

THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION ON PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study strove to collate and analyse data from precisely 388 respondents to structured questionnaires administered on Public Relations Practitioners in both paid employment and consultancy services, Television and other media Executives, companies executives which cut across small, medium, and large scale outfits; and selected members of the public in the cities of Lagos, Abuja, Enugu and Port Harcourt where commercial activities are in the front burner. Similarly, the available literature was reviewed.

A comparative study was equally conducted on some companies, especially the small scale firms which due to lack of fund have not been able to carry out their public relations activities / programmes through the television and some other ones, mostly the highly-monetized blue chip organizations which have over the years been employing the television in the implementation of most of their public relations programmes. The attendant impacts of the use and non-use of this virile electronic medium on the entire activities of these two categories of companies vis-a-vis their perceptions by members of the public were used for the analysis and discussions to validate or otherwise, the propositions made.

It is worthy of note that in spite of the attendant limitations of the study, there was yet a palpable revelation that every organisation, be it large scale, medium scale small-scale or even a one-man show needs the services of the television in not only

communicating its activities to its respective publics but also in effectively positioning itself in the market, especially in a highly competitive environment. There have been copious evidences that the public relations activities of an organisation aired through the television are better appreciated and espoused by members of the target audience. This fact as revealed by the research, does not rule out or completely carpet the effects of other media in the above - the line and below - the - line categories as they too stand out in their various areas of influence.

The salient motivating factors that often inform the choice of television in executing public relations communication activities are located in its (television) programmes mode. These are discussed under Function, Format and Target Audience.

The study equally supplied relevant information on the profiles of the users of television which can further help its (television) owners to develop and improve theories and practices that would make the medium serve the interests of the users and general public.

Albeit, it is obvious that the use of television has greatly influenced the activities of public relations in both government and private organizations in Nigeria, there are still pockets of problems militating against its optimal patronage by public relations practitioners in the execution of their communication programmes. Some of these problems have to do with the high costs of television air time and programmes production, the transient nature of the medium's broadcast messages and

infrastructural deficiency of the populace (that is the supposed target audience) among others.

Considering the great impact the medium of television has over the years been having on the overall activities of public relations in Nigeria, further studies need to be carried out with a view to evolving a more efficient, effective and vibrant television programming that would further give some impetus to the practice of public relations in Nigeria.