The Impact of New Means of Communication on Public Relations within Government Institutions

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Abstract
This study aims to investigate the impact of new communication channels on public relations practices within government institutions in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The research sample comprised 300 individuals who interacted with the Roads and Transport Authority in Dubai. The findings of the study revealed that a majority of the participants utilize these new communication channels when engaging with public relations departments in institutions. Moreover, a significant proportion of individuals interacting through these channels within the Roads and Transport Authority demonstrated susceptibility to their influence. Among the various new communication channels, Instagram emerged as one of the most widely utilized platforms within government institutions. Based on the research findings, the researcher recommends the provision of necessary resources and support to enhance the effectiveness of the public relations department in engaging with the public through electronic means. Additionally, it is advised to leverage the potential of various social media platforms to enhance organizational communication within institutions. Furthermore, the establishment of an internal and external social and administrative communication database for employees within institutions is recommended.
Keywords: New Media, Public Relations, Government Institutions, UAE

Introduction
Communication and interaction have long been integral aspects of human societies and institutions (Khaldun, 2008). Throughout history, various modes of communication, including verbal and written forms, have played crucial roles. The industrial revolution marked a turning point with the emergence of newspapers, radio, and television, paving the way for ongoing communication advancements (Ahmed et al., 2021a; 2021b). The discovery of the World Wide Web (www), commonly known as the Internet, represents a significant milestone that revolutionized information exchange and communication practices. This transformative event led to the advent of new media and alternative forms of communication, such as

websites and social networks, facilitating interactions between the public and institutions (Al Suwaidi, 2014; Alsharif et al., 2021).

In the context of public relations, strategic planning and meticulous implementation of programs and activities are essential to ensure smooth operations and enhance outcomes. Several previous studies have explored related topics, including Al-Luqmani's (2018) examination of public relations management for electronic media during times of crisis. This study emphasized the strategic role of public relations in preparing for and effectively addressing crises that pose threats to an institution's existence, activity, and competitiveness. Furthermore, Murad (2016) investigated the influence of new communication channels on the practice of public relations, aiming to identify the effects of new media on this field. Over time, public relations has evolved alongside global developments and changes across various domains, leading to accelerated technological interactions among societal forces, including countries, institutions, parties, and groups. Consequently, this has generated numerous challenges that necessitate effective public relations practices (Murad, 2016).

Research has also delved into managing an institution's image through new media. The process of constructing and reinforcing a positive institutional image constitutes a central objective of public relations, involving three key stages: image building, preservation, and correction (Affan, 2021). The emergence of new media has ushered in transformative changes in communication and media practices within contemporary society. These changes encompass the methods of producing, distributing, and consuming information, giving rise to new communication techniques and features (Ahmed et al., 2022b). The term "new media" has emerged to encapsulate these phenomena, characterized by interactive communication and diverse content, contrasting with the one-way mass communication and homogeneous content of the past (Affan, 2021).

Additionally, studies have explored the effectiveness of social media in public relations programs and activities (Ahmed et al., 2022a; Alsharif et al., 2022). Taha and Moussa (2021) focused on highlighting the most significant methods, techniques, and technological media employed in public relations activities and programs. Their study aimed to address the existing knowledge gap and limited utilization of social media by public relations departments and employees in various institutions, including the Federal Ministry of Culture and Information. Another study by Hammouda (2021) examined the use of social networks in activating public relations activities within the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Employing a descriptive approach, the study employed surveys and observations to investigate the extent to which public relations practitioners employed social media platforms. The findings indicated the effective utilization of social networking sites by the Public Relations Department for their activities (Hammouda, 2021).

The importance of this research lies in its focus on multimedia and its impact on public relations activities and programs within government institutions. Furthermore, it seeks to identify the influence of new means of communication on public relations practices within government organizations. This study aims to explore the impact of new media on public relations within government institutions. This study contributes to existing research in this field. This study aims to answer the following questions:

- To what extent do organizations use new media?
- What is the most used social media within government institutions?
- What is the impact of new media on public relations through dealing within institutions

Literature Review
The use of new media in public relations

Due to the media's significance, it has become imperative for public relations to leverage new media as a means to reach both internal and external audiences of an institution. Public relations utilize various electronic platforms, such as blogs, forums, electronic magazines, news sites, email, and social networking sites, to disseminate information to the public under normal circumstances and during times of crisis. The Public Relations Department aims to influence the target audience through its presence on these platforms.

The strategic mission of public relations becomes evident when new media is effectively utilized, as it contributes to resolving numerous issues and challenges faced by the institution while also endeavoring to prevent crises. Several studies have revealed that the use of new media by Public Relations Departments within institutions reaches a staggering percentage of 95.8%, emphasizing its substantial role. Furthermore, these studies indicated that the use of modern media significantly contributes to building the institution's reputation alongside other forms of media. This highlights the determination of public relations professionals in institutions to harness new media due to its immense importance in supporting diverse institutional activities (Abdel-Aty, 2015).

Communication methods employed in public relations through new media can be classified as follows, based on Badaracco's (2017) classification: internal communication means, including electronic text messages via mobile phones and internal digital reports for public relations; external communication means, facilitating discussions in blogs, chat rooms, and electronic communities, as well as utilizing electronic media such as online newspapers, and establishing two-way communication through social networks like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and others.

Veil and Petron (2015) categorized public relations methods for employing new media tools into main communication methods, involving addressing the crisis, denying it, providing excuses and justifications, offering compensation, and issuing apologies. Additionally, secondary communication methods encompass highlighting the founders' work, praising, and deflecting responsibility from the institution through new media and its platforms.

Selin (2017) identified suitable communication methods for new media, including submitting proposals and guidance through new media channels, issuing regular publications regarding the crisis and its resolution via social media platforms, building trustworthy communication relationships with the institution's audience, publishing advertisements and messages about the institution's capabilities on new platforms, and constructing an electronic public space to enhance the institution's reputation.

The Role of Public Relations in the New Media

In light of the significant advancements in communication technology, the presence of public relations within organizations and institutions has become an indispensable requirement for stability and development. Public relations now serve as a crucial pillar in the organizational structure of any institution.

The new media plays a vital role in enhancing public relations, particularly in government institutions, as observed through the attitudes and continuous efforts of public relations professionals to find the most effective ways and methods to serve customers and the public (Alsharif et al., 2023). Consequently, the role of public relations in new media necessitates guidance (Al-Shibl, 2014). It is crucial to identify new media applications used by

major private sector institutions and select the most suitable options among the various available means. Additionally, public relations professionals should utilize the most effective means of promotion, employing appropriate advertising mediums. Furthermore, public relations should incorporate new media into their five primary functions, including communication, media, administration, consulting, and marketing. Therefore, it is essential for public and private sector institutions to establish specialized and comprehensive internal units dedicated to new media under the guidance of public relations. Furthermore, institutions relying on new media should accurately assess their need for utilizing these means. When adopting new media, public and private sector institutions in public relations must have clear visions that define the precise tasks required before making a decision to employ them (Ahmed et al., 2023).

The impact of new media on public relations within institutions has undergone significant development through academic studies and the expertise of professionals in various areas, such as marketing development, product, price, promotion, distribution, services, sectoral sales, market research, planning and management, and promotional concepts, including advertising, commercial relations, direct marketing, product development, sales, and the development of public relations media and sales and customer services. All these services are now facilitated through online promotion, digital marketing, and online game marketing (Taha & Musa, 2021).

The Internet has revolutionized the field of public relations, altered not only communication methods but also expanded the scope of public relations as a whole. The Internet can adapt to various fields, including journalism, advertising, marketing, and public relations, wherein public relations play a persuasive role rather than adhering to the objective rules of journalism. Public relations content is freely provided to the media and the public, who receive and interact with the message based on their information and previous experiences. Digital media offers a wide range of communication opportunities, allowing public relations officers to engage with their audience without the need for special arrangements like press conferences. The Internet empowers public relations officers with numerous services that, when utilized effectively, enable the implementation of comprehensive public relations programs and ensure their success. The continuous and remarkable development of these media and the public's interaction with them make them highly influential tools for delivering messages compared to other means. Moreover, these services provide vast research opportunities through search indicators. The Internet can store and manage a vast amount of information, including text, images, graphics, audio programs, and movies. With its diverse programs, it allows for modifications, offers extensive access to text and advertising programs, and facilitates effective communication between public relations officers and their target audience, promoting their organization's objectives (Al-Qahtani, 2017).

Email services have significantly simplified traditional postal correspondence, which is an integral part of the public relations building process. Public relations officers can send and receive messages from anywhere and at any time, to an unlimited number of recipients. These messages can be stored and accessed when needed. The Internet also enables convenient exchange of attached documents, such as photos and video site drawings, facilitating information sharing. Furthermore, internet services allow for holding meetings through chat rooms or closed groups, providing direct contact between public relations officers and decision-makers. Additionally, interviewees have ample time to consider their responses in many interview formats, and interviews can be scheduled at the interviewee's

convenience. Hence, the Public Relations Department can establish a website or social media page as a virtual space where the institution's audience can stay informed about the latest developments. This site or page serves as a primary source of information about the institution and fosters a sense of closeness between the institution and its audience.

The use of new media within institutions offers numerous advantages. Over the past few years, new media has emerged as a viable option due to its speed and ability to reach large audiences. Additionally, new media allows for interactive two-way communication or monolithic communication, depending on the desired purpose. It provides flexibility in terms of time commitments for both the audience and institutions. New media also enables participation and widespread dissemination, allowing news to be shared across multiple platforms and locations. Communication can occur horizontally between equal parties or vertically between the center and the periphery, reducing the role of traditional media as intermediaries between citizens and institution management. Moreover, it reduces the costs associated with sending and receiving information compared to traditional methods. New media offers instant communication and rapid exchange of information and opinions, while also minimizing physical and social barriers that impede communication in traditional media (Al-Saeed, 2022).

Methodology
Data Collection and Sample
The research employed a descriptive approach as the chosen methodology, which is a structured methodological approach allowing the researcher to examine the subject in its natural context. This approach was supported by the collection of relevant data and information as deemed appropriate by the researcher (Al-Ahbabi, 2021). By utilizing this approach, the researchers were able to provide explanations and clarifications pertaining to the research problem. Furthermore, this approach facilitated the exploration of opinions and experiences, contributing to the determination of the impact of public relations on new media usage, as well as the formulation of research objectives and questions (Saad, 2021).

The target population for this study consisted of individuals interacting with the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) in the Emirate of Dubai, who were relied upon to provide opinions and suggestions to the RTA's public relations departments. These departments serve as government institutions aiming to enhance the quality of public services delivered through the authority.

The study sample comprised a group of respondents selected by the researcher from the aforementioned target population, specifically social media users. A random sample of approximately 300 individual users of social networking sites was chosen to participate in this study. The aim was to investigate the influence of new media on public relations. In order to accomplish this, the researchers employed a questionnaire as a research instrument, which is commonly utilized in scientific studies to measure specific phenomena or gather information crucial to obtaining significant research outcomes.

Findings and Discussions
The results of the field study and the answer to the objectives of the study
In this section, the researchers deal with the results of the field study of the questions raised by the study, where the results of the demographic study related to gender, age group, educational level, social status will be reviewed, as well as answering the extent to which the research sample uses new media, and the impact of new media on relations within

institutions, and the following is a detailed explanation of these results. The following figure 1 shows the type of respondents studied.
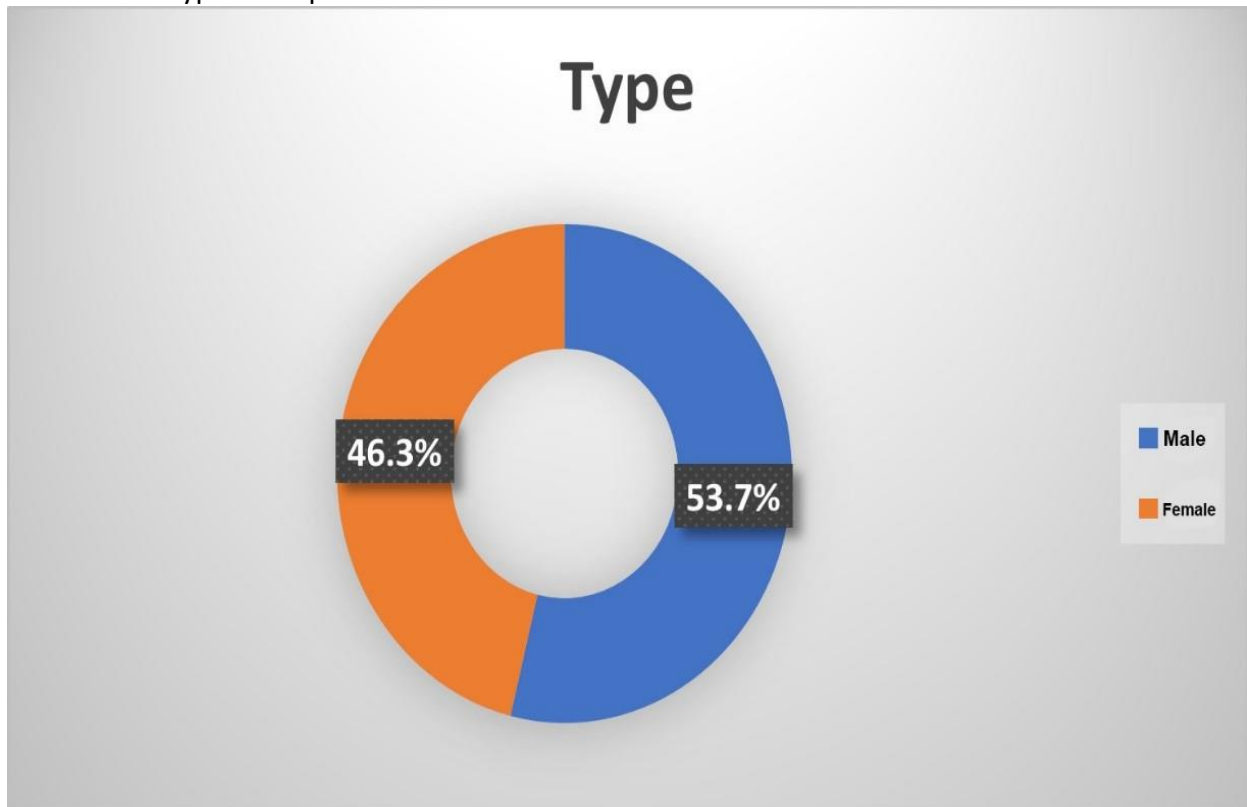

Figure 1: Shows the type of respondents.

The data of the previous figure indicates that the distribution of sample members by type consists of 53. 7% are males and 46. 3 of females, in reference to the response of the study sample to the questionnaire and their interaction with its vocabulary in a close manner of both sexes. In addition, the following figure 2 shows the age group to which the field study was applied.
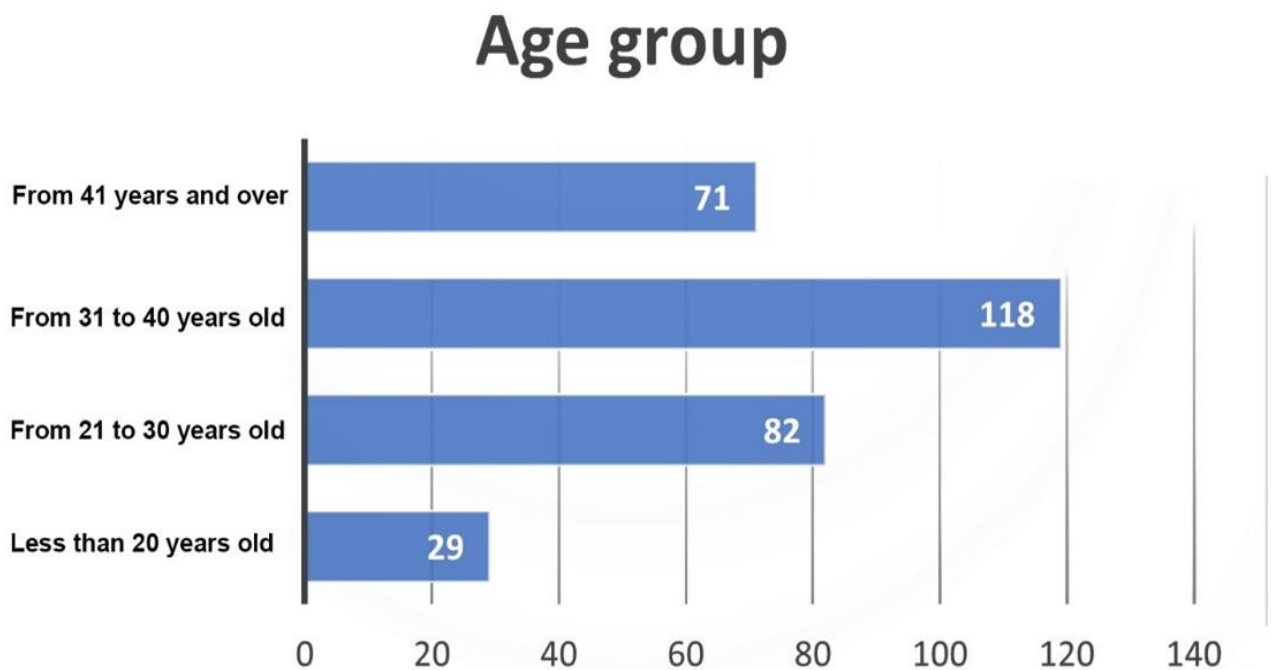
Age group

Figure 2: Shows the age group of the respondents.

The previous figure shows that the age group (from 31 to 40 years) represents the largest percentage of the total study sample, reaching 39.7%, and the age group (less than 20 years) is considered the lowest age group in the study sample by 9.7%. These data and statistics indicate that those between the ages of 31 and 40 were more responsive to the survey as this segment represents a middle segment and is one of the groups that most use RTA services. They are followed by young people between the ages of 21 and 30 years old, who are also among the groups that use the services of the Roads Authority. The previous statistics also indicate that all age groups within the community deal with the RTA in varying proportions. In addition, the following figure 3 shows the educational level of the respondents who were subjected to the field study.
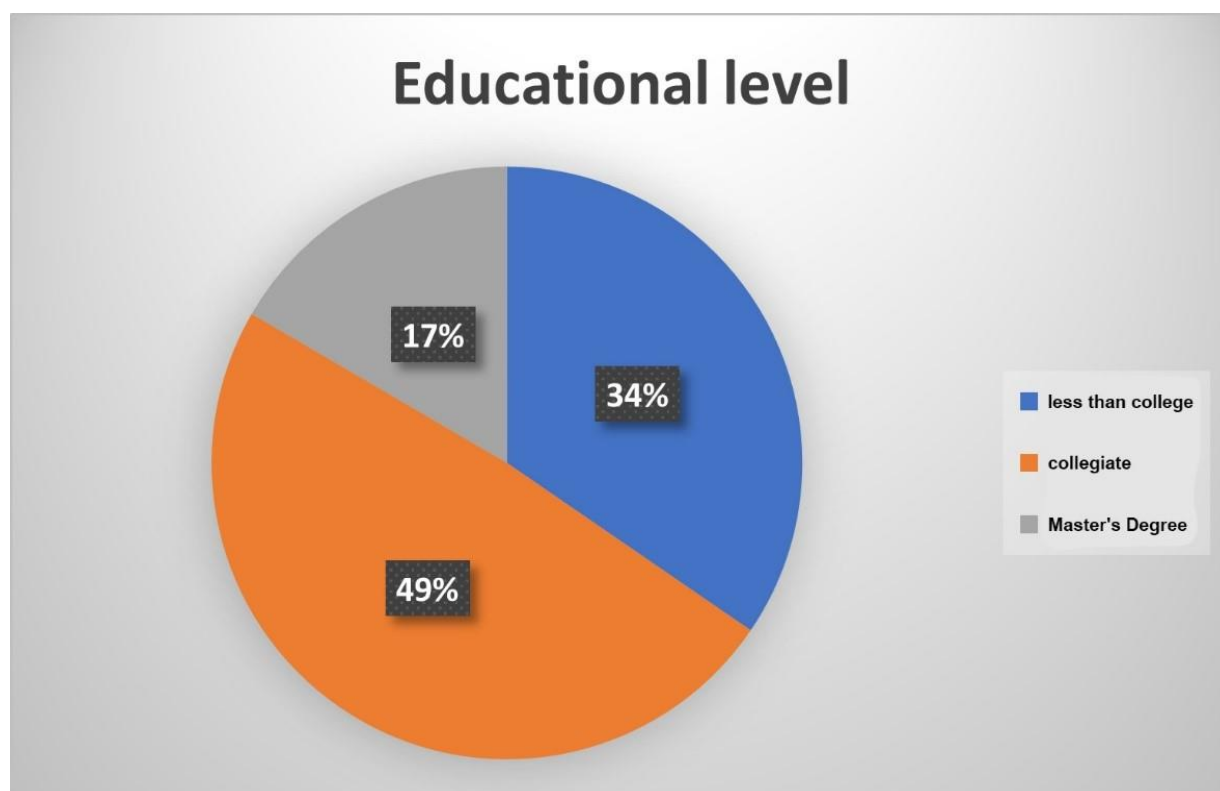
Figure 3: Shows the educational level of the respondents.

From the previous figure, it is clear that the large percentage of the study sample who hold a university degree and represent 49% of the total sample, while they come in second place from their educational level less than university by 34.3% and finally those who have higher degrees by 16.7%. This statistical result indicates that the respondents with university degrees had the highest percentage, followed by the lowest university graduates, and then those with higher degrees. This indicates that the educated group is the most likely to use social media in interacting with the Roads and Transport Authority in Dubai, and this result also indicates the interaction of all segments of society at all levels of education with the services of the Roads and Transport Authority provided through social media. The following table 1 shows the marital status of the respondents to whom the field study was applied.

Table 1
Marital status of respondents.

Percentage %	Duplicate	Marital status
51.3	154	Married
35.1	105	Single
10.3	31	Divorced
3.3	10	Widower
100	300	Total

It appears from the previous table that the most prominent frequency of the marital status variable reached (154) for married couples by a percentage of (51.3%) followed by single people with a frequency of (105) and a percentage of (35.1%).

These data and statistics indicate that the percentage of married people in the study sample was the highest among the respondents. They are followed by singles of both sexes, and then come the rest of the other cases. What is striking in the sample is the increase in the percentage of divorced women among the sample, which exceeds 10%. In any case, all segments of society and from different social situations deal with social media in their dealings with the Roads and Transport Authority in Dubai.

The extent to which the research sample uses new media. The following table 2 shows the extent to which the research sample uses new media, where the options were selected between (no - to some extent - yes).

Table 2
The extent to which the research sample uses new media.

Percentage %	Duplicate	Use
3.7	11	No
6.6	20	Kind of
89.7	269	Yes
100	300	Total

The study showed that most of the sample members use new media while dealing with the Roads and Transport Authority, and their number is (269) individuals, by (89.7%) of the total study sample, while (20) individuals use it to some extent by (6. 6%), but (11) individuals do not use it during their dealings with the Roads and Transport Authority individually by (3.7%).

This statistic indicates that the vast majority of respondents use social media in their daily lives, and this is an indication that social media has become today one of the most widespread means of use, and this will result in a lot of work related to these means.

The most used new means of communication within government institutions: The following table 3 shows the types of social media that respondents are accustomed to following.

Table 3
The most used social media within institutions.

Percentage %	Duplicate	Medium
11.3	34	Facebook
10.0	30	Twitter
29.6	89	Instagram
5.7	17	Tiktok
22.7	68	Snapchat
20.7	62	TRA Website
100.0	300	Total

Through the data of the previous table, we find that the Instagram program is considered the most used among social media with a frequency of (89) individuals and a percentage of (29.6%), followed by the Snapchat program with a frequency of (68) individuals and a percentage of (22.7%), and the authority's website comes in third place among social media with a frequency of (62) and a percentage of (20.7%) of the total sample members.

These figures and statistics indicate the following

- Instagram is one of the most used social media by RTA auditors. It is followed by Snapchat, then the authority's website, and then the rest of the means come in different proportions.
- The extent to which the public dealing with the RTA is keen to use social media.
- The great leap achieved by the Government of Dubai in the field of e-government, and the facilities used in it.
- The Authority's keenness to accomplish the tasks of the auditors without their cost of attendance and direct follow-up.

The impact of new media on public relations through dealing within institutions. The following table 4 data indicates the extent to which new media influence public relations within institutions.

Table 4

Impact of new media.

Percentage %	Duplicate	Does new media influence you while dealing with RTA?
37.0	111	No
34.7	104	Kind of
28.3	85	Yes
100.0	300	Total

Data from the previous table the study indicates that the new media does not affect individuals during their dealings with the Roads and Transport Authority, with a frequency of (111) and a percentage of (37. 0%) of the study sample, while (10-4) individuals agree that it affects to some extent and by (34. 7%) but (85) individuals (28.3%) believe that social networking sites affect them while dealing with the RTA.

The previous results and statistics indicate that a large percentage of those dealing with the Authority's new media are affected by these sites and their content, and this effect is usually positive, as evidenced by the fact that the large percentage of customers terminate their transactions and obtain their information through these sites.

The Theoretical and Academic Implications

The researcher believes that this research would open the way more for academics and researchers to address this topic in detail, analysis and scrutiny, because the world to which we belong is forcing us to use and adapt these means to advance our institutions, and accordingly requires academics to focus more on these means and review their advantages and disadvantages in the field of institutional advancement.

This research will also influence the research community on which the study was conducted by pushing it to make optimal use of these means and consolidate their use in all

their communication and completion of their transactions with public relations departments within institutions, and at the same time urge these departments to use the most used means among the public of customers, and at the same time avoid any negatives that these means may cause with the public.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The previous article reviewed the effects of new media on public relations within institutions, as the new media imposed a new reality in the public relations departments within institutions that necessitated them to keep pace with this information and communication revolution, and therefore this article reviewed the topic of using new media in public relations, and the extent to which the public is affected by these means and the speed of communication with them. They also reviewed the communication methods used and public relations such as text messages, digital reports and others. The article pointed to the impact of new media on public relations in terms of its impact on communication methods, expanding its activity, and providing a range of services to customers with institutions. The article concluded by referring to the advantages of using new media within institutions, which is interactive, reduced communication costs and immediacy.

General Conclusions

The previous article reached a set of results, the most important of which are the following:

1. The study showed that most of the respondents use new media while dealing with public relations departments within institutions.
2. The study showed that Instagram is one of the most used new media within government institutions.
3. The results showed that a large percentage of those dealing with the Authority's new media are affected by these sites and their content, and this effect is usually positive.
4. The new media has facilitated the public relations departments within the institutions quickly and easily to communicate with the internal and external audience of the institution.
5. The need to use new media within institutions and identify all applications related to them in order for institutions to carry out their duties towards the public.
6. The new media provided many services to the public, such as the exchange of attached documents such as photos, drawings and videos.
7. The new media has made available new features to the audience such as speed, access to large numbers of people and interactive features.

Recommendations

Through the tools and results of the research, the following recommendations appeared:

1. The need to provide all auxiliary capabilities to the Public Relations Department within institutions in order to activate its electronic tasks in communicating with the public.
2. Work to make the most of all social media in working within institutions.
3. Work to provide a database for workers within institutions for social and administrative communication internally and externally.
4. The importance of creating pages for new media within institutions that enable the provision of services to the institution's audience easily and conveniently.
5. The need to train workers within institutions on the need to interact with new media and qualify employees of the Public Relations Department in order to make the most of the technical and scientific capabilities in those media.

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