



Use of New Media & Dialogic Strategy: Case Study of Select State Government and Private Organizations in Nigeria

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Abstract

This is a comparison study that investigates the extent to which select private organization; United Bank for Africa (UBA) and government organization; Lagos State government in Nigeria use websites and Facebook dialogically to engage, build and sustain relationships with their publics. The study adopted a case study design and combination of qualitative and quantitative content analysis method to examine the presence and use of Kent and Taylor five dialogical principles in the organization-public relationship. Findings show that private organization incorporated more dialogical features and principles of dialogic loop on web and Facebook than government institution. Also, the private institution uses new media to build and sustain relationships with its public while government organization is more concerned with managing its reputation than sustaining and nurturing relationship with its publics as it has more contents on web and Facebook. Also, the government institution is lacking in dialogic loop and return visit.

Keywords: Social media; Website; Dialogic strategy; Government public relations; Organization-Public relationship

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Introduction

In a rapidly changing environment, the adoption of internet technologies in public relations offer greater opportunities for practitioners and their various publics/stakeholders in managing effective and long-lasting relationship for mutual benefits [1].

The new media has significantly transformed the pattern of communication from one-way flow to a two-way interactive and conversation pattern. Moreover, the increasing ubiquity of social media and its two-way symmetrical attributes mark significant turn in communication beyond just sending information to people to an interactive and dialogical participatory culture [2]. Thus, signifying a shift from traditional approach of public relations practice to a more conversational public relations practice [3, 4].

Beyond two-way symmetric, dialogical theory of public relations emphasizes that the only ethical communication is the one based on genuine concern, empathy, mutuality acknowledgement, commitment, humility and trust [5]. Thus, dialogical communication is a mutually beneficial and dependent relationship that requires reciprocity and continuous engagement. Hence, social media and website have become

key communication tools for such participatory and balanced communication between organizations and their various publics [6].

Literatures have established that the shift to dialogical strategy has created a critical challenge to public relations practitioners [7]. Only few organizations and practitioners in the world have fully embraced the use new media and dialogic communication strategy due to fear, lack of ROI (return on investment) metrics, misunderstanding and underestimation of the media channel, particularly misperception of practitioners and management control constraint which have limited the effectiveness of these tools to facilitate a dialogical communication [8]. In 2015, Uzuegbunam, Duru and Ekwenchi mentioned lack of new media literacy and training as the key challenge inhibiting of use of new media among Nigerian public relations practitioners. However, the narrative is changing now as organizations both profits and non-profits have recognized the unending opportunities of the internet and social media especially in engaging and facilitating dialogic communication with their stakeholders and have incorporated it as one of its key communication tools [9]. However, the proper use of these communication tools for

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dialogical public relations remains a big challenge.

Researchers from different part of the world have investigated the existence of Kent and Taylor (1983, 2002) dialogic principles in organization-publics relationship using different approaches and strategies with similar findings that organizations and PR practitioners are yet to put all the dialogic principles into practice. Vural et al. (2022) investigated how Izmir Metropolitan Municipality, the third largest city in Turkey, uses its social media accounts as a dialogical tool of communication and found that Municipality social media accounts are not dialogical. Though the social media accounts have high followers' rate and are successful in 4 dialogic principles of ensuring revisits, ease of interface, keeping visitors and usefulness of information, the accounts do not support dialogue communication as it was lacking in dialogic loop principle which therefore put the company in a negative light before the people.

Similarly, Sunday, Obia and Simon (2018) also investigated the extent to which Nigerian government websites adopt dialogic principles for effective relationship building with the citizens by content analysing 24 websites belonging to the Federal ministries (parastatals) and the state house. Results of the investigation showed that the websites have only usefulness of information for the media and ease of interface. Significantly, the websites were lacking in other principles like usefulness of information to the citizens public, dialogic loop and conversation. Therefore, the researchers concluded that Nigerian Government websites are not dialogical in nature as it practices a passive two-way communication process. In addition, the researchers discovered that though the government websites have some features like contact information, coat of arms, phone numbers and email addresses, logo of institutions, audio and video contents, the links in the contents lack functional use as the websites showed no information when the link were clicked. Thus, the researchers submitted that the websites exist only for cosmetic purposes [10].

Also, Lane and Bartlett (2016) in their research "Why Dialogic Principles Don't Make it in Practice and What We can do about it" investigated the occurrence of Kent and Taylor (2002) dialogical principles of empathy, propinquity, commitment, mutuality and risk among 17 Australian contemporary PR practitioners and found that many of the practitioners lack the understanding of dialogic communication. Also, they found that public relations practitioners operate within situational constraints of lack of time and need to meet up with given deadline as key constraints that make it impossible for them to practice dialogic communication. Part of the constraints that was discovered also include the issue of power i.e., influence/control of the organization on the function and form of communication. This means that PR practitioners have no power to determine the conduct of dialogue within them and the target audience as it is determined by the organization/employer. This implies that, the communication pattern between an organization and its various public is a function of the organization's management, goals and pattern of operations.

In another related study conducted in the United State, McAllister approached the investigation from another perspective by

analysing the website of non-profit organizations and found that many organizations are weak in conserving visitors, generating return and in dialogic loop. Meanwhile the company performed well in usefulness of information and ease of features [11].

Also, Capriotti et al. (2019) content analysed the Facebook pages of selected 157 Latin America Organizations (from Peru, Argetina, Mexico, Brazil Colombia and Chile) to determine how the companies foster dialogue and sustain relationships with their publics through social media. Findings showed that the companies do not use social media to create and sustain relationships; rather they use it for disseminating information on business contents and increasing their online presence (visibility). The level of interactivity or dialogue between organizations and the publics is very low, hence they adopt non-dialogical and unidirectional communication approach.

In a recent comparative study and contrary view, Ayiku and Tandoh (2020) conducted a focus group discussion with 30 practitioners' from 6 private and public institutions (3 private, 3 public) in Ghana and in-depth analysis of their websites. They found that while public institutions utilize their websites to build good relationships with their publics, and private institutions are focused on increasing sales and maximizing profits. Specifically, public institutions use their platform to train, inform, and educate the public's therefore create and develop good cordial relationships with them. Though public institutions build relationships and interact with customers, Ayiku et.al could not establish the extent at which the institutions practice dialogical principles. On the other hand, private institutions use their platforms for profit maximization by running advertisements. Findings also revealed that organization's ethics to a large extent dictates the content and dialogical communication that institutions share on their websites.

While researchers have investigated the adoption and existence of Kent and Taylor dialogic principles in both profits and non-profits organizations using various perspective and in different countries, including Nigeria, the similarities in the research findings that organizations use non-dialogical strategy revealed the need to investigate the phenomenon further. Likewise, Ayinku el al. findings on public institutions using their websites for relationship building while private is concerned with sales also motivates the need for comparative research from Nigeria perspective [12].

Also, recently, findings established that the percentage of Nigeria companies that now rely and use social media and website for its business purpose is on the increase. Tobi Asehinde (2020) founder/CEO of one of the renowned Digital Marketing Skill Institute in Lagos, Nigeria and United State of America submitted that "over a whopping 90 percent of Nigerian businesses now rely on social media platforms, target and communicate with consumers online". He added that social media platforms to Nigerian business are beyond information dissemination and achieving connectedness. Instead, it has become an "an inevitable dominant tool strategically used in building customers' relationship Similarly, some state governments and federal government parastatals are not left out. Hence, this paper investigates the extent to which organizations in Nigeria

use websites and social media dialogically. Specifically, it will examine and compare the dialogic features of a government and private organization's websites and Facebook platforms in order to determine which of them uses dialogical strategy to build and sustain relationships with their publics. Hence, the study will fill the lacuna on comparison research on dialogical strategy in Nigerian by answering the questions below.

1. What are the dialogical features in private and government Websites and Facebook platforms?
2. Which of the organization (private or government) uses dialogical strategy more to build relationships with its publics?

Dialogic Theory of Public Relations

Dialogic theory represents a change in public relations practice from monologue to negotiation (dialogue). Dialogue is from a Greek word "dia" which means through and "logos" which refers to creating meaning [13]. In short, dialogue refers to an authentic way of creating mutual understanding between or among people through self-disclosure creation of meaning, trust, mutual respect and equality [14].

Kent and Taylor (1998, p. 325) defined dialogic communication between organization-publics as "any negotiated exchange of ideas and opinions". Thus, the theory bothers on building and maintaining good relationship with key publics through effective use of social media in cultivating relationship that is mutually dependent.

Specifically, Kent et al. (1998) submitted that dialogue is not about agreement, rather reaching a "mutually satisfying position" through open negotiated (exchange) conversation. Thus, organizations should view dialogic communication as give and take, by allowing stakeholders involved in the negotiation process so as to express themselves honestly and openly. In this regard, dialogue is based on the Martin Buber text of "I and Thou" which translates that the prerequisite of human interactions should be stimulated by genuine concern for the other person, intimacy and true acceptance of others [15].

Dialogical Communication, Social media and the World Wide Web

Since dialogic theory is an extension and improvement of two-way symmetrical model of Gruning and Hunt (Vural et al., 2022), it needs the internet technologies as key tools to drive engaging and interactive organization-public relationships. The wider popularity and acceptability of the social media and World Wide Web in private and government institutions present them as collaborative tools efficient noted that the internet is an "open door" through which institutions can create a dialogical relationship with its publics.

Likewise, Taylor and Sen Das (2010) cited in Akwari (2017) espoused that the internet present a "unique space" for organizations and PR practitioners to continuously engage its publics. Impliedly, Kent and Taylor dialogical principles are premised on the use of the internet technologies; particularly World Wide Web (Sunday et al., 2018) and social media platforms

to drive enriching organization-public relationship (Vural et al., 2022). Kent and Taylor are of the opinion that "the WWW offers a multi-channel environment where negotiation between organizations and publics may occur" [16].

To measure if an organization-public relationship is dialogical, Kent and Taylor developed five principles of measurement below. These principles are operationalized to suit the purpose of this research as they formulate the coding variables for our content analysis.

Dialogic loop refers to the continuous and interactive two-way communication through the features of the websites or social media accounts. These features enable mutual conversation and feedback loop where the public can ask questions about their concerns or raise issues or suggestions and get quick and immediate feedback from the organization (Vural et al. 2022). To achieve this, organizations assign capable employee to be on standby for a quick and effective communication (Sunday et al., 2018). This is measured based on the following: opportunity for public to comment on post, response to publics enquiry, timeliness of response to publics issues or problems, ability to solve public issues or problems, links to other social media chats and offline contact.

Usefulness of Information this is about the relevance and usefulness of the information available on the organizations' websites and social media accounts to the target publics. Likewise, the information on the platforms must be properly structured, accessible and should address the issues, concerns and needs of the various organizations' public This principle is measured in line with Sunday et al. (2018) variables which include mission statement, vision, press release, organization's history, logo of the institution/organization, structure of the information/ accessibility to the public. For government platforms, we will also look coat of arms and usefulness of information to both media public and citizen public.

Ease of interface this explains that the website and platform should be easy to navigate and understand. Vural et al. (2022) submitted that it is crucial that visitors do not experience difficulties in accessing information on the platforms and the most of the content should be more text than graphics as texts load faster than graphics. Also, the platforms should contain links to the most important and useful information on the first page, there should be a search box to find information, drop down menu and site map (Sunday et al., 2018). All these formulate the variables of measurement for both government and private website and platforms.

Revisit for visitors to revisit a platform, it must contain useful and attractive content and interface that can keep visitors. Hence, the platforms should up-to-date information, new topics, question and answer section where visitors get responses from experts, free and downloadable information in PDF format, exciting and special announcement These variables form the metrics for evaluation including free gifts or coupon, sales promotion or promo.

Keeping Visitors Vural et al. (2022) explained that organizations must avoid sponsored advertisement or place them in strategic

locations because they obstruct and slow down the proper functioning of the site. Hence, sponsored advertisement if cannot be avoid should be placed in strategic location that will not affect the purpose of users when they visit.

Methodology

The goal of this paper is to examine and compare the dialogical features on a private and public organization website and Facebook and determine which of them uses dialogic strategy in dealing with its publics. To achieve this, the researchers conducted an in-depth qualitative and quantitative content analysis using Kent and Taylor five dialogical principles.

Private institution in this study is represented by financial institution while public institution is limited to state government as other researches have analysed the websites of 25 federal government agencies (Sunday et al. 2018) as well as the webpages of the 36 state governments in Nigeria (Oni, Okuneye & Mbarika 2016). Findings from these investigations revealed that Nigerian government websites lack dialogical loop and operates one way communication system. Also, the study established that out of the 36 states in Nigeria, only 23 state government have online presence, while only Lagos state government has timely and updated contents on its webpage.

On this note, this research adopts a case study research design as it enables the researchers to focus on specific institutions to carry out a thorough analysis of the webpages and Facebook platforms of a selected private and public organization. According to MCCombs (2020) case study design is a specific and detailed study of a subject, phenomenon or an organization efficient for comparing, describing, understanding and evaluating different aspects of a research problem. Thus, Lagos state government was purposefully selected to represent public organization as findings have established it is the only state that has updated information and increased online presence in Nigeria (Oni et al. 2016). Besides, Lagos state government is also appropriate for this study as it is the most popular, most populated and a leading state in Nigeria that is advanced in use of internet technology among other states in the country, hence use public relations.

On the other hand, United Bank for Africa (UBA) represented private organizations in Nigeria. A report by Abubakar (2018) indicated that UBA is one of the first banks on the list of banks that are technological inclined in Nigeria.

The researchers used coding guide structured in line with Kent and Taylor five dialogic principles as the research instruments.

The coding guide has five parts based on the principles and 33 items scale in total while each part has not less than 5 items under it. The coding was done in a period of four weeks in Landmark University Campus in the month of March, while the period of analysis covered two months; January and February, 2022. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS version 26 and presented in simple frequency percentage while the qualitative data was analysed and presented through in-depth, expository and interpretative analysis.

Analysis

Principle 1: Dialogic Loop

This principle was investigated by examining the presence of the following features in the table 1 below on the selected private and government institution’s websites and Facebook platforms (Table 1).

Examining the official website of Lagos state government, findings showed the presence of only variable 2 (link to social media accounts) and variable 5 (Offline contact/emergency) on Lagos state government websites while the remaining variables are not included. You can easily connect to the government institution’s Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or Interest accounts from the website with just a click of a button. Also, the government institution always includes a link to its website in the stories shared on Facebook so that when users click, they can connect to the state government official web page. To confirm the functionality of the links, they were tested and found functioning.

Likewise, there are offline emergency contacts of some agencies that members of the public can call when there is an emergency. Investigation further revealed that Lagos state government put out emergency contacts of up 20 agencies under it some of which include agencies on Tax Issues, Fire Safety, The Nigerian Police, Land Issue, Fake Drugs/Narcotics, Vehicle Registration/Driving License, NAFDAC, NDLEA, LAWMA, BRT, LASEMA etc. Meanwhile, the website does not include event calendar, opportunity to fill out survey or vote in order to express opinion on an issue, and link to top officials’ contacts. However, there is an official email address where public can send mail directly to the Lagos state government. Also, there is no use of chat box or opportunity to chat with human on the web.

On the other hand, proper observation of United Bank for Africa (UBA) website revealed the full presence of four variables out of six; variable 1 (Opportunity for users to fill out survey/vote

Table 1. Variables of dialogic loop.

	Website	Facebook
V1	Opportunity for users to fill out survey/vote in order to express opinion on an issue	Opportunity for users to respond to institution post
V2	Link to social media account/webpage	Institution’s response to user’s question/inquiry
V3	Link to contact of top officials	Timeliness of response to public question/enquiry
V4	Event Calendar	Ability to solve users complain or query
V5	Offline contact/emergency number	Events Calendar
V6	Use of chatbot/direct human agent	Use of chatbot/direct human agent

Source: Researcher’s field work (2022)

in order to express opinion on an issue), 2 (link to social media accounts), 5 (Offline contact) and variable 6 (use of chat box/direct human agent interaction). The private institution has the phone contacts and office address of its head office branch, Marina Lagos on the web, a form which users can fill to express their concerns or opinion on a subject. This form is titled “GET IN TOUCH”. Also, there was a slight presence of variable 3 (Link to contact of top officials) as one out of about fifteen top officials has her official email contact on the bio-data displayed on the page.

On the Facebook Platform of Lagos State government, findings revealed the presence of only one variable (V1- opportunity for users to respond to institution’s posts) out of the five that were examined throughout the period of the investigation. Members of the public have the access to comment, express their opinion, place complain on the institution social media post, but there is no engagement or response to users’ posts. For instance, a recent post on Lagos State government Facebook page on Feb 28th, 2022 on property assessment triggered a user to lay a complain on property related issue and there was no response or feedback to the post. Even if the user didn’t channel the complaint to the appropriate agency in charge of property management, he could have been advised on how to go about his complains so the issue can be resolved or attended to. Further investigation on other posts showed that the Lagos state government is lacking in dialogic loop as there is no response mechanisms or interactive features in place where the institution engages or dialogue with the citizens either on both web and Facebook. Thus, we can say that the public institution engages in monologue or one-way communication process.

On the other hand, findings revealed the presence of four variables out of the five examined on UBA Facebook page. The variables include opportunity for users to respond to institution post, institution’s response to user’s question/inquiry, timeliness of response to public question/enquiry and ability to solve users complain or query. Aside that the private institution often responds to user’s complain or post, they were timely and compassionate in their response. The tone of the response message is empathetic as it indicates genuine concern for users’ situation or complains and willingness to assist in resolving the issue. Though the messages are automated, it is evident that they are capable of solving users complains as the responses appropriately address each complaint and are personalized to each complainer. Also, in case users need further assistance, they are advised on how to redirect the complaint to the appropriate channel for further attention. Thus, this is a good way on building and sustaining relationship with customers. Further, it was discovered that the private institution has a chat box; Leo on its webpage and Facebook platform. This means the users can engage in dialogue with the chat box. Interact directly with human agent to have their issues resolved without visiting the branch. Screenshots below showed the organization-public interaction between UBA and its public and one way communication flow between Lagos state government and its public (Figures 1-4).

Principle 2: Usefulness of Information

This principle was tested in two variants. The first was based

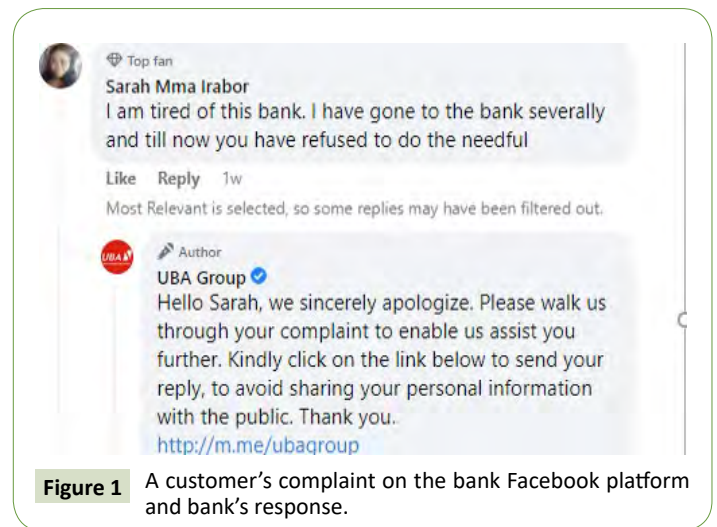


Figure 1 A customer’s complaint on the bank Facebook platform and bank’s response.

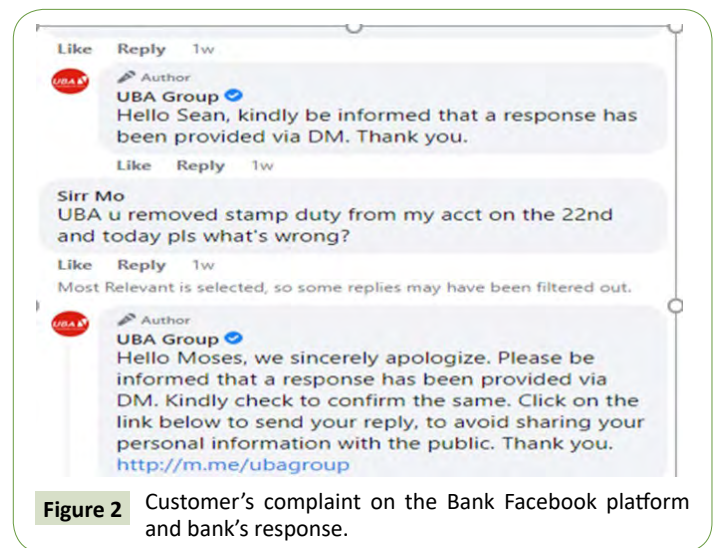


Figure 2 Customer’s complaint on the Bank Facebook platform and bank’s response.

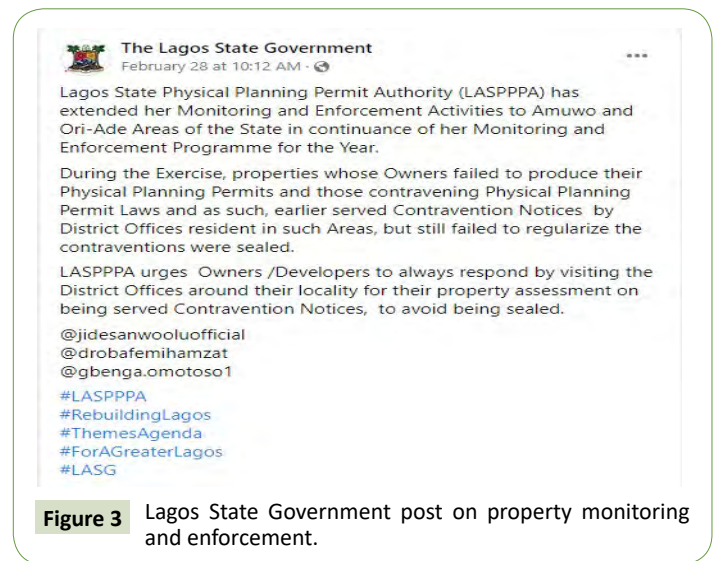


Figure 3 Lagos State Government post on property monitoring and enforcement.

on usefulness of information to the public and usefulness of information to the media as categorized by Sunday et al. (2018). To further determine the usefulness of information to both the public and the media, we adopted and modified Capriotti, Zeler

Ismaeel Olanrewaju Abuu Jaabir
DISTRESSED BUILDING AT 182 BAMGBOSE BY OSHODI STREET, LAGOS ISLAND.

The above-mentioned distressed building beside Ola Fatiah Central Mosque, Bamgbose Street has now become a matter of serious concern.

We had earlier reported this incident to the Authority sometime in year 2019, and the building was inspected by some personnel from the Lagos State Government. However, we were told to allow the then occupants to evacuate the building, which had been done. Since then, there is no one who has been occupying the building but to date, the needful has not been done namely; do a due diligence and subsequent recommendation to demolish.

At the early morning of 26th of February, 2022, about 7:45am, a large chunk of rubbles as a result of the distressed state of the building fell and had a big impact on the building (mosque beside) it.

Leaving this structure standing without any hope of demolition is posing a big risk to the lives and properties around it.

We implore the Government to take necessary action to prevent unnecessary loss of live and properties and we trust that the team saddled with this responsibility will approach this matter with deep sincerity.

Figure 4 A user's complaint on the above post.

and Oliviera (2019) content category table below as it is suitable to the purpose of this study which is also to determine the dialogical nature of the content disseminated by the selected private and public institution. The content category has three main dimension which includes business topics: these include posts that has to do with the commercial, corporate or business activities of the organization, corporate social responsibility (CSR) topics: refers to topics that concerns corporate social responsibility/daily activities of the institution while the third dimension is context topics which had to do with the general sector or business sector or industry in which the organization functions. For the purpose of this study, the three dimensions were analysed only for the private institution while only two; CSR and context related topics were used to examine the public institution since it is not a commercial or business driven organization (Tables 2-4).

On the first variant, findings showed that many of the information posted on the selected public institution website and Facebook platforms are useful to the media to write good stories about the institution's activities, administration and performance

Table 2. Content category.

Content	Dimension	Aspects
	Business Topics	Strategy, result, offer, innovation
	CSR Topics	Integrity, work, citizenship
	Context topics	General, sector related and relational

Source: Capriotti et al. (2019)

Table 3. Frequency of post.

Institution	Count post in Jan	Count of post in Feb	Total
LASG	220 (86%)	235 (87%)	455 (86.5%)
UBA	36 (14%)	35 (13%)	71 (13.5%)
Total	256 (100%)	270 (100%)	526 (100%)

Source: Researcher's field work 2022

Table 4. Usefulness of information on facebook.

Institution	Context topics	CSR topics	Business
LASG	383 (92%)	72 (93.5%)	N/A
UBA	30 (42.5%)	5 (6.5%)	36 (51%)
Total	413	77	

Source: Researcher's field work 2022

in office while only a few are useful to the public. Specifically, analysis revealed that the government institution disseminates more posts on its web and Facebook showing the daily activities of the state government within and outside the state. Table 4 above showed that the Lagos state government had a total of 86.5% (n=455) posts during the 2-month period of analysis while the private institution (UBA) had a total of 13.5% (n=71) posts. Furthermore, it was observed that larger percent of information posted by the public institution are context topic related (92%) showing government daily activities like award nomination for best staff, industry partnership, dissemination of information on some new policies, governor's visit to other agencies or parastatals or receiving visit of top government officials or dignitaries either local or international, birthday messages to top government officials, information on on going project, quotes of the day, organized conferences or seminars for government staff and other general and industry related topics.

On the other hand, UBA had more business-related post 51% (n=36), context related post 42.5% (n=30) and CSR related posts 6.5% (n=5). The business posts of the private institutions are advertising and promoting their products and services like how to access business and personal loan, use of USSD code for self-service banking like block card in case of emergency, check balance, buy airtime or data, incentivized campaign, free offers, promos, online betting and games e.g.; Predict and Win King of Africa Football game, valentine promos etc. While the context-related posts are direct marketing communications also designed to promote the bank's business and reputation. They include new month/week message, TGIF, motivational posts etc. Also, the direct marketing communications are also meant to build and nurture the organization relationship with its various public. This is similar with the public institution as its context related topic are also designed to manage its reputation.

Furthermore, we found that the public institution has more CSR related posts (93.5%) on Facebook than the private institution (6.5%) and this kind of posts for governments are more on the health and traffic management of the state like raising awareness on drug abuse, eye care and disease (Glaucoma), organizing free seminars on eye care treatment and mental wellness and traffic diversion. Significantly, it can be deduced that the state government made health wellness campaign a priority as larger percent of its quotes of the day were on awareness of Glaucoma and eye care treatment, drug abuse. Also, there were regular information update educating the public on traffic diversion and road work schedule and these are quite commendable. This communication focus is in tandem with the Lagos State government 7 pillar themes; traffic management, transportation and health and environment which are the first two themes in the 7 pillars guiding the government's activities. However, more still need to be done on adopting dialogical strategy and posting

useful information to the public by the government compared to the rate at which the selected private institution shares regular information that are of beneficial to both the organization and the public.

In addition, the Lagos state government often share detailed and textual information in its posts in form of news story, news features, opinion article or news recap and they all combination of pictures, words, graphical illustration, images, text and sometimes recorded and live videos while the private institution uses more graphics and images for communication.

The second variant used to test this principle includes use of coat of arm/logo of the organization, history of the organization and press release. We found that Lagos state government use the state coat of arm of its state and images of 7 pillar themes as its profile picture on Facebook and background image on web while the private institution UBA used the logo of its organization on both media channels. Also, both have the organization history while only government institution has the presence of press release on web and Facebook. Also, progress report on on-going project was found on the Lagos state government website and this information are accessible to members of the public.

Principle 3: Return Visit

This principle was tested with 3 variables that were examined only on the webpage of both institutions. The variables include bookmark, request for information via email and update on organization news. From analysis, Lagos state government website has the presence of just 2 variables; bookmarking and update on organization's news. As stated earlier, the government institution is efficient in disseminating updated information about the organization activities and ongoing projects both on its website and Facebook platform. Also, it often shared stories with link to its websites which easier for users to access its contents and shares articles of interests with other users.

In the same vein, the selected private institution also has the presence only 2 variables which include bookmarking and request of information via email. Also, there is a request for information form titled "Get in touch". Aside this, UBA has another form through which users can request for information. This is titled; "How can we help you?". With this, users can request for information via email and submit his or her email address to the institution. By submitting information, users are asked to subscribe to the institution newsletters and other information. However, there is no synchronization between the content shared on the webpage and the one shared on Facebook. In other words, UBA doesn't share the same story on Facebook and web or include links on posts shared on Facebook so users can connect to its webpage via like the public institution does.

Principle 4: Keeping Visitors

We tested this principle on websites with 4 variables that include site loading time, date of last update, ease of navigating websites and found that both the private and government institution have the presence of 3 variables out of 4.

We discovered that the Lagos State government engages in daily update of its website and Facebook posts. Thus, there is current

date of last update which usually is the current date. Also, the website is very easy to navigate and access information and site loading time is fast once there is a strong network but there is no option for users to sign up for newsletter. Meanwhile UBA also has fast site loading time, ease of navigating website and option to sign up for communications. The webpage doesn't include the last date of update and information on the webpage did not change all through the period of investigation. Impliedly, the Lagos state government disseminate more information and has more posts that the private institution however the usefulness of the information is lower than usefulness to the media.

Principle 5: Ease of Interface

We tested this principle on the selected institution webpage using 6 variables which include search box, link to important information, having most important information on first page, content downloadable in PDF format, drop down menu, and website map.

We found that both Lagos state and UBA has the presence 5 variables out of 6. These variables for Lagos state government are search box, link to important information, having most important information on first page, content downloadable in PDF format; drop down menu while UBA has same except content in a downloadable format and including site map.

The only missing variable from Lagos state government webpage was site map. We saw contents like Lagos state financial statement from 2015- 2020, poverty report, household survey report, 2022 appropriation law, budget performance report etc. all in a downloadable format on the webpage. Likewise, there are links to important information on the first page on the site, there is drop down menu, but no site map. Meanwhile UBA website has a sitemap and other variables excluding content in downloadable PDF format. However, the webpage is well structured, loads faster, easy to access information and opportunity to request for information. Likewise, the website is detailed and has useful and relevant information to both new, existing and non-customers of the bank. Also, we found that Lagos state government webpage is more textual but less graphical to that of the private institution.

Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

RQ1: What are the dialogical features in private and government Websites and Facebook platforms?

The purpose of this research is to compare the dialogic features in selected private and government institutions' websites and Facebook platforms and determine which of them has more dialogical features and practices dialogical public relations than the other. Thus, the answer to the first research question is presented in the analysis testing Kent and Taylor (1993) principles 1, 2 and 5; dialogic loop, ease of interface and usefulness of information.

With the introduction of new media, websites and social media have become essential tools to facilitate effective and dialogical public relations practice. They help organizations maintain interpersonal relationships with their publics (Kent & Taylor, 1998/2003) through functional websites (Sunday et al. 2018) and dialogic social media interactivity.

The result of our findings showed that private institution incorporated more dialogical features in its websites and Facebook than the public/government institution. We saw the presence of use of chatbot, availability of human agent for dialogic communication, opportunity for users to comment on posts and get feedback almost immediately, ability to solve users complains and enquiry, opportunity for users to respond to post and express their opinion on issues as well request for help and further information on private institution Facebook and web all which are lacking in that of the public institution. These feedback features in private institution facilitates a feedback platform that enables the private organization to gather information on public's values, needs, concerns, aspirations and expectations, while the public institution operates a passive and un-interactive communication system. Aside comments/opinion box, the public institution didn't perform well in incorporating dialogic loop features in terms of enabling newsletters, responding to public complains and enquiries on web and Facebook. It is important to state that the public institution didn't do totally bad or poorly as there were emergency call lines for up 15 agencies through which the public can reach out to them. Also, there was an official email address on the webpage through which users can send mail to the government, however, timeliness of feedback and ability to solve users complains and enquiry could not be determined.

However, public organization did very well in terms of disseminating updated information and in ease of interface. Their websites and Facebook platforms are updated on daily basis and have the highest number of posts throughout the period of study. Hence, they did considerably well to an extent in usefulness of information to the media and to the public. Though they had more of context related and CRS posts which are strategically designed to manage its reputation in the public, they were posts educating the public on traffic policies and management. This finding corroborates Sunday et al (2018) investigation where they content analysed 25 Nigerian federal government websites and found that the websites have more features on ease of interface and usefulness of information to the media and less of dialogic loop. Thus, they concluded that the government performed passive two-way communication rather over active two-way communication.

On the other hand, findings also showed some similarity in the information disseminated on the websites of both the private and public institution as they both target not only existing customers/users, but also new and prospective individuals that may not be familiar with the state activities or the bank's products/services. This finding corroborates Akwari (2017) research where he found that both top 50 PR websites and bottom 50 PR websites in Ghana used their websites to target existing and prospective public. Also, both institutions utilize their webpage and Facebook platforms for reputation management. However, the private institution takes it further for business purpose; to advertise its products and services.

RQ2: Which of the organization (private or government) uses dialogical strategy more to build relationships with its publics?

This research question is answered using analysis of the five dialogical principles. We cannot determine which organization

uses dialogical strategy to build relationship with its publics without re-examining dialogic loop, usefulness of information, in combination with keeping visitors, return visits and ease of interface. A user will only revisit either a social media page or web if he found the information in there useful to him, and finds solutions to his problem/issues. Also, if a webpage is not functioning well in terms of ease of use, easy access to information and easy navigation, it is very likely such user will stop visiting the site.

Our findings revealed that both public and private organizations did very well in keeping visitors in terms of fast loading time, ease of navigation and having important information on webpage. However, the private organization did better in return visit as it has option for users to sign up for newsletters, request for information, use site map on web and access information easily because it has lesser information (on web and Facebook) which are more useful to public than the media. The private institution web is well-structured and the graphical images, design, communication concepts, brand colour and design are beautiful, attractive and appealing to the public than that of the public institution. While the public organization has too many information, users could be bored with the excess information and found it uninteresting as it is more of text than graphics. Also, the information can be described as what the institution wants the publics to see and know rather than what the public may like to see. Also, the lack of dialogic loop; inability to solve publics complain and lack of interactivity limit the dialogical features on the web and Facebook platform of the institution. Rather than building and nurturing relationships with its publics, Nigerian public institution considers Facebook and web as news media through which public are informed about government activities and educated on traffic policies and management. This finding corroborates some aspect of Oni et al., (2016) analysis on Nigerian state government websites while some contradict. Oni et al. evaluated the websites of the 36 state governments in Nigeria to determine the level of their conformity to national IT policy strategy and found that while almost all 23 states in Nigeria focused on using their web to publicize their daily activities, only Lagos state government uses its website to educate the people on traffic and health related policies. Likewise, none of the state government provides option of online survey or submissions of online forms whatsoever. Similar to Oni's et al's findings, we also saw that Lagos state government has downloadable contents accessible to the public like budget review, financial appraisal etc. However, findings on citizen participation in governance and provision of online transactions like vehicle registration, tax payment are yet to be incorporated in the state government websites.

Furthermore, Ayinku et al. examined how public institutions in Ghana use their websites and found that they used the web to educate, inform, train its publics as well as develop cordial relationships. Though Nigerian state government uses their web and Facebook to inform and educate the people, there was no cordial relationship building between the two.

Summarily, public institution in Nigeria practices undemocratic and non-dialogical public relations through passive one way

communication. Also, the institution is more concerned with information dissemination and managing its reputation through context related and CRS posts rather than a participatory, empathetic and dialogical public relations practice [16].

Limitations and Recommendation

The crux of this research is to determine the institution that has more dialogical features on Facebook and web and that uses these features to facilitate dialogical public relations practice. This was achieved through in-depth qualitative content analysis

and quantitative content analysis of selected case study; Lagos state government and United Bank for Africa websites and Facebook platforms. Hence, the findings of this study are limited and should be generalized to other state governments in Nigeria with caution because Lagos state is perceived as a leading state in Nigeria with the highest population and technology advancement. Therefore, we recommend that further studies into dialogic strategy should consider examining the websites of more state governments in Nigeria using a quantitative approach and chi-square non-parametric test for comparison.

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