%	- - -	400 1313÷400 100%	3.28	Accepted
<b>10v</b>	Printed News	203 812 50.75%	153 459 38.25%	44 88 11%	- - -	400 1359÷400 100%	3.39	Accepted

Source: *Field Survey, 2026.*

Data on Table 10, reveals the extent the media adopted by both organisations are preferred by their audience. 203 representing 50.75 % of the respondents strongly agreed that printed news are preferred by the audience among the media adopted by the organizations. One hundred and eighty nine representing 47.25% of the respondents strongly agreed that creation of personal relationship with consumers is an influence of the public relations tool. One hundred and fifty four representing 38.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that social media is preferred by the audience. 146 36.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that the use of internet in PR is audience preference, while 142 representing 35.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that television is preferred by audience in public relations engagement of Coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC.

#### 4.2.5. Research Question Four

What is the essence of the audience preference of the media used by the organizations? To answer this question, items 12i-12v on the questionnaire were used.

Data gathered from the respondents are presented in table 12 below and analyzed accordingly.

**Table 11: Respondents' views on the essence of the audience preference of the media used by the organizations**

Item	Details	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	Decision
	<b>The essence of audience media preference.</b>	4	3	2	1			
12i.	Trust	189 756 47.25%	176 628 44%	19 38 4.75%	16 16 4%	400 1438÷400 100%	3.59	Accepted
12ii.	Brand Royalty	187 748 46.75%	205 615 51.25%	5 10 1.25%	3 3 0.75%	400 1376÷400 100%	3.44	Accepted
12iii.	Real Time News	176 704 44%	164 492 41%	40 80 10%	20 20 5%	400 1296÷400 100%	3.24	Accepted
12iv.	Availability Of Medium	150 600 37.5%	155 465 38.75%	61 122 15.25%	34 34 8.5%	400 1221÷400 100%	3.05	Accepted
12v.	Family/Peer Influence	166 664 41.5%	175 525 43.75%	38 76 9.5%	21 21 5.25%	400 1286÷400 100%	3.22	Accepted

**Source:** Field Survey, 2026..

Table 12 reveals the other factors that influenced audience media preference.189

representing 47.25% of respondents strongly agreed that trust is a factor that influences the essence of audience preference. 187 representing 46.75% respondents strongly agreed that real time news is also a factor that influences audience media preference of both companies in their PR practice. 176 representing 44% strongly agreed to referrals as a factor. In addition, 166 representing 41.5% strongly agreed to family/peer influence as a factor while 150 representing 37.5% of respondents strongly agreed to availability of the medium is an enabler in audience preference.

#### **4.3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This section discussed the findings based on the answers to the research questions as data was collected and collated. The media often employed by Coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC in engaging in PR practice, the medium employed by both organisations, the extent the media adopted by the organizations are preferred by their audience and the other factors that influenced audience media preference. Table 6 and 7 gave answer to research question 1, which media are often used by Coca-Cola Nigeria PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC often used to engage in public relations practice. A high respondents agreed that social media and internet are the medium often employed by both organizations in engaging audience as they practice their PR. Television, radio and print news are other medium employed by the organizations. To a large extent the public relations Practice of both companies anchors on the medium they use as their communication channel.

Table 8 and 9 gave answer to research question 2. Which of the old and new media do the organizations prefer? A high respondents agreed that new media platforms are often used by both organisation in their public relations practice. The findings are in line with Asemah (2019) who suggested that various avenues such as television, press releases, social media platforms etc. goes along way in determining the success or failure of a public relations outing or practice.

Table 10 gave answers to research question three, To what extent are the media adopted by the organizations are preferred by the audience, table 10 showed that social media is most used and accepted platform, followed by television which indicates importance of television as a medium for public relations practice. This shows that the respondents still sees the huge importance of tradition media as a channel of communication and public relations practice of both companies. while table 10 gave solution to research question number four, that asked the essence of the audience preference of the media used by the organizations to reach out. A high percentage of the respondents agreed to and accepted the fact that trust as well as brand

royalty influence the choice and preference of media the organizations use in engaging their audience as regards to public relations practice. Availability of the medium and the ability to access news and information are also of high importance. Family and peers also play a role in influencing the audience in their media preference of both companies engaging with them.

### **5.1. CONCLUSION**

As a matter of fact, the rate of changes in today's business environment is fast, faster, and affects a larger number of persons globally than at any other time in history. Yet despite all these changes, there is still one that is constant, that is public relations (PR). And this is why public relations should be included as a top management function for effective reputation management in any organization. The empirical data and facts from this study provide strong evidence that the media an organization uses in public relations practice affects the engagement of stakeholders with the organization. The study shows that in the case study of Coca-Cola PLC and Nigeria Breweries PLC, the use of new media and social media in particular is the audience preferred medium in engaging with the companies in their public relations practice. Additionally, based on the findings it could be observed that the traditional media like television and radio are still on top of the audience preference despite the evolution of digital media. Finally, there is a gain in harmonizing both media in consultation with stakeholders so as to enable public relations managers and their audience to always be on the same page.

### **5.2. CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

This study makes several important contributions to communication and public relations field:

**1. Contextual Insight:** By focusing on these two different multinational organizations, it is significant because most of their audience, customers, employees, operational head offices and factories are in Ikeja, Lagos state, where the researcher sampled opinions, conducted and collected data. It shows that the same customers or audience can be loyal with different organizations with different products and services. As regards to organizations' wealth and pronounced audience disparities, this study provides a much-needed professional engagement perspective. It highlights how media and the medium of engagement with organizations offered insights that are directly applicable to management team and organizational

policymakers in a similar contexts.

**2. Theoretical Integration:** The study advances existing literatures by integrating two different theoretical frameworks to explain how the media both organisations employed in their public relations practice is dependent on the audience preference including the medium and channel of engagement. This multidimensional approach not only clarifies the communication and public relations strategies and mechanisms at work, but also underscores the role of audience in fostering long term social engagement and public relations practice by firms or organizations.

### **5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Public relations managers, practitioners and consultants should always watch and monitor the trends and fall in line with their audience and their choice of media while engaging with them.
2. Organizations should train, develop and equip their public relations departments with modern communication technology and tools to effectively engage their audience with their choice of media in order to enhance their productivity and service to their customer or audience.
3. The traditional media should be given more attention, incorporate into digital media, since the audience still sees as a good medium of engagement and channel of communication with their stakeholders.

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